

NINTENDO GAMECUBE ■ GBA ■ DS

NGC

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INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING



resident evil

THE REVIEW



MARCH 2005 £3.99

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NGC

INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING

30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW
Tel: 01225 442244
E-mail: NGC@futurenet.co.uk

EDITORIAL

Guest Editor L Scott Kennedy
From Resident Evil, folks!
Angry Fella Paul Edwards
pinta.stella@futurenet.co.uk
Puppeteer Martin Kitts
past.caring@futurenet.co.uk
Influenza Geraint Evans
infecting.paris@futurenet.co.uk
I'll never forget Whatsizname

CONTRIBUTORS

Mark Green, Jes Bickham, Claire Howlett,
Lee Hart, Richard Broughton, Andrew Mills,
Emma Swift, Simon Goddard

PRODUCTION

Super Senior Co-Ordinator Kirsty Bell
Production Manager Rose Griffiths
Purchasing Manager Michelle Rogers

CIRCULATION

Product Manager Russell Hughes
Subs Manager James Greenwood

ADVERTISING

Advertising Director Jayne Caple
Advertising Manager Darren Gratton

MANAGEMENT DESK

Publisher Kerry Lawrence
Publishing Director Mia Roberts
Editorial Director Jim Douglas
Overseas Licensing Simon Wear

SUBS & DISTRIBUTION

Future Publishing Ltd, FREEPOST BS4900,
Somerton, Somerset TA11 7BR.
Tel: 01458 271184

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Non-executive
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This magazine was brought to you by the letter Evans, the colour Edwards and the number Kitts.

MEET THE NEW BOSS...

Same as the old boss? Not quite...

Having disposed of the previous incumbent in the only manner that seemed appropriate (mainly bullets, if you must know) I thought it would be rude to leave the **NGC** team without an editor. Not least because they had the biggest game of the year to cope with, in the biggest review the magazine has tackled during its 104 issues to date. And if any long-memoried pedant writes to tell me that issue 42's *Perfect Dark* review was just as long as this month's *16-Page Resi Blowout*, well... I'll remind you there's a space or two left next to the dear, departed Mr. Hawkins, and we'll leave it at that.

Elsewhere in the mag, you'll find I've made a few changes. When I saw the vast volume of correspondence sent in by you readers, some of it actually semi-literate, it became clear to me that to have just three pages of letters was to squander a most valuable labour-saving resource. So I upped it to four pages. *There's* your Revolution, Nintendo. Can you see it? *Can you see your Revolution?*

Ahem. Got a bit carried away there – but it's with due justification, because this is undoubtedly the best issue in this mag's history. And I'm not saying that just because it has the best game in it. Where else would you find Nintendo's greatest courtroom hits? Or your chance to be an EA exec? Or a hardcore gaming quiz? With prizes!

Nowhere on this planet. I thank you.

Leon S Kennedy
Guest Editor

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

Go to page 79, where for a small amount of cash you can get three free issues and a free limited edition **NGC** bag! No excuses now!

TURN OVER THE PAGE!

For an **NGC** experience you're never likely to forget.



* in old money

WHY WE'RE No.1 FOR NINTENDO

NGC's the result of over a decade of gaming genius – so you're the best-informed Nintendo gamer around.

1992 **Super Play** INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE
NEW! IMPORT REVIEWS!
OFFICIAL REVIEWS!
FREE!
AND THIS!

1997 **N64** FOR NINTENDO 64 FANS
It's pure dino-mario
MARIO GO! GO!
Super Mario 64 reviewed, rated... and completed!

2001 **NGC** MAGAZINE
WIN AS N64. AMAZING NEW LOOK!
IT'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR...
MARIO SUNSHINE
CRAZY TAXI
ZELDA

■ First there was the SNES, and Super Play came out alongside it – fanboys rejoiced.

■ A new machine meant a new magazine – but one with the same high standards.

■ Now we've got Gamecube, and you've got NGC. That's 12 years of Ninty love right there.

NGC'S FIVE STAR

GUIDE TO WHAT'S
UNMISSABLE
THIS ISSUE!

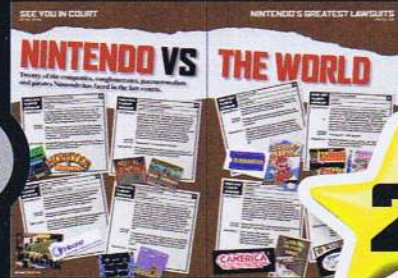


PAGE
50

RESIDENT EVIL 4

THE REVIEW

The UK PAL version blown to pieces. Don't miss this...

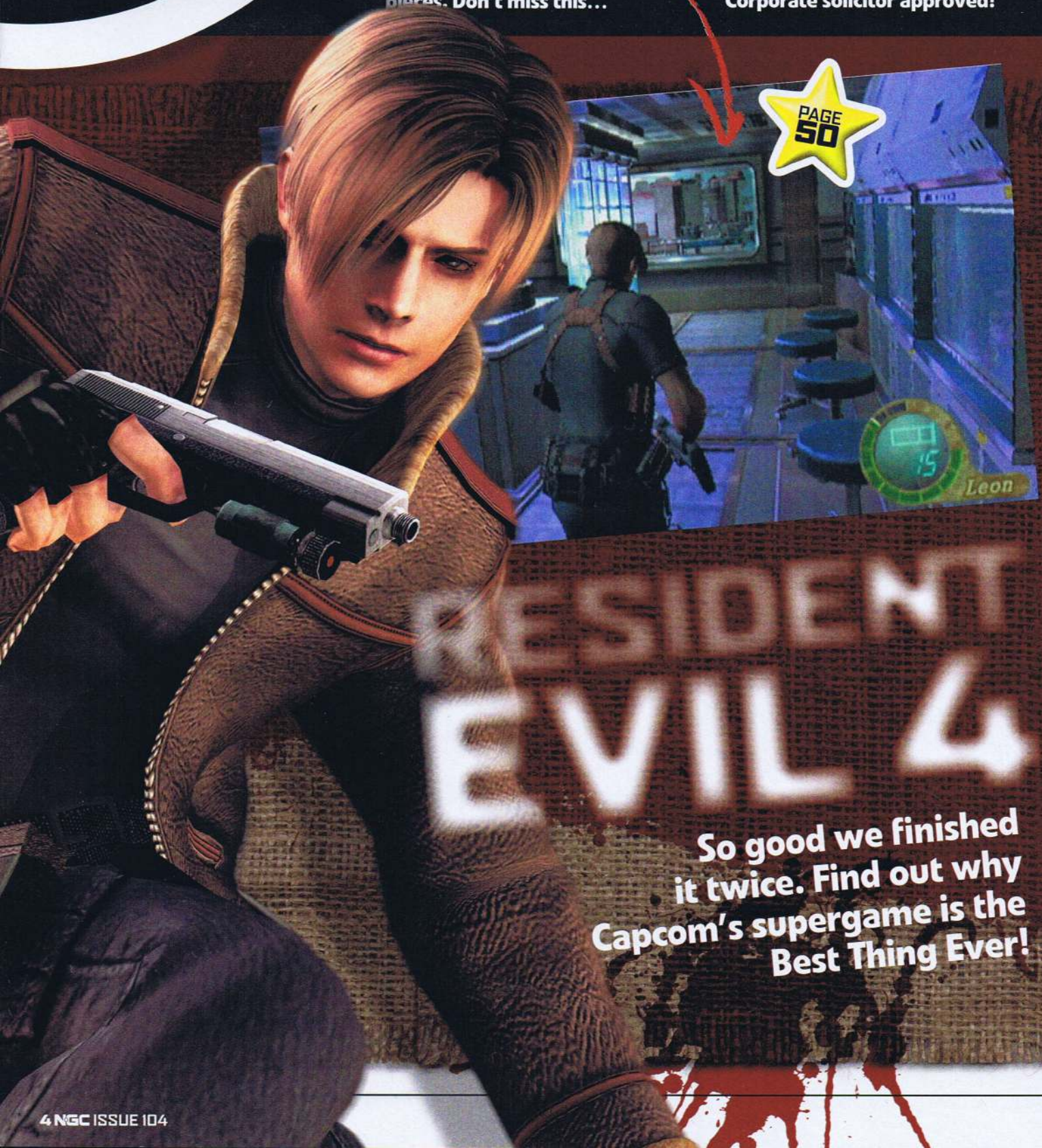


PAGE
80

NINTENDO VS THE WORLD

LEGAL EAGLES

Corporate solicitor approved!



RESIDENT EVIL 4

So good we finished
it twice. Find out why
Capcom's supergame is the
Best Thing Ever!

REVIEWED THIS ISSUE!

BANJO PILOT
The bear is back on a Nintendo console! PAGE 2

TIGER WOODS '05
It's only golf but it scans us...! PAGE 8

IS PACKED PAGES OF DS & GBA!

NGC POCKET
FOR HANDHELD GAMERS

NINTENDO DS GAME BOY ADVANCE



3

PAGE 33

DS HITS UK!
14 launch titles, aggressive price tag, and that all-important launch date revealed inside...

PLUS!

Crystal Drive: Starts with a bang! Page 40
Astro Boy: A new look at a classic game Page 42
Super Mario Bros.: The first and last game Page 72

NGC EXCLUSIVE

SNEAKES AND LEADERS
Challenge Everyone! Use the Jungle Family characters to out-think and out-maneuvre your opponents. Collect cards, complete scores & challenge to take out someone on the ladder as you go!



4

PAGE 24

SNEAKES & LEADERS
FREE BOARD GAME!
Our light-hearted tribute to the world's No.1 third-party.

NGC TIPS, HINTS, CHEATS AND EXTRAS

EXTENDED PLAY
METROID PRIME 2 ECHOES
We've beaten the coolest of the Chozo and here's what!

EXPERT BOSS STRATEGIES
The definitive strategy guide for every boss!



5

PAGE 84

METROID PRIME 2
ULTRA EXPERT TIPS
Play like a Chozo god with our unique strategy guide.

WHAT'S IN NGC?

Enough to keep you busy for weeks...

PREVIEWS

Amazing new games coming your way

- 14** **FIFA STREET**
What Rooney and Ronaldinho get up to on their days off...
- 18** **FIGHT NIGHT**
It's Round Two, and you get *Punch Out* for free! Wonderful.
- 20** **STAR FOX ASSAULT**
Looking forward to next month's big review of Foxy's comeback.
- 23** **SRS**
Street Racing Syndicate - Namco's take on *Need For Speed Underground*.
- 23** **HARVEST MOON: SONG OF HAPPINESS**
All-new farming and singing in Gamecube's nicest RPG.



NEWS

The latest rumours, truths and goings-on

- 6** **NEWS**
Revolution rumours rounded up and rubbished. Is it even real? Or is it not?
- 12** **RELEASE LIST**
Those all-important dates for Gamecube, GBA and DS games.
- 33** **NGC POCKET**
All the latest news and reviews for Nintendo's handheld consoles.

EXTENDED PLAY

Getting more from your favourite games

- 10** **THE NGC QUIZ**
Call yourself a Nintendo fan? Test your knowledge and win something great.
- 26** **BEST OF 2004**
So what was the Game Of The Year?
- 80** **LAWSUITS R US**
Courtroom fun with the world's most litigious games company.
- 84** **METROID MASTERS**
Echo ownage, right here.
- 90** **TIPS EXTRA**
The codes and cheats you need.
- 94** **SKILL CLUB**
It's back! Get your certificate here.
- 96** **GAME ON**
Reader challenges for classic games.
- 98** **MAILBOX**
The only games magazine letters page remotely worth reading. Expanded!
- 102** **MADAME GREENER**
Wave goodbye to the psychic hag.
- 104** **MAKING THE MATRIX**
Wachowski me up, brother man.
- 108** **DIRECTORY**
The 100 best Gamecube games.

REVIEWS

Ways to blow your hard-earned cash

- 40** **DS REVIEWS**
All the latest titles (well, three of them): *Crystal Drive*, *Tiger Woods and Puyo Pop*. Nicely.
- 42** **GBA REVIEWS**
On the rack this month: *Banjo Pilot*, *Astro Boy* and *Mr Pants*. That's two Rare games in one month!
- 50** **RESIDENT EVIL 4**
Sixteen whole pages! That's three times as long as a 'huge' review in any other mag, and if you count the pages which are actually any good to read, well, it's 16 times as long.
- 66** **UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2005**
If it was all about presentation, this would be the best footie game ever.
- 68** **NBA STREET V3**
Fantastic three-on-three basketball game meets Mario, Luigi and Peach.
- 72** **MARIO TENNIS**
Six 'huge' pages of serve-and-volley craziness, court-esy of Nintendo.



WHERE'S THE NEWS???
 Ahh... Although we generally have around five pages of news in the magazine, this month's monstrous Rest review, plus the quiz on page 10, plus the board game on page 24, plus the lawsuits feature on page 80... well, we're totally out of space this month. And since nothing much has happened...

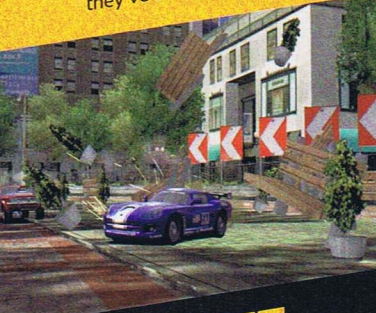
NGC BRINGING YOU NEWS FIRST
NEWSDESK



NEWS SNIPPETS

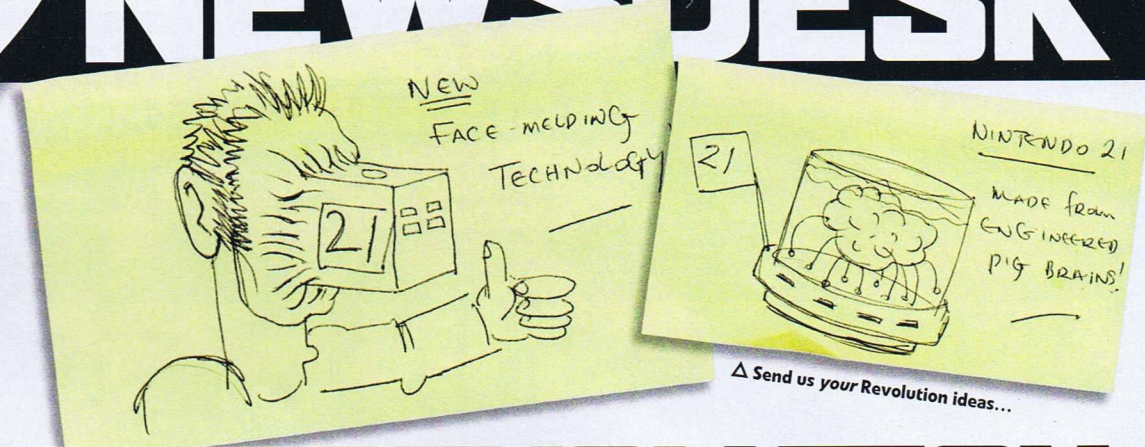


SHATALOGUE SHOCKER!
 The Stars Shatalogue redeemed itself this month! Sort of. For 1000 stars and 130 nicker you could get a DS, Mario 64 DS, a T-shirt, and demos of *Metroid Hunters* and *Wario Ware*. Sadly, they've all run out though...



EA GAME SPLURGE
 Looks like a bunch of EA's new games are heading to Gamecube this year, including *SSX4*, *James Bond: From Russia With Love*, *Need For Speed: Most Wanted*, and best of all, *Burnout 4*. Hurrah! More news and details as we get 'em.

NINTO-BALL
 Nintendo are to develop and publish a 'serious' baseball sim, *Nintendo Pennant Chase Baseball*. It's fully licensed, which means it'll probably make less sense to us Brits than *Mario Baseball*... no release date has yet been set. Griffty!



△ Send us your Revolution ideas...

THE REVOLUTION STARTS NOW!

GAMECUBE'S SUCCESSOR UNVEILED AT LAST?

This month saw speculation, rumour and outright preposterousness run riot concerning Nintendo's next console, the Revolution. Except, it seems, the machine is now called the 'Nintendo 21' and will form a wireless network via the 'Nintendo Home' hub – the idea being, presumably, that'll you be able to play over persistent online worlds with other gamers, or at least send rude messages to other users via a *Pictochat*-style program. Intriguingly, the machine is also said to have a hard drive and any saved data will affect other Nintendo 21s. Hmm.

Other points of interest include a mooted released date of late 2005, backward-compatibility, 8cm 5.4GB capacity discs enclosed in a plastic shell

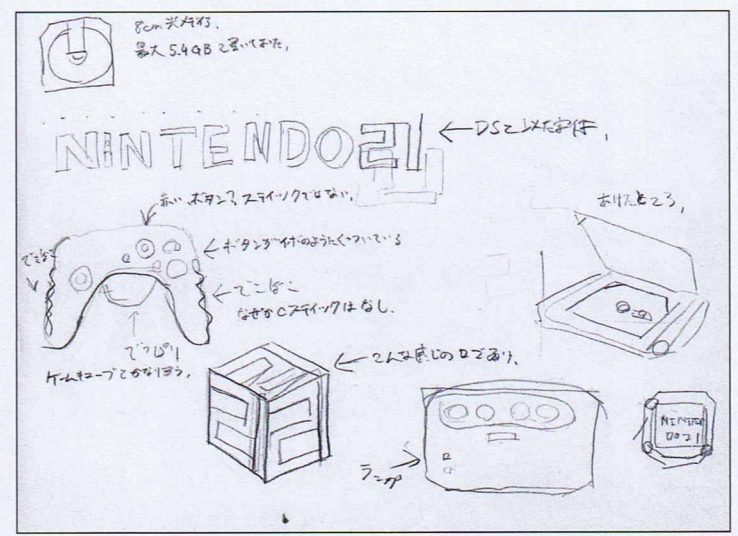
We'd genuinely like some of these whispers to be true – it sounds, in part, like a logical extension of what's happening with DS's wi-fi support. But

RUMOUR: NINTENDO 21 WILL BE 'TEH ROXXOR'. NINTENDO 21 WILL NOT BE 'TEH SUXXOR'.

and touch-sensitive controllers with gyroscopes for motion control. This also supports the rumour about doing away with the D-pad. Intriguing, eh?

it could all be so much internet piffle, especially given the astonishingly crap pencil drawing that accompanied the initial spate of rumours. (We liked it so much, mind, that we've drawn a couple of our own visual speculations as to what 'Nintendo 21' will look like).

- We've also come up with a list of 'facts' about Nintendo 21 that we hope will be circulated onto the internet in the coming months*. Enjoy!
- Nintendo 21 will be fashioned like a small statuette of Johnny Depp, star of TV's '21 Jump Street'.
- Nintendo 21 will speak to you like HAL9000, but in the cheery of tones of Charles Martinet as Mario. "What are you a-doing, Dave?"
- Nintendo 21 will be 'teh r0XX0r'!
- Nintendo 21 will not be 'teh suxx0r'.
- Nintendo 21's slogan will be 'Nintendo 21 is fun, fun, fun!'
- Nintendo 21 will ditch Gamecube's carry handle but can be worn like the 'fanny pack' so beloved of our American cousins.



△ Look. Look! Hardly official-looking, is it? Still, nice logo attempt, there.

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* AT SELECTED RETAILERS



NEW HAIRCUT →

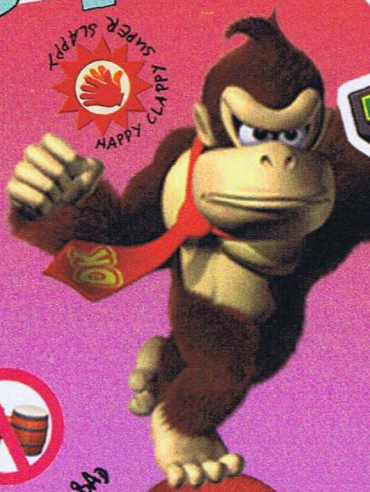
OUT Feb 4 NINTENDO GAMECUBE.

DONKEY KONG JUNGLE BEAT

COMES WITH BONGOS*

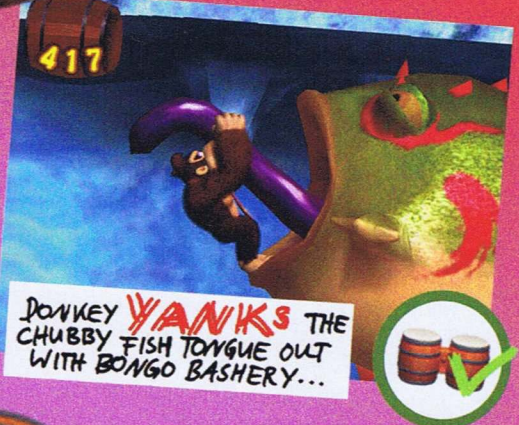


FIRST TESTS PROVE: BONGO CONTROLLED TRUCKS ARE RUBBISH



Happy Claps Super Slappy

WHO'S A BIG PIGGY



DONKEY YANKS THE CHUBBY FISH TONGUE OUT WITH BONGO BASHERY...



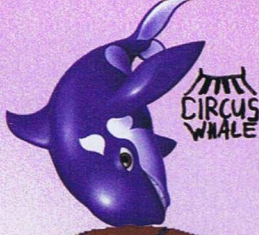
PROVERB SAYS: SHIP LOADED BY BONGO CRANE IS SHIP IN POOP!



THANKS TO BONGOS, CATCHING FLYING BANANAS FROM A PARACHUTE IS EASY PEASY (SEE ABOVE)



NEWSFLASH BONGO BELTING BURIES DIGGER



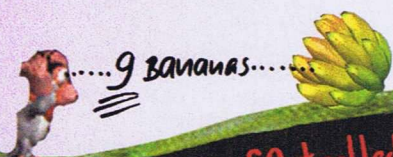
CIRCUS WHALE



18-7+48=



NO KNIVES, PISTOLS, BOMBS, EGGS OR STINKY LETTUCE... JUST BONGOS!



9 BANANAS...



KING OF BALANCE

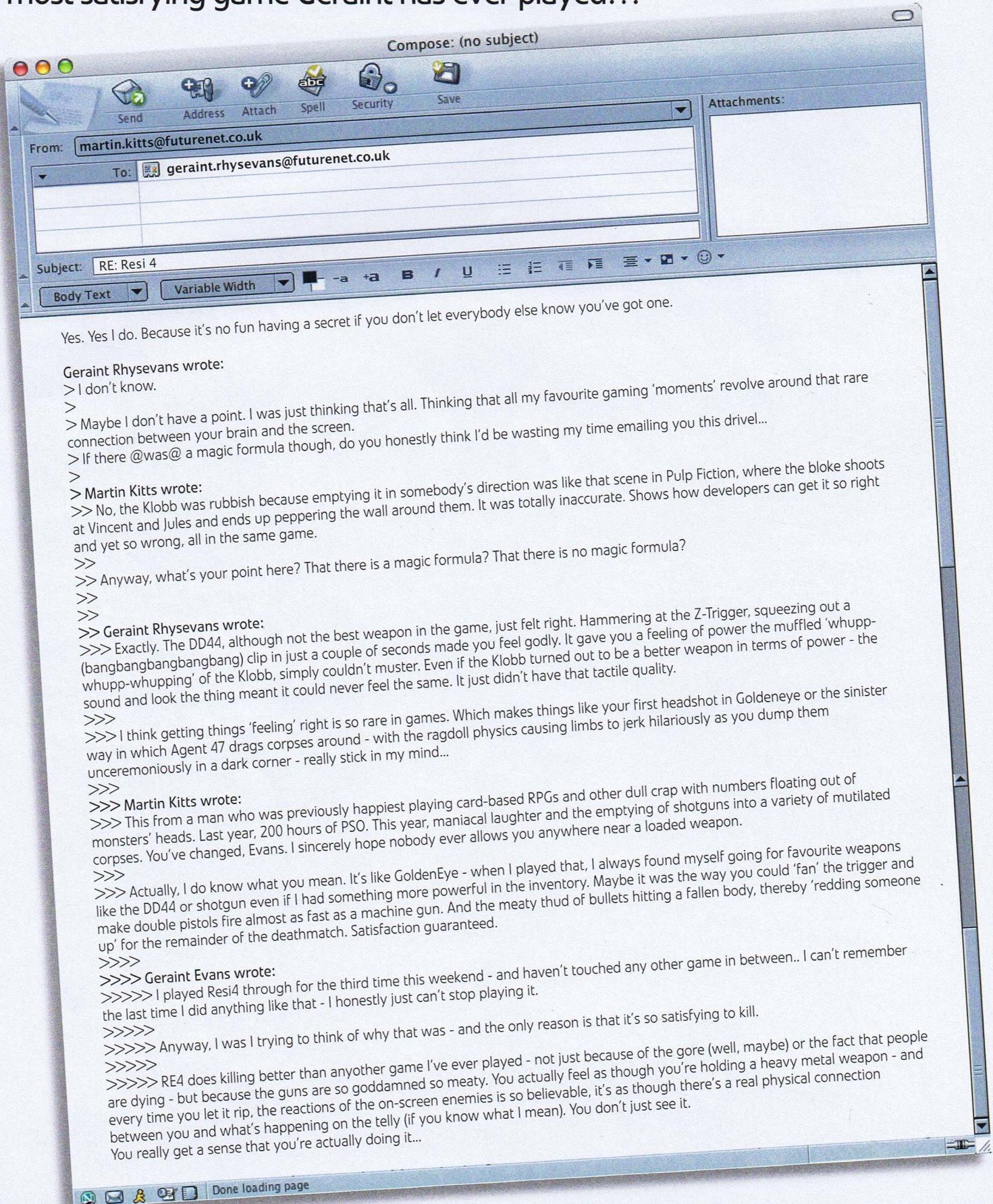


World's 1st Bongo Controlled PLATFORM GAME!! CONTROL STUFF WITH



BONGOS

New! The random email argument page. This month: Why Resi 4 is the most satisfying game Geraint has ever played...



DK King of Swing

OUT 4TH FEB
GAME BOY ADVANCE SP

SWING THE KING OF SWING

one banana

two banana

banana

SWINGING
SOLVER
MEDAL
25%

opposable
THUMB

DANGER:
HIGH
VELOCITY
FALLING
KITTEN

How'd you cook
A sausage in
The Jungle?*

Buses
Have no fingers
So they're rubbish!

Swinging
Gnome has
slippy GRIP
- OH GNO!!

THERE CAN ONLY
BE ONE KING OF SWING.

swing Bands are
only good at one
type of swinging

GOOD
SWINGERS

BAD
SWINGERS

LEFT and RIGHT
BUTTONS ARE DONKEYS
GRIPPING MITTS

* GAS MARK 4 35 MINUTES,
TURNING OCCASIONALLY

Nintendo®

YETI!!!

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THE NGC

Win special *Resi 4* consoles and copies of the *Resi 4* game



Fancy playing *Resi 4* on a special edition silver/black Gamecube? Using a special edition silver/black controller? Since we're all about the Evil this issue, we thought we'd give you the chance to win yourself a prize that's so nice, you might forget all about the blood dripping from a large proportion of this month's mag. Sort of.

And we're doing it in the 'funnest' way we could think of – an incredibly difficult quiz designed to separate the true hardcore gamers from the mere 'enthusiasts'. Honestly, you won't find the answers to all of these on Google. We don't expect *anybody* to get them all right, but hey - we're here to be proved wrong.

We've got *Resi 4* Gamecube and game bundles to give away to the three highest-scoring entries, plus three more copies of the game for the runners-up. So power up the Nintendo cortex deep within your brain and try this. It's like Mastermind without the questions about 17th century composers...

ROUND 1



1. In which game would you hear the line "I am the great Leon"?
2. What game did Tim Weaver say "...is stunningly dull"?
3. "Consider your gamefreak status temporarily suspended until you own a copy of this groundbreaking title." Which game were we talking about?
4. Backlash, J-Bomb, the A-Team van. Where would you find 'em?
5. The laptop gun is quite clearly the best gun ever. But which game does it come from?
6. What does the Cerebral Bore do and which game does it come from?
7. "His coconut gun can fire in spurts" – which game?
8. Which company made the brilliant *Sin & Punishment*?
9. Names the first three editors of N64 Magazine.
10. "I am the great mighty poo." Which game?

ROUND 2 NINTENDO COMPANY LIMITED

11. In which year was Nintendo founded?
12. Name any three of Gunpei Yokoi's inventions.
13. Who composed the Mario theme?
14. Two-thirds of Nintendo's unsuccessful 1980 *Radar Scope* arcade machines were converted into which smash hit title?
15. Which family dynasty founded Nintendo?
16. Who is the president of NCL?
17. In which year did they launch the Famicom?
18. Which Nintendo games machine was codenamed Virtual Ultra Eye?
19. Nintendo originally made playing cards. Name two other non-videogame products the company has been involved with.
20. In which year did Shigeru Miyamoto join Nintendo?

QUIZ

HOW TO ENTER

Send your answers to: The NGC Quiz, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW or email ngc@futurenet.co.uk, with 'Quiz' as the subject line. Include your name and address too.

THE RULES:

1. In the event of a tie, the winner will be the person with the neatest handwriting or the least 'funny' email address (ie we'll pick them at random).
2. Employees of Future Publishing may not enter (except for Geraint Evans, who doesn't know most of the answers anyway, and Martin Kitts, who wrote most of the questions and would really like a silver and black Gamecube).
3. If you're a bit artistic, feel free to draw a picture of a goblin on your entry. It won't enhance your chance of winning but it might at least make us laugh.
4. Closing date for entries is March 7th. We'll print the answers and the names of the winners in issue 106, on sale April 14th. Best of luck.



ROUND 4 GUESS THE GAME



31



32



33



34



35



36



37



38



39



40

ROUND 3 GAME BOY

21. When was the Game Boy released?
22. There is a GBC version of *Metal Gear Solid*. True or false?
23. From which Japanese company did Nintendo obtain the rights to *Tetris*?
24. Which of the following games was not part of the Japanese GBA launch line-up? *Kuru Kuru Kururin*; *F-Zero Maximum Velocity*; *Super Mario Advance*; *Mario Kart Super Circuit*.
25. Which Konami adventure game featured a backpack-stealing monkey?
26. Which Natsume game is *Harvest Moon's* watery sibling?
27. Which short-lived girl group featured on the front of our equally short-lived spin-off Planet Game Boy magazine, next to the cover line 'four fruity beauties'?
28. Other than Nintendo, which developer is most associated with Game Boy Zelda titles?
29. How many AA batteries did the original Game Boy take?
30. What was Sega's Game Boy rival known as?

ROUND 5 GAMECUBE

41. Which company originally designed Gamecube's graphics processor, before being bought up by ATI?
42. What was Gamecube's development codename?
43. How many Marios were there in Gamecube's 'Monopoly board' tech demo?
44. Which studio is developing *Killer 7*?
45. How many Mario Parties have there been on Gamecube?
46. Who is the final boss in *Luigi's Mansion*?
47. What is the codename of the assassin hero in *Hitman 2*?
48. How many characters are there in *Eternal Darkness*?
49. Which car game comes with a free copy of *Pac-Man Versus*?
50. What is the biggest selling game, worldwide, on Gamecube?



ULTRA RELEASE LIST

The latest on every Nintendo system game in development – updated monthly!

UK RELEASES

The most accurate listing available – although be aware that slippages can occur. All titles Gamecube unless otherwise stated.

FEBRUARY

18	Advance Guardian Heroes (GBA)	Ubi Soft
18	NBA Street V3	EA
25	Banjo-Kazooie Pilot (GBA)	Rare/THQ
25	Jimmy Neutron: Attack of the Twonkies	THQ
25	Jimmy Neutron: Attack of the Twonkies (GBA)	THQ
25	Mario Power Tennis	Nintendo
25	The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie	THQ
25	The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie (GBA)	THQ

MARCH

1	Smashing Drive (GBA)	ZOO
4	Ghost Recon 2	Ubi Soft
4	TimeSplitters Future Perfect	EA
11	FIFA Street	EA
11	Kao the Kangaroo: Round 2	JoWood
11	Robots	Vivendi
17	NGC Issue 105 out today	Future
18	Mario Party 6	Nintendo
18	Resident Evil 4	Capcom
TBC	Asphalt Urban GT (DS)	Ubi Soft
TBC	Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 2	Atari
TBC	Fairly Odd Parents: Shadow Showdown	THQ
TBC	Fairly Odd Parents: Shadow Showdown (GBA)	THQ
TBC	Mr Driller: Drill Spirits (DS)	Namco
TBC	Nintendo DS (Hardware)	MOST WANTED Nintendo
TBC	Pokémon Dash (DS)	Nintendo
TBC	Project Rub (DS)	Sega
TBC	Rayman DS	Ubi Soft
TBC	Ridge Racer DS	Namco
TBC	Spider-Man 2 (DS)	Activision
TBC	Splinter Cell Chaos Theory	Ubi Soft
TBC	Sprung (DS) (working title)	Ubi Soft
TBC	Super Mario 64 DS (DS)	Nintendo
TBC	Tak 2: The Staff of Dreams	THQ
TBC	Tak 2: The Staff of Dreams (GBA)	THQ
TBC	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 2: BattleNexus	Konami
TBC	The Urbz: Sims in the City (DS)	EA
TBC	WarioWare Touched! (DS)	MOST WANTED Nintendo
TBC	Zoo Keeper (DS)	Ignition

APRIL

1	Viewtiful Joe 2	Capcom
TBC	LEGO Star Wars (GBA)	Eidos

MAY

6	Kingdom Hearts: Chain of Memories (GBA)	Nintendo
TBC	Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith (DS)	Ubi Soft
TBC	Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith (GBA)	Ubi Soft

SPRING

	Boktai 2: Solar Boy Django (GBA)	Konami
	Fight Night 2005 (working title)	EA
	Killer 7	Capcom
	Medal of Honor: Dogs of War	EA

	Metroid Prime Hunters: First Hunt (DS)	Nintendo
	Winnie the Pooh Rumbly Tumbly Adventure	Ubi Soft
	Winnie the Pooh Rumbly Tumbly Adventure (GBA)	Ubi Soft

SUMMER

	Batman Begins	EA
	Batman Begins (GBA)	EA
	The Incredible Hulk	Vivendi

TBC 2005

	Advance Wars DS (working title) (DS)	Nintendo
	Advance Wars: Under Fire	Nintendo
	Alien Hominid	O-3
	Animal Crossing (DS)	MOST WANTED Nintendo
	Another (working title) (DS)	Nintendo
	Atari Classics (DS)	Atari
	Baten Kaitos	Namco
	Bionicle 2 (GBA)	THQ
	Boktai (working title) (DS)	Konami
	Bomberman (DS)	Hudson
	Caduceus (DS)	Atlus
	Castlevania (working title) (DS)	Konami
	Codename: Kids Next Door (GBA)	Take 2
	Custom Robo	Nintendo
	Dora the Explorer: Super Star Adventures (GBA)	Take 2
	Dragon Ball Z (DS)	Banpresto
	Dragon Booster	Konami
	Dragon Booster (DS)	Konami
	Dragon Quest Monsters (working title) (DS)	Square Enix
	Dynasty Warriors (DS)	Koei
	Egg Monster Heroes (DS)	Square Enix
	Fantastic Four	Activision
	Final Fantasy III (DS)	Square Enix
	Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles (working title) (DS)	Square Enix
	Fire Emblem	Nintendo
	Frogger 2005	Konami
	Frogger 2005 (DS)	Konami
	Funkydilla	Zoonami
	Game Zero (working title)	Zoonami
	Ganbare Goemon (DS)	Konami
	Geist	Nintendo
	GoldenEye: Rogue Agent (DS)	EA
	Harvest Moon (DS)	Natsume
	Jam with the Band (working title) (DS)	Nintendo
	Jump Superstars (DS)	Nintendo
	Kirby Adventure (working title)	Nintendo
	Lamborghini FX	Avalon
	The Legend of Zelda	MOST WANTED Nintendo
	The Legend of Zelda DS (working title) (DS)	Nintendo
	Madden NFL 2005 (DS)	EA
	Mario Baseball	Nintendo
	Mario Kart DS	Nintendo
	Mario Party Advance (GBA)	Nintendo
	Mega Man Battle Network (DS)	Capcom
	Meteos (DS)	Bandai
	Mobile Suit Gundam Seed (DS)	Bandai

	Monster Rancher (DS)	Tecmo
	Moonlight Fables (DS)	Majesco
	The Movies	Activision
	Nanostray (DS)	Majesco
	Need for Speed Underground (DS)	EA
	Nightmare Before Christmas: The Pumpkin King (GBA)	Buena Vista
	Nintendo Puzzle Collection	Nintendo
	Odama	MOST WANTED Nintendo
	Oggy and the Cockroaches (GBA)	Telegames
	One-Line Puzzle (working title) (DS)	Nintendo
	One Piece (DS)	Bandai
	Pac'n Roll (DS)	Namco
	Pac-Pix (DS)	Namco
	Ping Pals (DS)	THQ
	Pokémon Diamond (DS)	Nintendo
	Pokémon GC	MOST WANTED Nintendo
	Pokémon Pearl (DS)	Nintendo
	Puppy Times (working title) (DS)	Nintendo
	Puyo Pop Fever (DS)	Sega
	Rave Master: Special Attack Force (GBA)	Konami
	Retro Atari Classics (DS)	Atari
	Robots (DS)	Vivendi
	Room Zoom: Race for Impact	Jaleco
	Secret of Mana (DS)	Square Enix
	Snowboard Kids DS	Atlus
	Sonic DS (working title) (DS)	Sega
	Space Raiders	Taito
	SpongeBob SquarePants (DS)	THQ
	SRS: Street Racing Syndicate	Namco
	Starcraft: Ghost	MOST WANTED Vivendi
	Star Fox Assault	Nintendo
	NEW Super Mario Bros (DS)	Nintendo
	Super Princess Peach (DS)	Nintendo
	Survival Kids (DS)	MOST WANTED Konami
	Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf 2005 (DS)	EA
	Touch! Kirby's Magic Paintbrush (DS)	Nintendo
	Ultimate Brain Games (DS)	Telegames
	Ultimate Card Games (DS)	Telegames
	Ultimate Pocket Games (DS)	Telegames
	Vandal Hearts (working title) (DS)	Konami
	Viewtiful Joe (DS)	MOST WANTED Capcom
	Virtua Quest	Sega
	WINX (working title) (DS)	Konami
	World Championship Pool 2004	Jaleco
	World Soccer Winning Eleven Series (working title) (DS)	Konami
	Yoshi's Universal Gravitation (GBA)	Nintendo
	Yoshi's Touch and Go (working title) (DS)	Nintendo
	Yu-Gi-Oh! Destiny Board Traveller (GBA)	Konami
	Yu-Gi-Oh! Nightmare Troubadour (DS)	Konami
	Zoids (DS)	Tommy

OF GREAT TENNIS WAS LIKE THIS MORE PEOPLE WOULD GO

Tennis for people who would rather bit things with sticks, than eat strawberries & cream,

"Is this appropriate?"
"No Sally, it certainly isn't."



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PREVIEWS

DREAM TEAM

The Star Team option enables you to pick the ultimate foursome from the football galaxy's glittering array of stars. But be warned, selecting a quartet of lethal attackers would be foolish and wrong. If you're going to rule the streets you'll need a team with a little bit of everything...



THE STOPPER

This street soccer malarkey doesn't extend to playing rush goalie. You have to have a keeper - it's the law - so go for a big man with good distribution and agility like Italy's Gianluigi Buffon.



THE HARDMAN

It's not all step-overs and scissor kicks, someone in the team has to do the ugly stuff like winning the ball and chasing back in defence. That someone should be a top tackler and passer such as Roy Keane.



THE TRICKSTER

Arguably your most important pick is a skill merchant with a bulging bag of tricks to open up defences. We've gone for buck-toothed, dodgy-permed, perma-grinning Brazilian maestro Ronaldinho. Olé!



THE SPEED DEMON

Pace is a deadly weapon in street footie and they don't come any quicker than Thierry Henry. His finishing ain't bad, either.

FIFA STREET

Football crazy? Then you'll love EA's skill-packed attempt to take soccer back to the streets.



△ Will there be comedy beach balls and stuff like that to kick? Erm... yes.



△ Hey, it's like that advert with Eric Cantona and some other football men.



△ Straight through the keeper's legs. He'll be sickened by that one.



umpers for goalposts? You're havin' a laugh. EA may well be taking football back to basics but *FIFA Street* isn't just a bunch of scruffy urchins having a kickabout in the park, before legging it home to a clip round the ear from mum because dinner's gone cold and they've worn a hole in their school trousers. We're talking glamorous locations in football's global hotspots, such as Rio de Janeiro, Marseille and Rome. We're talking the world's greatest players representing their home nations in ultra-cool sportswear that's entirely impervious to grass stains. And we're talking four-on-

four footie action that puts the skill back into skilliant as you flick the ball over your marker's head before unleashing a flying volley into the top corner. Striker!

Coming from the same EA

score. A boring tap-in might win you the match but it goes against the cavalier spirit of *FIFA Street*. Instead, you're encouraged to rack up the combos beat-'em-up stylee - linking a string of skill moves into

FLIP THE BALL OVER YOUR MARKER BEFORE SMACKING A VOLLEY INTO THE TOP CORNER

stable that gave us the US sports madness of *NBA* and *NFL Street*, this is similarly urban in looks and style, and raises two fingers to the word 'simulation' by putting almost as much emphasis on *how* you score goals as *how many* goals you

awesome attacking forays that hopefully end with the ball in the back of the net, but even if you miss at least you'll have done so by larging it big style.

Boasting two dedicated skill buttons, plus short





FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 2

■ This month's issue is so packed with other stuff, you might not find as many previews here as you normally would. You could always try closing your eyes and imagining there are zillions of games coming out. Or you could turn to page 18 for some boxing.



STARFOX ASSAULT

■ Ah, this is more like it. Foxy's real Gamecube debut is almost upon us, and were it not for the dark magic of deadlines and the fact that *Resident Evil 4* is probably the most exciting game in the world right now, we'd have reviewed this. Page 20...



△ The final version of the game doesn't have all that Gosen-speak plastered on the screen. This was just a special edition, for us.



△ No blasties! No blasties! Fear the impact of ball on bare leg. Ouch.



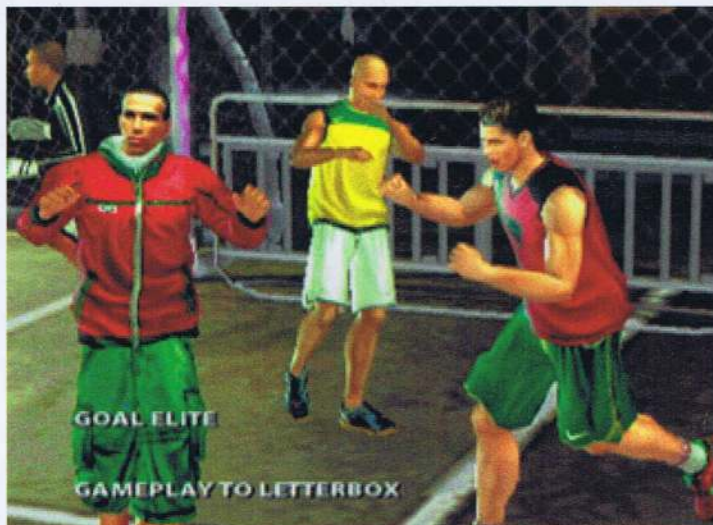
△ The keeper does his best Marcel Marceau impression. We hate mimes.



△ Different teams, same place. That's the magic of backgrounds.



△ There's still time to score, but only if you're going the right way, mate.



△ Having scored a good goal, the screen will go letterboxed. How did we guess that?

pass, high pass, sprint and, of course, shoot, the controls do take a bit of getting used to. But once you start thinking *Street Fighter* rather than *FIFA 2004*, you'll soon get the hang of how to link a roulette with a step-over flurry and when it's best to throw in a cheeky nutmeg (hint: it's not when your last man is facing two on rushing opponents). All this trickstyling tomfoolery not only looks cool but when you fill that combo-meter you're rewarded with the opportunity to hit a Gamebreaker – a zoomed-in, slow-motioned, blockbusting shot on goal that's virtually unstoppable.

And there's plenty of substance to the style. You can take part in multiplayer 'friendlies' and basic matches between 16 world class

footballing nations. All the game's biggest stars are here – Henry providing the va-va-voom for France, Brazil's goofy duo of Ronaldo and Ronaldinho playing samba football, the pug-like Rooney terrorising defences for England – and if you don't fancy filling their boots you can always build your own pro thanks to the hilariously

in-depth Create Player options. But the mode that will undoubtedly keep you off the streets the longest is the globe-trotting delight *Rule The Streets*.

Starting out with a mediocre squad and your own created player, your task is to travel the world taking part in street tournaments and earning enough Skill Bills



THE KNOWLEDGE

- Stars fully-licensed players representing 16 different nations.
- Conquer the world of street football in *Rule The Street* mode.
- Superb Create Player options.
- Features more skill moves than Ronaldinho's had hot dinners.

FACTFILE

■ Who's making it?
EA Sports

■ What have they done before?

NBA Street V2 (NGC/84 88%)
Fast and Furious slamdunk-tastic basketball action.

"Earn cash by turning on the style"



△ Just punch it back into play. Diving for the cameras only makes you look a knob.



△ He should have held that, not punched it. Useless wussy foreign goalkeeper.



△ Happily for the less skilled among us, there are plenty of ways to disable superior players by judicious use of the knee-high sliding tackle.

BALL BREAKERS

Some of the coolest skills that will help you humiliate opponents and pick up enough points to earn a deadly net-bursting Gamebreaker.



■ Cristiano Ronaldo-style step-overs are great for beating a marker one-on-one.



■ The kickflip as immortalised by Ossie Ardiles in *Escape To Victory*.



■ Zinedine Zidane's trademark roulette: spin over the ball and drag it back into your path in one elegant, defender-baiting movement. Voila!



■ With your back to the defender, flick the ball up and over his head. Then leg it.



■ Ahh, the glory that is the nutmeg. Don't forget to shout "Nuts!" as you go past.



△ Isn't there something about him that evokes the Predator movie?



△ No matter how famous you are, you'll like playing on the streets.



△ Who'd have thought a proficiency in keep-ups would be worth millions?

to buy better players or boost the ability of your humble squad. Skill Bills are acquired through winning games and scoring goals but you can earn just as much cash by simply

Before you know it you'll be banking those bills and bringing in some big names to help you climb the street football ladder. There's massive scope here and even when you've won the ten Rule The

BRING IN BIG NAME PLAYERS TO HELP YOU CLIMB THE STREET FOOTBALL LADDER

turning on the style. Beating an opponent one-on-one with a piece of skill, linking combos and hitting outrageous passes all rack up the points. And what do points make? That's right, Skill Bills!

Streets tournaments, the incentive to keep earning cash to turn your created player into a football genius should keep you playing for months on end. Find out for sure in our review next issue...

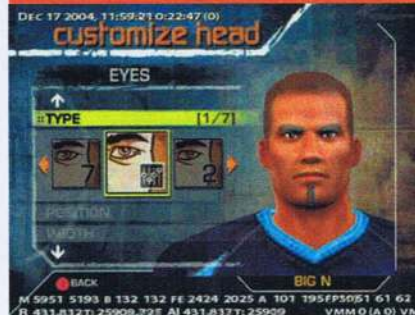


△ The audience is smaller than these footballers are used to... and two of them have got their arms stuck in the fence.



△ Ponna na na? You'd be embarrassed to do that. There's a nightclub called 'Po Na Na' except it's pronounced 'Poo'.

STREET LIFE



■ **FIFA Street's** Create Player options challenge even the **WWE** games in their Frankenstein-like obsessive minutiae. Eye slant, chin size and head width can all be tweaked in your efforts to produce the ultimate footballing machine.



■ We decided to build a 6'6" tattooed titan named Big N. This bemused knucklehead was a bit cumbersome but, let's face it, you wouldn't mess and once we boosted his stats he became a force to be reckoned with. Grrr.

NGC VERDICT

UK MARCH US TBC JAPAN TBC



Decent stuff. The *Street* series is arguably the best thing EA's in-house development teams are currently producing, and this is another solid, consistent effort. Maybe we'll see rugby or golf given the *Street* treatment in future. Or how about *Street Boxing*? There could be levels set in pubs and town centres across England. Lovely.

ANTICIPATION RATING



EAT MY (RETRO) FISTAGE!

In a rather nice addition, EA have included the SNES classic *Super Punch Out!* Kitty's already got a £20 wager on it being better than the actual 'proper' EA game...



THE KNOWLEDGE

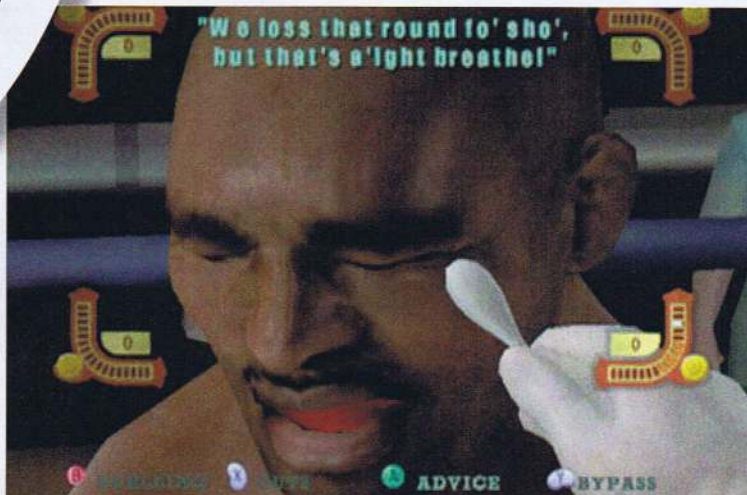
- Realistic character models, with famous likenesses to beat the living daylights out of. Watch them sweat, bruise and bleed.
- Huge career mode that tracks your boxer from zero to hero.
- Massive array of customisation options and boxers whose physiques change as the years roll by.
- Cinematic camera angles and solid commentary enhances that big-fight atmosphere.
- Innovative control system that uses the C-Stick to throw punches rather than the usual button combinations.

FACTFILE

■ Who's making it?
EA

■ What have they done before?

NFL Street 2
(NGC/102 81%)
American football sim, that takes it to the streets. Not half bad actually.



△ Don't worry, you can skip this if you can't be bothered with it...



△ The slow-mo replays of your...



△ ...finest moments will make you grimace with each punishing blow.



△ We like the fact that there's a minimum of 'health bars' and what-not...

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 2

From the Bronx to the Big Time – EA's bruiser looks set to be the best yet...

It has to be the control scheme that really stands out here. Instead of holding, tapping – or just mashing – combinations of buttons to throw your punches, EA asks you to take a slightly different approach. In *Fight Night: Round 2* it's the C-Stick that's the weapon of choice. Flick it diagonally forward to the left or right to throw the corresponding jab. Hold it to the right or left and circle it forward to throw a hook, or hold it back in each direction before circling forward to unleash an

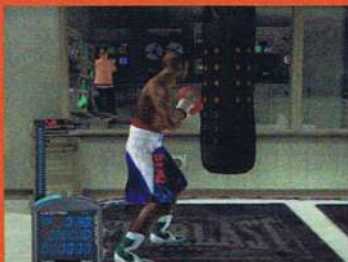
uppercut. It's an interesting system and, in fairness, gives a far better feeling of throwing punches than just tapping A, B, A, B, B, A. At least in so far as it requires a great deal more thought and effort, and a little more care when it comes to timing your blows. The downside of course, is that when you first pick up the joystick, you'll be flailing your arms like a drunken orang-utan. To the casual observer watching virgin pugilists going toe to toe, the game looks, for all intents and purposes, like a steaming pile of crap.

So it's one to persevere with then,

which is by no means a bad thing. You can tell EA's development team is making a concerted effort to create a decent boxing game – something that hasn't been done since *Rage*'s somewhat overrated *Rocky*. As ever EA's have pulled out all the stops to create as comprehensive an experience as possible. Beyond the inevitable selection of weight divisions and a roster of boxers that includes the likes of Holyfield and Ali, *Round 2* has a host of pretty smart features to distinguish it from the likes of *Knockout Kings* and *Rocky*. The create-a-champ option is,

BEHIND THE SCENES

While we're still not totally convinced about the actual boxing itself, there's no doubting that the extra features are extremely well implemented...



SKULL CLUB

The create a boxer option is pretty nice to use – you can shape and mould your boxers head using the analogues.

EAT IT UP FATTY

You can even choose your boxers muscle-fat ratio. Looking at an opponent's body is a good indicator of their weaknesses.

WORK IT

Between bouts you can indulge in a spot of training. After each session you can see how your physique has changed.

TWEAK MY NIPS

Over the course of a career your fighter evolves from a lean featherweight to a fat, ageing heavyweight.



BLACK AND BLUE

Between bouts you have the option to take over the role of the corner men – healing cuts and swelling.



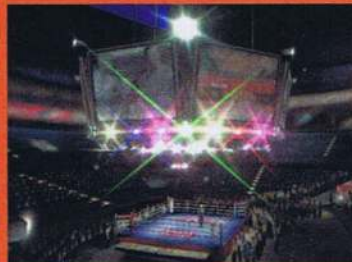
FEW TOO MANY

Patch up well or you'll be in trouble. A knockdown means having to align two cursors to regain consciousness.



WHAT A DUMP

When you start your career you'll be an amateur boxer fighting it out in seedy dives – where anything goes.



CALL MY AGENT

Turn pro and you'll be fighting in grander surroundings, but your tactics and strategies will need to be above board.



▲ If you want to, you can pit featherweight against heavyweight and then mercilessly smash their faces in...

as you'd expect, versatile enough to create pretty much any kind of boxer you want, from a slow-but-powerful, sumo-sized lard-ass, to a lean, mean, whippet-like scrapper.

The main Career mode looks to be particularly meaty too. You can take your freakish fighter and guide him through his early years on the amateur circuit, right through

of time. At the moment we're all pretty rubbish at it, truth be known. So until we get to grips with the intricacies of the controls we can't really judge it properly.

With a month of training, we'll be in a better position to tell you what we think. On the whole though, it's not shaping up too badly at all – and could well be the boxing game fans have been crying out for. It even includes a character from the classic Nintendo *Punch Out* game, plus the complete SNES version.

AT THE MOMENT WE'RE PRETTY RUBBISH AT IT...

And the more you play, the more options, like tattoos, shorts, boots and other accessories you can use to kit your fighter out with.

his professional career and to his eventual retirement. The only thing that remains to be seen is how well the actual fighting stands the test



NGC VERDICT

UK MARCH US MARCH JAPAN TBC



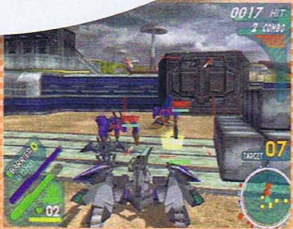
It's not looking too bad at all. We particularly like the lack of on-screen furniture during bouts, which gives it a more authentic feel. The camera tracks the action very well, and the commentary is actually pretty decent for a change. This could well turn out to be the best boxing game yet...

ANTICIPATION RATING



ALMOST READY...

A spot of deadline magic (and the fact that we totally ran out of space thanks to *Resident Evil 4*) meant we were unable to snag an early review of *Starfox* in this particular issue. Next month, with any luck...



THE KNOWLEDGE

- True sequel to Miyamoto's cinematic N64 shooter.
- Battle mode for up to four players, with multiple characters from the various *Starfox* games.
- Landmaster tanks are back. Drive them until they pop, then grab another one and drive it some more.
- All-new bits where you run around on foot, a bit like the bonus mode from the N64 game. But better, of course.

FACTFILE

Who's making it?
Namco

What have they done before?

Soul Calibur 2
(NGC/86 92%)
The best beat-'em-up on Gamecube.



△ Oh, just look at the wonder of it. Absolutely fantastic.



△ Fox on foot – it's like two games in one. Sort of.



STARFOX ASSAULT

T minus one week...

With the game just days away from its Japanese debut, if nothing disastrous has happened in the three weeks between us writing this and you reading it, *Starfox Assault* is in the unfortunate position of being completely overshadowed by the mighty *Resident Evil 4*.

Which is something of a mixed blessing for the developers at Namco, as it has been ages since we've heard anybody even mention the game, let alone complain that it's never going to be a patch on the N64 version, which wasn't really as good as the 'pure' SNES original anyway...

Away from prying eyes and (temporarily) shielded from the

most stinging criticism the internet can dish out, Namco's team has produced a game that's definitely a worthy spiritual successor to the previous versions. Even if it does feature 'sexy cat' Krystal from the disappointing *Starfox Adventures*.

Come to think of it, there's a very good case for arguing that the *Starfox* characters are the least imaginative that Nintendo has ever come up with. Much as we admire Fox's heroic competence and despair at Slippy's woeful inadequacy, they're just humanoids with animal heads. In jumpsuits. The only one with any real personality is Falco, and he's a grumpy old sod.

But that's why *Adventures* didn't work. *Assault* is a shoot-'em-up, and it's going to rock. Dude.

NGC VERDICT

UK TBC | US MAR 15 | JAPAN FEB 24



We can't wait to get our mitts on the finished game, and find out if it's promoted as a multiplayer title for a good reason. It might be that the solo mode doesn't last a great deal of time, although like the previous titles there will be multiple routes through it. On the minus side, there's no firm UK release date. Amazon lists it for (gulp) December.

ANTICIPATION RATING



KONAMI

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... or History*

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Town:

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Country:

e-mail:

Parent/Guardian's printed name:

Parent/Guardian's signature:



Parents: Your child would like to register for the D-MAX program from Wizards of the Coast. When you send in this form, he/she will be sent a membership kit including fun printed materials related to Duel Masters and a membership card. From time to time he/she may also be sent other physical mailings and emails. In addition, he/she will gain access to a special area of the Duel Masters web site. While visiting the Duel Masters web site, your child may change his/her contact information and participate in online surveys. Before we can allow your child's personal and demographic information to be viewed and modified online, we want to notify you about our online information collection practices and obtain your permission. We ask you first read through the "Note to Parents" in the Wizards Website Privacy Statement (<http://www.wizards.com/parents>), which identifies the personal information that Wizards of the Coast collects from children online and the way we handle such information. If you cannot connect to our web site, our customer service team can provide you with the information and answer any other questions (+44 32) 70 233 277 or (+44) (0) 8457 125599. When you have finished and wish to provide your consent, please sign this registration form where it says "Parent/Guardian's Signature." Please note that once you have signed and sent us this form, you always have the ability to: (i) review your child's personal information collected online; (ii) request that we delete your child's personal information online; (iii) stop us from further using or collecting additional personal information online about your child without gaining new permission from you. To do so, please contact us using the information provided above.



HARVEST MOON SONG OF HAPPINESS

Shine on, shine on...

More *Harvest Moon* on Gamecube is a pretty good reason to celebrate, as far as we're concerned. Natsume's marvellous *A Wonderful Life* remains the most heartwarming title you can buy (and now it's relatively easy to find so you don't have to search every shop in town or pay over the odds for a second-hand copy). If you cried a bit over the ending of the original game (we certainly

did) then you'll be pleased to know that this follow-up has a more open-ended structure. The theme this time is the joy of music rather than the inevitability of death, and it will be interesting to see how this is incorporated into the game. *Zelda*-style musical instruments for soothing your animals, perhaps?

And judging by these screens, scanned from a Japanese mag, you can play as either a boy or a girl. Good job, because this is a great game for the ladies, you know.



△ At home on the farm. Work hard and maybe you'll get a nicer house.



△ Outside with the cows, which now have a cuter, fatter sort of look.



STREET RACING SYNDICATE

Feeling the need for speed

This Namco take on the *Need For Speed Underground* phenomenon (two successive Christmas number ones, sales figure fans arrived just a little too late to be reviewed this month, so we'll bide our time and mod our car a bit before giving it a good Turtle Waxing next issue.

From first impressions, it's quite a decent looker, if not quite in the *Burnout* class. While it definitely isn't

as vast as *NFSU2*, it has smoother movement. Which is a good thing. What's not so good is the lack of any real sensation of speed, a fact we're prepared to put down to the fact that we're new to the game and our car needs a lot more work before it can reach the kind of speeds our own boy racer Paul hits around Bath's one-way systems - while clenching a mobile phone between shoulder and ear, peeling an orange with two hands and steering with his knees.

Next month for this one.



△ Looks better than any other Batman game? It had better be. Or else...

BATMAN BEGINS

Ever danced with the devil?

Normally the origins of any superhero are taken care of in the first movie of the series. And that was the case with Batman, Tim Burton's 1989 gothic masterpiece having touched on the reason why mega-rich Bruce Wayne opted to blow his cash on a customised battlecar and a rubber gimp suit.

But after the films began to get a bit silly, with Arnold Schwarzenegger ("Ice to see you") and all the rest, the only way to regain the superhero

high ground was to go back to the source. *Batman Begins* chronicles Bruce's transition from humble billionaire to bloke who lives in a cave and goes out at night to beat the crap out of petty criminals.

Of course there has to be a supervillain in there too, and this time The Scarecrow fits the bill. A high-powered cast featuring the likes of Caine, Neeson, Freeman, Hauer and Oldman are digitally recreated in EA's movie companion piece, which is, you'll be pleased to know...

A 3D platform beat-'em-up. Yay!

SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY

Afraid of the dark? Then this might not be the game for you.

Good news - *Chaos Theory* has finally been confirmed for Gamecube, after ages and ages of 'will they, won't they' speculation. Well, we're pleased, anyway.

New for this third instalment in the hardcore stealth series, Sam Fisher has some excellent attacks to use while dangling out of sight. If an enemy walks past when he's holding onto a ledge, Sam can grab the bloke's ankles and throw him to his doom. When Sam is dangling from an overhead pipe, he can grab an enemy

by the head and either break the poor guy's neck or slit his throat.

He can also use his neck-opening knife to cut through sheets of canvas, thereby creating sneaky routes to other areas, or for a spot of hand-to-hand combat. And there are now two stealth meters to keep an eye on - one to show how well hidden you are, and another to show how much sound you're making. Which is something to bear in mind when using the new shotgun weapon to dispose of a bad guy, up close and personal. Ka-boom!

All good, grim fun.



△ Sam Fisher. Just call him Mr Stealth, director of the National Stealth Service.



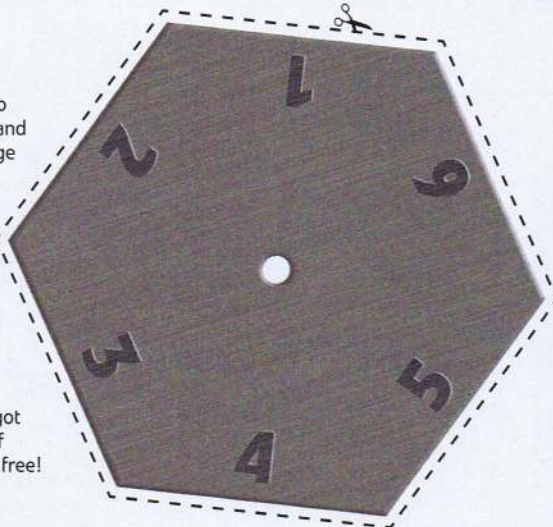
Because we like you

SNEAKES AND LEADDERS

Challenge Everyone! Now the whole family can enjoy the twisted machinations of cash-obsessed corporate behemoths. Spin that wheel and climb your way to stratospheric commercial success – and don't forget to take out exclusive licenses on the ladders as you go!

WHAT TO DO

Carefully remove these two pages from the magazine and stick them to a suitably large piece of card, making sure to match the two halves of the playing board. If you're under 18, you should use flour-and-water paste; otherwise, knock yourself out. Cut around the dotted lines, jam a pencil through the centre of the spinner, and Bob's your uncle – you've got yourself a fantastic piece of papery entertainment. For free! Only in **NGC** Magazine...



THE RULES

1. This is a game for one to four players. Choose to play as EA Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer Lawrence F. Probst III; President - Worldwide Studios Don A. Matrick; Executive Vice President and Chief Creative Officer William B. Gordon; or Executive Vice President, Chief Financial and Administration Officer Warren Jenson.
2. Spin the spinner provided, then move the designated number of spaces along the board. Move up ladders and down snakes – unless you're able to convince your shareholders that such a move is financially inadvisable.
3. If you pass another player's counter, enquire about the value of their stocks and attempt an aggressive takeover. If you land on the same square as another player's counter, CRUSH THEM.
4. After each move, speak for 90 minutes on forward-looking expectations, dividend forecasts, and your commitment to researching and exploiting new markets.

100 Congratulations! You are more powerful than God. Enter cryogenic storage, wait for civilisation to rebuild itself after a catastrophic Third World War, thaw yourself out and start all over again. With *Medal Of Honor: WWII Heroes*.

99

98 *Simpsons' Prime 2: Echoes* fails to chart. Down to 57.

81

82

83

80

79 Coders promise that *Need For Speed: Most Wanted* will "look really good". Up to 81.

78 Teenage playtesters diss *Medal Of Honor: Underground 2's* war stans, customisable tanks and bikini-clad military hospital nurses. Down to 39.

61

62

63 GAME gives up and change name to 'EA'. Up to 77.

60

59

58 Serbia-based *The Sims* spin-off – *The Sims 2: The Sims* – attracts controversy. Down to 43.

41

42

43

40

39

38 President takes delivery of swimming pool filled with liquid gold. Up to 62.

21

22

23 EA Canada office collapses under weight of staff's golden crowns and sceptres. Down to 1.

20

19

18 *Super Simpsons' Kart* defies critics, sells two copies for every human on Earth. Up to 39.

1

2

3 CEO's diamond-encrusted desk and monkey slaves arrive. Up to 23.

SNEAKES AND LEADDERS

A tactical game of world domination

97	96	95	94	93	92	91
84	85	86	87	88	89	90
77	76	75	74	73	72	71
64	65	66	67	68	69	70
57	56	55	54	53	52	51
44	45	46	47	48	49	50
37	36	35	34	33	32	31
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
17	16	15	14	13	12	11
4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Everyone hates you. Down to 38

Takeover plans hit major hitch - no companies left to take over. Down to 54

Five companies give you their dinner money and promise not to tell. Up to 94

I.K. Rowling refuses to write ninth Harry Potter book, 'Harry Potter And The Last Gasp Grab At Your Cash'. Down to 52

Child forced to whisper "Challenge everything" over every ad escapes from 'dungeon'. Down to 49

The Legend Of Simpsons goes straight in at number one, two and three. Up to 89

Only 39 out of 40 places occupied in Christmas chart. Down to 36

Five employees found dead from overwork's new hiring process begins. Up to 58

Evil scientists temporarily misplace "secret formula". Down to 34

Half-year profits announced; newspapers unable to fit all numbers on page. Up to 52

Chief Financial Officer accidentally ends profit announcement with evil maniacal tackle. Down to 13

New single from McFly incorporates EA in devastating put-down rhyme about "The Man". Down to 24

Two development studios obliterated when *Burnout* and *Need For Speed* cancel each other out. Down to 6

Office cattle prods arrive. Up to 50

Small moon begins orbiting around Vice President's annual bonus. Up to 35

"It's In The Game" patented - royalties now due from anything that is in a game. Up to 47

Teenage playtesters describe *Need for Speed Underground 2*'s street slang as "wack to the max". Down to 9

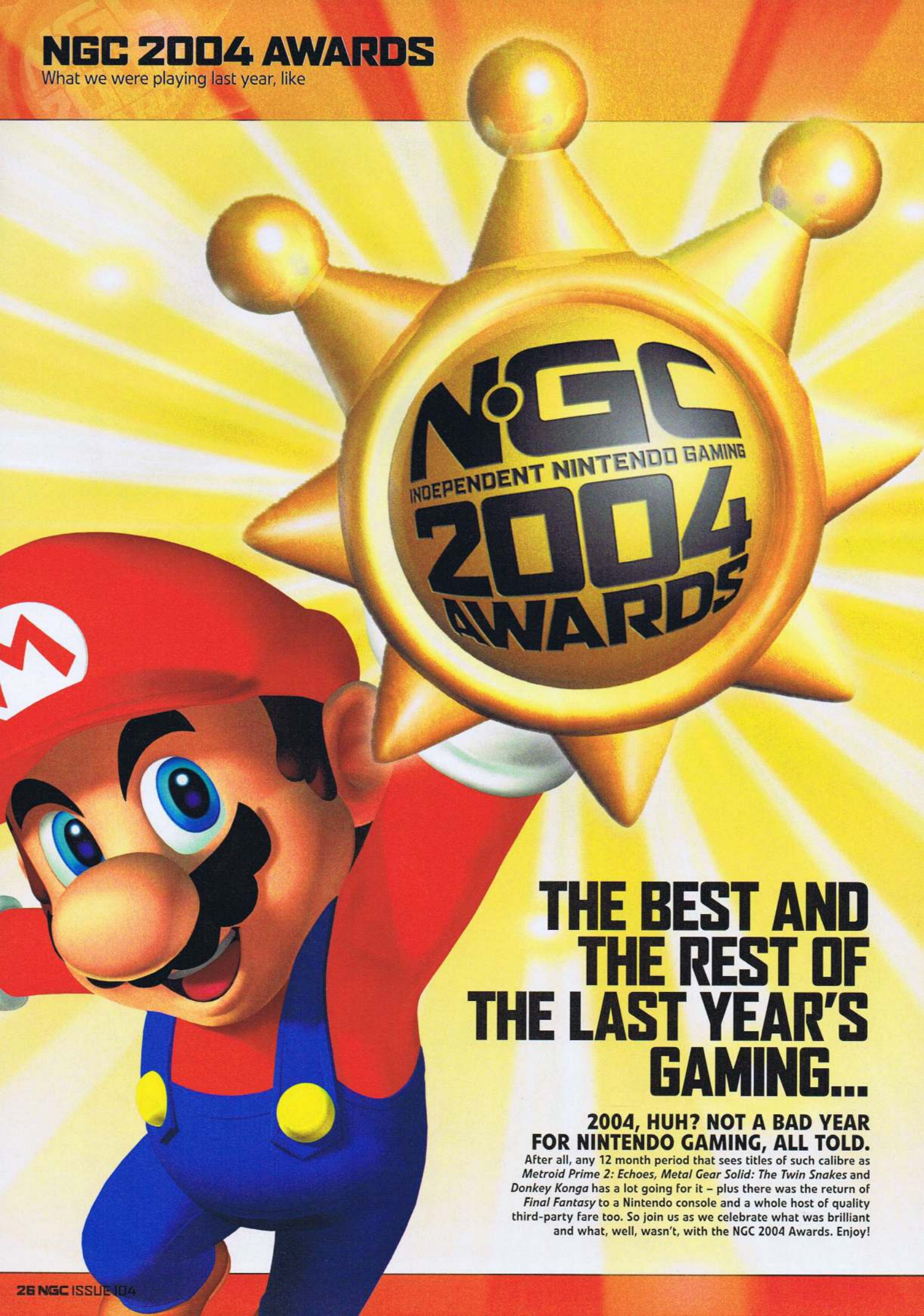
Employees demand 22-hour days, release of neck-clamps, and alternate Christmas Days off. Down to 5

Ubisoft turns down takeover bid - buy whole of France instead. Up to 15

Exclusive license agreement reached with goalposts and grass. Up to 33

NGC 2004 AWARDS

What we were playing last year, like



THE BEST AND THE REST OF THE LAST YEAR'S GAMING...

**2004, HUH? NOT A BAD YEAR
FOR NINTENDO GAMING, ALL TOLD.**

After all, any 12 month period that sees titles of such calibre as *Metroid Prime 2: Echoes*, *Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes* and *Donkey Konga* has a lot going for it – plus there was the return of *Final Fantasy* to a Nintendo console and a whole host of quality third-party fare too. So join us as we celebrate what was brilliant and what, well, wasn't, with the NGC 2004 Awards. Enjoy!

MOST ORIGINAL GAME

SECOND SIGHT

Codemasters NGC/97 - 90%

It came out of nowhere and stole our hearts - a superlative romp with two strains of gameplay, straight shooter and mind-bending psychic adventure. Short but oh-so-sweet.

BEST THIRD-PARTY GAME

MGS: THE TWIN SNAKES

Nintendo NGC/91 - 90%

Crusty old POne classic reborn as a stunning Gamecube exclusive. Too short and prone to showing you cutscenes rather than letting you play, this is nonetheless an essential game.

SPIDER-MAN 2

Activision NGC/96 - 84%

Everything a sequel should be - bigger, better and stuffed with new bits. Brilliant.

PRINCE OF PERSIA 2

Ubisoft NGC/102 - 88%

More fighting than is strictly necessary, but superlative platforming all the way.

MOST PLEASANT SURPRISE

ANIMAL CROSSING

Nintendo NGC/98 - 90%

Simply because Nintendo deigned to actually release it in the UK over a year after it hit the US, this has to rate as 2004's most pleasant surprise. We'd almost given up hope of ever seeing it...

BEST PLATFORMER

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Nintendo NGC/102 - 88%

Given the absence of a new Mario, Ubisoft's sterling tale of backflippery clinches the platforming prize. It's a masterful game full of belief-begging agility and gymnastics. Brilliant.

VIEWTIFUL JOE 2

Capcom NGC/102 - 87%

More of the same, maybe, but that still means this is amazing stuff.

TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU

THQ NGC/92 - 69%

A surprisingly accomplished platformer. Shame about the hideously ugly main character though.

BEST USE OF A LICENSE

SPIDER-MAN 2

Activision NGC/96 - 84%

Never before has the feeling of being a superhero been captured so perfectly. You'll spend hours simply swinging through New York, to the detriment of the occasionally tiresome main game.

BEST HARDWARE

DONKEY KONGA BONGOS

Nintendo NGC/99

Hardly the most sophisticated peripherals ever - they're basically drums, and they're horrifically expensive at 20 quid a pop - but they make Donkey Konga a thing of brilliant brilliance.

BEST ACTION GAME

METROID PRIME 2: ECHOES

Nintendo NGC/101 - 94%

Echoes is all things to all men, its brow-furrowing exploration and puzzling leavened heartily by all the sci-fi gunplay you could ever want. Rocks the house, as no-one ever says around here.

SERIOUS SAM: NEXT ENCOUNTER

Take 2 NGC/94 - 83%

Plain graphics are more than made up for by some utterly mental shooting. Fast and frantic.

SPLINTER CELL

Ubisoft NGC/97 - 78%

Glitchy but absorbing stealth thrills make for a patchy but ultimately worthwhile

BEST ADVENTURE

MGS: THE TWIN SNAKES

Nintendo NGC/91 - 90%

Constantly thrilling espionage action that brings to life all your superspy fantasies. A landmark title and a tremendous adventure that is, perhaps, a little short.

BEYOND GODD AND EVIL

Nintendo NGC/90 - 86%

Impossible to pigeonhole and thoroughly varied. A real treat that deserved to sell loads. But didn't.

SECOND SIGHT

Nintendo NGC/97 - 90%

Beat people to death with the power of your brain. What could be better?

AND OUR PERSONAL FAVOURITES ARE...

Honourable mentions for some of the games that didn't quite win...



HARVEST MOON

Ubi Soft/Natsume NGC/91 - 91%

MARTIN: I have no idea why this didn't win something. It's clearly the best game of the year, and proves that whoever chose these awards is a muppet.

GERAINT: I used to like this game. And then Mim started playing it and wouldn't SHUT THE HELL UP about it. Now she's gone my life is complete.

JES: Sometimes it seems like too much hard work. After all, if I wanted to shovel crap and stroke cows I could go down and see my uncle Cletus.

NGC 2004 AWARDS

What we were playing last year, like

NGC
2004
AWARDS

BEST USE OF CONNECTIVITY



FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES

Nintendo NGC/91 - 86%

If *Four Swords* was released in 2004 it would have bagged this, but *Crystal Chronicles* was the first game to really, successfully show how connectivity could really work. A flawed masterpiece.



BEST MULTIPLAYER

WARIO WARE INC Nintendo NGC/97 - 90%

All the quickfire minigame brilliance of the GBA original embiggened on Gamecube. Get three mates in and you'll have a splendidly silly amount of fun. Rivals *Mario Kart Double Dash* As Gamecube's premier multiplayer game.

RUNNERS UP

DONKEY KONGA Nintendo N64/99 - 80%

Brilliant bongo-based party action, but it's expensive for four people to play together.

PIKMIN 2 Nintendo NGC/99 - 92%

Surprisingly fun battle mode and co-operative challenges too. Top stuff.

WORST USE OF A LICENSE

GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT EA NGC/101 - 66%

One-dimensional gunplay that has absolutely nothing in common with the timeless classic it steals its name from. Also single-handedly devalued the Bond license due to general naffness.

BEST GRAPHICS

PIKMIN 2 Nintendo NGC/99 - 92%

Achingly beautiful environments that shimmer with a hyperreal arboreal sheen. *Pikmin 2*'s garden-based levels are works of art in their own right, offering a sense of place second to none. If only it were all real.

RUNNERS UP

METROID PRIME 2: ECHOES Nintendo NGC/99 - 92%

A step forwards from the still-stunning *Metroid Prime*, this amazes with every glance.

FINAL FANTASY Nintendo NGC/91 - 86%

The best-looking *Final Fantasy* ever created. Almost as lovely as *Pikmin 2*.

BEST SOUND

METROID PRIME 2: ECHOES Nintendo NGC/101 - 94%

Hauntingly atmospheric, *Echoes'* electronic soundtrack is an ambient extravaganza of evocative awesomeness, buttressed by pitch-perfect effects. The sense of isolation is heightened immeasurably by the aural accompaniment.

RUNNERS UP

METAL GEAR SOLID Konami NGC/91 - 90%

A superb soundtrack and generally excellent voice acting contribute to *MGS*'s cinematic splendour.

SECOND SIGHT Codemasters NGC/97 - 90%

Like *Metal Gear Solid*, this is chock full of superb speech and rousing music.

BEST GBA GAME

ZELDA: THE MINISH CAP Nintendo NGC/101 - 94%

Link's first all-new GBA outing, would you believe - and while much of it is familiar *Zelda* fare it's brilliantly done, and the eponymous shrinkydink millinery gives access to a secondary world of terrifyingly inflated everyday objects.

RUNNERS UP

METROID ZERO MISSION Nintendo N64/92 - 89%

An amazing, if short, re-imagining of the original *Metroid*. A great companion piece to *Echoes*.

HARVEST MOON Ubisoft N64/90 - 91%

Who'd have thought farming could make such a brilliant videogame? But it does.

AND OUR PERSONAL FAVOURITES ARE...

More of the noteworthy titles that failed to win a damned thing...



NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2

EA NGC/100 - 69%

MARTIN: Well, there wasn't a racing game category, was there? And this one pressed enough of the right buttons to have been the Christmas No.1.

GERAINT: This one kind of wins by default though doesn't it? It's the only game I've played where the customisation is more fun than the actual racing.

JES: What a shocking year for racing games. Still, this is good fun, although I prefer something a little more interesting and unusual, like *F-Zero* or *1080*.



DEF JAM FIGHT FOR NY

EA NGC/99 - 80%

MARTIN: I liked this a lot. It has good comedy value and it allows you to beat the living toilet out of a wide variety of hateful rappers. Which is a good thing.

GERAINT: I'm with Martin on this one. It's actually a very entertaining scrapper with a great feeling of being connected to the teeth-smashing violence.

JES: Not a fan of rap or hip-hop in the slightest. Now if it was a cock rock-based scrapper I'd be in hairspray heaven. It's good fightin', though.

NGC 2004 AWARDS

What we were playing last year, like

AND OUR PERSONAL FAVOURITES ARE...

Two more titles that could have been given all sorts of awards. Could have.



TALES OF SYMPHONIA

Nintendo NGC/98 - 84%

MARTIN: Brrrr... That's the cold shiver I get when I see numbers come out of a goblin's head in an RPG. I don't know which I dislike more - goblins or RPGs.

GERAINT: I'm actually playing through this for a second time now - if it wasn't for the battle system I don't think I'd bother because the story really pumps.

JES: Ger spent an entire weekend playing this when he could have been playing *Resi*, so it must be good. I expect you really need to like RPGs, though.



PAPER MARIO 2

Nintendo NGC/100 - 91%

MARTIN: Now this is more like it. I don't really consider this to be an RPG, as it stars Mario and is actually funny rather than a turgid pile of stale dump.

GERAINT: Sweet, sweet Nintendo love - that's what this is. Like Martin says it's genuinely funny and brings some fresh and innovative ideas to RPGs.

JES: Wonderful stuff. Inventive, charming, huge and actually funny. But just try explaining that to anyone who doesn't like Nintendo games. Sigh.



BEST SPORTS GAME



MARIO GOLF

Nintendo NGC/95 - 85%

Mario does it again, turning golf from a good walk spoiled into immediate and satisfying gaming. Chock full of challenges and addictive sticksie-ball action.

RUNNERS UP

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005

EA NGC/98 - 88%

Brilliant golfing that so very nearly pipped Mario to the post.

MADDEN NFL 2005

EA NGC/99 - 87%

The best American Football game ever. 2006 will have to go some to beat this...



WORST GAME



CATWOMAN

EA NGC/97 - 46%

A *Prince of Persia* clone that took everything that worked about *Prince of Persia*, considered it for exactly a nano-second, and then threw it away. Looks great, plays like a drowned tabby. Yuck.



MOST UNDERRATED GAME



BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

Ubisoft NGC/90 - 86%

A sprawling adventure that doesn't sit still or settle for a single genre, offering alien invasion, photography and a riot of minigames. A neglected classic and well worth ferreting out - it's dead cheap nowadays.



DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR



RETRO STUDIOS

Metroid Prime 2 NGC/91 - 86%

This could easily have gone to Nintendo, of course, but we felt that Retro deserved it for creating an astonishing sequel to a jaw-dropping original. We're still playing it even now, just to wallow in its wonder and beauty.



BEST FIRST-PARTY GAME



METROID PRIME 2: ECHOES

Nintendo NGC/101 - 94%

It had some stiff competition, but Nintendo's sci-fi archaeology extravaganza has all the exploratory wonder of *Zelda* coupled with big old guns. An absurdly atmospheric masterpiece.

RUNNERS UP

PAPER MARIO 2

Nintendo NGC/100 - 91%

Surreal, absorbing and genuinely funny, this is roleplaying done Ninety-style.

ANIMAL CROSSING

Nintendo NGC/98 - 90%

One of Nintendo's finest ever games and a showcase for everything that makes the big N brilliant.



BARREL-SCRAPER OF THE YEAR



POKEMON CHANNEL

Nintendo NGC/92 - 24%

Has Pokemon really fallen to these desperate levels? Watch telly with Pikachu and die slowly and painfully from boredom. So awful that it's sinister.



GAME OF THE YEAR 2004



METROID PRIME 2: ECHOES

Nintendo NGC/101 - 94%

A well-deserved triumph for this stunning sequel. While it couldn't hope to match the impact made by its predecessor, by dint of sheer familiarity, this is nonetheless videogaming at its finest. Stunningly designed and exquisitely fashioned, *Metroid Prime 2: Echoes* is a modern classic.

RUNNERS UP

PIKMIN 2

Nintendo NGC/99 - 92%

Everything a sequel should be - bigger, better and stuffed with new bits. Brilliant.

ANIMAL CROSSING

Nintendo NGC/98 - 90%

Literally years after it was first released in Japan, Ninty's unclassifiable community game has been well worth the wait.

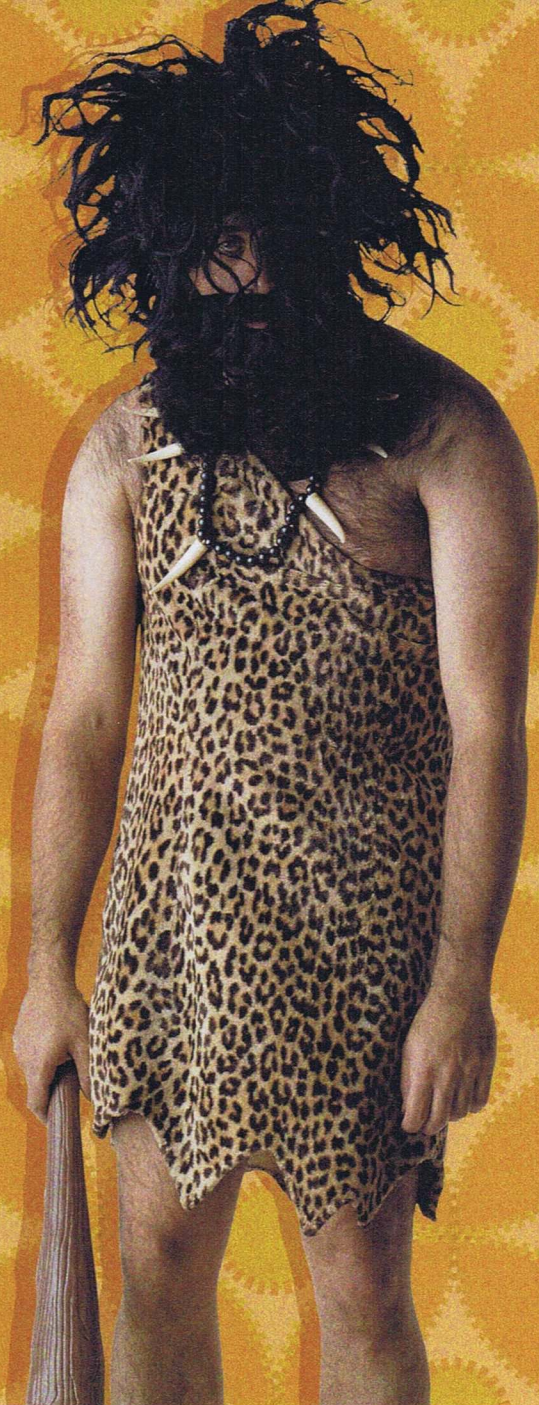
YOUR CHANCE TO VOTE!

So that was the year that was, and our picks for the best and the rest. But what did *you* think of 2004?

We want to hear from you so we can put together the - wait for it - NGC Reader Awards. Do you agree that *Metroid Prime 2: Echoes* was the game of the year? Played a stinker worse than *Catwoman*? Let us know. Simply vote for a single game in all the categories above, and send your votes to us at

NGC Reader Awards, NGC Magazine, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, or else email us at ngc@futurenet.co.uk with the title 'NGC Reader Awards' in the subject line. Simple, no? Yes. We'll compile the Reader Awards in a future issue...

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REVIEWED THIS ISSUE!



BANJO PILOT

The bear is back on a Nintendo console! **P.42**

TIGER WOODS '05

It's only golf but it scares us... **P.40**



15 PACKED PAGES OF DS & GBA!

NGGC POCKET

FOR HANDHELD GAMERS

NINTENDO DS. GAME BOY ADVANCE



DS HITS UK!

14 launch titles, aggressive price tag, and that all-important launch date revealed inside...



PLUS!

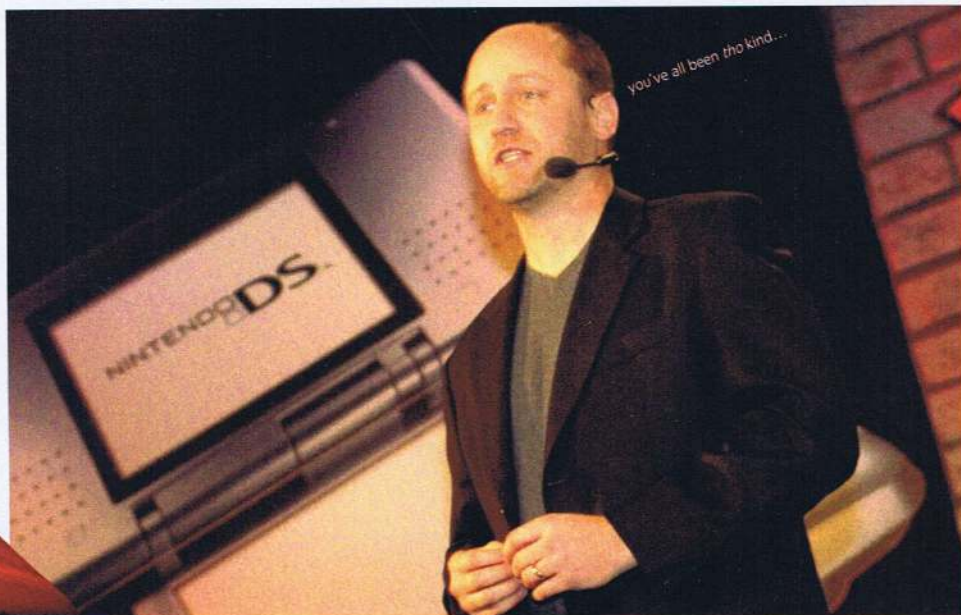


- Crystal Drive – tennis with added touch
- It's Mr Pants – but do you really want to meet him?
- Puyo Pop – match those coloured blobs (again)
- Super Mario 64 DS – tips and stuff for you

NGC POCKET

FEATURE ■ FEATURE ■ FEATURE ■ FEATURE





EURO A GO-GO

The DS is on the last leg of its world tour. Wallets at the ready, folks...

In all the years we've been writing about Nintendo – this is the first time we can remember NoE putting *this* much effort into a launch announcement. Sure there's been the 'Cube Clubs', the GBA

hard cash to put up for the night, with over 100 staff employed to look after them. It's easily one of the biggest single events that Nintendo of Europe has organised in a long time, seeing over £500,000 of the company's cash blown in one night, and

General consensus on the show floor was that Nintendo are, rightly or wrongly, worried about Sony's forthcoming PSP. "They must be pretty worried about PSP, ja?" exclaimed one very, very drunk German attendee, his equally inebriated friend nodding and stroking his beard in agreement behind him. You'd never hear such a thing from Nintendo themselves of course, but the fact that NoE Marketing Director Jim Merrick's opening address began by brushing aside the PSP threat speaks volumes. Bolstered by a nice bit of bar graph action, (the DS's mighty reds dwarfing the PSP's pitiful blues) it was a mildly effective – if a little cheap – way of attempting to

NINTENDO WERE PRETTY KEEN ON MAKING THEIR DS MESSAGE HIT EUROPE HARD...

announcement and the odd show and shindig in London – but never anything quite like this. Held in Paris, Nintendo saw over 700 people in attendance for the day's presentation, 600 of which, Nintendo forked out cold

racking up a bar tab to cover well in excess of 10,000 drinks for the party at the night's end. That's more than ten drinks per person. Nintendo was pretty keen on making sure its DS message hit Europe's alcoholics hard.



△ Our hotel. Big and swanky. Which was nice.

THOSE LAUNCH DETAILS IN FULL

- Out on Friday the 11th March
- Costs 149 (Euros) or £99.99.
- Comes packaged with *Metroid: First Hunt*
- 14 Launch games in total.
- Games launched with two price points: £19.99 and £29.99.



A QUICK HANDS ON WITH...

Out of all the games playable on the show floor, these were the most surprising. Surprising in that we didn't expect them to be there. So...



NINTENDOGS

Easily the most intriguing out of the lot. You're in a room with three dogs that you can play with to your hearts content. You have an items box from which you can pull out a towel, tennis ball and frisbee (among other things) and, using the touch screen, you can throw, pull and bounce said items with your little posse of puppies. As you play, the puppies rack up points for certain skills - so you're essentially training them by playing with them. These trained pups can then be taken into competition. In the case of the demo we played, we took our favourite puppy to a Frisbee-wanging competition, where you earned points for chucking your Frisbee as far as possible

while still allowing your pup to catch it. We hate to say it, but this was a *lot* of fun...

YOSHI'S TOUCH AND GO

A slightly extended version of the game we played at E3 back in May. You basically have to guide Baby Mario and Yoshi through a level, by drawing the platforms around them. In the game's opening, Baby Mario is falling through the sky, and you have to draw clouds to help steer him away from enemies and towards points-scoring coins. Once safely near the ground, you land on Yoshi and you then have to guide the green dino to the end, by drawing (for example) cloud platforms over chasms. It's a very interesting little game if perhaps a little slow and simple for our tastes - although this is probably down to the fact that the level we played is very early into the game. Still, it's very promising. We'll have a review next issue, hopefully.



TOUCH! KIRBY!

Mark this one down to a lack of time with the game, but we found it strangely tricky to control. Tapping Kirby makes him dash or attack depending on what pickups you have. You have to guide Kirby to a level's exit, by drawing coloured lines under him to help him reach higher levels, although the amount you can draw is strictly limited by a recharging ink-well. There's an interesting inertia system at play there, whereby drawing loops makes Kirby travel faster. An odd little game, make no mistake, and one that warrants longer than the quarter of an hour we got to spend with it...



△ Boxes and boxes of quite bizarre goodies. A jelly pack thing that warmed your hands, a T-shirt and a vial of lubricating massage goo. Classy.



△ Iwata made a personal appearance after a little 'joke' where he fooled everyone into thinking he was just going to be on video. How we laughed.



△ Nintendogs! The most pleasant (playable) surprise of the show.



△ That Mario costume needs replacing. It's a little threadbare.

stamp authority from the word go. Whatever the reality may be in a year's time, Nintendo made their point and continued a display of confidence throughout their announcement.

Regardless of any perceived threat from their rival handheld though, it's safe to say the DS' sales figures *do* speak for themselves. The hardware has performed phenomenally well (over 3 million units in ten weeks) and Nintendo hope to achieve even better success in Europe, just three months after the US and Japanese launch. For us, that's an impressively short time scale for a hardware launch, especially considering that we're used to waiting double that time (and

sometimes more) for consoles and software to be released over here. "This is not an accident" explains NoE's president, Satoru Shibata. "It is, instead, a sign of the increasing importance Nintendo is paying to Europe, the fastest growing videogames market. The evidence of that fact can be found in our first shipment. Across Europe, more than 650,000 units will be available from day one; significantly more than was available in Japan and North America."

It's a pro-Europe sentiment that Nintendo's President, Satoru Iwata, was also keen to impress. "First, my apologies", he began. "Often Nintendo launches its products in Europe later than the other parts of the world because

of the need to comply with a number of different regulations, languages and so on for which I'm always terribly sorry. However, this does not mean Nintendo does not consider Europe important - on the contrary, the European market has become increasingly important". At a time when European gamers have become increasingly annoyed at NoE's often laboured release schedule, it's nice to see the issue being addressed. The fact that *Metroid Prime 2* was released in Europe and the US well in advance of Japan, and the DS's US debut are just two examples of Nintendo thinking and acting globally, and it was refreshing to see Nintendo make a point of openly talking about this as opposed to talking

the 'you'll have it when we're good and ready, so put up and shut up' approach of old...

With that, it was back to talking DS specifics for Iwata.

"Nintendo decided not to make the DS a linear extension of any existing machine" explained Nintendo's top dog. "For the healthy growth of our industry, Nintendo believes that games must be seen by the widest range of people... [they must be] attractive, easy to understand and enjoyable. Unless we increase the total gaming population, there is no bright future for games. We really wanted to create easily understandable devices for those who are not playing videogames as well as current gamers. Merely beefed-up versions of existing



THE WRIGHT STUFF?

The Urbz? Cutting edge?! Yeah right...

Will 'I-invented-the-Sims' Wright was wheeled out during the presentation to blather on for twenty minutes or so about history, Nintendo's history and his history with Nintendo, before slowly working his way around to talking about the (more interesting) possibility of exploring brand new genres, or rather, in Will's own words, "New peaks in the gaming space." We think this was the whole point of him being there, but we couldn't be quite sure...

Anyway, he talked about how the two screens and touch interface would bring about a brand new era in gaming. You know, the same kind of over-the-top Nintendo evangelising we've been doing over the past twelve months - how new ways of playing means new breeds of game, unique experiences, yadda, yadda, yadda... all good, valid points yes, but then he went and ruined it by bringing *The Urbz* into it.

Now maybe it's just us, but talking about *The Urbz@* at an event like this is like bringing a fresh dog-egg to a christening and slipping it into the font. If Will thinks the DS is so amazing, opening up new doors to some gaming Nirvana, why, in God's name, did he take a hatefully mediocre GBA game and just bolt some rubbish, touchy, double-screeny menus and mini-games onto it? That's not exactly a new 'peak in the gaming space' is it? It's hardly in the spirit of gaming innovation, is it? No. Less a new 'peak' then, more a dirty brown 'trough'.

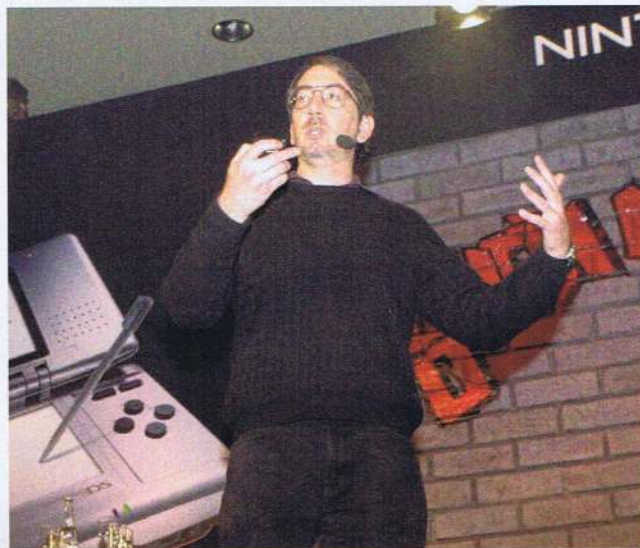
It's one thing to talk about how the DS's features allows the creation of fantastic new games. It's another thing to, you know, actually put those ideas into practice...



△ Nintendo had the full launch line-up on the show floor, plus some extras.



△ Nintendo took over an entire wing of the hotel. The whole show ran perfectly.



△ Yeah, so he's 'famous' - but surely they could have found a better speaker.

devices may produce beautiful graphics and sound, but this is not enough. Nintendo has come to realise that such a device will never be able to realise our objective. We needed to create an innovative proposal based upon a paradigm shift... nobody really wants to rewind the clock - and few people will feel pleasant surprise with games they have played before. We must create something unprecedented... this is why Nintendo DS has all these unique features, changing the way videogames are played."

We've heard much of this before of course - but you can't argue that Nintendo aren't putting their money where their mouth is. In just over a year, they've gone from initially announcing

the concept to getting units into people's hands - and the reaction has been almost universally favourable - all that remains to be seen is how quickly Europe adopts the device.

On the whole, Nintendo's European DS Conference was

NINTENDO DELIVERED WHAT WE HOPED - AN AGGRESSIVE SUB £100 PRICE TAG...

something of a success. A roaring success compared to the dark days of enduring an hour in the presence of David Gosen who, standing in front of a series of pie-charts and marketing stats, with little in the way of charisma,

routinely failed to rouse any feeling of excitement from an increasingly jaded European crowd.

Gone are the days of Nintendo regurgitating old news for Europe (parading it as something new) and, pleasingly, there was plenty

of room for a couple of surprises, including an extended look at *Mario Kart DS* (which looked to be shaping up well, even if the giant screens it was displayed on gave it an unflatteringly chunky PSone appearance). Crucially, not

once was it suggested that Mario Party 'X' or some other such non-announcement would be a cause for cheer.

Nintendo have delivered what we hoped they would. An aggressive sub-£100 price for the DS, a very attractive launch line up (which, incidentally, boasts the biggest number of titles of any launch that we can remember) and, unexpectedly, a smart dual-pricing system, that fairly differentiates between the available software in terms of game-size and complexity, with puzzlers and the 'smaller' games, reflecting their status with cheaper pricing.

Maybe we're speaking too soon here, but NoE may well be finally getting their act together...



GIVING THE FINGER

Nintendo want to touch you...

And now for something very close to NGC's collective hearts. NoE's marketing campaign for an important hardware launch. We'd like to say that they've nailed it perfectly for the first time since... er... well... *ever* - but we can't. It's still early days yet and, at the time of writing, the TV ads for pre and post launch (directed by the 'award-winning' Richard D'Alessio) are still being filmed in Buenos Aires.

We were however, given insight into the campaigns overriding theme - that of 'the finger'. The idea of 'touch' is integral to the whole campaign - the power your finger has as a means of interacting and controlling. That image you see of the finger busting through a wall will no doubt become all too familiar over the next few months as Nintendo throw a colossal 35 million Euros at the launch in an attempt to recruit everyone to the DS's cause.

Entering centre stage via a hole in a wall - punctured by a giant, fibreglass finger - Tim Freystedt (Senior Manager for Marketing in Europe) went on to explain: "Touch is what sets Nintendo DS apart from other game devices. It gives you direct and fast control, lets you command armies, target bad guys just by pointing the way. Our marketing campaign will take this dynamic one step further, by taking the power of touch into the real world. Just imagine, how would use it?"

What would happen if you could control everything around you with the touch of your finger? (What? You mean like switching a light on, you chimp? **Ed**)

It's an intriguing concept for sure (*Are you Gosen in disguise? Ed*), although Nintendo did go and spoil things a little by showing a piece of video featuring an irritating 'comedy' talking finger - a painful little episode that had us gnawing at our clenched fists in embarrassment. If the finished ads are *anything* like that particular horror, we may be tempted to kill ourselves. Seriously.



**... PAINFUL EPISODE HAD US
GNAWING AT OUR CLENCHED
FISTS IN EMBARRASMENT ...**

WHAT TO BUY. WHAT NOT TO BUY.

Your at-a-glance guide to the first wave of DS games.

MUST BUYS!

Super Mario 64 DS

(Nintendo) - 4/5

Astonishing recreation of the first - and finest - 3D platformer ever, marred only by some iffy controls that nonetheless manage to make cracking use of the touchscreen. Plus! Loads of new stuff. Quite simply wonderful.

WarioWare Touched!

(Nintendo) - 5/5

Arguably an even better bet than *Super Mario 64 DS*, this is a laugh-out-loud barrage of split-second minigames that makes full use of the touchscreen and even the microphone. Best thirty quid you'll spend this year.

Project Rub

(SEGA) - 4/5

A frankly insane dating sim that sees you embarking on all manner of Jackass-style japery to impress a lady. Second only to *Wario Ware* as far as innovative use of the touchscreen and microphone is concerned.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Tiger Woods PGA TOUR

(EA) - 4/5

Excellent recreation of sticksie-ball that uses the touchscreen to cleverly replicate the swing of the club, replacing the need for an analogue stick in superb fashion. Other than that, it's really just golf - but as polished as you'd expect.

Zoo Keeper

(Ignition) - 4/5

The most addictive game known to mankind and one of the best puzzle games we've ever played. It may not be innovative or a sterling example of why DS is so different, but it plays up a storm.

Polarium

(Nintendo) - 4/5

Known as *Chokkan Hitofude* in Japan and reviewed in issue 103, this incredibly simple but startlingly fiendish puzzler is well worth a look. It doesn't have a big name but it's a cracking little effort.

NOT BAD

Pokémon Dash

(Nintendo) - 3/5

An unusual left-turn for Pokémon, but no worse for that - it's all about racing Pokémon, sort of, by rubbing their backs, with a dash of orienteering. Good fun, but ultimately short-lived and repetitive.

Spider-Man 2

(Activision) - 3/5

Perfunctory side-scrolling platformer that, while it fails miserably to take advantage of DS's unique qualities, still manages to be a cut above the usual platforming tosh that clogs up handheld libraries.

Mr. Driller: Drill Spirits

(Namco) - 3/5

Great fun only because it's *Mr. Driller*, and we all know *Mr. Driller* is ace. But the touchscreen actually makes control too slow, so this isn't exactly ideal DS fare.

AVOID!

Asphalt Urban GT

(Gameloft/Ubisoft) 1/5

A rushed-out stinker of a racer that can't be recommended on any level at all. Yeurch.

The URBZ: Sims in the City

(EA) - 2/5

Like the GBA version with a few minigames bunged in. Hateful lifestyle sim action.

...AND THE REST

Rayman DS (Ubisoft)

We hadn't received a review copy of this so can't tell you what it's like. Hopefully it'll be a decent 3D platformer.

Sprung: The Dating Game*

(Gameloft/Ubisoft)


Utterly unrewarding dating game that's essentially a bunch of tedious conversations.

Ping Pals (THQ)

Bewilderingly unnecessary instant-messaging type rendered redundant by the free Pictochat.

Robots (Vivendi)

Based on the upcoming animated film, this looks like an average platformer-type.



WWE DAY OF RECKONING



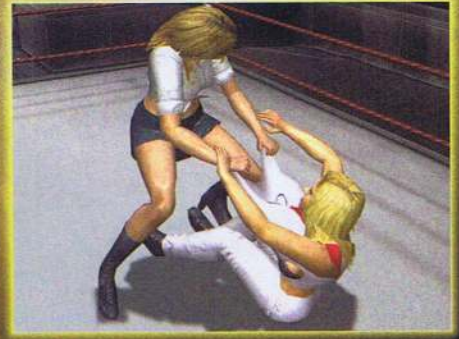
SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

Take your created Superstar up the ranks in a completely original story mode all the way to the big time of **WWE** programming.



REDESIGNED GRAPHICS AND ENVIRONMENTS

New detailed models and crowd environments with dynamic lighting and pyrotechnic effects featuring TV-style presentation.



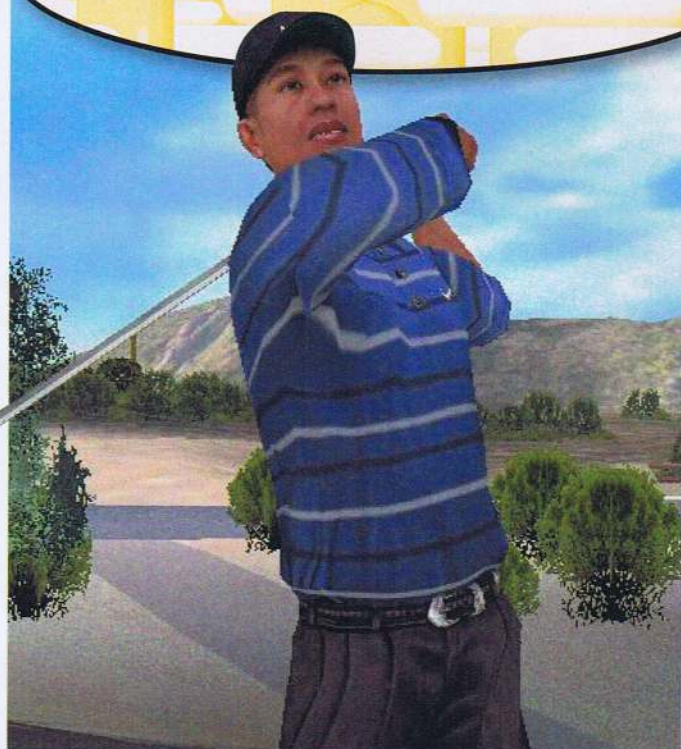
BRA & PANTIES

For the first time in a **WWE** GameCube product, choose your favourite **WWE** Divas and go head-to-head in the famous Bra & Panties Match.

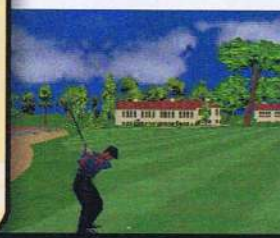


NGC POCKET

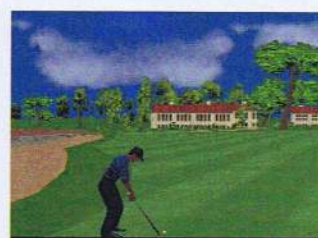
REVIEWS ■ REVIEWS ■ REVIEWS ■ REVIEWS



△ This man earns more dosh in a hour than the entire NGC team earns in a year. Sob.



△ Drag your stylus over these.



△ Tiger aims to break some windows...



△ Advice is doled out if you need it.



△ You'll easily get into the swing of it.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR '05



FROM: EA
MICROPHONE: NO

PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW (US)

SINGLE CART LINK: YES
COST: \$30 (£21)

Tiger Woods has scared us into playing his virgin DS outing. He usually looks like a nice guy – but on the cover of this game he's pointing an accusatory finger and showing a face so full of wrath that it made at least one member of the NGC team void their bladder. Yes, Mr Woods! We'll play your game! Anything you say!

Beyond the glowering cover-photo, though, lies a surprisingly successful game of sticksie-ball, as we like to call golf here at NGC Towers, and it makes a good attempt of utilising the touch-screen, too, offering a splendid alternative to analogue stick control.

The touch screen shows the map for each course, and by dragging the stylus around it you can check out every area of the course, as well as setting the directional marker for where you want to hit the ball. Sweet

WE'RE AFRAID TIGER'LL BEAT US INTO A COMA WITH HIS CLUB

stuff, although it's a little sensitive and it's slightly difficult to get the marker to go exactly where you want, as it swings around a bit. And talking of swinging, taking your shot is where *PGA Tour* really comes into

its own, DS-wise. When you're ready to give the ball a good thwack, hit A or touch the club icon on the touch-screen, and you'll be brought to fabulous touch-based shot system. To the right of the screen there's a power

meter – rub the stylus up and down it as quickly as possible increases the power of your shot. Then you drag your stylus over the U-shaped swing icon, completing both downswing and upswing in one smooth

movement (thus replicating the use of the analogue stick on Gamecube).

It's a cracking system and one that we were genuinely surprised by. Of course, while it's easy to appreciate the system, your enjoyment of *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005* is rather dependent on what you actually think of golf. Half the NGC team think it is indeed a good walk spoiled but this is nonetheless a fine rendition of the sport and a decent premier outing on DS. It also offers many of the extras found on Gamecube and the other, bigger console editions. You can create your own player, for instance, and scrolling through the faces, bodies, clothes and so on is simplicity itself when using the touch-screen.

So a definite thumbs-up, then, and not only because we're afraid Woodsy'll come 'round our houses and beat us into a coma with his club (he's a serious-looking man). It's graphically a little perfunctory at times, and the sounds are bit naff on occasion (the squawking of seagulls comes to mind), but if you fancy a bit of golf on your DS, you really can't go wrong. Result.

JES BICKHAM

DUAL ★★★★★
TOUCH ★★★★★





Beyond shadow of a doubt, an essential purchase



Definitely recommended.



Okay, but not a disaster if you miss out.

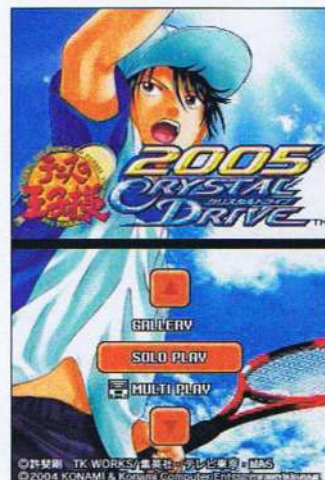


Disappointing and a waste of good money.



The gaming equivalent of a venereal disease.

CRYSTAL DRIVE 2005



△ Apart from this screen, the rest is in Japanese, thus quite confusing.



FROM: KONAMI
MICROPHONE: NO

PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW (JAP)

SINGLE CART LINK: YES
COST: ¥5,040 (£25)

It's a funny little game, this one. On the one hand, it plays a spirited little game of tennis, simple, responsive and surprisingly satisfying, but on the other it offers perfunctory touch-screen support, very basic visuals, and not a lot more besides. Simply put, it's not a bad game, but it's certainly not something that you'd buy a DS for – or, indeed, something that you'd expect to pay to play on your DS.

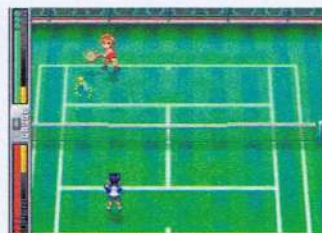
We'll admit to being slightly baffled by *Crystal Drive 2005* – it's all in Japanese, of course, so we may be missing some crucial use of the touch

screen, but if we are we're blown as to what it can be. As far as we can tell, you can tap your coach with the stylus to give you a tip, or else, when you've filled-up an on-screen meter, you can play Simon Says-style minigame in order to let off a mega-powered return. And that's about it. Not much, is it?

But as disappointing as the lack of touch-screen functionality is, it still can't be denied that this is a fun tennis game, if a basic one. Control is quick and responsive and it's genuinely absorbing and fun to play. But it looks like a SNES game and we can't ever imagine splashing 30 quid on it, not when there are so many other superb games on DS that warrant your attention. So while *Crystal Drive 2005* isn't bad, neither is it particularly good. Hardly a glowing recommendation, is it? No. It isn't.

JES BICKHAM

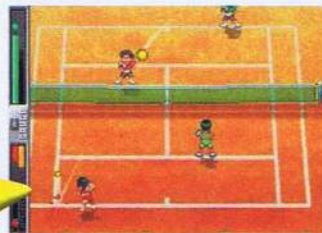
DUAL ★★★★★
TOUCH ★★★★★



△ It's not that it's a bad game...



△ ... It's just that, well, there's really...



△ ... nowt much spectacular about it.



PUYO POP FEVER



FROM: SEGA
MICROPHONE: NO

PLAYERS: 1-8
OUT: NOW (JAP)

SINGLE CART LINK: YES
COST: ¥5,040 (£25)

After last month's lacklustre *Mr. Driller: Drill Spirits*, we were rather hoping that *Puyo Pop Fever* might take greater advantage of the DS's touch-screen. But sadly, like Namco's game, Sega's puzzler has regarded the innovative new features of Nintendo's blistering handheld as something of a novelty and barely worth trifling with. Maybe that's a little harsh; it is after all possible to control the game via the touch screen, but it's simply

easier to use the D-pad and the A-button as there's no real benefit to deploying the stylus. The game remains much the same as it ever was, though, which is a good thing. Like many other puzzlers, the aim of the game is to match like-coloured blobs in groups of four or more, in order to make 'em disappear. But *Puyo Pop Fever* doesn't rely solely on this; it's rather more involved than that. The idea is to indulge in a little bit of thinking, as the way to

inconvenience your opponent and dump loads of blobs on his or her screen is to 'chain' blobs, linking like colours by virtue of stacking them so that when one line has vanished, the resulting collapse of blobs causes more to go. Things are made trickier when you enter 'Fever' Mode, offering madcap pre-set blob-stacks that can be entirely demolished and dumped onto your opponent. It's engrossing and brain-mincing in equal measure, and while we at NGC don't think it's intuitive enough to stand with the greats of the genre – *Tetris*, *Pokémon Puzzle Challenge* – it's a fine puzzler nonetheless.



△ Dump as many blobs as you possibly can on your opponent. Eat that!

Nonetheless, it barely makes use of DS and is a haunting sign that we might see a lot of games that can't be bothered to utilise what makes DS so great with any finesse.

JES BICKHAM

DUAL ★★★★★
TOUCH ★★★★★





BANJO PILOT



△ Banjo takes to the skies like a bear in a tiny little aeroplane.

RACE RESULTS		
BANJO	1ST	1
KAZOOIE	2ND	2
HUMBA WUMBA	3RD	3
JINJO	4TH	4
HUMBA WUMBA	5TH	5
GRUNTilda	6TH	6
KLUNGO	7TH	7
JOLLY ROGER	8TH	8

△ Where's Pipsy? What good is a Rare racing game without Pipsy? Pah.



FROM: THQ
SAVE: ON CART

PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW

SINGLE CART LINK: NO
COST: £30

A bear in a plane. Whatever will they think of next?

Whatever happened to Rare, eh? What happened to the company that has, along with Nintendo, taken the lion's share of our Fondest Gaming Memories? Golden, lingering memories of *Blast Corps*, *Banjo-Kazooie*, *Jet Force Gemini*, *Perfect Dark*, and *Donkey Kong 64*. Not to mention *Diddy Kong Racing* and *Conker's Bad Fur Day*. Nostalgia may be a terrible, lying thing most of the time, but in this case, the Rare of yore, it rings true; things really were better back in the day.

Their move to Microsoft has yet to throw up anything spectacular, and their continuing GBA output, while welcome, has been inconsistent. And *Banjo Pilot*, originally titled *Diddy Kong Pilot* (thank heavens for that

small mercy, at least) does little to change this state of affairs. The game also originally took advantage of the 'tilt' technology seen in *Kirby's Tilt 'N Tumble*, but that's long gone – so what we have here is your basic, bog standard *Mario Kart* clone... with aeroplanes.

Bereft of any GBA-flipping novelty, *Banjo Pilot* is a solid enough racer. The cast of the Banjo games is present and correct, from our ursine chum and his Breegull co-star Kazooie to lumpen Igor-alike Klungo and the distressingly alluring Humba Wumba. Sadly there's no room for some of the characters we most enjoyed in the huge and wonderful *Diddy Kong Racing* – Timber the Tiger, Tiptup Turtle and (sob) Pipsy Mouse. Surely Nintendo doesn't own the rights to

those. After all, *DKR* is where Banjo made his very first appearance, back in the Christmas of 1998.

Anyway, they all have different handling characteristics and voice samples. The game itself is a simple case of progressing through various cups that culminate in one-on-one 'boss' races. All fairly predictable and straightforward.

The real interest comes in the way the planes handle. Naturally you can move up and down, unlike in *Mario Kart*, meaning you can whizz over the heads of other racers, dodge (some) projectiles and angle yourself to catch speed-up strips and power-up honeycombs that are dotted around at differing heights. Hitting the right shoulder burron enables you to take a tight turn, and the left shoulder



△ A critical moment as Mr Banjo Bear prepares to penetrate the ring.



△ You've got to have good control if you want to bank around these corners.



△ Like a bumblebee with its tiny wings, this thing shouldn't be able to fly. But thanks to the magic of GBA, it does. Praise be!



△ What a miserable selection of comedy animals with big eyes.



△ Looks like a low-res version of Diddy Kong Racing. Doesn't it?



△ Banjo tenses his muscles and... no, we're not even going there.

button allows you to barrel-roll when pressing left or right on the d-pad.

The whole flight mechanic works well, ultimately, although using a D-pad to zip around the screen can be unsatisfactory (just imagine using the DS's touch-screen for an analogue substitute – that'd be ace) and confusing. But there are times when the whole flying thing is a little redundant – fly over track-based hazards such as mud-pools and the like and you'll still slow down, which is both illogical and annoying.

Power-ups aren't terribly exciting either, running the gamut of expected and traditional fare, from fireballs to speed-ups and so on. Each plane, handily, is equipped with a peashooter-style gun which is a nice touch as it means you're never

defenceless. Nevertheless, there are times when the whole system breaks down; simultaneously firing at the enemy, taking a corner and gaining height is a bit too much to do successfully with the humble GBA's cramped controls.

So what we're left with is an OK racer, dependable enough and workable, but one that, crucially, is never as much as fun as it should be. And the novelty element – the flying of tiny animal-piloted planes – doesn't offer enough in the way of refreshing gameplay to make *Banjo Pilot* be considered as a serious alternative to *Mario Kart: Super Circuit*'s all-conquering brilliance. Nice try, though.

JES BICKHAM



AIRBORNE BOSS BATTLE

After each cup – consisting of four races in the early stages of the game – you'll need to fly one-on-one against a boss character. This takes two forms; firstly, you'll be chasing them from behind, shooting them and avoiding any nasty business they drop behind them. After a while, though, you'll be plonked in first place, with the camera dropping "in front" of you, meaning you'll have to do the dodging and dropping of power-ups. It's frankly all a bit tiresome.



△ With his legs spread thusly akinbo, Astro's body should tear itself apart.



△ Astro looks mildly worried at the giant stream of candy floss oozing out of the robot boss's antennae. Just lick it up and you'll be fine.



△ Astro enjoys a brisk climb to the top of a pyramidal pyramid. Well done.



△ Astro visits a king of Russian government building sort of place.



△ Astro Boy should be totally fireproof, being an astro boy.

ASTRO BOY



FROM: THQ
SAVE ON: CART

PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW

SINGLE CART LINK: NO
COST: £30

Small half-naked boy tries to conquer universe. Who'd have thought?

We reviewed this on import in our spectacular one hundredth issue, but seeing as it's out in the UK we thought it was worth another look. Mainly this is because the game comes from the hand of Treasure, legendary purveyors of such sterling shoot-'em-up fare as *Ikaruga*, *Bangai-O* and the near-mythical *Radiant Silvergun*. Proudly, Treasure can add *Astro Boy* to their roster of challenging blasters, even if it isn't quite as clever as some of their past games.

There's no cunning conceit like *Ikaruga*'s black/white mechanic at the heart of *Astro Boy*, but it is nonetheless a hugely enjoyable romp. That said, it rather depends on your tolerance for an disturbingly cute boy robot who likes to dress in nothing more than black leather underpants and cowboy boots. And it's full of in-jokes, sort of, for those that are knowledgeable about their anime – as Geraint pointed out in his import

review, some of the cast of Metropolis make an appearance. Nonetheless, even if you couldn't care one jot nor wit for anime, *Astro Boy* is endearingly daft enough to appeal.

It's a fairly straightforward shooter, offering both platform-style bashery (smashing enemies that come towards you) and airborne action that sees you downing recurring waves of

bosses. Indeed, this system, coupled with *Astro Boy*'s manifold abilities, allow for a game of deceptive depth. Once you get a handle on everything he can do, *Astro Boy* becomes a tool of stunningly pyrotechnic destruction and, strangely, once completed on your first run through, the game's longevity comes through replaying, perfecting and elevating your overall

LIKE ALL TREASURE GAMES, THIS IS PUNISHINGLY HARD

monsters. The action is brain-fuzzingly fast and there's little to no room for error. Like all Treasure games, this is punishingly hard, but the rewards are worthwhile.

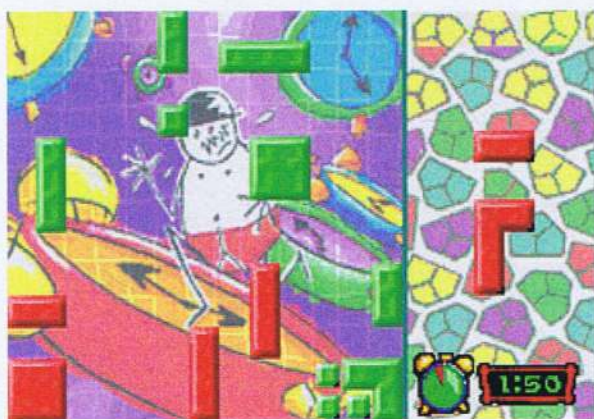
In this case, you get to upgrade *Astro Boy*'s abilities in an RPG style, from his health to the power of his punches to the effectiveness of his jets, which are used for enemy-avoiding dashes and provide the key to beating many of the game's

pross and (consequently) your ballooning highscore.

So ultimately, this is huge fun and a real test for your fingers and reflexes. Granted, it will only really appeal to a few with the patience and iron-will to unravel it's hidden charms – but in our opinion, it deserves to be played. A minor classic, of sorts – then.

JES BICKHAM

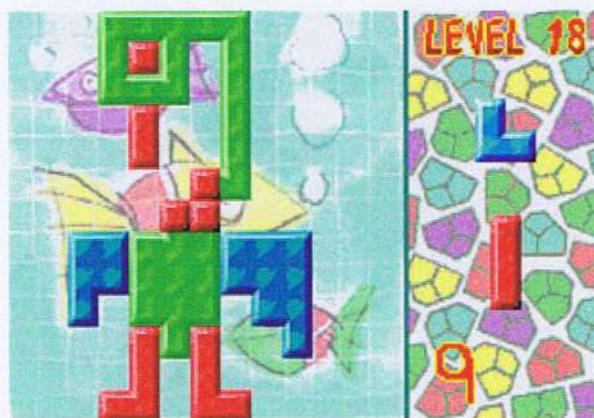




△ See Mr Pants? See how crap he is? That's the essence of Britain.



△ The scribble around the edge of the screen indicates your time limit. What a nice touch.



△ For some reason this puzzle level looks a lot like a child's drawing of Mr Pants himself. Which is to say, exactly like Mr Pants. Spooky.



IT'S MR. PANTS



FROM: THQ
SAVE: ON CART

PLAYERS: 1-6
OUT: NOW

SINGLE CART LINK: NO
COST: £30

Words fail us. Really, they do.

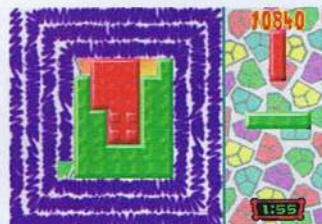
To be honest, it's not quite the gaming broadside you'd expect from the makers of *GoldenEye*. Indeed, Mr. Pants originally sprang from crudely-drawn life as a character from Scribes, the letters page on Rare's website. As such, *It's Mr. Pants* shouldn't, by rights, be anything

refreshingly British and untouched by concepts of cool or demographics. The style of the game, while primitive is actually wonderfully idiosyncratic, as if scrawled by a tartrazine-fuelled, crayon-wielding child. Throw in some annoyingly crap-but-catchy music with Mr. Pants himself 'singing' along and you've got something that's

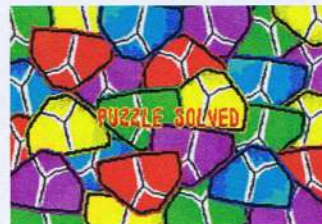
immensely playable. It's not as simple and elegant as *Tetris* and the rest, but it offers good puzzling thrills. The idea is to create squares and oblongs of at least two-by-three squares, at which point they'll disappear. The art of the game lies in the ability to place different colours on top of each other, although some colours can't be overlaid, meaning you won't get stuck with a screen filled with useless objects. And if you're playing in Marathon Mode, a pencil-scribble itches around the screen, reducing the playing area for every second you hesitate.

Once you get your head around it, *It's Mr. Pants* can exert quite a grip. And for something so eccentric and seemingly throwaway, that's good news.

JES BICKHAM



△ Almost out of time, so you might as well give up and start again. Wuss.



△ Solving a puzzle gets you a bonus screen filled with... pants!

MR PANTS CAN EXERT QUITE A GRIP. THAT'S GOOD NEWS...

more than a silly little novelty; hell, it is a silly little novelty, a cheap 'n cheerful puzzle game hosted by the world's most ineptly-drawn and frankly crap game character. Why, then, is it so much fun? The mind boggles.

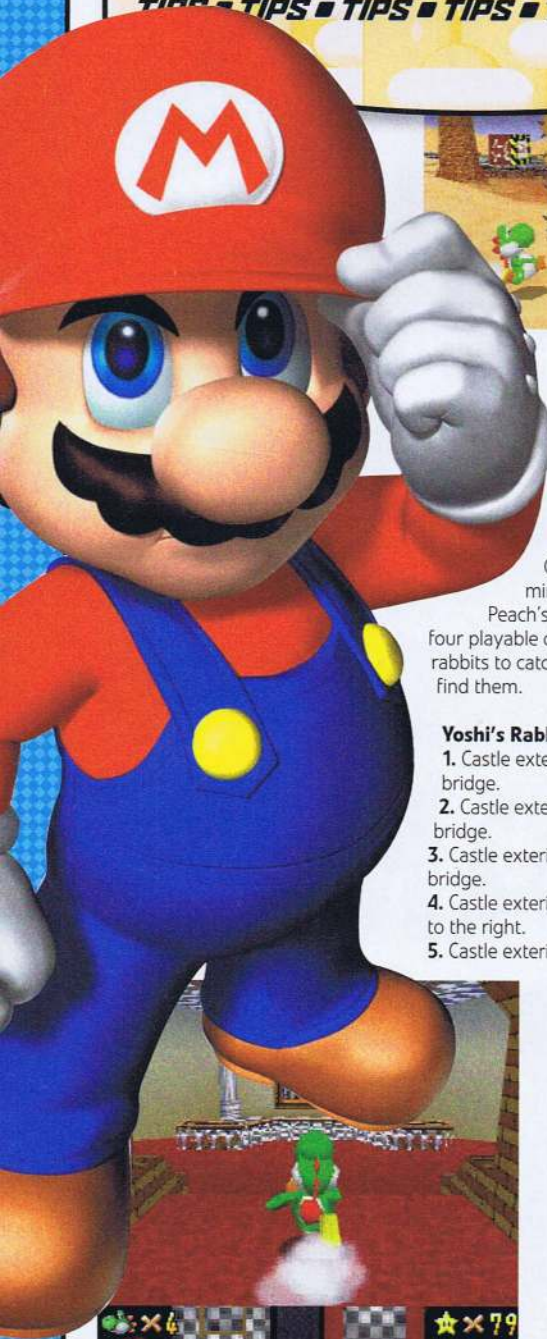
Perhaps it's because it's so

somehow as intractably British as fish and chips or Monty Python. It's very silly indeed and you can only wonder how it'll be received abroad. And strangely, it fills us with an odd national pride.

Aside from the decidedly odd presentation, though, the game itself

NGC POCKET

TIPS ■ TIPS ■ TIPS ■ TIPS ■ TIPS ■ TIPS ■ TIPS



MARIO 64 DS

Gotta catch 'em all.

You'll find a number of rabbits hopping around the castle grounds, but they're more than vermin-shaped scenery.

Catching them unlocks minigames in Princess Peach's Rec Room. Each of the four playable characters has seven rabbits to catch – and here's where to find them.

Yoshi's Rabbits

1. Castle exterior, at the end of the bridge.
2. Castle exterior, at the end of the bridge.
3. Castle exterior, at the end of the bridge.
4. Castle exterior, in a patch of flowers to the right.
5. Castle exterior, at the bottom of the



drained moat

6. Castle exterior, to the left in the hedge maze.
7. At the entrance to Lethal Lava Land in the basement.

Mario's Rabbits

1. Castle exterior, left of the bridge
2. Castle exterior, at the bottom of the drained moat.
3. Near the entrance to Jolly Roger Bay.
4. At the entrance to Lethal Lava Land in the basement.
5. At the entrance to Lethal Lava Land in the basement.
6. At the top of the stairs on the second floor of the castle.
7. In the room with the large mirror on the second floor of the castle.

Luigi's Rabbits

1. Castle exterior, to the left in the hedge maze.
2. In the room with the entrance to Bob-Omb Battlefield
3. Behind the castle, in the courtyard with the boos.
4. In the basement, where you drain the moat.
5. To the right of the doorway on the second floor of the castle.
6. By the entrance to Sunshine Isles.
7. Castle exterior, on the roof.

Wario's Rabbits

1. On the far right, outside the castle.
2. By the entrance to Whomp's Fortress
3. In the left-hand hall in the basement.
4. Behind the castle, in the courtyard with the boos.
5. In the halls with the entrance to Tiny-Huge Island.
6. By the entrance to Tick Tock Clock on the third floor of the castle.
7. In the left-hand upper alcove on the third floor of the castle.

CHARACTERS!

And where to find them.

As you might have gleaned from our list of rabbits (there's something we thought we'd never type) there are four playable characters to find in Mario DS. Here they are (except for Yoshi, of course, as you start with him



△ For some reason, girls prove highly efficient at this game. Unnaturally so.

and don't need to find him. Makes sense, really).

Getting Luigi

Been to the courtyard with the fountain and ghosts yet? There's one Boo that's larger than others – stomp him with Mario. It'll drop something which you can enter to get to Boo's Mansion. Get the first star, and then, while getting the second, go to the second floor – defeat the big Boo there to get Luigi's key.

Getting Mario

You'll need at least eight stars for this. Go into the castle version of the Rec Room, where Toad is worried about losing Peach's Rec Room keys. Open the 8 Star door. Go forward, jump across the platforms, climb the pole, and reach the top of the huge tree. Jump down the hole that you'll find on top. Beat the boss and you'll get Mario's key. Hurrah!

Getting Wario

Easy, this. As Luigi, go to the Mirror Room. Jump into Wario's painting there and defeat the Giant Ice Bully (great name, that) to get Wario's key.

△ Mini-Games. Everyone loves em. So much so you may find yourself playing hardly anything else. They're one of the best ways of showing the touch-screen.

IT'S COMING
MARCH 2005

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NINTENDO DS™

OUR PROMISE
 Our reviewers are the most talented and knowledgeable Nintendo fans in the business. We don't only play games at work - we play them at home too, just like you. We ensure that we've played games through to the end so that we can give you a proper verdict - and one that saves you from wasting money.

NGC THE VERDICT YOU DESERVE! REVIEWS



RESIDENT EVIL 4

Capcom brings us what could well be Gamecube's best game. Fact! **P50**

WARNING!
 SPOILERS AHOY!
 OUR REVIEWS
 CONTAIN
 SENSITIVE INFO!



NBA STREET V3

Remember those adverts with all the fancy footballers kickin' it mad-style in a ship's hold? this is a bit like that. Sort of. (Did we really just say 'kickin' it mad-style'? Sorry about that.) **P68**



UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

It's like FIFA - but in widescreen! At least, that's what Martin tells us, and he should know. **P66**



MARIO POWER TENNIS

It was brilliant on the N64, and it's brilliant on the Gamecube too. Hurrah! **P72**

- AND...**
- PUYO POP FEVER** **P41**
 - CRYSTAL DRIVE 2005** **P41**
 - ASTRO BOY** **P44**
 - IT'S MR. PANTS** **P45**



HOW IT WORKS...

Our reviews are the most comprehensive on Earth. We devote more pages to the games you want to know about, and give you loads of detail. We don't rest until we've played a game enough to pinpoint ALL of its strengths and weaknesses, and be able to deliver the most honest, no-nonsense verdicts around.

OUR SCORING SYSTEM

0-24

■ **Crushingly awful, massively dull.** Rest assured, this game is crud.

25-49

■ **A disappointing title, stashed with nasty faults and likely to be short on any quality.**

50-74

■ **Some great bits, some not-so-great bits.** Decent but definitely problems.

75-89

■ **Great fun, brilliantly programmed at times, but probably flawed.**

90+

■ **Rarely awarded, a 90+ is essential.** Buy with confidence.



THE SCORE BAR

■ The verdict explained for you...

PROS AND CONS

Because we think it's important to provide you with balanced reviews, we'll sum up the game simply with some quick plus and minus points.



- Powerful
- Got his own plane



- Needless War
- Texan
- Gimlet eyes



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Jesident Evil
Patesoft
NGC/5678, 0396
Shambler around an empty mansion as one of NGC's ex-editors. Not much fun.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Not all games are good (unsurprisingly) - so you'll be wanting to know what the alternative is. We'll provide suitable suggestions here.

VISUALS AND SOUNDS

Gamecube sends PS2 packing. Do the visuals and sounds show this?

MASTERY

How well does the game make use of the Gamecube's startling hardware?

LIFESPAN

Will it last you a lifetime or a couple of minutes? This is where you'll find out for sure...

VERDICT

We don't throw scores around - we give a game what it deserves. Here you will find the definitive verdict as to whether you should bother purchasing a game.

5 VISUALS

Squinty little eyes and a mirthless smile. Genuinely unsettling.

5 SOUNDS

Constant verbal mistakes and poor public speaking.

8 MASTERY

In charge of an entire country. Plus! Can make war on a whim.

8 LIFESPAN

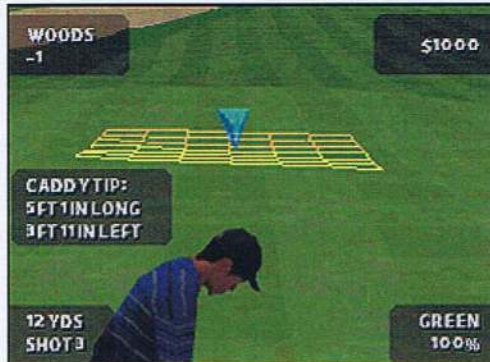
At least four more years.

VERDICT

President Evil puts you in the shoes of the world's most prominent zombie. Disturbing fun.

NGC

79



TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005

EA bring their typical brand of professionalism and polish to the DS with a likeable golf sim that makes top use of the touchscreen. **P40**



BANJO PILOT

Thankfully Diddy Kong-free, Rare's forever-in-development airborne racer finally gets released. But was it worth the wait? **P42**

MEET THE NGC TEAM

In honour of *Resi 4*, the NGC team get all undead and brain-hungry.



MARTIN

Since tasting flesh at an early age, Martin's transformation into zombie didn't really make too much difference.



PAUL

Paul found that surfing with two rotting stumps for legs didn't really work very well. "Duuuude", he groaned.



GERAINT

The Welsh Wonder's trip to France for the DS press conference ended badly when he tried to eat Jim Merrick's brains.



JES

Back to help out for an issue, NGC old boy Jes fell right back in to the swing of things. "Zombies again, is it? Bloody typical."



EMMA

Helping out as a kind of female mini-Paul, but nowhere near as physically repellent, Emma simply rolled her eyes and sighed.



LEON

"For the love of God, nobody told me I'd be guest-editing the issue with a bunch of shamblers. Where's my shotgun?"



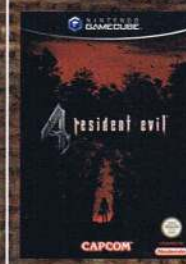
"Standing shoulder to shoulder with *Zelda*"

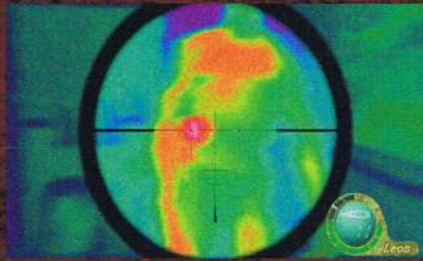


△ It's officially the best looking game on Gamecube by a country mile...

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	NINTENDO
DEVELOPER	CAPCOM
RELEASE DATE	18TH MAR
PLAYERS	1
MEM. CARD PAGES	13
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	YES
COST	£40





△ While the puzzles certainly take a back seat this time around – Capcom has really pushed the...

△ ... series forward in terms of the combat, action and, crucially the way the game's presented...

△ ... both visually, and in terms of the dramatic new over-the-shoulder camera angle.

Bigger, Better, Darker, Harder – survival horror will never be the same again...

T

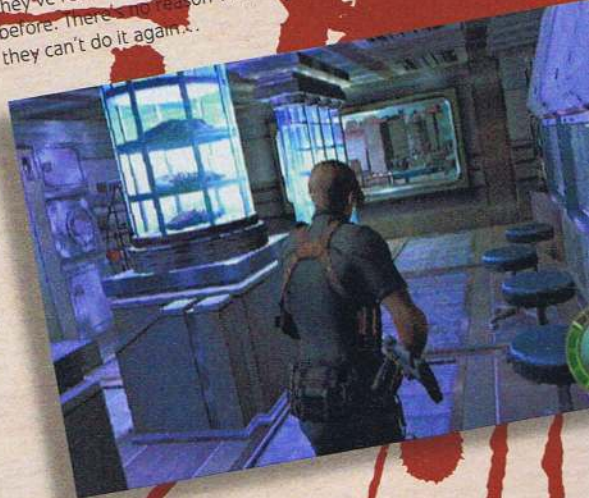
Third party games on Nintendo consoles rarely come much bigger than this. Standing shoulder to shoulder with *Zelda* as our most eagerly anticipated game of 2005, we've

given over more pages of the magazine to *Resident Evil 4* than any other game.

Capcom have promised so much. By their own admission, survival horror has become more than a little stagnant over the past few years. Sure, recent instalments in all the major series (like *Silent Hill*) look nice enough, but pre-rendered backgrounds, clunky control and unimaginative puzzles aren't doing the genre any favours any more.

Time for a rethink then. Time for someone to take the lead and deliver an entirely new experience. To start moving

that crusty old benchmark up a notch or three – and who better to do it than Capcom. After all, they've reinvented the genre before. There's no reason why they can't do it again...





PREVIOUSLY ON RE...

We've covered so much of this game in previous months, so we don't want to go over old ground – but for the benefit of those who've not played *Resi* before, here's a quick debrief before we launch into the review...



THE BEGINNING...

You play as Leon S. Kennedy. He's the Raccoon City cop from *Resident Evil 2*, now under the employment of the US government, charged with looking after the president's family. When the president's daughter, Ashley Graham is kidnapped by an unknown group, Leon is sent to a European backwater to go looking for her...



NEW AND IMPROVED

The *Resi* series has undergone a complete overhaul for this fourth instalment. Rather than using pre-rendered backgrounds, the game now uses fully 3D, fully explorable environments. There's also a more traditional third-person camera that tracks your movements from an over-the-shoulder view – really putting you in the action...



WHAT? NO ZOMBIES?

No. No Zombies at all. The game has nothing to do with viruses or the undead – instead, your enemies are more human-like. With this added brain power, you can expect new threats. Enemies, pursue you with more purpose, smashing through doors, throwing things, setting traps, climbing through windows – anything to get at you.



WHAT'S THIS ABOUT 'HIT ZONES'?

Thanks to the improved camera – combat is more satisfying. Shoot a man in the head and watch it explode. Shoot him in the foot and watch him fall over. Shoot him in the stomach and kick him in the face when he's doubled over in pain. Your handy laser-sight will help you to place your shots where they really count.



WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

The action button is the other major addition. When in certain areas or situations you're prompted to tap 'A' to execute an action. Anything from flipping switches and picking up items – to more interesting abilities, like vaulting over walls, kicking stunned enemies, knocking down ladders – it's all very slick and intuitive.



SO IT'S NOT LIKE RESI AT ALL THEN?

Yes and no. While it's had a serious re-working it's still very familiar. The controls are the same to start with. Rotate left and right, 180 degree spin, stop to aim – and all that. You still use typewriters to save (albeit without ribbon constraints), you still use herbs to heal and you still have typically *Resi* find-key/switch/emblem-for-door puzzles.

FRIEND OR FOE?

Not necessarily in order of appearance...



THE VILLAGE CHIEF

Old beardy himself and big boss of the Ganados – that's what the villagers are called. He lives just outside the village and preaches the word of the Los Illuminados – the strange religion that's responsible for kidnapping the President's daughter.

Leon meets him quite early on in the game when snooping around his house – but for some reason declines to kill him because... well, you'll just have to find that out for yourselves won't you?

LORD SADDLER

This guy reminds us of the Emperor in *Star Wars* – right down to his wrinkly old face, hooded cloak and the way that he speaks. It's fair to say that this is the guy who's responsible for all the trouble. He's the head of the Los Illuminados – a Pope-like figurehead for an old religion that's recently become resurgent thanks to the help of Salazar. What's their ultimate goal? How have they managed to become so influential? And when do you finally get to kick his face off?



SALAZAR

This little fella is just plain wrong. Imagine *Soul Calibur's* Cervantes, minus the two foot long blades, about 30 years younger and boasting a highly irritating, screechy Spanish accent and you'll be pretty close to the mark. The castle that you find after the village belongs to the Salazar family – a once great power around these parts, with a decidedly unpleasant history. Keeping the family name up – Salazar is a fruit cake with a disturbing line in domestic animals – none of which are house trained.

ADA WONG

You'd think she'd be happy to see Leon – puckering up as soon as they made eye contact. Early signs of a romance are poor, though. She tries to kill him. Leon tries to wrench her arm out of its socket and a whole lot of fighting kicks off in the bedroom. Still, we can see it in her eyes. She loves a bit of Leon. Can't get enough of him, we reckon. But we're suspicious of her motives – who's she working for? What's she doing in Europe? And is that cocktail dress really suitable attire for scrabbling around in the dirt?



HUNNIGAN

Everyone knows that a hero needs a call centre operative to back him up. Even if it's just for a quick chat when he's feeling lost and lonely. Hunnigan will point you in the right direction after any major developments in your mission. She'll give you handy tips about how best to go about your business and will even put up with your lousy jokes and relentless sarcasm. Now that's dedication for you...

LUIS

A slightly undignified entrance for our Spanish friend. You find him locked up in a cupboard early on in the game. Seems like the Ganados like him about as much as you – which is good grounds for striking up a friendship if ever we saw one. Still, he's a slippery customer – always dashing off for something or other and never as forthcoming with information as we'd like. Still, he's careless enough to leave us little notes and secret files in any old shed he comes across. Which is nice...





"It makes you feel like a cold, ruthless killing machine"



△ These button prompts occur regularly throughout the game – usually for dodging.



△ Capcom's enemy design is second to none throughout the entire adventure.



△ What are these parasites – and where did they come from? Umbrella would love them.



△ Leon can vault over anything that's around waist high. A godsend when running away.



△ The switching of camera angles (like for this evasive manoeuvre) occurs seamlessly and with no disorientation.



△ One thing that really took our breath away was the sheer breadth and regularity of new environments...



It's just so satisfying – that's the only way we can describe it. Equip your rifle, take aim, line the sights over an enemy's face and squeeze the trigger. A split-second later, oblivious to your presence, his head explodes in a shower of brain to a gruesome sounding squelch. His decapitated body shambles forward a few paces before crumpling to his knees – the blood still pumping from his neck onto the floor below.

Satisfying yes, but there's more – the kind of little detail that epitomises *Resident Evil 4*. Leon click-clunks his bolt-action rifle and slips another bullet into the chamber. It sounds robust,



GUNISHMENT

A nice addition this – and very useful in honing your much needed combat skills. About a third of the way into the game, you come across a room with a merchant in it. Behind his door is a target range, which enables you to win prizes for racking up monster scores (earned by headshotting a bunch of wooden cut-outs).

pleasingly metallic, and is a process that, while taking just a second longer than you'd like, makes you *fully* appreciate your kill. It just feels *so right*. It makes you feel powerful. Makes you feel like a cold, ruthless killing machine

woodland opening, to the final stages of your quest, *Resident Evil 4* is relentless. Like a punishing behemoth of a rollercoaster, it all starts with a palpable tension – a nervousness as you approach the unknown – before plunging you

RESIDENT EVIL 4 IS RELENTLESS, LIKE A PUNISHING BEHEMOTH OF A ROLLERCOASTER

Which is a bloody good job – because that's exactly what you are. What you *have* to be if you're going to survive everything *Resident Evil 4* throws at you.

From the first encounter with the villagers in the game's

into the depths of panic as you're forced to deal with each encroaching terror. It's a pretty accurate analogy, truth be known – not just in terms of the game's fearsome peaks, troughs, twists and turns but also in its structure.

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

Are you sitting comfortably? Here are just a few of the nasties that await you in *Resi 4*. Avoid if you don't fancy seeing your lunch again...



NICE DECOR

Women spiked against walls with pitchforks, bloody sacrificial altars, policeman burned on stakes, monks impaled down sewers – whatever, your taste in macabre ornaments, *Resi 4* has the lot...



INSECT HUNTERS

What's worse than a giant insect? Ten giant insects. That can fly and climb walls. Oh yeah, and are invisible to the naked eye right up to the bit when they're sicking up their lunch. In your face. See right for the result.



NOT THE FACE

A chainsaw to the neck will see Leon's headless torso crumple to the floor in spectacularly bloody fashion, but our favourite has to be this view of Leon's skull – skinned from the vomit-spray of a flying insect.



MAN'S BEST FRIEND

Resi and dogs have gone hand in hand since those blood thirsty Dobermans first smashed through the mansion windows. This time, they've undergone a rethink. A John Carpenter's *The Thing*-style rethink...



C'MON BLINDY

One of the more... interesting mini-boss encounters – you head down to a dungeon where you find this poor soul. Gimped up to the nines in leather and iron with his eyelids sewn shut – he's not best pleased.



PARASITE

Blowing someone's face off may seem a good idea if you want to stop them in their tracks – but when you consider the potential of it being replaced by a pulsating, mutant parasite, it's not always a good idea.

It's a very linear game, make no mistake. You're constantly forced down the game's rigid paths from point to point. If we wanted to be overly critical, we could easily strip the game down to its bare components. Arenas of combat – be they against a single boss or army of enemies – each interlinked with corridors, which in turn are interrupted at intervals by basic puzzles. Corridors provide the journey to each location (as well as much needed health and ammo pick-ups), the arenas throw up the tense ammo-hungry battles for survival and the puzzles offer the calmer moments of concentration. This really doesn't do the overall experience any

justice though – *Resi 4* is far, far more than the sum of its parts.

While we've always been advocates of the age-old mantra, 'gameplay over graphics' it's safe to say that the exceptional quality of Capcom's presentation is one of the driving forces behind the game. It's one of the most cinematic games we've played in recent years. Game-engine cut-scenes frame gameplay seamlessly. The use of sound is exceptionally strong throughout (with only minor examples of hammy, over-acting threatening the overall quality of the dialogue) and the incidental music is never intrusive and is always on hand to get your adrenaline pumping at



S FOR SECRET

Another trademark *Resi* feature returns. Search every nook and cranny for these files. They give background info on characters, prior warning about upcoming threats and, crucially, help to flesh out the game's story and history. Combined with the excellent cinematics, RE4 has one of the best plots yet...

the required moments of action or tension.

But it's really in terms of the visuals that the game truly flies – offering, arguably the finest looking game on any console. The detail on character models is second to none. The consistently high level of animation – particularly in terms of the fine nuances of their movement and expressions – is far greater than anything else on Gamecube right now. However, the piece de resistance is the huge game world. Woodland veiled by rolling mist, darkness punctuated with flashes of lightning, eerie corridors and damp tunnel walls illuminated by

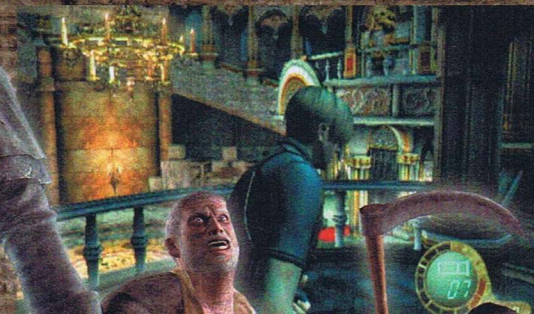
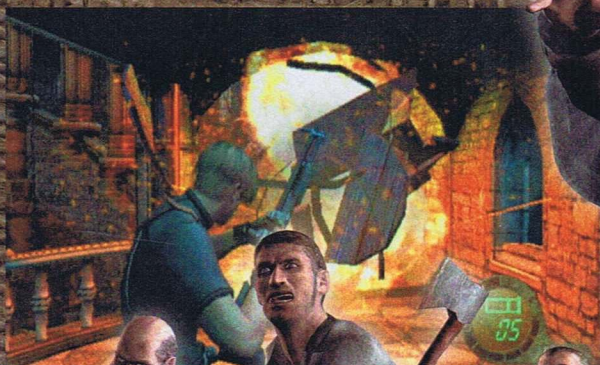




"Each and every location is sumptuous"



▲ Recognise who this statue is? Yep, it's that creepy Salazar fella. He really makes our skin crawl...



 torchlight, beautifully textured interiors caressed by moonlight streaming through gothic arches – each and every location is sumptuous. All in proper 3D, solidly constructed and utterly believable. A survival horror is nothing without its atmospheric locations and Capcom has nailed this aspect perfectly – with much of your sense of growing fear being drawn directly from your journey through the many environments.

Unlike previous *Res* titles, your progress through the game is remarkably speedy. Not in terms of the game's longevity (it's actually a monster – but we'll get to that later), what we mean is its



GREY MATTER

Quite a major disappointment is the quality of the puzzles. There are a couple of decent brain teasers, but on the whole, puzzles are pretty incidental. You're usually presented with a door flipping, colour matching, or tile shuffling kind of puzzle. Problem-solving has definitely taken a back seat this time around...

own stupidity in missing the blatantly obvious way forward. This change of scenery really enhances the experience in a number of ways, not only in that it keeps things feeling constantly fresh and interesting – but it also

GONE ARE THE DAYS OF TRAIPSING DOWN THE SAME CORRIDORS AGAIN AND AGAIN

through new environment after new environment. Yes, there are occasions where you revisit old ground, but these are pretty rare – and the only time we retraced our steps to the point of annoyance was because of our

gives the game a sense of urgency. The feeling that you're either on the run, or in a race against time to keep young Ashley from harm.

These aspects certainly grab you from the word go



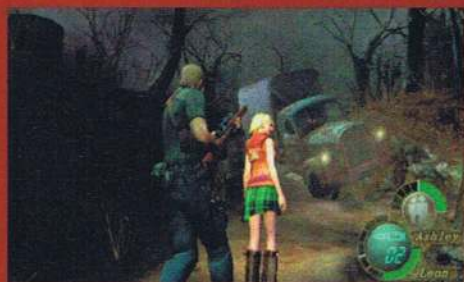
HOW TO... INFILTRATE THE CASTLE



1. As night falls, Leon and Ashley need to escape from the village as soon as possible. The villagers are growing in number and are proving far too relentless...



2. In a last ditch attempt to stop you, a villager tries to run you over as you try to make a break for it. A clean rifle shot to the face should stop him in his tracks.



3. In the cold, dead hands of a headless corpse, the truck inevitably crashes in a shower of rubble – leaving the road ahead clear of enemies...



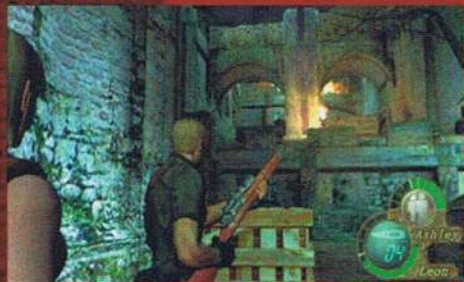
4. In the distance you spot a castle. You know, nice thick walls, moat, en-suite bathrooms, silk sheets – the usual. Surely you'll be *much* safer in there... right?



5. The villagers are still in hot pursuit – brandishing fiery torches and sporting some interesting glowing red contact lenses – they're boiling with pumping hot evil.



6. With no way back, our heroes must enter the castle and, on raising the drawbridge, allow themselves a few moments of relative safety. Suffice to say it doesn't last...



7. The castle is crawling with flesh-hungry, tattooed monks with a love for smashing faces with maces and clawing at eyes – not your typical friend of Jesus, then.



8. Once you've been spotted, the monks pull out all the stops to crush you, catapulting fiery rocks that rain down from sky – making the village seem a much safer place.



9. This next sequence is one of the first jaw-dropping scripted sequences in the game. Rounding a corner, a fireball rockets down from above and crashes straight...



10. ...into the pergola in the courtyard. All this takes place in real time. The colossal impact and explosion, the hundreds of pieces of rock flying inches from your face.



11. There are loads of these sequences throughout the game and, although scripted, are spectacular to watch and really bring the environments to life.



12. Anyway, no time to stand and stare, you've got to get your more vulnerable partner to safety somehow – or it could get messy.



13. In order to avoid being annihilated you need to take down the monks controlling the catapults. If you didn't pack your sniper rifle you better go back and buy one.



14. With the ramparts clear of catapults, you now need to get inside the castle. But it's going to take serious firepower to bust through. This cannon should do the job.



15. Raise it to the top of the ramparts and let rip. Seconds later, the castle door is no more – giving you access to one of the most twisted chapters of the game.



"Like a Jackson Pollock in blood and bone"

IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE

A quick glimpse at some of the first locations where you'll be shrieking like big babies.



VILLAGE

You should all be fairly familiar with this place by now – it's where the game begins. If you thought the opening few stages seemed pretty frightening, just wait until night falls. The torch-wielding Ganados reveal themselves to be not quite what they first appeared, and the gloom – illuminated by their advancing torchlight – makes for a very eerie setting.

CASTLE

This place is huge – easily one of the biggest 'levels' (if you can call it that) in the game. Despite its size, Capcom has injected plenty of variation into the environment, with each wing of the castle markedly different from the next in terms of ambience. Subtly lit cloisters, a little maze garden in the centre surrounded by vast dining rooms and shiny, marble-floored hallways.

DUNGEONS

Every castle needs a dark underbelly – and the sewer-cum-dungeon provides an unnervingly grimy contrast to the lavish castle above. This is home to your first encounter with the invisible insects. We particularly like the fact that, before they attack, you can only see them by their splashing footfalls in the puddles. That, and the chittering noise that makes your skin crawl.

FIRE PIT

One of those jaw-dropping 'wow' moments. Deep in the belly of the castle is this pit of lava, that shoots fountains of fire high into the air. You need to get across this room to get a specific item – which wouldn't be too difficult if there weren't huge, stone dragon-riding monks that blasted flames at you every couple of seconds. Our advice? Keep moving.



but as we said before, it's the little things, the details that truly elevate *Resi 4* to lofty new standards of brilliance. Take the game's vastly improved combat system as an example. With the new camera system, aiming is now enriched with full analogue control (something that can't be said for movement, but there you go). Hold down the R-Trigger and Leon will root himself to the spot and steady his weapon – each one comes with a laser sight for improved accuracy – whereupon the choice of targets is in your hands.

Shoot an approaching villager in the shin and watch him drop to his knees. Do you follow up with a



HAMMER TIME

For those of you who are prone to nodding off during cut-scenes, *Resi Evil* takes a more interactive approach – reminiscent of Shenmue's QTE's – requiring you to enter button presses when prompted. These range from bashing the A button to sprint away from threats, to squeezing the shoulder buttons to dodge from attacks.

shot to the head? Do you close in while he's stunned and hit him to the ground or break his body with a devastating stomp? How about going the sadistic route? Shoot a guy in the foot while he's walking and chances are he may just

shotgun blasts into his back. At which point you may just like to stand and watch as he writhes on the ground in agony. Choices like this have very real consequences in battle. It's often better to temporarily disable your

IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS THAT ELEVATE RESI 4 TO NEW STANDARDS OF BRILLIANCE

hobble on the spot for a second or two. Better yet, wait until he's running, whip out a pistol, aim at his feet and watch him trip over himself, ploughing into the dirt whereupon you can stand over his body and deliver a couple of

enemy QTE to buy yourself more time. On other occasions headshots rule supreme – but then this runs the risk of having to subdue a more terrifying enemy when the head is replaced by something more unpleasant. The sheer depth to the

WOODS TODAY...



ABBEY

This game just keeps getting better the more you push through it. After spending half an hour in a dank basement area you eventually emerge on the outskirts of a ruined Abbey, which looms in the distance. Slaughter your way to the Abbey itself, and you'll find a gigantic gothic hall, guarded at one end by a huge, mechanised stone statue of Salazar...

MINES

Mine cart sections in games are ten a penny – but this one is genuinely terrifying. It's a rollercoaster ride that only slows down to pick up some more hillbillies for you to splatterise as you hurtle through tunnels at breakneck speed. If you thought dealing with Dr Chainsaw in an open village was scary, wait until you have to deal with him in a tiny meter by meter metal bin...

BASEMENT

This is a very small area – but it offers one of the most intense moments in the game. This damp, almost industrial-looking section is home to a vicious and almost indestructible beast. You try to escape in a lift, but you have to wait for it to arrive. Four short minutes feel like an eternity when all you can do is run for your life and pray to god it gets here before that thing rips your spine out.

WATCHTOWER

This place is guarded by loads of monks. You need to make your way to the top if you have any hope of rescuing Ashley – but the monks have a nasty habit of rolling giant flaming barrels down the massive spiral staircase. Still they're nothing compared to the horror that you'll find at the top. Salazar is ready to make his last stand against you and he's got a nasty surprise up his sleeve...



combat is what makes *RE4* so utterly satisfying to play. You'll never tire of some of the game's claustrophobic set pieces. Moments when you're surrounded on all sides, with nothing but a shotgun to help clear space, will make you grimace in disgust as heads explode mere inches from your face, while buckets of gore decorate the environment like a Jackson Pollock in blood and bone.

Surely ultra-violence has never been so much fun. We challenge anyone to find a game with a more satisfying shotgun, a more visceral sniper rifle or a game whose enemy encounters are so unnerving and threatening. Okay, so *Halo*, say, might boast

exceptional AI – but the *actual killing itself* doesn't offer anywhere near the level of gratification you get from blowing the sweet-red juices from a pack of steely-eyed hillbillies. And that's a cold, hard, fact.

Suffice to say then, the game has moved on great deal from the traditional survival horror template. Overall, *Resi 4* is a much slicker, more refined game than its predecessor, and feels nowhere near as ponderous. Loading times are barely noticeable and there certainly aren't any stair climbing or door





"The relationship between Leon and Ashley is endearing"

TO PROTECT AND SERVE

How annoying is it to have someone relying on you all the time? Well actually it's not that bad...



1. Ashley Graham is the president's daughter – and the main reason you're in this mess. By some miracle, Capcom has managed to create a dependant character that is neither annoying, or a chore to have watch over.



2. Tapping X toggles two commands – wait and follow. Pleasingly, when following, she doesn't get stuck in scenery, and finds the best route back to you if you've asked her to wait behind while you clear the road ahead.



3. In many cases you'll need her help to progress. She can use you to give a piggyback up to higher areas where she can trigger switches or get behind doors and unlock them from the other side. She's very simple to use.



4. The relationship between Leon and Ashley is, in its own way, quite endearing. You have to catch her when she leaps off high ledges and hide her away in places to keep her safe. After a while you'll grow quite fond of her.



5. If she does get captured you'll need to make sure the enemy is stopped before they run away with her. If she's harmed it's game over. So aim carefully to make the enemy drop her so she can run away.



6. At one point in the game, you actually take control of her as she finds her way back to Leon. This dimly torchlit section in a dusty basement proves very atmospheric, as armoured knights pursue you in the dark.



7. Unable to wield a firearm, Ashley has to rely on her legs to keep her out of harm's way. She can also crawl under tables and such-like to get a bit of distance between her and any potential threat.



8. She's not entirely defenceless though. Look around the environment for anything you can throw at attackers. In this case, Ashley throws an oil lamp (enemy targeting is done automatically) to burn one of the monks.




9. Expect plenty of Leon-and-Ashley-based puzzles. This is one of the simpler ones, where you need to get Ashley to 'wait' on one of the floor switches, while you weigh down any others in the area.



10. There are also plenty of smart set-pieces involving the two of you. Here Leon has to shoot away metal belts holding Ashley to the wall. One missed shot here will see Ashley's kidneys splattered all over the place.



 opening animations between areas of significance. The

introduction of the context sensitive action button – which triggers animations like vaulting, ladder-climbing and dodging – occurs with very little fuss.

It's as though Capcom has made a point of tearing down many of the series' odd little quirks and eccentricities, that may have prevented people enjoying its previous instalments. The omission of the Ink Ribbons is one example of this. Now you can save as many times as you like. True, much of the tension you used to get from limping back to a save point after

RESI EVIL 4

A true lesson in survival – Resi-style



△ While we'd be lying if we said the repetitive villager models weren't just a touch disappointing, but the nature of combat more than makes up for it.



△ When you do get caught, you'll be treated to scenes like these. In fact, you'll (almost) welcome some of the more spectacular deaths.



△ The shotgun. Probably the most important weapon for those inevitable close encounters.



△ The shimmering heat here is absolutely gorgeous. And very, very, er... orange.



△ Just look at all that sweet black mess. Good boy Leon.



△ Each weapon has its own reloading animation. In our opinion, the more basic weapons have the best of the lot...



completing a key objective has now disappeared – but with it goes the frustration of having to replay an entire section because you didn't quite make it past that last enemy. There's also an abundance of ammo to be found

The consequence of this is that *Resi 4* is a much more accessible title and one that feels as much an action game as it is a survival horror. Not that it's a

RESI EVIL 4 FEELS AS MUCH LIKE AN ACTION GAME AS IT DOES A SURVIVAL HORROR

too. Encounters that drain your ammo reserves, more often than not, replenish themselves through pick-ups dropped by enemies. In fact, on our first run through the game on normal – we hardly ever found ourselves running out.

criticism in any way, but, well, that's just the way it is. Doubtless there will be people who will moan – but we, feel it's a change for the better. Surely it's better for a series to forge



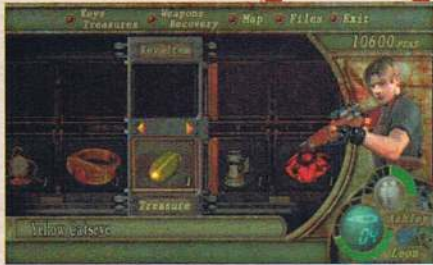
WIDE-SCREEN?

No. The view is just letterboxed. Which means if that if you have a widescreen telly, and put it into 16:9 format, the image will just stretch with the black borders still present – which is a bit of a pig. If you're lucky enough to have a widescreen telly with a zoom function – then you'll be in for a real treat.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Finding treasure – and utilising it or selling it on – is pivotal to your progress in Resi. Follow these tips and you'll be a proper Del Boy in no time...



RIP-OFF MERCHANT

Once you've got the required haul of cash and valuables, you'll need to take them to a trader (usually found by a save point) and exchange them for something you'll find more useful in the field. New weapons can be bought or, if you prefer, weapons already in your possession can be upgraded to something a little more meatier.

Even when you have the maximum sized Weapons Cache (inventory), you won't be able to tool up with everything, so choosing what to buy and what to upgrade will affect how you go about engaging in combat. With time, effort and money – even the humble pistol can be turned into a powerful and effective weapon. Later on in the game, more powerful variants of standard issue weapons, like the shotgun and rifle will become available.

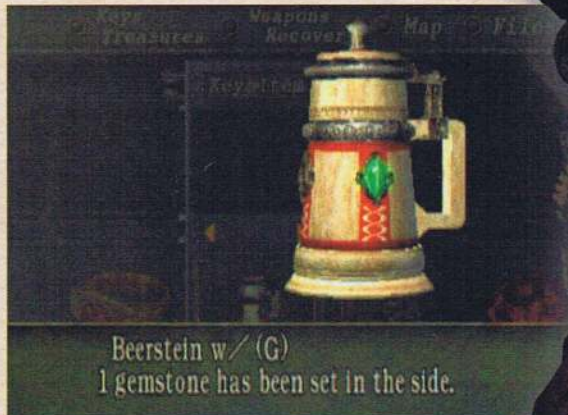
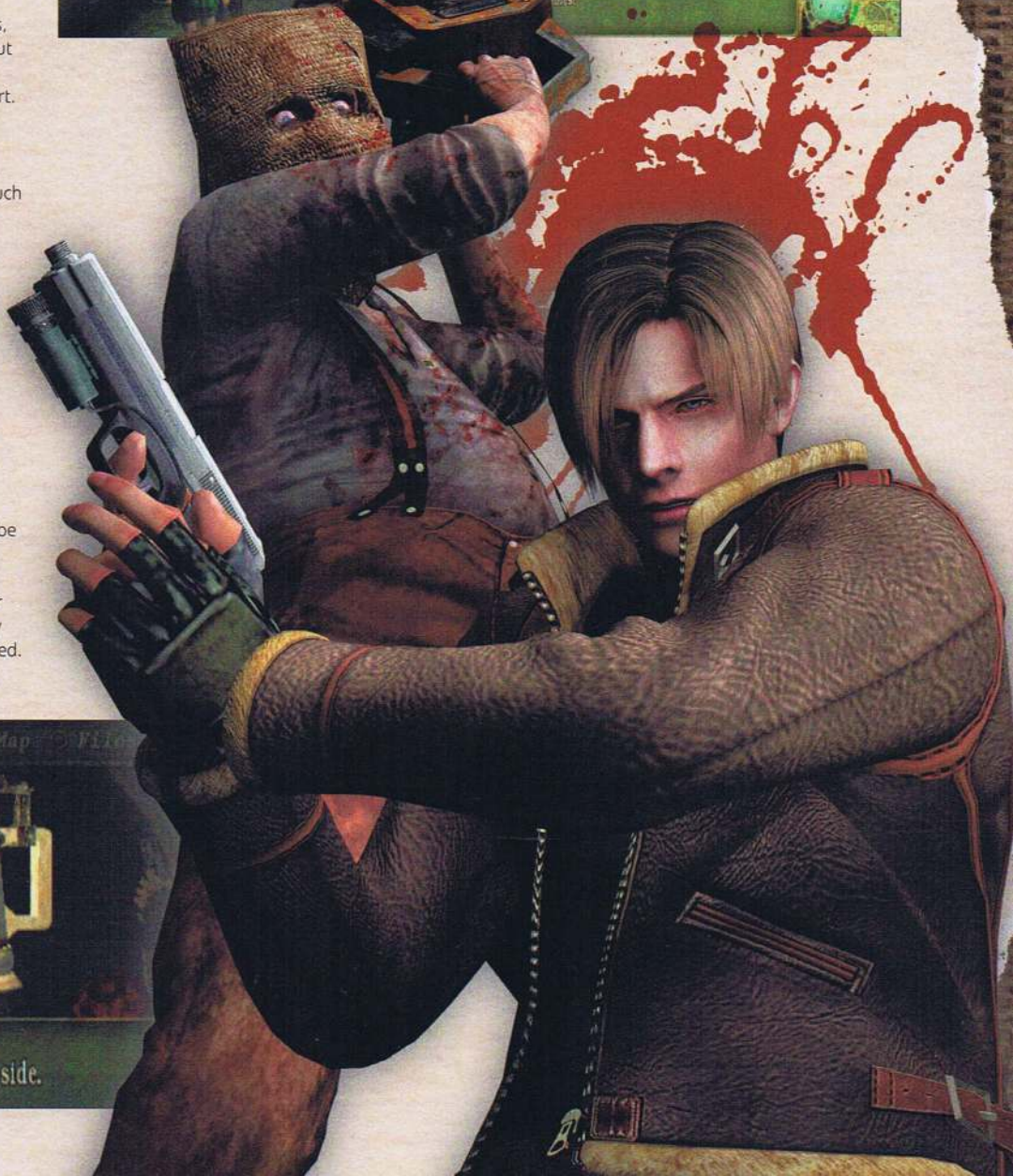
The inclusion of the trader and treasure hunting aspect is, perhaps, the most significant addition to the series. With the exception of the first Shotgun, you no longer find weapons in the game. Instead, you have to buy them from the trader – the first of which you'll find a little way into the game.

Treasure manifests itself in a number of ways. The first, and most obvious, is the cold hard currency that you find hidden in wooden boxes, barrels, or drops from any enemies you kill – but if you want to earn yourself the most money, you're going to have to put in a little more effort.

There are much bigger treasures to be found throughout the game world. Crowns, Sceptres, Elegant Headdresses, Rings, Tiaras and other such antiques and trinkets will earn you the most money. These can be found by solving puzzles and finding chests.

There are also many different kinds of jewels to find. Take time to meticulously explore the environment and you'll spot these twinkling gems hidden under gantries and embedded in rocks. Some are much harder to find than others – try shooting any lamps you come across, the resulting explosion may make hidden treats twinkle.

The more common treasures you find can just be sold off as soon as possible – but others are worth holding onto. Some jewels can be combined with other treasures, increasing their value significantly. Examining every find closely gives clues as to what treasures can be improved.



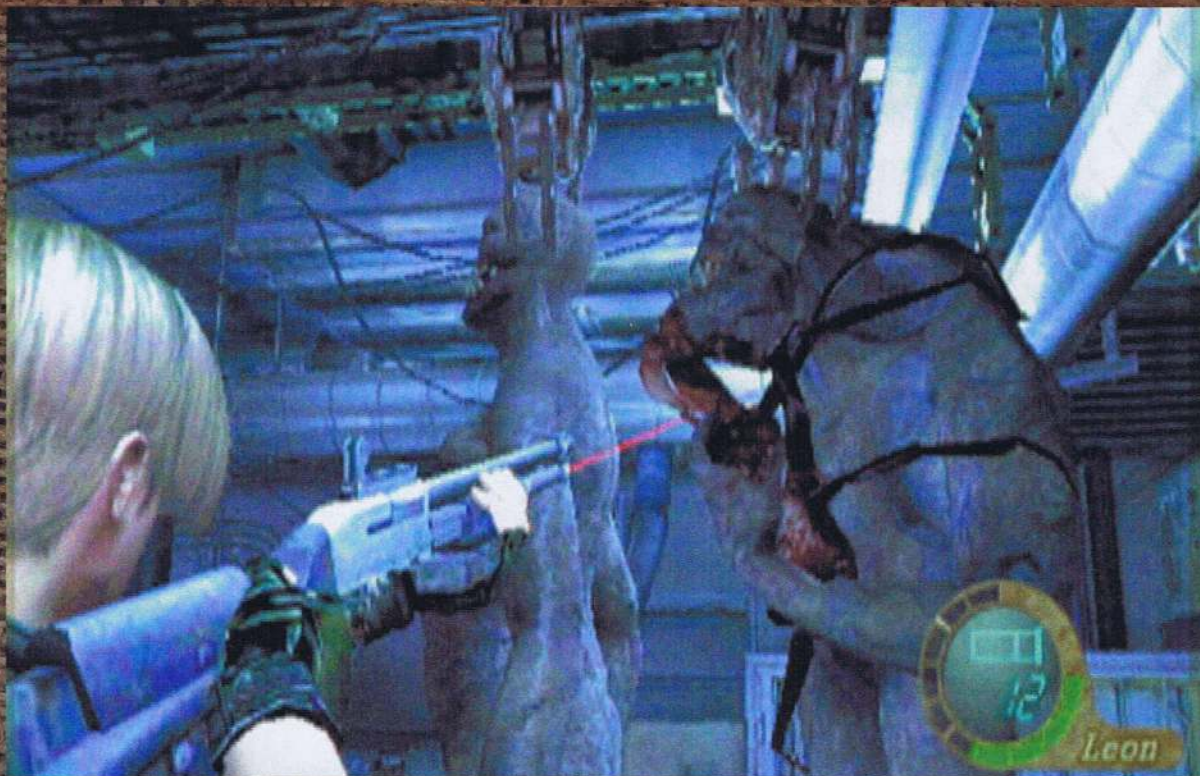
Beerstein w/ (G)
1 gemstone has been set in the side.



△ The fact that Ashley can't wield weapons brings its own kind of tension and can provide some interesting challenges.



△ The only thing that isn't so strong is the puzzles, but they play such a minor role in the game that it doesn't really matter.



△ This place is just like Kitty's own walk-in freezer at home. Except his is a bit bigger. And doesn't have a man with a shotgun in it.

new ground rather than remain stubbornly rooted in its past.

Still, that's not to say Capcom has stabbed *Resi* devotees in the back – far from it. Despite some radical changes, this still feels very

Which leaves us with that final burning question, that everyone seems to ask – it's going to be short lived isn't it? Actually, no. Not at all. It took us just under 30 hours the first run through – and that was being pretty meticulous

THE SIMPLE FACT IS, THE GAME IS SO SATISFYING TO PLAY, YOU'LL WANT TO PLAY IT AGAIN

much like a *Resi* game. There's plenty of fan service here, the puzzles all feel distinctly *Resi* – if disappointingly unimaginative as a result – and the backing story is, as always, very well told and engaging throughout.

about finding treasure. As far as we're concerned, that's a perfectly respectable length for an action game. One thing that's worth noting is that all the time we were playing it, a part of us wanted, or rather craved, to go back to the



IN CONTROL

There are times when the rotational control scheme can feel a little stifling – no doubt about it. But in many ways it goes some way to lending the game its tension. There were occasions when we felt that a side-step or strafing option would have been ideal – but ultimately, we think such a mechanic would have ruined the experience...

beginning and try and do things better. Which we did. Twice. The simple fact is, the game is so satisfying to play that you'll want to play it again – there's no doubt about that. And just to put the icing on the cake, Capcom hasn't skimped on those special little extras that we've come to know and love either!...

The complete package (spanning two disks), easily matches Gamecube's top tier of games. It's as well produced as Nintendo's *Wind Waker* and Retro's *Metroid Prime* – and deserves to stand alongside both of them as the finest examples of entertainment that Gamecube can provide.

GERAINT EVANS



- Satisfying weapons.
- Atmospheric and cinematic.
- A real step forward.



- Puzzles aren't the most imaginative.
- Sometimes it feels a little repetitive.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

RESIDENT EVIL
Nintendo
NGC/72 89%
The beautiful Director's Cut remake of the game that started it all off...



10 VISUALS

Exceptional. Easily the best looking game on Gamecube.

9 SOUNDS

Strong voice acting and perfect incidental music aids your play.

10 MASTERY

Capcom has made Gamecube its bitch.

9 LIFESPAN

It's a big game with extra modes. You'll play it again and again.

VERDICT

A phenomenally high standard for survival horror – it's an intensely satisfying game of quite astounding quality.

NGC

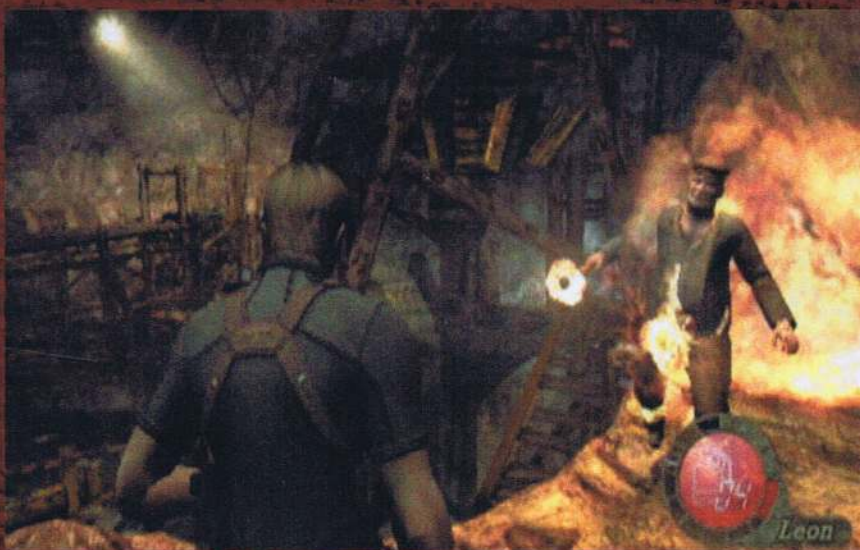
97



"Try to think of the last genuinely likeable male lead in a game"

THE TOP TEN REASONS WHY WE LOVE IT...

That's right pop-pickers, we've managed to cram everything we love about *Resi Evil 4* into just ten solid-gold reasons why this game is top notch.



sniper rifle in the Dam in *GoldenEye*... *Resi 4* is stuffed full of brilliant setpieces and events from start to finish – like a golden trail of magic moments. Long after you've finished you'll be reminiscing about *that* the cabin siege with Louis, the battle in the burning barn and the moment when you turn off the... (*that's enough* – Ed)

1/ PUT YOUR BACK INTO IT

Nothing pleases us more than a game that looks and feels as though colossal amounts of effort have gone into making it right. Think



about the old *Resident Evil* games and list all the things that you didn't like – chances are 90% of those things have been either eliminated, completely reworked or vastly improved. Capcom has really looked at what works and what doesn't. It has listened to players' criticisms and acted on them in the most positive way possible. Now if only every developer did that...

2/ MAGIC MOMENTS

Everyone has fond memories of specific games. The first time you took Epona out into Hyrule Field. The sunken ship in *Mario 64*. Using the



3/ YOU WANT SOME MORE?

We were always terrified of the prospect of a beautiful game that only lasted a few days. To be honest – we half expected this to be the case with *RE4*. How wrong we were. Sure it's not the longest game in the world, but even after we finished it we couldn't stop playing it. And we're talking about the main game here – not the pile of extras that Capcom had been so generous in including.

4/ FANCY A PINT?

Try to think of the last, genuinely likeable male lead in a videogame. The prince in *Prince Of Persia*? Too whiney. How about Solid

A SECOND OPINION?

Hey, it's not that we don't trust Geraint, or anything... We just wanted to see what other people thought of the game. Take it away fellas...



△ Wasn't it kind of Kittsy to lend his castle for the making of *Resi 4*?

MARTIN

From what I had seen of the game in the past, it was always going to be something special. It got an incredible reaction when it was shown at the E3 expo last May, but I suppose if there was any concern on the part of the masses who waited in line for another chance to get terrorised by a chainsaw-wielding gimp, it was that Capcom surely couldn't make the entire thing as intense as that classic village scene.

But they did it. And they did it in style. It's almost unbelievably good, bringing a compelling new perspective to an old series just as the likes of *Metroid Prime* and *Mario 64* have in the past. It's probably the best looking thing on any of the current consoles, and when it comes to satisfyingly meaty gunplay, heart-thumping boss battles and relentless, seat-of-your-pants action, it's in a league of its own right now.



Spike? Too Kurt Russell – and anyway, rumour has it he likes to wear women's underwear. Leon, however, has proved to be a very strong character. A likeable kind of chap who, alongside Link and Agent 47 from *Hitman* is the only game character we'd happily entrust our daughter too... if we actually had one that is... It's nice to play a character who isn't a complete idiot.

5/ SITTING COMFORTABLY?

There's nothing worse than intrusive cut scenes or FMV that looks nothing like the actual game (the likes of *Resi 2* is a good example of this) it can often damage the overall experience of the game and (especially with games like *MGS2*) prove both tedious and highly irritating. *RE4* has a solution. Have all cut-scenes use the in-game engine, use the same screen ratio, add a touch of interactivity and, more importantly, keep them short, sweet and to the point – oh, and chuck in some genuinely impressive fight choreography to get the pulse racing...

6/ WEAPONS OF WAR

We've gone into some detail about the intensely satisfying weapons – but perhaps the game's greatest achievement is in making all weapons as useful as the next. As you power up your arsenal, each weapon will hold a special place in your heart as being handy in different situations. Even the lowly pistol – and in some instances, the knife – is a force to be reckoned with in the right hands. Everyone will find their own personal combination of weapons (you can fit them all in your



inventory) and will find their own personal way of dealing with situations.

7/ NOT SO LOUD

The sound deserves a special mention – mainly because you barely notice it. A strange kind of compliment maybe – but the subtlety of the game's sound is one of *Resi's* strengths. Music only really kicks in when you're engaged in combat. Cunningly, the music stops when you've defeated the last enemy who's aware of your presence in a certain area. When the music stops, it almost lulls you into a false sense of security. Also, we particularly like the mumbling and chanting of the monks in the castle – a sound that can't fail to send shivers up your spine.

8/ THE LITTLE THINGS

There are so many delightful little touches that make *Resi* such a pleasurable gaming experience. If you spot an enemy behind a wooden door, you can blow chunks out of it to get at whoever is on the other side. You can distract villagers and lead them into their own explosive traps. Shoot projectiles out of the air, barricade doorways and even indulge

in a spot of fishing if you're low on herbs or first aid sprays.

9/ AT THE MOVIES

The *Resident Evil* series has always been one to cherry-pick from the best horror flicks. Never before has a game managed to capture the essence of films like *Dawn Of The Dead*. Okay, so the villagers aren't Zombies – but when you're surrounded, that feeling of encroaching danger is very much the same. And the resulting gun battles are just as messy. In many ways, the rather linear nature of the game enhances this movie-like feeling, as though you're playing out scenes in a film.

10/ WATCH ME KILL

Maybe it's the game's cinematic qualities – or simply the fact that people love to see lots of blood splattered around. Whatever the reason, it's rare that you get a single player game that people will happily sit down and watch while you play – wincing and grimacing, oooh-ing and ahhhh-ing with each and every unnecessarily messy and brutal fatality. Or screeching in your ear with each perilously close encounter with death...

JES

My word. My word. *Resi Evil 4* is quite simply breathtaking. Naturally, it looks astonishing – makes you wonder whether the PS2 version will look anywhere near as good, given the hardware – and the changes to the tried-and-tested *Resi* gameplay and camera have almost created a whole new game. Sure, you still have to press a button to run, some of the puzzles are a bit dump, and there are parts of the voice-acting that are a little weak, but the action is brilliantly executed and so enjoyable that *Resi 4* feels like a cut above everything else. And that's simply from the odd moment I've been able to play the game when Geraint hasn't been (ie, when he's had to go to the loo). I can't wait to sit down in a darkened room and play the thing properly. Best game on Gamecube? Almost certainly, at least until new *Zelda* comes to town. Truly remarkable stuff.



△ All right, all right, so the game's not going to change lives, but our Jes reckons that all the cogs that make up the intricate gameplay in *Resi*, are in perfect working order.



"Setting new standards for TV-style camera angles"



△ Raul whacks one in and the manager goes utterly ape. Victory.



△ There are loads of dramatic shots like this. It looks very televisual.



△ We signed Nesta, Totti and Paul Dickov for Real Madrid. Result.



△ This is the default manager. We just gave him some new clothes.



△ Free kicks are handled brilliantly in this game. Can he score?

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Beating Mourinho at his own game...

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	EA
DEVELOPER	EA
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM. CARD PAGES	23
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	YES
COST	£40



So how, in the wide world of sport, is this different from the usual *FIFA* games? And what's the big idea with releasing a game based on one specific competition at a time when that competition is halfway finished?

Whatever the reasoning behind it, this is actually a pretty decent way to play a *FIFA*-like game with a few technical changes and a token focus on the managerial aspect of football. Never mind that it should have come out last summer, and the player rosters don't appear to have been updated to include recent events – this is the only chance you're likely to have to see Jonathan Woodgate in a Real Madrid shirt this side of Christmas.

Instead of just jumping straight into a match and 'being' a team, here you design your own

managerial avatar, give him a name, pick the team, and then play a match. To highlight this subtle difference, your manager will pop up in a picture-in-picture window at key moments during the game, doing his gum-chewing, fist-pumping thing.

Beginning with the must-win final game of last season, and consequent Champions League qualification (or instant Game Over if you lose), you take your team through key moments of the season, all the way to the final in Istanbul. You can improve the squad during transfer windows, when your club's mega-rich new owner awards funds based on how well you fulfill his outlandish demands. Make no mistake, this is no *Championship Manager* in-depth simulation – the game never lets go of your hand during the transfer process. You can only

recruit in specific positions, and the player's transfer value tells you everything you need to know about his quality.

With only 50 games to play before you're crowned champion, and no teams outside Europe's elite divisions, it's by far the briefest member of the *FIFA* family. But it's one of the more engrossing in single-player mode, thanks to the storyline which keeps things ticking over nicely, and gives you far more to play for than the standard, anonymous leagues and cups you tend to find in these games.

It's also very well presented, setting new standards for TV-style camera angles and dramatic cutaways. The ball could go out for a throw, and you'll be treated to a quick replay of a key moment from several minutes ago, complete with managerial reaction. Champion.

MARTIN KITTS



- Nice presentation.
- A slightly different way of experiencing *FIFA Football*.



- Limited lifespan for a sports game.
- You'd better be a Champs League fan.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

FIFA 2005
EA
NGC/99 79%
Unsurprisingly similar, and it has a great deal more teams and players.



7 VISUALS

All widescreen, all football, very high production values.

6 SOUNDS

The radio phone-ins between matches can get tiresome.

7 MASTERY

Plays as well as any of its cousins, while looking a bit nicer.

6 LIFESPAN

It's only this year's competition and only 50 matches. Bah.

VERDICT

Short but sweet. If this is an indication of the quality of *FIFA 2006*, we're looking forward to it much more now.

NGC 72

"You don't own Resident Evil 4. It owns you." IGN.com 9.8 out of 10



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res-evil.com/re4

RESIDENT EVIL 4 2005
ONLY FOR NINTENDO GAMECUBE





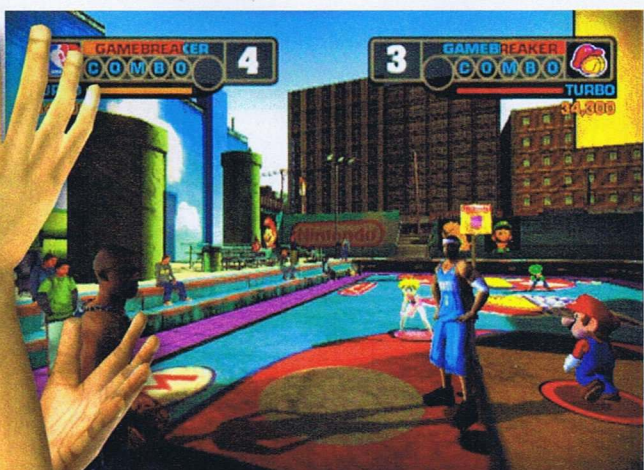
DUNKIN' DONUTS

Words cannot do justice to the sheer bizarreness of seeing Mario and Peach go head-to-head in a gravity-defying dunk contest. They even do body-popping to influence the judges afterwards.



NBA STREET V3

Michael Jordan did it with rabbits in Space Jam. Now EA does it with Mario in Gamecube's craziest crossover.



△ "Holy crap, dude. What the heck did you put in my Lucozade?"

If Nintendo's best in-house development team set about making a basketball game to join the company's tennis and golf franchises, they probably would have come up with something very much like *NBA Street Vol 2*, but with added Mushroom Kingdom and lots more special moves.

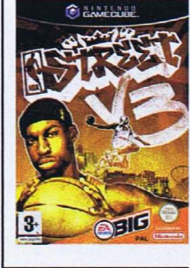
NBA Street V3 is essentially this game, with added Mushroom Kingdom and lots more special moves. In a commendably honest outbreak of 'well, if you can't beat them, join them', Nintendo's best characters have been

and sometimes spectacular core. It's not so much about playing to win as it is playing with style.

One point is awarded for scoring at close range, two for netting from a distance. But if you settle for hitting dull two-pointers all the time, an opponent who knows how to string together trick moves and finish off with a difficult but low-scoring dunk will soon have an ace or two up his sleeveless shirt, in the form of a gamebreaker. The flashier your playing style, the more gamebreakers you'll get during the course of a match, and each one can add up to four points to your

INFO

PUBLISHER	EA
DEVELOPER	EA
RELEASE DATE	18 FEB
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM. CARD PAGES	15
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



EXPOSES THE SPORT'S FAST, EXCITING, SOMETIMES SPECTACULAR CORE

incorporated into the world's most enjoyable basketball game, with fantastic results.

If you missed the previous version, you missed one of the best arcade sports titles ever. *NBA Street's* three-on-three action strips the tactics and tedium from the sport, exposing its fast, exciting

own score while knocking one off the other player's.

Naturally, the value of each gamebreaker depends on how many airborne tricks you perform before dunking the ball, so there's never time to sit back, relax and watch the show.

There's a huge range of moves

LIVING THE DREAM

Or a life on the streets...



PLAY DAY

Another day, another challenge. Choose one of the many on offer each day and night. Skip one and you lose respect. Word.



PAY DAY

Thrash anyone foolish enough to think they can beat you. The better you thrash them, the more money you take home at the end...



CASHING IN

...To spend on frivolous extras such as matching uniforms for your team. Or a smart pair of trainers. Or a poncey haircut.



URBAN RENEWAL

When you're incredibly rich you can start wasting cash on paint (for spraying around your home court) and other cosmetic goods.



THE BIG TIME

Eventually you'll have a team worthy of taking on the best, and a home court sparkly enough to attract superstars. Happy days.



△ The correct technical term here is 'rocking the rim'. Probably.



△ Don't rub it in, or they'll lob a fireball up your jax. Sore losers, see.



△ Hitting the designated points total results in a one-off sparkly effect. Most gratifying. Since we clearly rule at this game (on easy) we see this all the time.



HOME BOYS

You can't draft Mario, Luigi or Peach into your created team (at least not as far as we've seen) for two good reasons. Number one, they look like cartoon characters and would therefore make a mockery of the career mode's serious tone. And B, they're far too good - Peach and Luigi are two of the best dunkers in the game, and there's no stopping Mario when he's on the move.



accessed by pressing a direction on the 'trick stick' (or C-stick, as it's otherwise known). Your options are multiplied when holding one, two or three turbo buttons, resulting in a bewildering array of physically improbable stunts, some of which will dump your foolish marker unceremoniously onto his arse, leaving you with a free run towards the basket. To make sure you don't repeat the same moves, a combo meter at the top of the screen shows the last five tricks in your personalised (ie, random) sequence. Learn to read this and you can acquire a gamebreaker in next to no time. It's the basketball game that plays like *SSX Tricky*.

If the tricks are there for showing off, other more skilful

techniques are the key to keeping your opponents firmly on the back foot. It's possible for one player on the court to pass the ball back to himself off an opponent's forehead, a move which ensures total humiliation as well as knocking a big hole in your rival's defence.

You can even pass it off the backboard and, if you're extremely good, soar through the air to slam the ball home before the other team know what's hit them. The possibilities are endless, and the commentator awards you a suitable nickname once he's sussed out your playing style.

Something missing from *NBA Street Vol 2* was that old basketball game staple, the three-point contest, in which you get a short



MAKING THE BREAK

To earn a precious gamebreaker move faster than your opponent, you'll have to string together your most elaborate tricks. Basically, the more turbo buttons you hold while moving the trick stick, the flashier the trick will be. Here we see Luigi doing a kind of breakdance thing. Bless.

time to sink a few long-rangers from various parts of the court. *NBA Street V3* still doesn't have one, but the new dunk contest mode makes it pretty much redundant. Here you select up to eight players and take turns attempting to impress the judges with your aerial prowess, launching the ball off the floor or backboard and performing a smooth trick routine before dunking it. Placing obstacles on the court and dunking over the top of them helps earn more points, and the skills you learn here are what you need in order to max out your gamebreakers during a proper match.

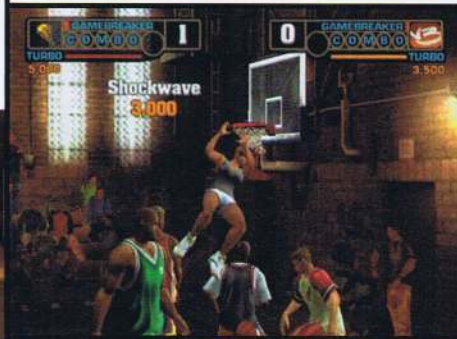
A huge career mode enables you to customise players, teams, nicknames



"Anyone for a spot of Brighton basketball?"

SCORING BIG

You can customise the rules so you play for dunks, trick points, gamebreakers, long-range shots or whatever. Every variation crops up at some point during the career mode.



FOUL PLAY

Don't worry about flattening your rivals - there are no fouls other than violating the shot clock. Your computer team-mates are as dirty as they come.



SURELY NOT...

The sight of Mario putting the moves on real basketball stars is fantastic. We'd love the game no matter what, but if you own multiple consoles don't even think about getting it on another format. The Gamecube version is definitely the one to own.



V3
Nitty
Hey Bitty
TBA



△ Peach and Luigi concentrate on their defensive duties.



△ Oh, nice work, sir. But why is this move called a backbreaker?



△ Learn how to defend and you're halfway to NBA greatness.



△ A simple ankle-tap from Luigi would end this Laker's moves.

and the like, before taking part in a basketball tale of rags-to-riches that's expansive enough to have its own day-night transitions and cover venues in Canada and England as well as the US. Anyone for a spot of Brighton basketball?

While customising the type of net, playing surface or background decoration of your team's home court is something only the most dedicated players are likely to spend a great deal of time with, every Nintendo fan will appreciate the inclusion of Mario, Luigi and Peach as playable characters. Shame there aren't a few more of them on court, maybe, but the *Space Jam* concept of the Nintendo All-Stars team dribbling the LA Lakers clean off the court is great fun, and the game style suits the characters perfectly.

The All-Stars get their own court, painted in a Nintendo-meets-



BREAKING THE GAME

When you activate a gamebreaker, you get a few seconds to add your own twist to the move. This is where the dunk contest proves its worth in the main game, as it's essentially the same sort of thing with a tighter time limit. Do it right and you score more points, plus you get to see your player's signature written in glowing sky-plasma. Cripes!

hip-hop style, and special sound effects for every trick combo they perform. Being only half as tall as some of their NBA opponents means they're not so hot at scoring from outside the D, but anyone who's played a Mario game will know there's no point trying to outjump them.

Consequently they make excellent choices for the dunk

but this really is an amazing bonus.

Take the Nintendo gang out of the equation and the game would still be worth buying - we'd definitely give it the same score. With them, it's something that's going to appeal to Nintendo enthusiasts as well as basketball nuts, which is a very smart move on the part of both companies involved. After the *Punch Out*

EVERY NINTENDO FAN WILL APPRECIATE THE INCLUSION OF MARIO, LUIGI AND PEACH

contest. You can create preset favourite contests, to save time choosing players and venues, and we'll bet the first one on everyone's copy will be a shootout between Mario and friends. You may prefer the main game in its natural state,

character and bonus game in EA's *Fight Night Round 2* (see page 18), we wouldn't be at all surprised to see Bowser putting in a crunching tackle on Wayne Rooney in *FIFA Street 2* next year.

MARTIN KITTS



- Superbly playable.
- Dunk contest.
- Huge career mode.
- He's 'in the game'.

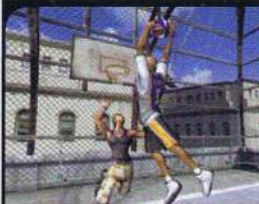


- Remembering the right move at the right moment...



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

NBA Street Vol 2
EA
NGC/84 88%
Still a stormingly good game. Being older, it's a bit easier to master than the latest one.



8 VISUALS

Very smooth, great animation, and some nifty special effects.

9 SOUNDS

One of the funniest commentaries in any sports game.

8 MASTERY

The concept may belong to *NBA Jam*, but this does it better.

9 LIFESPAN

Another vast EA Sports title to while away the months.

VERDICT

There's something for everyone in here. Slick, customisable basketball with lots of flair and a little dash of Mario.

NGC
90

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△ Diddy dives for cover as Donkey lets one rip.

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	NINTENDO
DEVELOPER	CAMELOT
RELEASE DATE	25TH FEB
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM. CARD PAGES	3
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



MARIO TENNIS

Or *Mario Power Tennis*, to be precise. The full title wouldn't quite fit in the space under Mario's armpit, y'see.



MARIO POWER TENNIS

Serves up a tennis treat!



△ Have some! Mario narrowly misses decapitating the love of his life with a supersonic serve. Hit the ball at the apex of the toss.



△ Bonus game time, with a kind of klaptap maze sort of affair.



△ Wario takes the time to plug his earholes before having a swim.



Power Tennis? Power, as in Special Super Power? As in the Power To Cheat Your Way To An Undeserved Victory? Yes indeed, and three months after being delighted and frustrated in equal measure by the Japanese version, we're still loving every minute. Every minute apart from the

playability of this most remarkable and divisive of Nintendo sporting titles.

We know we probably shouldn't like it as much as we do. We're fully aware that this game does for *Mario Tennis 64* what *Double Dash* did for *Mario Kart*, and that alone is reason

WE KNOW WE REALLY SHOULDN'T LIKE IT AS MUCH AS WE DO

ones where one player suddenly leaps out of his seat, tosses away the controller in disgust, and vows never to play such a blatantly unfair game again.

That it sometimes takes all of half an hour for order to be restored and a fresh game of *Mario Power Tennis* to be started is a testament to the inherent

enough for some unduly harsh critics to dismiss it out of hand. That's the power of the internet for you.

But although you'll no doubt be aware that we often take great pleasure in being among



"A better range of shots than any of its rivals"



△ Diddy's attacking special move involves the silhouette of a banana.



△ Look how pleased Wario is. His opponent won't be quite so happy.



△ Replays are nowhere near as good as they were in the N64 version, sadly.



△ Breathing fire on the ball turns it into a fireball. Funny how things work out.



△ Choose from two camera angles – this one or a slightly lower option. Exciting, hmm?



△ We still haven't seen Bowser bury his racquet spikes into somebody's back. Strange, that.



△ When you take a Power Shot in the chest, like DK just has, you get knocked right to the back of the court.

VIDEO STAR

Mario Power Tennis features the biggest chunk of FMV we've ever seen in a Nintendo game, with this introductory sequence showing Bowser training Wario in the dark arts of Power Shot cheater. It's a monster.



the most brutally honest reviewers around, we see no reason to change our opinion. If anything, three months of recreational Power Tennis have only reinforced our conviction that this is the perfect Gamecube follow-up to an all-time N64 classic.

tennis game relied on loads of buttons to select various types of shot, which had to be activated at precisely the right moment to allow for a backswing animation before connecting with the ball. *Mario Tennis* was different.

Despite using just two buttons,

THIS IS THE PERFECT GAMECUBE FOLLOW-UP TO AN ALL-TIME N64 CLASSIC

To begin again at the beginning, *Mario Tennis* on the N64 was a brilliantly simple game, relatively free from intrusive gimmicks and blessed with the finest tennis control system any developer had ever created. When every other

Mario Tennis had a better range of shots than any of its rivals, and required little sense of timing. As long as your character was in roughly the correct place when you pressed the button, the ball would always be returned.



RETRO

Unlocking the small number of hidden bits and pieces within the game is surprisingly easy. Our favourite is this Mario Bros court, based on the ancient 2D platformer, but if you're wondering why you haven't unlocked anything new after a couple of days, it's because it's all done.

The best part was that despite the ridiculously easy controls, you could actually become extremely good at the game if you put in the practice. Its user-friendliness didn't come at the expense of depth, and ultimately *Mario Tennis* proved to be a truer test of gaming prowess than the more advanced and complicated sims that followed it, notably *Virtua Tennis*.

More than four years later we've finally got a sequel to mess around with, and it's clear that the developers have been messing around with it, too. Although it's based on the same 'engine' as the N64 original – retaining the same basic controls, the same physics and the same feel – there's a huge new addition which, perhaps understandably, means a lot of the

MARIO POWER TENNIS

Serves up a tennis treat!

A LITTLE BIT SPECIAL

The great big cheat-qualiser.



MARIO'S HAMMER OF INJUSTICE

Marvel at the sight of the stumpy Italian as he whips out a huge mallet and spanks off a 300mph return. Stylishly cheap.



LUIGI'S UNSPORTSMANLIKE SUCKER

Beaten by a perfectly placed shot from a superior opponent? Not when you have a ball-recovering vacuum in your pocket.



PRINCESS P AND THE KISS OF DEATH

According to the rules of tennis you can return the ball using a racquet. Peach does it via magic kisses, the cheaty royal cow.



DONKEY KONG AND HIS MONKEY WRONG

Our hairy hero thinks he's being clever by blasting himself out of a cannon, but he's still just a stupid monkey. This one is easy.



DIDDY'S JETPACK SICKENER

If only you could target Diddy's jetpack and make him spin uncontrollably to his death, like Baba Fett in Star Wars. If only...



BOWSER'S SHELL-SHOCKED COWARDICE

When the going gets tough, Bowser retreats into his shell and uses his evil ability to return the ball from anywhere.



WARIO'S SELF-ABUSE CHEATATHON

Here's where he motivates himself for a big shot by hitting himself really hard on the head. It seems to work quite well.



BOO TO YOU TOO

Ghosts never play tennis alone and this Boo summons all of its pals to add extra venom and just a little dash of cheatiness.



△ Doubles matches are packed with special moves. Here Bowser activates his defensive techniques...



△ ...followed seconds later by Shy Guy. Diddy's ready for one next.

original fans are going to hate it with a passion.

We're talking Power Shots, the special moves that can turn a quick tennis match into a jarring sequence of cut-scenes interspersed with the occasional few seconds of gameplay.

Unleash a Power Shot (they're significant enough to demand capitals) and a character can return a ball from anywhere on the playing area. He could be sliding towards the spectators in the far corner when his opponent places a perfect angled drop-shot into the opposite service court. With no chance of reaching the ball before it bounces twice, normally this would mean the end of the point, and rightly so.

But not when he's got a Power



BOSS BATTLE

Fight Mecha-Bowser by launching balls of blue energy in this bonus game that has very little to do with tennis. Like most of the extra modes, it's just something to give you a bit of a break from the main game. There's not much lasting appeal with this one, even as a score challenge.

Shot in reserve. Activate one of these and each character has a signature method of retrieving the ball, generally involving teleportation or some such cheaterly, and always freezing the game so an unnecessarily long cut-scene can precede the Power Shot itself.

It's not like there's any skill involved in earning or using a Power Shot, either. The harder you hit the ball, the faster you gain the special move, although you'll get one after a few strokes no matter how fiercely you're swinging. And when





"Power Shots level the playing field"

SERVICE COURT

Your service must land in this box. You knew that already, right? If you use a tricky character you can swerve the ball here impressively.




HIGH SPEED

The radar records your service speed, which isn't a particularly useful stat. You can see how fast it went with your own eyes. They should have given A-B-C ratings for how sweetly you hit a shot, or something like that.

SMASH BROS

Hold A+B to perform a smash when the ball bounces high. When serving, this is the way to blast out the most potent of deliveries.



 you press the button to activate it, there's no further action required on your part. Just sit back and enjoy the sight of what should have been an unreturnable winning shot being returned without the slightest fear of failure. You don't even need to aim.

Clearly this is pretty amusing the first few times it happens, and there's fun to be had exploring every character's two Power Shot techniques (the other being an offensive move for smashing the ball at supersonic speed). But

the game really does lay it on thick, to the extent that a typical point might involve a Power Shot returning another Power Shot, followed by three or four ordinary strokes, then a final Power Shot to finish it all off. Unless the opponent has also managed to charge up his special, in which case it can go on for ages. Action freezes; three second cut-scene every time. It can make a game of doubles last forever, so you'll be glad of the option to play matches with as few as two games per set.

The problem isn't so much the waste of good playing time as the fact that there's no way to win a point if your opponent has a Power Shot ready to go.

What you need to do, and what most of the critics who complain



RINGING THE CHANGES

Ring Shot mode can be played as a multiplayer tennis variation, and is probably the most appealing of the mini-games. Rally through the rings to build up a score pot, and the winner of the current point scoops the whole lot. Very good fun.

about the game have blatantly missed, is use your tennis ability to draw the sting out of your opponent. If he has a Power Shot charged up, play a shot that forces him to waste it on a defensive save, leaving him out of position, then blast a winner into the empty part of the court.

When you have a Power Shot of your own ready, don't use it at the first opportunity. Use it tactically, bearing in mind that it can easily be returned if your opponent is charged up, but if done correctly you'll have the upper hand and your rival will be on the defensive for the next few shots.

Power Shots also level the playing field somewhat, and give average players a chance of winning the odd game against

COURT JESTERS

Three of the game's wilder, crazier playing surfaces...



Wario Factory

■ Hitting the arrows makes the court move around.



■ Splatter your opponents with chocolate goop.



■ Knock beasties off the net to attack your rivals.

good ones. There was no way any casual gamer could have beaten a seasoned veteran in the N64 version, but on Gamecube it just might happen from time to time.

Besides, if the alterations to the game's balance don't take your fancy, you can simply turn off the Power Shot feature and play as nature intended. The solo tournaments against the best computer are the only places you're obliged to use them, and since most people are likely to spend the vast majority of the game's extended lifespan playing multiplayer matches, who cares anyway?

Without Power Shots, it's a nicer looking version of the best tennis game ever made. With them, it's a nicer looking version where you can have competitive matches with



GHOST PANIC

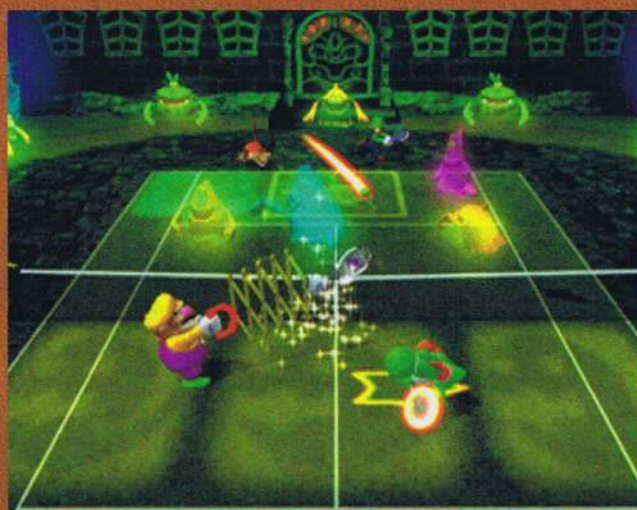
The front garden of Luigi's haunted mansion is the venue for a ghost-filled series of matches and challenges. In this one you have to knock the ghosts back into their portraits, demonstrating your amazing accuracy or complete lack of coordination.

MARIO POWER TENNIS

Serves up a tennis treat!



△ Don't return it to the square with the X on Yoshi. This bit is great fun.



△ Oh Wario, you fat, cheating scumbag. Why must you always use that thing?

players of all abilities.

Away from the main tennis modes, the designers have really gone to town with the whole Mushroom Kingdom theme, packing the game with bonus

Party 6. Not much of a

recommendation, but there you go.

Mario Power Tennis is the game that gives as good as it gets, and if you're prepared to live with the initial inconvenience of Power Shots

A CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT OVER THE CLASSIC N64 ORIGINAL

modes that make heavy use of familiar backgrounds, characters and concepts. Not all of these will hold your attention for very long, but some make decent score challenges or multiplayer diversions, and all are more entertaining while they last than anything you'll find in Mario

for as long as it takes to learn how to use them properly, you'll find it a considerable improvement over the N64 original. Or any other tennis sim you could name.

Maybe it's a love-it-or-hate-it thing, but we're in no doubt which side of the net we're on.

MARTIN KITTS



- Special moves mean novice players can win.
- Loads of challenges.
- Loads of fun.



- Special moves mean expert players will whine.
- Replays aren't great.
- Gets very difficult.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Mario Golf Toadstool Tour
Nintendo
NGC/95 85%
More Mario sports action from the same team.



9 VISUALS

Nice effects and impressively detailed character models.

8 SOUNDS

Loads of speech, which will either annoy or delight you.

8 MASTERY

It looks great, it plays great and it's full of Nintendo humour.

9 LIFESPAN

Tough tournaments and a wide range of multiplayer modes.

VERDICT

The best tennis game of the current console generation, and a uniquely competitive multiplayer experience.

NGC

91

NEXT MONTH

"I suppose I should be grateful..."

17.03.05

PLUS!

- TimeSplitters reviewed
- Resi 4 walked through
- ...and more DS than you can handle

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All rise, all rise

NINTENDO VS


Twenty of the companies, conglomerates, paranormalists and pirates Nintendo has faced in the law courts.

NAME/DATE	MONSTER IN MY POCKET/2003	20
PLAINTIFF	MORRISON ENTERTAINMENT GROUP	
DEFENDANT	NINTENDO	

DESCRIPTION: You might remember 'Monster In My Pocket', an early-'90s troop of little rubber monsters that would fit – yes – in your pocket (albeit with a little rubber foot prodding you in the hip). In 2003, Manhattan toymaker Morrison alleged that a certain Nintendo brand infringed on their tiny army of tiny ogres.

CHOICE QUOTE: "The law is not, nor could it be, that only the big guy can sue... It's whoever had the senior mark can sue. They've effectively put us out of business because everybody thinks we're a rip-off of Pokemon." - Morrison attorney Brian Lysaght, in the Los Angeles Business Journal.

THE RESULT: DISMISSED. The judge didn't agree with Morrison. "Pokémon is a three syllable single word beginning with a 'p.' Monster in My Pocket sounds nothing like this."

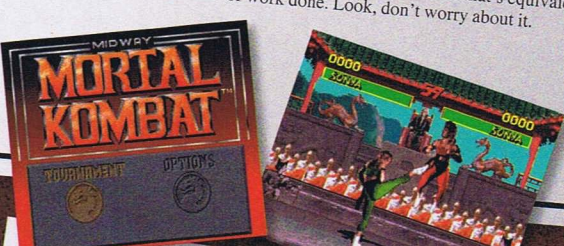


NAME/DATE	MARTIAL ARTISTS/1997	19
PLAINTIFF	MORTAL KOMBAT CAST MEMBERS	
DEFENDANT	MIDWAY, NINTENDO, ET AL	

DESCRIPTION: Nintendo spent the early '90s getting it in the neck from both parents livid at the spine-ripping play in *Mortal Kombat*, and gamers angry at the Super Nintendo version's missing blood. So The Yamauchi must have been thrilled when three of the martial artists motion-captured for use in the monstrously successful beat-'em-up named Nintendo in a suit claiming "the unauthorized use of their respective name, persona and likeness" in the console and computer versions of *Mortal Kombat* and its sequel. They believed they'd been hired as actors, and were due for some meaty royalties from sales.

CHOICE QUOTE: "Get over here!" - *Mortal Kombat*'s Scorpion.

THE RESULT: WIN. In legal speak, there was "no claim for quantum meruit" – which basically means an unspoken fee that's equivalent for the amount of work done. Look, don't worry about it.




NAME/DATE	PATENT... SOMETHING/1997	18
PLAINTIFF	NINTENDO	
DEFENDANT	WINBOND ELECTRONICS CORP	

DESCRIPTION: This one passed by quietly and quickly, as Taiwan-based chip manufacturer Winbond was given 'the heat' by Nintendo for allegedly treading on The Big N's copyright while manufacturing semi-conductors. The details are either too complicated or too boring to be easily tracked down.

CHOICE QUOTE: Something involving semiconductors and copyright infringement. Believe us, you're better off without.

THE RESULT: SETTLED. In 1999, it was revealed that Nintendo had pocketed an "undisclosed amount" from Winbond, and dropped the action. The two loggerheaders also signed a bit of paper promising not to upset each other patent-wise again.




NAME/DATE	MULTI-GAME TV TOYS/2004	17
PLAINTIFF	NINTENDO	
DEFENDANT	EITAN AVRAHAM ET AL	

DESCRIPTION: If you've thought about buying a '300-Games-In-One' TV game just to get the persistently yelling market stall trader out of your ear, check this. Last year, Nintendo of America 'filed suit', as they say, against two companies it alleges were selling illegally-copied NES game systems with hoards of copyright experts on board. Amazingly, 400 little whistle-blowing fans were thanked in a press release. U.S. marshals in western Washington now have the power to "round and seize up as many of these counterfeit systems as they can find."

CHOICE QUOTE: "Nintendo won't tolerate these illegal products, and is grateful to its devoted customers. We'll aggressively protect the quality and integrity of the video game products our fans are so loyal to." - Jodi Daugherty, Nintendo of America's director of anti-piracy

THE RESULT: Ongoing.



THE WORLD

16

NAME/DATE BLOCKBUSTER/1987
PLAINTIFF NINTENDO
DEFENDANT BLOCKBUSTER

DESCRIPTION: When Blockbuster began renting out NES videogame in the same way as videotapes, Nintendo did not like it one bit – and introduced the rental company to Mrs Sue You.

CHOICE QUOTE: Nothing specific here, but then most of the fiery words sent Nintendo's way by incensed (former) fans probably shouldn't be reprinted.

THE RESULT: LOSE. No surprise there, because you can happily rent a videogame without getting rugby-tackled to the floor by Copyright Cops. Blockbuster did lose on one crucial point, though: photocopied manuals were a definite no-no, which is why you often get the real manual in rented games to this very day.



NAME/DATE TILT CONTROLLERS/2004
PLAINTIFF JACOBS
DEFENDANT NINTENDO

15

DESCRIPTION: A perfect introduction to the ins and outs of the law – which is even more confusing than programming a washing machine. Mr Jacobs owns the patent for “a video game controller that the operator tilts... rather than push buttons”. He sues Analog Devices Inc. for selling similar technology – then drops the suit after hammering out an agreement with the company, which allows them to keep selling their bits and bobs. Done. But wait! Here's Jacobs again, attempting to sue Nintendo... because they bought some tilt-detecting stuff from Analog Devices Inc.

CHOICE QUOTE: “Our heads hurt” - NGC Magazine.

THE RESULT: WIN. The US District Court in question – and, later, the Court of Appeal – agreed that Mr Jacobs could not sue Nintendo “through the back door”. It says here.



13

NAME/DATE CAMERICA/1988
PLAINTIFF NINTENDO
DEFENDANT CAMERICA

14

DESCRIPTION: Nintendo had a real hit on its hands with the Nintendo Advantage, a chunky NES joystick that gave users that ‘arcade experience’ at home (minus the grumpy git at the change counter). Then a company called Camerica blundered into the danger zone with the Freedom Stick, a wireless controller that – let's be honest here – bears more than a passing resemblance to the Advantage. And as if that wasn't enough, Camerica also had a non-wireless lookey-likey – the wonderfully-named TurboTronic.

CHOICE QUOTE: None available. But “This looks uncommonly like the Nintendo Advantage!” was probably fairly common at the time.

THE RESULT: WIN. Camerica really learnt its lesson: in 1991 it began selling unlicensed NES games, and then got sued again for distributing the Game Genie cheat cart (see issue 103).



“Look Ma, no more wires.”



NAME/DATE SONGBOY/2000
PLAINTIFF NINTENDO
DEFENDANT SONGBOY.COM

DESCRIPTION: Silicon Valley media company SongBoy.com got a knock on its door from you-know-who when it created SongJones, an \$80 digital music player add-on for the Game Boy Pocket and Game Boy Color that allowed you to play music, read lyrics and watch ads. Nintendo alleged that using the ‘Boy’ suffix would make those poor innocent kids think this was an official product.

CHOICE QUOTE: “You go to school to learn how to play the corporate game. But the powers that be try to stop you at every turn,” Ron L. Jones, SongBoy.Com CEO of SongBoy.Com, in a press release.

THE RESULT: SETTLED. Thanks in no small part to outspoken equal rights campaigner Reverend Jesse Jackson, who helped mediate a deal, SongBoy changed its name to Song-Pro as a result – and then the iPod crushed every music-related gizmo on Planet Earth.

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SEE YOU IN COURT

11

NAME/DATE CYBERINTERNETWEB/2001
PLAINTIFF NINTENDO OF AMERICA
DEFENDANT STEFANI US ET AL

DESCRIPTION: The law-beam was targeted at web domains Nintendo wanted back (such as Pokemon-Trader.com and Growlithe.com) in this hefty lawsuit. It made Our Favourite Company one of the first to leap into action – like a crazy law-cat – after the passing of an Anti-Cybersquatting Consumer Protection Act in October 2000. A lesson for “web sites [that] are an obvious attempt to profit illegally from the success of Pokémon”, according to Nintendo legal counsel Richard Flamm. Profiting from Pokémon? Perish the thought.

CHOICE QUOTE: “Nintendo is trying to catch ‘em all. Internet squatters, that is.” – fun-nee Nintendo press release.

THE RESULT: WIN. Nintendo grabbed back 48 of the domains that they were after – and scored themselves a juicy cash bonus of \$560,000 in statutory damages.

NAME/DATE ATARI/1998
PLAINTIFF NINTENDO
DEFENDANT ATARI/TENGEN

DESCRIPTION: Another biggie. Atari believed that they had the rights to the console version of Tetris, and had already spent \$3 million making the carts and shipping 100,000 of them. But suddenly Nintendo claimed they owned the block-tumbler, and – holding hands with Tetris creator Alexei Pajitnov – forced Atari to the courts in an attempt to consign their “unauthorised” Tetris to the bin.

CHOICE QUOTE: “The Soviets had no idea that this game had been sublicensed to Tengen for production in video game systems. The Russians were astounded and very angry. They made it clear to Nintendo that the game was available for license.” – Nintendo lawyer John Kirby.

THE RESULT: WIN. A preliminary injunction from U.S. District Judge Fern Smith prohibited sales of Atari/Tengens’s Tetris – it’s now one of the rarest NES carts in existence.

Nintendo beats up Pokémon cybersquatters
 By Drew Cullen (drew.cullen@theringer.com.au)
 Published Saturday 14th October 2000 09:33 GMT

Nintendo is suing 55 domain name owners, whose sites “willfully infringe” its Pokémon trademarks.

The Japanese video games suit has filed what it calls a mass domain names suit with the Federal Court in Seattle. But it seems to be leaving Pokémon fan sites alone – the company says it has targeted “domain names that are attempting to profit from the overwhelming commercial success of Pokémon”.

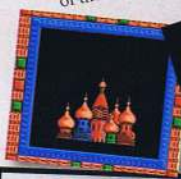


NAME/DATE ENTERBRAIN/2001
PLAINTIFF NINTENDO
DEFENDANT ENTERBRAIN

DESCRIPTION: Captain Copyright Infringement sailed into the courts again, as The Big N fought to prove that Enterbrain – the same people behind big-name Japanese games mag Famitsu – and Tirnanog had copied *Fire Emblem* for their PlayStation title *Tear Ring Saga*. Tirnanog’s founder had originally worked for Nintendo at Intelligent systems – his PlayStation game sold 350,000 copies in Japan (while plans for a US release stumbled after the lawsuit happened).

CHOICE QUOTE: “The original title of the game, *Emblem Saga*, had a similar name to the *Fire Emblem* series and was used deliberately for promotional purposes until it was changed a month-and-a-half before the release date.” – Nintendo

THE RESULT: LOSE. Tokyo Regional Court told Nintendo to clear off, deciding that no *Tear Ring Saga* game characters had been copied from *Fire Emblem*.



NAME/DATE SAMSUNG/1995
PLAINTIFF NINTENDO
DEFENDANT SAMSUNG

DESCRIPTION: When they’re not combating piracy with really tiny discs, Nintendo are often battling furiously for their precious circled-C in court. Samsung were a Nintendo partner, busily making Super Nintendo carts, when their friends dropped a present in their laps – an allegation that pirated copies of *Donkey Kong Country* had arisen due to Samsung “illicitly manufacturing ROM chips, or integrated circuits which contain Nintendo software”.

CHOICE QUOTE: “This is not a trivial exercise where we’ve come to an impasse in our negotiations and now. Let’s announce that we’re going to go to court”. It was a media mugging.” – David Harrah, Samsung spokesperson.

THE RESULT: SETTLED. After Samsung countersued for defamation, Nintendo agreed that Samsung provided the components but were not directly responsible for piracy.



NAME/DATE GENERAL ELECTRIC/1995
PLAINTIFF GENERAL ELECTRIC
DEFENDANT NINTENDO

DESCRIPTION: The biggest corporation in the whole wide world in 2004, General Electric beckoned Nintendo into the courts alleging that the NES, the Super Nintendo and the Game Boy trod on patents that they’d acquired with electronics company RCA – videogame signals. Nintendo thrilled the court with videos of their games in action to prove otherwise – although, unlike in our No.1 lawsuit, Shiggy was presumably too busy finishing the long-overdue Nintendo 64 to turn up wielding a joypad.

CHOICE QUOTE: “We bring good things to livin’, we bring good things to life.” – General Electric slogan (until recently).

THE RESULT: WIN. October 7th 1997 saw the courts give General Electric the big cardboard “DISMISSED!” sign.



NAME/DATE WIZARDS OF THE COAST/2003
PLAINTIFF WIZARDS OF THE COAST
DEFENDANT NINTENDO OF AMERICA ET AL

DESCRIPTION: Pokémon about co-operation and friendship? Ha. Ha. Ha. After a good few years of manufacturing and selling Pokémon Trading Cards, Wizards of the Coast pulled a Pokéball out its pocket that contained monster words like “patent infringement”, “breach of contract”, “misappropriation of trade secrets”, “tortious interference with a business relationship”, “unjust enrichment” and lots more. WoTC alleged that Pokémon USA had stolen at least nine key employees, then relied on their experience to ditch Wizards in March 2003 and sell the cards themselves.

CHOICE QUOTE: “Pokemon USA used the intervening period to undermine its relationship with Wizards, deprive Wizards of the benefit of its bargain and take its intellectual property, all to gain competitive advantage over its longtime partner” – the lawsuit.

THE RESULT: SETTLED. Terms of the settlement were not disclosed.



NINTENDO'S GREATEST LAWSUITS

I rest my case

6

NAME/DATE PLAINTIFF DEFENDANT
 ATARI GAMES/1998
 ATARI GAMES
 NINTENDO

DESCRIPTION: A \$5 billion spider's web of intertwining lawsuits that ensnared the two companies for five years. Atari Games (unrelated to Atari - confused already, eh?) alleged that Nintendo's control over NES licensees and cart-making factories gave it a vice-like market grip. It led to Nintendo putting the squeeze on the shops that sold Atari Games' (unlicensed) NES carts, Atari being banned from January '89's CES booth; a Nintendo countersuit, an Atari Games countersuit - and the discovery that Atari Games had tricked the US patent office into handing over proprietary info about the NES lock-out chip.

CHOICE QUOTE: "The counter-suit] is merely intended to throw more smoke on the situation... I don't see where it has changed the position of video game retailers. They're still worried about retaliation from Nintendo." - Dennis Wood, Atari Games.

THE RESULT: WIN. The \$5 billion lawsuit was apparently settled in Nintendo's favour in 1992 - although there are some decisions in Atari's favour along the way.

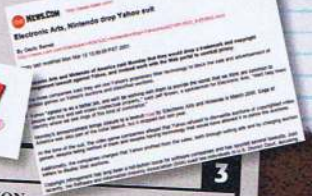


NAME/DATE PLAINTIFF DEFENDANT
 YAHOO!/2000
 NINTENDO
 YAHOO!

DESCRIPTION: The mighty web-search outfit found itself standing in the shadow of an angry triumvirate of game firms - EA, Sega, and Nintendo - for allegedly failing to bring the smack down on online auctions of pirated games. At the time, 90% of website auctions across the internet were offering pirated games (according to the Software and Information Industry Association), and the gang of three alleged that, by charging sellers and advertising the auctions, Yahoo! was actually profiting from piracy.

CHOICE QUOTE: "If the great potential of the Internet for our industry and our economy is to be fully realized, leading companies like Yahoo! must accept their responsibility to prevent illegal activity in cyberspace." - Richard Flamm, General Counsel for NoA

THE RESULT: DROPPED. Abandoned in 2001 when Yahoo agreed to "do a better job", in the words of EA spokesman Jeff Brown, by using filtered words to stop the sale of illegal software.



5

NAME/DATE PLAINTIFF DEFENDANT
 URI GELLER/2000
 URI GELLER
 NINTENDO

DESCRIPTION: Pokémon hit the headlines - for once - when spoon-botherer Uri Geller claimed that Pokémon number 41, Alakazam, infringed his copyright. You be the judge: Alakazam has three-toed horn-feet and a face that somewhat resembles a Dairylea Triangle; but is named 'Ungeller' in Japan and never seen without its spoons. Geller claimed substantial damages, after he'd had his attention drawn to an Alakazam trading card while Christmas shopping at a Pokémon Center in Japan.

CHOICE QUOTE: "[Uri was] simply bemused when the store manager rushed out from his office continuously bowing, as hundreds of children thrust Pokémon cards at him to autograph while chanting what sounded like Uri Geller." - The Guardian

THE RESULT: WIN. In the US at least, because the Los Angeles judge believed that "the vast majority of these cards have been sold in Japan, rather than the US".



NAME/DATE PLAINTIFF DEFENDANT
 ALPEX/1994
 ALPEX COMPUTER CORPORATION
 NINTENDO

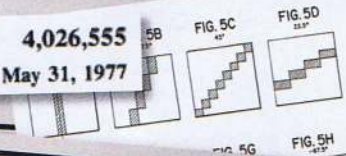
DESCRIPTION: They sound like they should have been making electric apples, but Alplex actually owned a 1977 patent - referred to as '555' - that protected removable cartridges and "rotating images on the screen". Unlike Atari and Sega, Nintendo rejected a flat fee to license Alplex's technology (\$400,000 in Nintendo's case), and choose to see the image-rotaters in court.

CHOICE QUOTE: "Alplex says Nintendo sold \$3.5 billion of game consoles and cartridges that infringed on its patent, and Alplex will seek 10 percent to 12 percent of those sales as damages." - Internet Patent News Service.

THE RESULT: WIN ON APPEAL. Unprecedented. Initially, Alplex won, and the jury awarded a staggering \$208 million in damages - by 2001, this was still the biggest patent-related damages ever awarded in the history of the courts. How did Nintendo like them apples? It didn't matter - the US Federal Court later reversed the verdict.

United States Patent [19]
 Kirschner et al.

[11] 4,026,555
 [45] May 31, 1977



NAME/DATE PLAINTIFF DEFENDANT
 NEW YORK/1991
 STATE OF NEW YORK
 NINTENDO

DESCRIPTION: You know you're unpopular when an entire American state is against you. The State Attorney General of NY - an area that had been an '80s testbed for the original NES back when Nintendo was preparing its assault on parents' wallets - accused Nintendo of monopolising. The allegations included fixing a 'minimum' \$99.99 for a Nintendo Entertainment System - by giving the cold shoulder to retailers who chopped entire cents off the price.

CHOICE QUOTE: "You have some problems. Your sales guys may have gone a little too far." attorney to Nintendo, quoted in Game Over.

THE RESULT: LOSE. Nintendo had to dish out \$25 million worth of \$5 coupons, redeemable against Nintendo products, to anyone who'd bought into the Nintendo dream between June 1988 and December 1990. Quite the 'punishment'.

NAME/DATE PLAINTIFF DEFENDANT
 MCA/1983
 MCA
 NINTENDO

DESCRIPTION: Laid bare in David Sheff's unsurpassed Nintendo history, Game Over, this battle between all-powerful movie conglomerate MCA and the then Not-All-That-Big N is the famous Nintendo court case of them all. MCA dangled the word 'lawsuit' in front of Nintendo attorney (and, later, senior vice president and chairman) Howard Lincoln after deciding Donkey Kong resembled the long-lost copyright-infringing brother of King Kong. Lincoln chose to take MCA on, and the ever publicity-shy Shiggy was called upon to demonstrate the game in court.

CHOICE QUOTE: "We must win." - Hiroshi Yamauchi, quoted in Game Over.

THE RESULT: WIN. Unexpected, and legendary. Not only did the judge dismiss claims of copyright infringement - but Nintendo lawyer John Kirby proved that MCA didn't actually own the copyright to King Kong. Nintendo + \$1.8 million damages = happy Nintendo.



EXTENDED PLAY



METROID PRIME 2 ECHOES

We've bounty hunted the coolest tips, cheats and hints ever!



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Last issue we told you everything you need to know about energy tanks, beam expansions and power bombs. This month, feast your greedy eyes on expert boss strategies, sequence breaks, crazy glitches and a massive helping of Action Replay Codes. Get involved now!



WHAT WE SAID IN ISSUE 101!

As the game progresses you get a gradual feeling of empowerment as you become more familiar with your weapons, skills and the growing environment – and your pride swells as you overcome the game's tougher mental challenges.

NGC
94

Secret Worlds in the *Metroid* series are actually empty voids in which the room sits (inside the game's programming). To enter a Secret World you need to exit the room's boundary so you can see the room from behind the walls. It won't be easy, but with patience and practice we will teach you everything you need to know to help you push the boundaries of *Metroid Prime 2* far beyond what the developer intended. But before you begin experimenting inside these Secret Worlds, take the time to



familiarise yourself with the techniques below to ensure that you move around safely without causing any issues such as sticking in walls permanently or crashing your Cube.

WALLCRAWLING

This is the act of moving around the scenery of the room to traverse the play area quickly. Wallcrawling usually



consists of you jumping either on the roof of the room (which is the quickest way to travel in Secret Worlds), or by jumping over the edges of the walls in the area if the room doesn't have a roof.

FLOATING

If you fall just under the room, all is not lost. You can abuse a safety feature of the *Prime* series to your advantage. If you stand just away from the room and let the controller go, you will start to float upwards. You can float up as high as you wish, but remember that this is a very slow process and can take a while. If the gun starts to judder up and down, then you won't be able to float, so move to a spot where your gun just sways as per normal. However, if you are below a room NEVER morph into a ball! Samus will rapidly fall into oblivion and you will have to reset your Cube.

RE-ENTERING ROOMS

Once you've learned the art of how to wallcrawl and float, the next step is to understand how the rooms work to be able to re-enter them successfully. The game will load an adjoining room's invisible structure first and then load the graphics later. If you're on the roof of a Secret World, you can run over the roof of the room you want to re-enter and swiftly morph into it. Very quickly un-morph and you'll be standing in mid-air, now walk towards the back of the door of the adjoining room to see the graphics load around you! You're now back in the game proper.

Think you've got all that? These are the basics that you'll need to help you move around Secret Worlds successfully. Just bear in mind that *Metroid Prime 2 Echoes* is a very sensitive beast and can crash easily if you're not careful. So go slowly to prevent this from happening.



TIPS EXTRA

■ Sweet gaming help is at hand from Action Replay codes, Dr Kitts' Clinic and Readers' Top Ten Tips p90



LETTERS

■ Leon S. Kennedy sets out on his scariest mission to date – guest editing our letters page. p98



SKILL CLUB

■ It's back! Test your gaming skill once again – and get a certificate to prove your gaming prowess! p94



MADAME G

■ It's your last chance to find out what Madame G predicts – we've fired her for being rubbish. p102



GAME ON

■ Squeezing every last drop of delicious gaming juice from your favourite games. p96



DIRECTORY

■ Before you splash out on a game, check this list of the best 100 games that money can buy. p108

EXPERT BOSS STRATEGIES

The baddest bosses beaten to a pulp with ease.



BOOST GUARDIAN

As soon as the fight starts, use two charged Light Beam shots and he will change into his boost form. If you jump onto one of the four pillars, the boss will destroy them – hopefully dropping ultra health – and he'll also revert back into his red puddle form. Nine bombs in this guise will make him reform and so continue with the charged Light Beam shots. Rinse, wash and repeat this until the Guardian dies.



QUADRAXIS

Ignore Quaddy's feet and aim two charged Light Beam shots at his knees as they glow up at the joints. As soon as all of his legs go, switch to the Echo Visor and lock onto the antenna in the middle of the body. Shoot off normal missiles until it's destroyed, stun the head with a charged Light Beam shot and then lock onto the antennas on

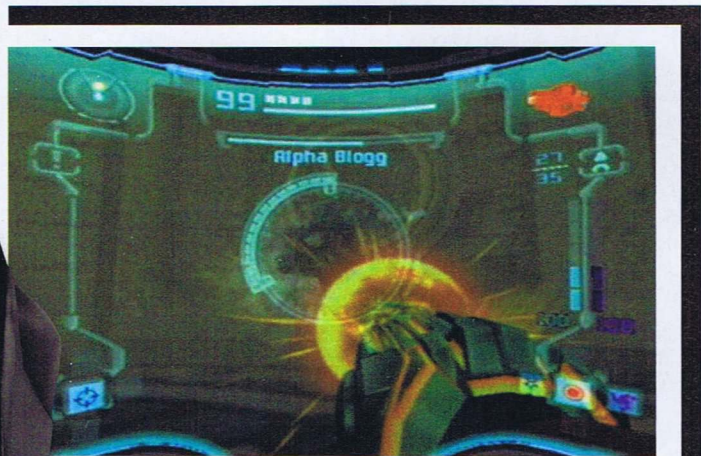
the head section, using one charged and two single Light Beam shots to destroy each head antenna. Watch where Quaddy's head moves in the final stage and boost over to the closest point – for example, boost off, hold R to latch onto his head and finish him off with a bomb in each slot on his head.

reach the bottom ledge near the bomb slot, get to the higher ledge to the right where it's safe. When the boss comes near, move out left and bomb him twice, then twice more straight afterwards just to make sure. Jump onto the ledge and bomb the slot to access the final room.

Room 4: Work your way from bottom to top, bearing in mind that the boss moves slower when he has a green shield around him (which takes four hits). You can continuously re-bomb the boss on the lower level if you need to buy more time for the upper slots.

DARK SAMUS FORMS 3 AND 4

Use Annihilator shots to rapidly get Dark Samus down to 75% health and into her final form where she goes into 'bubble mode' for much of the fight (if you don't have enough Light/Dark ammo, just use charged power beam shots). For the final form, you need to use the Power Beam's Charge Beam and a few Super Missiles. When Dark Samus rises into her bubble, dodge the missile attacks until Dark Samus generates the snowflake-like phazon particles and charge your Power Beam while manually locking your view upwards with L. Catch the phazon particles on the charge itself until your gun glows blue, and shoot the phazon back at Dark Samus. When Dark Samus drops to the ground, charge a Super Missile and just after the shield disappears, quickly fire off the Super Missile. This should force Dark Samus right back into her bubble mode, saving time. Repeat this until the evil bubble is history!

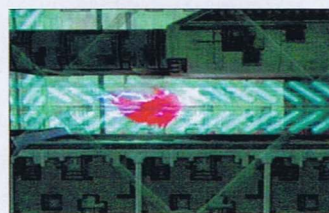


ALPHA BLOGG

As soon as the match starts, charge up your beam and when the Alpha Blogg charges at you, fire off a Super Missile and dash to your left. Now shoot off a fully charged Power Beam shot while he's stuck, to make him instantly charge again after he frees himself. Fire off another Super Missile and repeat this process until he is almost dead. Finish Blogg off with a charged Dark Beam shot if you run out of Super Missiles.

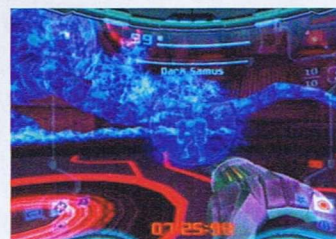
SPIDER GUARDIAN

Room 1: Hit the boss with two bombs as he passes to stun him then head right, double Bomb Jump up and to the right to activate the bomb slot and move on to Room 2.



Room 2: Boost all the way to the right and land on the ledge up here. Wait for the boss to make his way to the point where he's just about to come round the corner. Now, drop down and drop your bombs. Repeat this until the Spider Guardian turns green, boost left and get into the bomb slot to activate Room 3.

Room 3: Boost from right to left, land on the uppermost ledge, drop down, go left then down and right. When you





SEQUENCE BREAKS

Getting round tricky situations...



SKIP THE MISSILE LAUNCHER

A simple trick – with a bit of practice. When you reach Temple Assembly Site at the start of the game, kill the splinters and make your way left to the pillar that you'd normally Space Jump onto to reach the ledge that leads to the missile expansion. Walk to the back of it (towards the red missile door) and you'll spot a ledge that leads up to it.

Run at this ledge and when you hit it, jump up and the Ghetto Jump will kick in. You should land on top of the pillar, enabling you to collect the missile expansion before the launcher itself. You can use the missiles just as if you had collected the missile launcher, thus actually skipping the hassle of having to collect the missile launcher at all!



SKIP THE ECHO VISOR

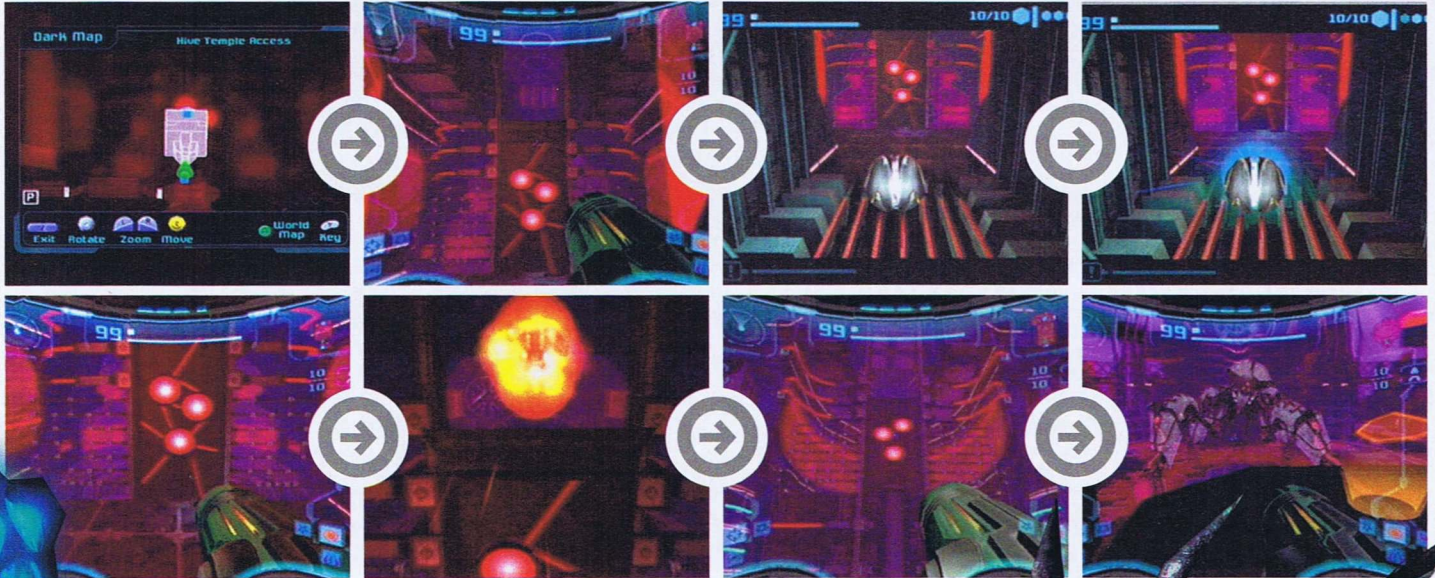
Once you enter Hive Dynamo Access and you spot the Ing Warrior in the room, lure it to where the Light Beacon is and approach it so it reforms again at this spot (but don't shoot the beacon!). Space Jump on top of the Ing Warrior and then Space Jump straight up and slightly forwards at the peak to enter the room's Secret World, where you

should land on a solid ledge in the roof. From here, Space Jump up and to the right and morph where you will stick in the wall, so hold up and start laying bombs to Wall Jump upwards. When you reach the top, un-morph and run towards the door you just came from.

Turn around again and run towards your target Hive Gyro Chamber and

just after you pass over the end of the ceiling of Hive Dynamo Access, morph. After a second of falling, very quickly un-morph to prevent falling below the room then turn around and walk

towards (then away from) the Light door, making the room load its graphics and you can proceed as normal. If the game forces you to re-morph automatically very quickly un-morph to prevent yourself from falling below the room and into oblivion. Congratulations! You've successfully skipped the Echo Visor!



SKIP ALL ING HIVE KEYS

To successfully skip the Ing Hive Keys and fight Quadaxis, enter the room with the barrier that normally requires the three keys, go to the door you've just come from, morph while the door is still on the screen (but is in an open state), drop a bomb and when you get

propelled upwards, un-morph.

The key to success here is that when done correctly you should instantly un-morph without seeing Samus's usual un-morph animation and once this happens remember to immediately perform a Space Jump and Screw Attack over

the barrier. If you get the un-morph animation then the trick won't work, as it's the instant un-morph that enables you to get the extra height as well as enabling you to continue jumping again.



POWER BOMB EXPANSION AFTER DARK SUIT

This is currently one of the hardest sequence breaks to perform in *Metroid Prime 2*, due to the fact that you'll be traversing through an invisible room. So taking the time to learn the layout of Feeding Pit and where its Power Bomb expansion sits would be advantageous.

Enter Feeding Pit and get onto the second pillar making sure you have destroyed all enemies nearby. Now, look over the edge to where the crystal is that you had to shoot to lower it, and lock onto it. In one quick motion, shoot the crystal with a charged Light Beam shot and very quickly move left to the opposite edge of the pillar, so you're

almost falling off it. The pillar should now rise all the way back up to the top. Look to your left and you'll see the gap in the ceiling, to the back and left is a dip and that is where you need to aim for. Space Jump out to that and onto the roof of the room. Head towards Feeding Pit Access where it will load in front of your eyes, so keep going forward until you reach the back of that room and turn around.

Feeding Pit should have disappeared off your screen now, meaning that it has successfully been removed from the Cube's memory. If you are running low on health, you can jump off the

roof and down to the light beacon that extends below the floor of Feeding Pit Access to recharge your health. Space Jump back onto the side of the wall and Bomb Jump up to reach the roof again. Now aim for the Light Door leading back into Feeding Pit and swiftly perform the next set of requirements (as it's here where you'll need to move around quickly in an invisible room). Just after you pass over the Light door, morph, push forwards and un-morph again about two seconds later, which should put you below the dark water in the invisible room (resulting in your screen getting purple water over it).

Now quickly move towards the cubby hole holding the Power Bomb expansion, collect it and turn right around and rush straight ahead to the ledges that normally lead out of the dark water. If you can't jump out of the section where the water is, the room has loaded the collision for the dark water and you'll be stuck, so be quick. Ghetto Jump up the ledges and jump out onto dry land and into the spot where the closest light beacon is. Once fully recharged, make your way to the light door of Feeding Pit Access and the graphics will load around you in Feeding Pit enabling you to proceed as normal.

GLITCHES

Lapping up those loopholes...



101% GLITCH

When you first enter GFMC Compound, face the side of the mound so that the red missile door is on your left. There's a dark section of rock that's shaped like a boot, so step back from it and take a run and aim just to the right of the toe of the 'boot'. Perform a Ghetto Jump up and to the left of the ledge and push forwards at the top of the jump. You should land on top of the ledge.

Drop down at the yellow crate that holds the missile launcher. Destroy it,

collect the launcher and make your way back towards the door you just came through. You will trigger off the normal cut-scene where the yellow crate will be in the movie behind Samus. Destroy the regenerated crate again and collect the launcher once more for ten missiles in total. If you collect every other item in the game as per usual, the end screen will read 101%!



MULTIPLAYER CANCELLATION GLITCH

With two controllers plugged in, go to the multiplayer screen and make sure both players are active. At the same time, press Start on controller one while pressing B on controller two. You should proceed to the next screen as you normally would. Now, try and press B on controller two and if nothing happens then you've successfully performed the glitch.

Start a match and you will soon notice that you are in fact playing a multiplayer map on your own! The timer and score counter will look funny as they will be right in the middle of your screen. If you try and grapple onto a grapple point you will crash the Gamecube, forcing you to turn it off and then on again to get the game back to normal.

MAIN REACTOR SECRET WORLD

Once you have the spider ball, make your way to Main Reactor (where you fought Dark Samus for the first time) and head up to the Light door which has the dead Luminoth slumped in front of it. Jump on top of the Luminoth's head, turn around

120 degrees to face the corner and Space Jump up onto the top edge. Turn right 90 degrees and space jump up and to the right so you go over the roof. Congratulations, you've entered the game's easiest Secret World, where you can practice wallcrawling, floating and re-entering rooms with minimum hassle.



ACTION REPLAY CHEAT CODES

Got an Action Replay disc? Then check out these top *Metroid* codes.



This Code Must Be On (1)

05FB-7BH7-2RM94
092K-1RWC-E1EKA
BGHB-4RWC-781V3
356M-Z1CN-NMM7W
5ZW4-PG70-JE0UM
RYHU-MTF0-6WEFA
7810-27Y8-4QGMM

This Code Must Be On (2)

3H62-X9K3-8UF2T
6F6N-9VHF-VPJVO
0COW-GQ2E-K8PUC
24MT-QMTG-46EWF
2TBK-YG13-X62XT

Moon Jump (Hold B)
26E1-JWRB-CGU2H
0CNG-CGJP-DAPU1
H4C4-2WQF-B3B6X

Infinite Health
CQNW-ANWY-QGYAU
URU2-J3J1-T2CHJ
PUZT-1392-BTUYW

Maximum Energy Tanks
WBY0-0K30-PBMVU
VYNY-8Q18-ZRAKM
1H7Q-82HU-7M5C5

Maximum Missiles
28HD-EFDJ-5PTGV
PKAG-J4PQ-VBZ1C

Infinite Missiles
P67R-JRYP-TE39Z
ACEF-YAMY-TQ90M

Have Charge Beam
EUK9-8ATU-G63ZJ
Q95M-5MUQ-71R75

EK4T-Q3MG-JYE33

Have Dark Beam
5B17-0M2A-X0KEJ
MMUC-HYZB-V9XYT
3J02-UHP0-WGH3G

Have Light Beam
BUHK-WJ7J-QNEC1
6YJN-X1RH-K6J01
F32R-J39F-9FJ4M

Have Annihilator
Q69H-UTXG-7N453
B2QA-QRM8-2CEQD
YWKZ-PUB6-YW13R

Have Super Missile
UQEE-AW7B-Y1TF5
BEAH-J7Y0-GWXQD
J0JP-K42H-X9JYM

Have Sonic Boom
R5GB-0CEU-KCVJG
ZHEN-X4HQ-JCA1P
4ENS-PAGT-XWA64

Infinite Dark Beam Ammo
RXEW-XDTD-KXPZJ
B7XP-NDPM-MF4BY

Infinite Light Beam Ammo
7CZ3-PJ65-06KP2
WTXQ-6N6X-0GU26

Have Darkburst
VJAV-Q5CA-M7N7U
VQN5-NFJB-MU0G2
3T8G-RK5Q-NFHG0

Have Sunburst
CFMQ-TWQ4-9Z65V
X77R-FVJK-G8WR0

WTK2-4GWQ-M6BMM

Have Combat Visor
VNGA-XVRF-ZR17W
JTJY-MWNE-3FYXJ
5821-XQ62-44WYQ

Have Scan Visor
RPGE-A9X8-DZH7E
RA62-4UF9-P9ZF1
7K61-R9Y2-YHXGP
Have Dark Visor
AHOR-XEHA-0W8WF
CQPB-VV9F-UHF9E
W9NZ-SURG-MW2QW

Have Echo Visor
ZYA6-QGCH-VUG5
TK98-A9PT-NMRVV
EEDW-56HY-74VTW

Have Dark Suit
YRMJ-RAN9-W5CQ5
HZF0-B575-32RCM
DUG7-1P00-GB36X



Have Light Suit
6W6B-YU7F-MYGW9
E336-HBK3-HG93R
Z5CV-Z5Q5-REF01

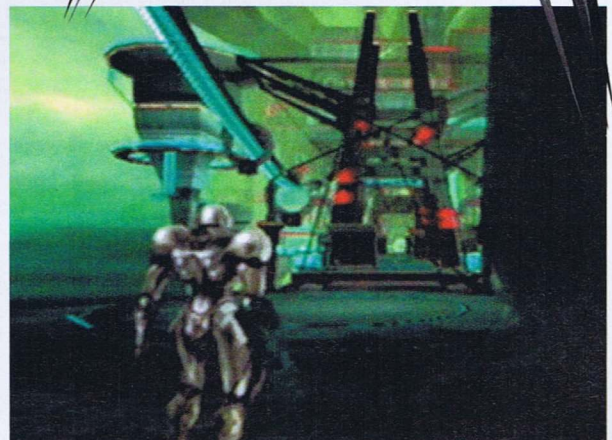
Have Gravity Boost
2V4R-9XVW-P36ZD
QW9-C06RK-9F6J5
30V0-31NT-73Q4W

Have Screw Attack
5U21-D60R-WV40V
QB3T-YA90-MFYW1
G08H-G7ZR-26U2J
Have Seeker Missile
Y4MR-9543-WAT5C
QCHW 0G54 B01RE
F98P UTHM 4EU9P

Have Morph Ball Power Bomb
P76X-XJYU-8ECZY
3NB3-QX9V-69JV9
N7WJ-E2A2-HZF9P

Have Space Jump Boots
5HT9-07CX-KNHEW
N6AU-W690-TCA9J
XAWW-WV13-23RWF

Have Grapple Beam
EH2Q-Q6NT-G8NVU
ECH4-ECWM-WW8R4
Q202-Q4HD-11PVG



**NGC GUARANTEE
TIPS, CHEATS
PROBLEMS SOLVED
EVERYTHING
YOU NEED!**

THE TIPS YOU NEED FOR THE GAMES YOU'RE PLAYING...

TIPS EXTRA



CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR

CHEAT MODE

Successfully complete the game under the easy difficulty setting to unlock the 'Big Head', 'Ricochet', 'Head Shot', and 'Ricochet All' cheat options. Successfully complete the game under the normal difficulty setting to unlock the 'Shrink Shot' and 'Dead Eye' cheats. Successfully complete the game under the hard difficulty setting to unlock the 'Big 'N' Small' cheat.

THE GIANT APPLE

Start the Operation Saturn mission. Back up slightly and turn to your left. Find the tree near the road that has no leaves. Face that tree, then drive to the right side of it, going off road. Turn left and follow the dirt path in the snow. After the path turns, look in the distance for something odd. Drive towards it to reach a giant hollow apple, with a UFO inside.

VIEWTIFUL JOE 2

CHAMBERS

Unlock the following chambers by completing the indicated task.

- 1: Complete Reel 1, Act 4.
- 2: Complete slippery floor scene in Reel 5 Act 1 with four lives remaining.
- 3: Get killed by a Rocker.
- 4: Complete any scene with just one life remaining.



- 5: Clear Reel 2, Act 3.
- 6: Complete Chamber 1.
- 7: Get 250 Film Canisters in any Reel.
- 8: Get a game over and do not reset.
- 9: Complete Reel 3, Act 1.
- 10: Complete Chamber 1 and enter the bonus scene in Reel 4, Act 2.
- 11: Complete Chamber 2 with at least an "A" rank.
- 12: Get a "V" time rank in five consecutive scenes.
- 13: Use only one life in a scene.
- 14: Complete Reel 4, Act 2.
- 15: Get a "Rainbow V" rank on the UFO fire scene in Reel 4, Act 1.
- 16: Complete the last scene in Reel 2, Act 1 without using VFX.
- 17: Complete Chamber 8.
- 18: Complete Chamber 9 and buy the Sliding power-up.
- 19: Defeat Long John in Reel 3, Chapter 2 with at least an "A" rank.
- 20: Complete the kitchen scene in Reel 1, Act 3 with a "Rainbow V" rank.
- 21: Complete Chambers 3 and 12.
- 22: Complete Chamber 13.
- 23: Complete Reel 7, Act 3 with over 200,000 Viewtifuls saved.
- 24: Get Joe thrown out of the bathroom ten times in the Monorail scene in Reel 3, Act 1.
- 25: Do not use VFX after the gear scene ends in Reel 3, Act 2 until the

- next one starts.
- 26: Complete Chamber 17 and Story mode under the kids difficulty setting.
 - 27: Complete Chamber 18 and buy the Redhot Kick power-up.
 - 28: Complete the switch scene in Reel 7, Act 1 with over 30 seconds remaining.
 - 29: Collect all the Film Canisters in Reel 5, Chapter 1.
 - 30: Get a "Rainbow V" rank in five consecutive scenes.
 - 31: Use the Ukemi move successfully ten times in Reel 7, Act 1.
 - 32: Complete Reel 1, Act 4.
 - 33: Complete Chamber 24.
 - 34: Complete Reel 1, Act 4 without getting any Film Canisters.
 - 35: Complete story mode under the Adult difficulty setting.
 - 36: Complete Chamber 27 and complete story mode under the Kids difficulty setting.
 - 37: Complete Chamber 6, complete story mode under the Kids difficulty setting, and get an overall "D" rank three times.

PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN

RAYMAN FIST

This is located in the Catacombs. Go to where you have to pull three stones out of the wall to raise the central area. Pull the first, go to the stairway, turn right, run on two walls and jump to the bar on the right side. Swing from the bar and follow the path and make a quick left. The Fist is in a weapon rack to the left. The Fist



never breaks, attacks rapidly, but it doesn't do a lot of damage and if you throw it it's gone forever.

GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT

CHEATS

UNLOCK 'ONE LIFE' MODE

Complete the single-player Campaign mode on the 'Hard' difficulty setting to unlock the 'One Life' mode of play.

UNLOCK MULTIPLAYER SKINS

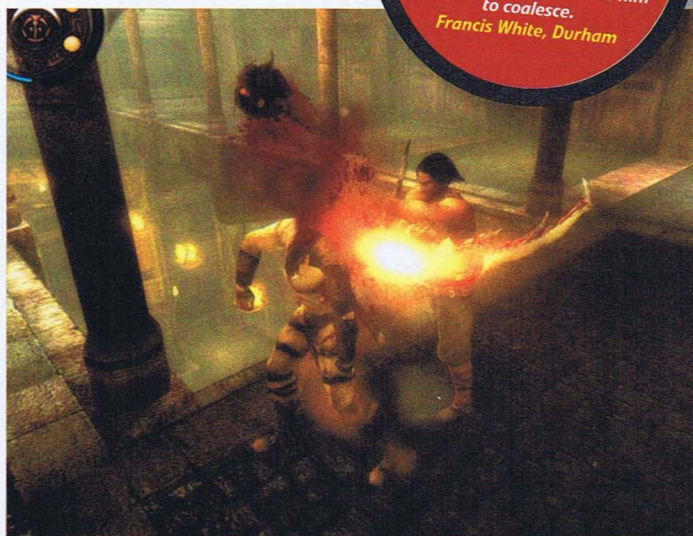
On the Extras screen, press Down, Left, Up, Left, Right, Down, Left, and Up to unlock the bonus skins for Multiplayer play.

UNLOCK PAINTBALL MODE

On the Extras screen, press Right, Left, Right, Left, Down, Down, Up, and Up to unlock the Paintball mode.

**NGC
READER
KNOWLEDGE!**

In Metroid Prime 2: Echoes, remember that when fighting the Boost Guardian it's essential to lay plenty of bombs when he's in his liquid form; the detonations will force him to coalesce.
Francis White, Durham





READERS' TOP TEN TIPS

Can you out-tip Tips Extra? Send in your hint-tastic helps and we'll 'sort out' the top tipster with a mystery prize from Geraint's 'special drawer'. Chances are, it'll be a game.



1. POKÉMON FIRE RED / LEAF GREEN

A Breed Apart

If you want to trade a rare Pokémon but only have one of it left and really don't want to lose it (like Aerodactyl), breed the Pokémon with Ditto. You'll have the Pokémon at level 5 and can trade it without losing the original.

Cedric Van Rossem, Belgium

2. ADVANCE WARS 2

War funds

To quickly build up money, don't waste your time doing Spann Island; just play the first level on Normal Campaign, then start a new campaign, wash and repeat.

Joel Mayner, Stockwell

3. ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER

Double trouble

Equip and use the magic armour and grandma's soup simultaneously – your double power won't go away when hit.

Jonathan Trier Brikner, Denmark

4. HARVEST MOON: IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE

Milky milky

If you're friends with Grant, go into the Inn when he is there and talk to him. He might challenge you to a milk-drinking contest!

Thomas Bignold, Dorset

5. PIKMIN 2

Monster 'min

On the Awakening Wood, go to the bridge – you should see a plant pot there. Throw a few Pikmin into it and a golden beetle will appear – kill it for more pellets.

Ryan Dow, Alloa

6. SECOND SIGHT

Nine tenths of the law

If you're using possession and leaving your host if he's still alive, he'll set off the alarm if he finds the bodies of the people you made him kill. So take out as many guys as you can, bar one, and then kill the

guy you're controlling. Maximum carnage, no alarm.

Alex Maunder, email

7. TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4 (GBA)

Skater boy

When you're about to do a wallride, do a body varial (L+Down) before you hit the wall. The skater then does it upsidedown!

Gilles Reuse, Belgium

8. METAL GEAR SOLID

Radio static

Hold up any guard from behind, shoot his radio, one arm and one leg. Let him turn around and he'll try to call for help but can't because the radio's busted! He'll limp away searching for help.

Gordon Yeung, Cardiff

9. SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

For fox sake

On the character select screen, select Fox, keep your cursor over him and rapidly tap A to hear the announcer repeat what appears to be a rather unsavoury word.

Josiah Mainwaring, Mynydd Isa

10. THE SIMS: BUSTIN' OUT

Dudley Do-Right

To get through Dudley's party, move to his house and order a pizza. Make sure there are enough chairs for everyone. Go to Joanne's gym and visit; eat and play the games console with a lot of people. Then make sure to talk to each person individually. You'll win a car!

Colm Laverty, County Armagh

TIPS EXTRA

The way to ensure gaming success



Not so much a doctor, really. He's almost the opposite.

Dr Kitts,

I require some hefty gaming help. I simply can't find the third Dark Temple key in Torvus Bog in *Metrod Prime 2: Echoes*, which is driving me absolutely round the twist. It's not the easiest game in the world in the first place, but I simply have no idea where to look for it. Please help before I smash my Gamecube into a million shards of purple plastic.

Daniel Forzone, Surrey

Dr Kitts slowly sits down, takes a sip of warm sweet tea and starts his stopwatch.

Right, then Daniel, the key – ha! – to this is the fight with the Alpha Blogg boss. Seen that yet? Once you've beaten the Alpha Blogg – below the Hydrodynamo Shaft – leave the room in which you've fought it and just before you get to the high steps that lead you back up to dry land, as it were, turn around and with the newly-acquired gravity boost you can jump up onto a ledge where a dark portal awaits. Activate it, step through and hey presto! There's your missing key.

Dr Kitts

I love small plant-men but *Pikmin 2* is threatening to turn my love into hate. I'm on the Perplexing Pool

level and there's a puzzle involving four pressure-pad style blocks, but for the life of me I can't work out how to do it – I think that it must eventually raise me up so I can get a bit of treasure. Help!

Ellen Thorpe, Felixstowe

Dr Kitts Throws open the window and exhorts his winged monkeys to "fly, my pretties!"

It's a tricky one, alright, but the application of simple logic should see you through. Failing that... throw 20 Pikmin onto the far right, pad along with Olimar. Switch to Louie, throwing 21 Pikmin onto the second from the left block to raise the one that Olimar is on. Olimar (with his 20 Pikmin) should then drop down to the next pad, followed by Louie weighing down the left-most pad to raise the new one occupied by Olimar. After Olimar and his 20 Pikmin drop down to the second from the left block, Louie should take the Olimar and throw enough onto the right-most block to raise the block occupied by Olimar so he can drop down onto the left-most block. This means that Louie just needs to throw Pikmin onto the second from the right block to raise the left-most block, allowing Olimar to take the 20 Pikmin to get the treasure. Easy. Sort of.

CODE BANK

Got an Action Replay? Whack these codes into it.



PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN

Master code
QR4T-KW7F-DBR2Y
ME9Q-UHZH-AMTQV

Infinite Sands of Time
Y7RF-YFJ8-KFUP8
20DX-PVB4-DQBUM

Infinite health
VFC1-1Q0Y-Q6WQN
A1PK-NW9Q-W53YV

Unlock all extras
P85D-DG2Q-Z5GK2
FQ97-1C2P-2ET20



CALL OF DUTY FINEST HOUR

Master code
Q8FK-H3F0-2Z202
0E3W-FRQN-NKY4A

Infinite health
4W24-YTX2-TC2N2
J7ZN-C1FR-51W8W
NJRJ-BBBT-70JG8

Unlock all cheats
23H8-JF6X-QBB7D
1VVY-97BG-JPRBA

Unlock all Making of... movies
ABK6-69F8-9JN47
D56J-HQYM-V7065



GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT

First section levels open
D1H1-FKPH-X867D
FKN9-83CM-TBG21

Master code
1P2P-ATQQ-HEU6Z
VU78-Y1ZB-M84BN
N18G-1N2T-Z0MMT
0JRN-71AZ-CTTWN
UFMZ-GNHU-V4E16
UY49-HRMU-1N6JW

Never lose health
BNAP-AH3Q-BTJ2A
NW8Q-F6XB-D8X5Q

Never lose armour
QB1H-8CF2-59KQB
DNTY-GBHF-BH1HW

Never lose eye power
6QT5-WJ3Y-ZWQJ5
M37Q-XD3E-1R1D0

Infinite ammo
ZY5N-142Y-Q7DD0
2GBQ-1R3F-JYM03

Stupid enemies
AK3X-HE81-M0074
RPCR-AC3U-MKYUR

Enemies can't throw grenades
PETZ-ZPV9-31VDY
A6GD-H55H-226DB

Unlock multiplayer maps
JF0E-7YQB-4K8JM
DAD6-32Y8-7UWEH

Big arms
UTHM-Y4FH-CXZ93
Y8T5-P4J3-4JVXZ

Can skip intro movies
VG30-0998-YBH2C
YNKX-ZN1V-5W77R

Unlock all missions
(Use this with an empty profile)
HTWF-E2X1-2WUMU9
PB02-K3BK-19HWH

Disable shadows
4D5P-GH5J-224RK
AF16-0JD9-ZFV1Y



YOUR TOP TIPS SHARE THE KNOWLEDGE AND BAG YOURSELF A PRIZE...

HERE'S MY TOP TIP...

IT'S FOR

AND THIS IS HOW IT WORKS

Name

.....

Address

.....

.....

Postcode

Send to:

TIPS EXTRA, **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW
or e-mail ngc@futurenet.co.uk

If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room. Or just buy two copies of the mag. That way you can keep a spare copy in the khazi, to help focus your mind.

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Tsunami Earthquake Appeal has been the fastest growing charity appeal in Britain, raising £200 million.

DEC and its member agencies are immensely grateful to the public for their overwhelming response. With your help they are now tackling a huge humanitarian relief operation. They are in the areas hardest hit distributing clean water, food and medicine.

This level of generosity will mean that work can be carried out beyond the survival stage, and help rebuild lives and livelihoods over the years to come.

Members are: ActionAid, British Red Cross, CAFOD, Concern, Christian Aid, CARE International UK, Help the Aged, Merlin, Oxfam, Save the Children, Tearfund, World Vision.

For further information: www.dec.org.uk

Disasters Emergency Committee
Working Together

SKILL CLUB 2005



It's back, back, **BACK!** But have you got the skills to join the club?



'm The Best is dead. But Skill Club is back, bigger and better than ever – and we want you to prove your gaming prowess to us.

Longtime readers may remember Skill Club from ages past – we've run several Skill Clubs, starting way back when **NGC** was N64 Magazine. It's long past time that it was resurrected, so here it is – 20 challenges so fiendish that only the very finest gamers will be in with a chance of completing them. And this is where you come in.

How It Works

We've conjured up 20 tricky challenges, and you can tackle any or all of them that you like. If you complete three, you'll gain a place in the Bronze league; complete seven, and you'll be honoured with a placing in the Silver league. Ten challenges completed means you'll be entered into the Gold league, and a mighty 14 proves that you're the best of the best and are worthy of entry to the Platinum league. You'll get a certificate for each league that you place in, and if you somehow manage to beat all 20 challenges you'll get a special Skill Club Guru award and certificate, plus something nice that we've got lying around. So what are you waiting for?



THE RULES

- Three completed challenges earns a Bronze placing; seven a Silver; 10 a Gold; and 14 a Platinum.
- You can enter any challenges you like.
- Each challenge must be accompanied by either photographic or videotaped proof.
- Use of cheat codes, Action Replays and the like is strictly prohibited – cheaters will be subjected to ritual humiliation for all to see.
- You are allowed to submit extra challenges at a later date to increase your standing – you don't have to do them all at once.
- There are only 15 challenges here – we'll be adding five more over the coming months to take advantage of games such as *Timesplitters: Future Perfect* and *Resident Evil 4*.
- If you want your tapes etc back, please include a stamped, addressed envelope.

● NGC would like to offer a thousand thanks to the following members of the Games Radar forums for their contributions to Skill Club 2005: Pell, Rex_McGee, TS2Master, tnman, LewisVoigtlanderFord, Andrew Mills, Drumstick, Plasticcoated, Thanatos, Vyper, Lenty, sntaa, Adam Pollard, and Falcon. Cheers!

NGC SKILL CLUB ENTRY FORM



Hello there,

Completed enough challenges to earn a certificate? Tick them off here and send your completed form plus video/photo proof to:
Skill Club 2005,
NGC Magazine,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath
BA1 2BW

A <i>F-Zero GX</i>	K <i>Tales of Symphonia</i>
B <i>Super Smash Bros Melee</i>	L <i>Freedom Fighters</i>
C <i>Pikmin 2</i>	M <i>The Legend of Zelda Wind Waker</i>
D <i>Soul Calibur</i>	N <i>Timesplitters 2</i>
E <i>Metroid Prime 2 Echoes</i>	O <i>Eternal Darkness</i>
F <i>Resident Evil</i>	P <i>TBA</i>
G <i>Spider-Man 2</i>	Q <i>TBA</i>
H <i>1080 Snowboarding</i>	R <i>TBA</i>
I <i>Donkey Konga</i>	S <i>TBA</i>
J <i>Stars Rogue Squadron 2: Rogue Leader</i>	T <i>TBA</i>

Please send my certificate to:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Use a photocopy of this form if you'd rather not cut your copy of **NGC Magazine**

Challenge A

What You Must Do: Open up and beat all the staff ghosts.
Proof: A photo or video of your times



F-Zero GX

Challenge K

What You Must do: Rack up an 85+ combo. Unison Attacks are key here.
Proof: A photo of the post-battle statistics screen – the screen you get after you emerge victorious from a fight.



Tales of Symphonia

Challenge B

What You Must Do: Get a total time of under 3 minutes 50 seconds for 10 man melee.
Proof: A photo of the screen showing total time.



Super Smash Bros. Melee

Challenge L

What You Must Do: On Freedom Fighters Mode, complete the last level (Fort Jay) without using a single recruit.
Proof: A video of the hoisted flag, skipping the credits and showing normal difficulty complete.



Freedom Fighters

Challenge C

What You Must Do: Complete the game in a mere 10 days with all 201 pieces of treasure found. There's literally no room for error here.
Proof: A photo of the stats screen showing how much treasure you've collected.



Pikmin 2

Challenge M

What You Must Do: Beat Ganondorf with only three hearts. That means you can only have collected three hearts in the entire game – no more!
Proof: A video of your performance.



The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker

Challenge D

What You Must Do: With Mitsurugi and the Damascus Sword (which can't block attacks), complete 15 battles on Standard Extra Survival mode. Erk.
Proof: A video of your performance.



Soul Calibur 2

Challenge N

What You Must Do: Get 56 Arcade Awards.
Proof: Video of you scrolling down the list of 56 arcade awards.



Timesplitters 2

Challenge E

What You Must Do: Complete it with 22% items - no missiles, energy, dark/light beam expansions, bombs or beam special weapons.
Proof: A photo of the ending stats screen with 22% items clearly visible.



Metroid Prime 2: Echoes

Challenge O

What you Must Do: Complete the game three times, once with each artifact.
Proof: A photo showing that Eternal Mode is available.



Eternal Darkness

Challenge F

What You Must Do: Complete the game under two hours with Jill. A nice speed run that keeps it tight, but certainly not impossible as it just requires a reasonably efficient route.
Proof: A photo of your time.



Resident Evil

Challenge P

What You Must Do: TBA.
Proof: TBA



TBA

Challenge G

What You Must Do: What You Must Do: Find every token. Secret, Hideout, Skyscraper... the lot!
Proof: Photos or video of the relevant stats.



Spider-Man 2

Challenge Q

What You Must Do: TBA.
Proof: TBA



TBA

Challenge H

What You Must Do: Beat 1'22"00 on Ride Easy Railways - Trestle Trouble, the toughest track in the game. Any character/board combo can be used except for the Rocket Board.
Proof: A photo of your time.



1080 Snowboarding

Challenge R

What You Must Do: TBA.
Proof: TBA



TBA

Challenge I

What You Must Do: Combo the entire song 'Don't Stop Me Now' on Gorilla mode. Yipes! Great and OK notes are allowed but you cannot lose your combo from the first note.
Proof: Photo of end of song screen will suffice.



Donkey Konga

Challenge S

What You Must Do: TBA.
Proof: TBA



TBA

Challenge J

What You Must Do: Get Gold medals on all levels, including the secret levels.
Proof: Photos or video of every medal.



Stars Rogue Squadron 2: Rogue Leader

Challenge T

What You Must Do: TBA.
Proof: TBA



TBA

HEY! IT'S THE CONTINUATION OF... GAME ON!



Don't throw your old games out! (Or even trade them in, which would be much more sensible than trashing them). Game On is here to make sure you can extract every last ounce of worth from them, because the end of a game need not necessarily be the end of the game! If you get our meaning. Ahem. Anyhoo, what Game On is designed to do is provide you with quirky little challenges to keep you playing. And we'll give a brand-new Gamecube game to the best entry every month. So keep sending 'em in!

SPIDER-MAN 2



JUMP NY

Korkieran O'Brien,
Dublin

There's no doubt that *Spider-Man 2* is a biiiig game. Really big. So big, in fact, that it's New York in half-scale – which is, um *big*. And full of very tall buildings indeed. Perfect for a wall crawling fella like yourself, then. For this challenge, Kieran wants you to find the tallest building in the city – the one with the Challenge marker on the top, which you can easily see

on the map – and **climb to the top as fast as you can without swinging, wallcrawling or wallspringing**. Sounds like utter madness, right? But it can be done. Oh yes. You can still walljump and use the surrounding buildings. Start the clock from the base of the building and make sure you stop it once you reach the spire.

TIME



2 MINUTES OR LESS

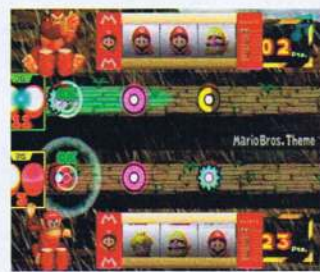


2 MINS 30 OR LESS



OVER 2 MINS 30

DONKEY KONGA



BONGO COMBO

Rachel and Leah Wild,
Stockport

Okay, who doesn't love a bit of bongo action? No-one, that's who. Only the stoniest-hearted misers would dare to deny any bongo related monkey-love. And Rachel and Leah have got a whole *lot* of monkey-love to share with you, bless 'em. You'll need two sets of bongos for this challenge – and a sturdy pair of hands! Get yourself into Jam

Session and choose a difficulty and song of your choice, but **instead of playing against another person, you're controlling both sets of bongos at the same time!** Play a duet all by yourself and see how far you can get before going insane, needing treatment for those blisters or collapsing in a fit of giggles. Good luck people!

DUET TIME



FINISH SONG



60 SECS



30 SECS

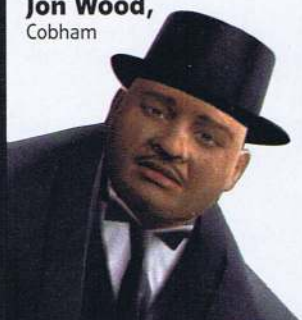


GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT



RUNNING MAN

Jon Wood,
Cobham



"Here's a way to get some enjoyment out of the new *GoldenEye*", writes Jon Wood. Good work, there, because it's quite hard to get any fun out of it at all. Ooh, aren't we harsh? Anyhoo, you'll need three friends for this. Go to the Atlantis multiplayer level and set the mag rail as the only weapon. One player should be on the middle floor in the halls that go around the central, the others above and below him. **The player in the middle must run around the halls, seeing how many laps he can do before being shot by the others through the floor and walls.**

LAPS



3+



2



1

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2



SUPER SIMIAN

Ben Curthoys,
via email

Why go forwards when you can go backwards? It's a point worth considering, as doing a lap backwards on *Monkey Race* actually counts. Incredible. This challenge, therefore, is to **complete Grand Prix mode by going backwards.** But be warned! This is real tough.



Shortcuts are likely to cancel your lap, zippers will stop you dead if they don't turn you around, and head-on collisions with the computer will be, says Ben, "inevitable and painful". Can't argue with that.

FINAL PLACING



5TH OR BETTER



6TH OVERALL



7TH OVERALL

NGC
CHALLENGES
WANTED

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN...

Have you discovered a weird and wonderful new way to play Nintendo games? Can you sum it all up in about 100 words? If you have a challenge you'd like to share with other NGC readers, then we want to hear about

it. Jot down a quick explanation of what you've got to do on a piece of paper, set three suitable levels of achievement for gold, silver and bronze medals, stick it in an envelope, and send it to...

GAME ON, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Or email ngc@futurenet.co.uk, with Game On as the subject line.

We'll take challenges for absolutely any game on the good ol' Gamecube, but this month we're particularly interested in...



NBA STREET V3



MARIO POWER TENNIS



RESIDENT EVIL 4



UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

THE BEST GET PRINTED RIGHT HERE, AND OUR FAVOURITE CHALLENGE WILL WIN A SHINY NEW GAMECUBE GAME. DEAL?



NGC

30 MONMOUTH STREET/BATH/BA1 2BW

MAILBOX



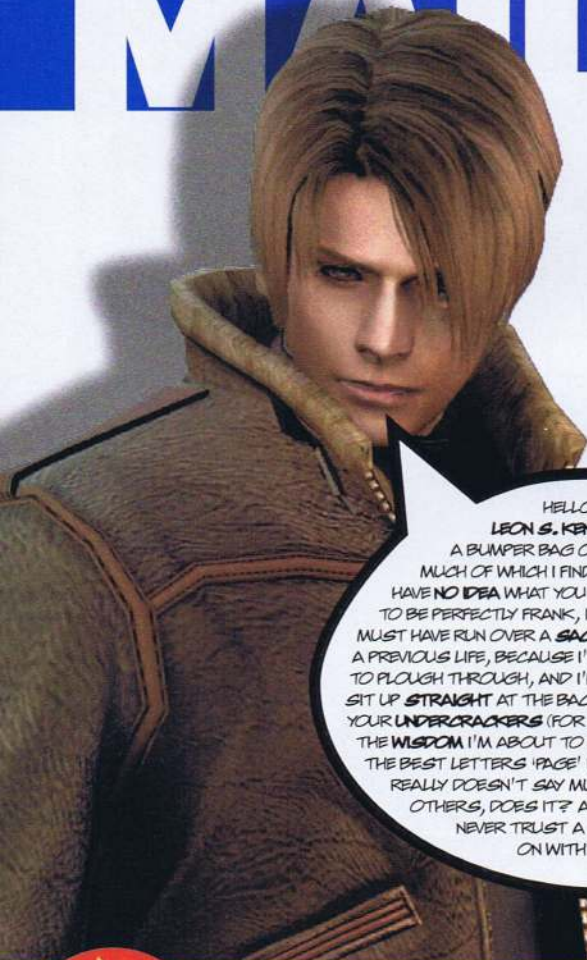
EMAIL US!

Got something to say? Run out of stamps? Guards won't let you near a pen? Then log on to the interweb and 'get' us 'at'...

ngc@futurenet.co.uk

Include your name and address so we know who to credit the letter to. Do it! Do it! Do it now!

A WARM WELCOME TO THIS MONTH'S GUEST EDITOR...



HELLO, FRIENDS.
LEON S. KENNEDY HERE WITH A BUMPER BAG OF CORRESPONDENCE. MUCH OF WHICH I FIND COMPLETELY BAFFLING. I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU PEOPLE ARE ON ABOUT, AND TO BE PERFECTLY FRANK, I COULDN'T GIVE A DAMN. BUT I MUST HAVE RUN OVER A SACK OF KITTENS OR SOMETHING IN A PREVIOUS LIFE, BECAUSE I'VE GOT TONS OF THIS NONSENSE TO FLOUGH THROUGH, AND I'D GREATLY APPRECIATE IT IF YOU'D SIT UP STRAIGHT AT THE BACK THERE, TUCK YOUR SHIRTS INTO YOUR UNDERCRACKERS (FOR SECURITY) AND PAY ATTENTION TO THE WISDOM I'M ABOUT TO DISPENSE. THEY TELL ME THIS IS THE BEST LETTERS 'PAGE' IN ANY GAMES MAGAZINE, WHICH REALLY DOESN'T SAY MUCH FOR THE QUALITY OF THE OTHERS, DOES IT? AND IT'S FOUR PAGES TOO. NEVER TRUST A 'JOURNALIST', KIDS.
 ON WITH THE SHOW...

Bonus Letters

They consider themselves to be elite gamers. Richard Frith, via email
I don't, unless they can complete Resi 2 in under 90 minutes.
Leon

I would like a lifesize poster of Paul. Can you take care of it?
Cedric van Rossem, Belgium

I'll ask him. He's an open-minded sort of guy.
Leon

I just think this shows how superficial the gaming market has become.
Raj Shukla, Kingston Upon Thames
Yes. Yes, it does.
Leon

Hello my name is Chris White and in April I will be 21.
Chris White, S Wales
Congratulations,
Chris. Leon

My wife had to grab it from me before I claimed it as my own!
Nick Bowyer, Falmouth
A little too much information.
Nick. Leon

Nintendo need to shift into gear again, get the absolute genius back out there (which it already is).
Gregor Omelasz, via email
Riiiiight.
Leon

'Past self'

Don't you think that a DS game of *TimeSplitters* would rule? You could have co-op missions where one person was your past self, future self and present self! And the touch screen you could use with the stylus for the new gravity gun thingy! How cool would that be! Huh? Huh? Huh?

Tom Anderson, Lichfield

You're hyperventilating, son. Breathe deeply into a paper bag and you'll be fine.
Leon



△ *TimeSplitters* on Nintendo DS! Feel free to scan this screenshot and post it on an internet forum.

'Seven hours'

When I first got my hands on *MP2: Echoes*, I couldn't wait to try out my new game. Therefore I began seven hours of constant playing. Thus, you would think that when you open your file and look at where it says 'Elapsed', it would say seven hours. But not this time. Instead it said one hour and 23 minutes. Now I've been playing for about 50 hours and I've completed 52% but the game says 19 hours and 42 minutes. Have you experienced this too, since I find it very strange?

Jonathan Trier Brikner, Denmark

Hmm. This kind of temporal anomaly suggests either a further mutation of the T-virus or that the game does not record time spent looking at the map screen. Further investigation is advisable.
Leon

'Lifeless bodies'

Hitman 2 is a great game, and when one plays it a lot one may get... tendencies. Like murdering an entire village, and forming words with their lifeless bodies. I saw the picture of two Sicilians in your Mailbox a few issues back, so I thought I'd send this beautiful creation in [see picture



STAR LETTER

The sender of the Star Letter receives a shiny new game from our bulging sack – not necessarily Billy Hatcher (or his giant egg). Which one will you receive?



'The rage'

Why is file-erasing so easy? As someone with a brother, too many times have I experienced the rage of discovering my near-completed file, which I've put 20 hours into, is gone forever, due either to my own stupidity or someone else's evilness. So shouldn't there be other precautions? Shouldn't there be a password, or big red letters, or a siren so insanely loud you can hear somebody erasing your data from the other side of the planet? The 'are you sure?' message just isn't working any more, and there are too many people who have had to play through the start of a game again or, worse, simply stopped playing altogether.
Elliot Hughes, Manchester

Like you, on many occasions I have risked my life to obtain certain files. Were anybody to erase this information, I would be denied the pleasure of pinning another of Wesker's amusingly inept reports on the office 'wall of shame', in which case I believe 'going mental' would be a perfectly justified reaction. There isn't a court in the land that would convict me, either. But I think you need to ask yourself why the 'are you sure?' message no longer works for you. Slow down. Relax. Think about the consequences before selecting that ambiguously worded 'erase data' option.
Leon

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

Thanks to everyone who wrote in, including (but not limited to): Alex Tam, via

email; Darren Greer, Belfast; Mathew Denman, via email; Jay Chalmers, via email; Alex White, via email; Stephen Dudley, via email; Max Naar, Kingston-upon-Thames; Andrew Hutchinson,

Bingham; Richard Donnelly, Maidstone; Stephen Gillanders, via email; Chris Gilman, via email; Ian Wallbridge, Sheffield; Nick Hogan, via email; David Kelly, Dublin; Henrie van Meurs,

Netherlands; Ben Dawson, Hull; William Oakley, Happy Land; Henry Cole, Herfordshire; James Evans, Walsall; Jeremy Ramsden, Ilkley; Mikey Azopardi, Gibraltar; Matt Curtis, Theydon Bois;



△ One of many ways to have fun while guarding Iraqi POWs. Be sure to pack a sand-proof camera.

above]. Does it make me the biggest gaming psychopath the world has ever seen, or just the undisputed king of creativity?

Ruud Jacobs, The Netherlands.

Sir, I salute your ruthless efficiency as a cold-blooded killing machine, and implore you to turn yourself in at your local army recruitment centre. They have well-paid jobs for people like you. Leon

'Master innovator'

So, I was sitting next to my computer, browsing the Internet and recovering from the bloot of one too many Quality Streets, when I came across yet another rant about how videogames aren't as good as they used to be. Well, as a 15-year-old I may have been brought into the world of videogames a little later than the NES era, but I've played my fair share of retro games and I'm inclined to disagree.

Think about it – as videogames have moved on and developed over time, it has become harder and harder to invent new schemes and ideas. Circa 1986, all you had to do was bung in a rubbish storyline and you were some master innovator of that genre. There were fewer genres back then, and it was easier to bring in new schemes. Compare that to today's world, where developers must strive to innovate, only to have their ideas exploited by weaker games, and it's easy to see that videogames haven't taken a turn for the worse. The market has just grown and there are so many more competitors nowadays.

Would Miyamoto still be hailed as the Spielberg-esque genius that he is recognised as were he to enter the world of developing today? I'm sure he'd still be classed as a very inventive man, but he wouldn't ever be able to achieve the same reputation. The last massive boast of originality was *Super Mario 64*, but even that was only due to the mastering of a control system in a new 3D era, and as soon as the 3D

Bonus Letters

I'll bet hundreds of letters are written in, about 99% of which are binned.

Michael Rumsby, via email

I actually had to print out your email just so I could 'bin' it. Leon

They are afraid, so very afraid, of the inner child.

Phil Turnbull, Daventry

Wasn't that the boss from Zero? Leon

Two friends of mine once said that they found it hard to believe that I was one of those small kids that you see sitting

in a row, playing Game Boy. My friends are really nice.

Johannes Sunde, Norway

They sound great. Leon

Don't start with me. When it comes to games I can't be stopped.

Kadeem Beresford-James, London

Duly warned. Leon

I will buy a Zelda sword and stick it somewhere Shiggy won't like.

Colin Welch, Cosham

Ouch! Leon

Please do not print this.

David Boreham, Milton Keynes

Whoops - my bad. Leon

I do prefer mature games because of my age.

Lewis Harvey, via email

There's nothing mature about playing games. It's just supposed to be fun. Leon

library began to fill up, that feeling of total mastery was lost to an extent.

Yasar Saleem, Burnage

I'm sorely tempted to pass your address to my friend Mr Miyamoto, so next time he's in the Burnage area he can pop round and beat a little respect into you. Leon

'Furry young lover'

I am prompted to write out of concern for one of my favourite game series – the mighty *Starfox*. You seemed optimistic about the way *SF Assault* was shaping up recently, but you also seemed optimistic about *GoldenEye Rogue Agent* and *The Incredibles*. In fact, it's not uncommon for you to have positive previews followed by negative reviews of the finished product, and after *Starfox Adventures* I want Namco to treat my furry young lover right – hell, they could even try tying up some plot threads left dangling frustratingly at the end of *Adventures* if they wanted.

So, put it to me straight Doc: Have you played any *Assault*? Is it really worth 'quivering with excitement' over, or are there a fair few problems you're hoping will be ironed out, only to find out come February/March that the developers intended them to be there? Just out of interest, based on what you've seen, are those dull-looking on-foot levels looking to be as common as, say, *Rebel Strike*, or is it seeming mostly Arwing-based at the mo?

Apologies for the ramble, but I want optimism for *Assault*. Imagine if Nintendo half-finished a *Zelda* game and released it into your face; that's how I feel about my *Starfox*. Help me regain my sanity, if not through good news then through effective medication.

Andrew Gordon, via email

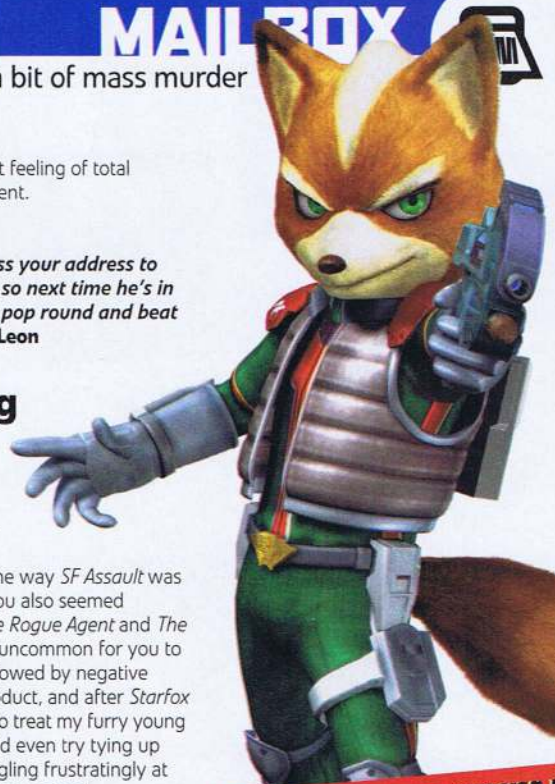
Just for you, I tracked down and interrogated somebody who has played Assault, and between uncontrollable spasms of excitement he managed to tell me that the on-foot levels are 'great', the space levels 'k-k-kick arse' and that being zapped repeatedly with a Taser 'really hurts'. Leon

'This is 2005'

Several times a week, many of my friends gather around my house to play *FIFA 2004* on my GC (just to clarify, it's my brother's game, I wouldn't be seen dead playing *FIFA*). Anyhoo, this particular week was just after my brother's birthday, when he was 'thoughtfully' given *FIFA 2005* as a present.

So, my mates storm into my house, switch on the telly and sort out the GC. *FIFA 2005* is on the table, so my friend opens the box, loads the disc, and navigates through the various menus to the team selection screen. Only then does he realise, 'Ooh, this is 2005!'

My point is this – each *FIFA* game is almost identical to the one before it in practically every way possible. The music on the menu screen is slightly different and maybe the graphics are ever-so-slightly crisper, but does that warrant a



CORRECTION CORNER

On the bag of **NGC 102**, you have spelt the word Gamecube with 2 c's (gamecube).

Phil Maguire, Rustington

Do not waste my time with petty nitpicking, Maguire. This is your first and final warning. Leon

In issue 102's review of *Zelda: Four Swords*, you have a paragraph titled 'Special Moves' which is clearly about *Paper Mario* (either that or the English version of *Four Swords* was about Crystal Stars). What I want to know is what you intended to put in this space?

Nick Elliot Pimm, via email

I'm told it was something to do with sheep. Leon



Bent Eigel Sumelius, Norway; Dom Egan, Leigh-on-Sea; Sam Medlock-Matthews, Neston; Tom Sherwood, Northwich; Alasdair Henry, Morpeth; Peter Hodgson, St Helens; Lynden

Bowen, Cadnam; Alexander Davies, Llandello; Lewis Miller, via email; Matthew White, via email; Andrew Black, Beaconsfield; Ryan Wilson, Lowestoft; Jonathan Richardson,

Callum Stockdale, Tonbridge; Conor Doran and Josh Coyne, Ireland; Marcus Canning-Evans, Bath; Sam Baylis, Tamworth; Ryan Attrill, Isle of Wight; Sam Packham, Derby; Jamie Clark, New

Zealand; James Boyce, Belfast; Ryan Dow, Alloa; Martin Dunn and Michael Oshea, via email; Tom Trott, Brighton; Darren Revell, Plymouth; Iain Dunn, Glasgow. Many thanks to you all.



CREATIVE CORNER

This month's top arts and crafts masterpieces...



'Picture I did'

Here's a picture I did of Link. Epona doesn't stand a chance.

Helen McCartney, Co Durham

Remarkable. I presume 'Link' is the one wearing an eviscerated ostrich on his head, and preparing to decapitate the goat. I like his thousand-yard stare. Please send another picture showing the gory outcome. Leon

'My artwork'

I hope you like my artwork. I drew it and then scanned it in.

Hector Stanley, Woking

Not bad. But next time you might want to scan it at a much higher resolution so it doesn't look like pixellated crap when it's printed. Or just send the original here for an art monkey to scan. Leon



'Technology'

Just thought you'd like to see this. I made it for my design technology project.

Andrew Montgomery, Northern Ireland

I can't believe people get official qualifications in this sort of thing. Well done. Leon



brand new version every single year? If EA are going to release a new *FIFA* every year, they could at least try to make each one different from the one before, instead of just adding some lame gimmick each time (first touch? What is that meant to be?)

Maybe I just don't appreciate *FIFA*, but I can't see why people would buy a 'new' version of *FIFA* each year. Unfortunately, it seems that that is what the public wants. Whenever games are mentioned at school its always *FIFA* or *Need For Speed* (another franchise which I just don't get). Thank god for Nintendo, who continue to (or at least attempt to) innovate with every title. *Pikmin 2* is a little delight.

John Kendall, Bishop's Stortford

Do constant refinement and updated player rosters really offend you that much? Doesn't the same thing happen with every decent sports game? And what about Mario Party 6? So many questions, so little time. Leon

'Original fans'

I disagree with what you said in issue 101, about the original fans growing out of Pokémon. I have been a fan from the start, and will always love Pokémon. I didn't start playing it because it was a craze - I didn't even know it existed before my mum bought me a *Pokémon Red* for Christmas. A year later I was asking for *Blue*, *Yellow* and *TCG*. After that, it was *Silver*, *Gold* and *Crystal*. I knew it was uncool then, and I, like many others, had to endure all those hours at school, teasing the kids that did show their love of Pokémon to the



Δ Copyright 2004? Copyright nineteen-bleedin'-ninety-six, more like. The bare-assed cheek of it.

world, scared that the other kids might find out that I loved it too. The only place I could really express my feelings was in Pokémon forums on the internet, where there are hundreds of others who have been fans from the start. Most of us play Pokémon today because it is the one game that really will never end. It's something you can call a classic on the day it was created, something where, when on *Fire Red* and *Leaf Green*, going back through all those memories, thinking how far Pokémon has come, actually brought a tear to my eye. That's true nostalgia.

Mathew Renouf, via email

Today, Pikachu versus Bulbasaur. Tomorrow, you versus a rabid zombie rottweiler. When you think about it, there is really very little difference. Leon

'Left hands'

As a left-handed gamer I do not find difficulty in playing games with D-pads or analogue sticks on the left side of the controller or handheld console. I have friends who write with their left hands and are generally left-handed people and they don't need weirdly shaped controllers or different button layouts to compensate. My point is that left-handed gamers are just an excuse not to place an analogue stick on the DS. It might possibly be more expensive, as the analogue stick would have to fold down or flatten out to make the machine more pocket friendly. So stop using this as an excuse. I've used a Gamecube controller with an analogue stick on the left side of it, which I control with my left hand. Sorry, I got a bit carried away there.

Matt Cassar, via email

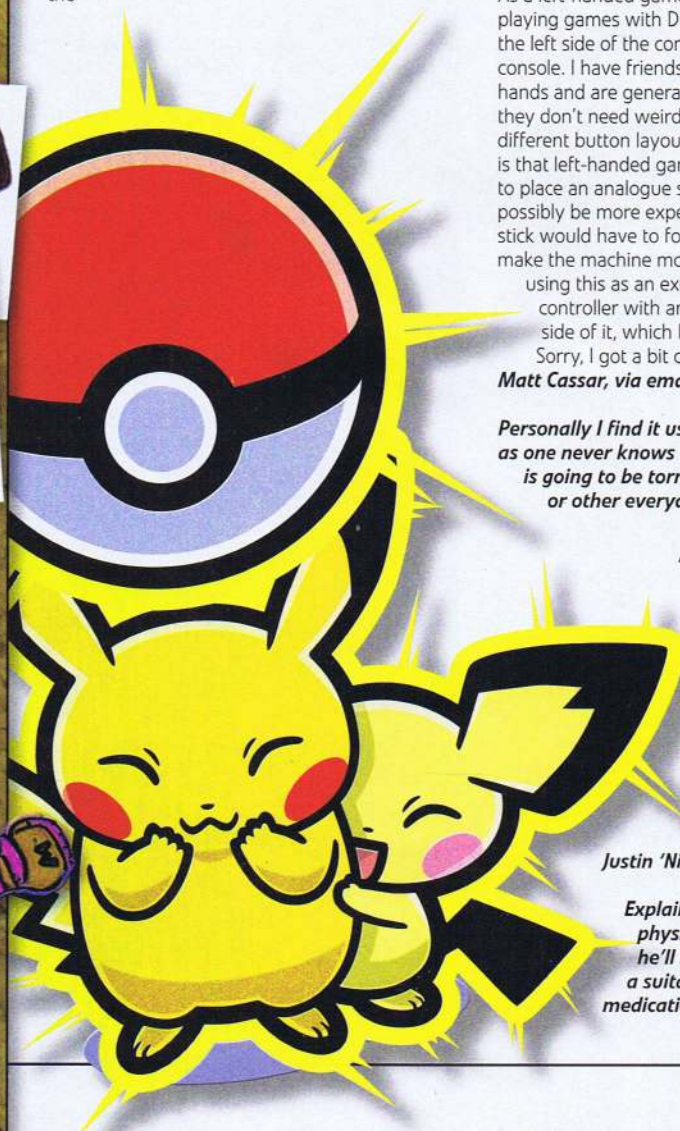
Personally I find it useful to be ambidextrous, as one never knows when one's weapon hand is going to be torn off by mutant tentacles or other everyday hazards. Leon

'My brain'

Recently, a little, how can I put it? Koopa Shell reverberating the insides of my skull. In fact the exact spot of my brain that controls 'mug trap' alert. Okay, one word: 'Longevity'. Now there's a jewel of a word.

Justin 'Ninja' Jones, Bedford

Explain all of this to your physician and I'm sure he'll be able to recommend a suitable change of medication. Leon





Gr Nintendo!

SEND US YOUR NINTENDO JOKES! MAKE THEM GOOD AND YOU WIN A GAME. BUT IF MR WHITE FAILS TO SEE THE FUNNY SIDE, THE YELLOW PIKMIN DIES. OF BOREDOM. THIS MONTH: JOKE INFLICTED BY MARK NISBET



I'M GONNA JOKE YOU UP, TLOK TLOK, GET UP, YEAH...



WHY DID REGGIE GO TO THE DONKEY FIELD? HMM? HMM?



BECAUSE HE WANTED TO KICK SOME ASSES! KICK! KICK! KICK!



HELLO? ...

WRITE TO... GRINTENDO, MAILBOX, NGC, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW OR EMAIL NGC@FUTURENET.CO.UK

'Wrench or plunger'

When did Mario become a plumber? I'm pretty sure I've played the first *Mario Bros* and can't remember any mention of plumbing. And even if I've missed something, why is Mario a plumber? He doesn't use a wrench or plunger. In fact in *Paper Mario* he uses a large wooden mallet, which if I'm not mistaken has nothing to do with plumbing. So why is our favourite Nintendo star a plumber? You might as well say Link is a carpenter - there's just as much evidence to suggest he's a carpenter as there is to



△ Mario - clearly not a plumber, because he's made of magic squares of electric pixel light.

prove Mario is a plumber. Maybe even more. So if you could clear this up for me I would be overjoyed (or at least more knowledgeable).

Adam Cafolla, via email

Mario started out as a carpenter, which is why he carries a giant mallet. He then moved into the plumbing business, having found that charging £120+VAT for spending half an hour with his head in the cupboard under the sink was far easier and more lucrative than attempting to construct a wardrobe using a hammer the size of a gorilla's ass. Leon

'Less gore'

Why does a first-person shooter game have to be so full of gore nowadays



△ Why is there a picture of me and Kittsy's mum here? Look, I was young and foolish. Forget it.

to get good sales figures? I'm sure this isn't necessary. I was reading through your preview of *TimeSplitters Future Perfect* in NGC/102 and was shocked and very annoyed to find that Free Radical seem to be following this trend. To me, *TimeSplitters* has always been about having fun, not trying to paint buildings red. I recently played through the superb *Second Sight* and really enjoyed it, but the gore effects made me view it as a good game rather than an excellent game that I recommend everyone buy.

A shooting game doesn't need to be filled with gore - just look at some of the truly great FPS's over the past few years such as *GoldenEye*, *TimeSplitters 2* and *Metrod Prime*. None of these games have any gore, but still stick in my mind as some of the finest shooting games on any platform. I appreciate that some gamers enjoy shooting things and watching them bleed, and I don't mind that at all, but there is a large proportion of gamers who don't.

Why don't games include an option to turn off the gore? It can't be that hard to program. I for one will boycott buying *TimeSplitters Future Perfect* unless they include a function like that, and I'm sure many other people will feel the same as me.

David Newman, Cambridge

David, you're talking to the wrong guy if you want sympathy for your lack of bloodlust. People want to play games with semi-realistic guns, and given the power of current consoles those guns are going to have semi-realistic effects. First-person games tend to be about killing people, which is an increasingly messy business, but the only ones that rarely have excessive gore effects are those based on wars that actually happened. Strange, isn't it? We'll just have to look at the sales figures to see if your proposed boycott has any effect. Leon

SO TELL ME THIS...

Your questions answered by the NGC motherbrain

1. Will the DS, given that it plays GBA games, link via the link cable to a GBA?
2. If so will it link to the Gamecube too so you could play *Zelda: Four Swords*?
3. Can *Zelda: Four Swords* be played with two players?
4. Will the computer take control of the other two Links?
5. Would we both need a GBA or could one of us use the joypad?
Bennet Aldous, via email

1. No.
2. No.
3. Yes.
4. No, each player controls two Links. Or

somebody can control three Links while the other has just one. The possibilities are, literally, binary.
5. You need two GBAs.

1. Will Game Boy and Game Boy Color games work on a DS?
2. Can you play one player at *Zelda: Four Swords* to Gamecube without a GBA?
3. Have you seen any sign of TS2 weapons such as Brick or Minigun in TS3?
4. Does TS3 have modes in multiplayer like *Virus* or *Elimination*?
5. As Ada Wong turns up in *Resi 4*, do you think there will be a chance that we will see other

characters, like Chris Redfield or Rebecca Chambers?
Jo Magnus Frostad, Norway

1. No, only GBA games.
2. Yes.
3. Yes.
4. Yes, both of those.
5. It's a possibility...

1. Will UK versions of the DS have the First Hunt demo?
2. Do you think we'll ever see ports of Rare games on DS, like *Perfect Dark* or *Jet Force Gemini*?
Marco Belmonte, Bromley
1. Yes.
2. Sadly it's very unlikely.

1. Is *Resi 4* really coming out on the 1st of April, or is it just an April Fool's?
2. If I don't go onto Animal Crossing on special days, will I still receive the presents?
3. What is Mario's surname?
Harry Newton, via email

1. The game is out on 18th March.
2. Yes.
3. Semi-officially his full name is Mario Mario, suggesting either a fine sense of humour on the part of his parents or a particularly slow day at Nintendo's imagination factory.

PROPHECYING THE NEWS OF TOMORROW WITH REAL-LIFE FUTUROLOGY

MADAME GREENER Predicts...



Looking into the future through crossed eyes...

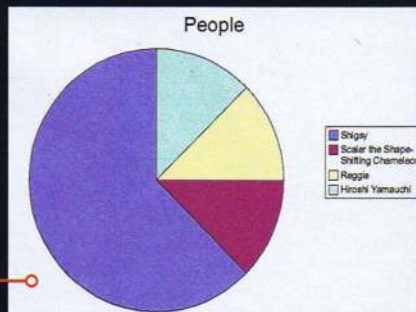
THIS MONTH: GREENER GOES BYE-BYE

Ten months, ten no-messing real-life ways of predicting the future. The result: a success rate not far off that of celebrity marriages. As Madame Greener steps into a rickety wooden boat and sails off into the mist towards lands unknown ("for tax purposes"), we take a fond look back at the rubbish we've had to put up with from her. Brings a tear to your eye – if you happen to be peeling onions...



2 THE METHODS After Madame Greener picked images out of candle wax shapes floating in water, readers wrote in with the shapes they claimed they could see, including: a pipe, a brick, a drinking straw, a human leg, an owl, a candle (?), a church, a cockroach, the Taymar Bridge, and David Hasselhoff.

3 EAT PIE It's no secret that Madame Greener has a crush on Shigeru Miyamoto – and thanks to our Predict-O-Pie™ you can see how many times the boyish hair-monster has cropped up in Greener's besotted predictions. By contrast, new Nintendo frontman Reggie Fils-Aime is as popular as Blazin' Squad.

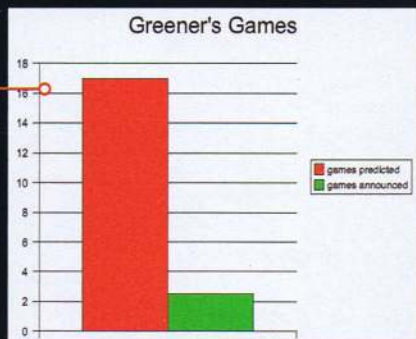


1 THE STENCH OF SUCCESS Nothing says 'Success!' like a spiky graph line that's barely able to get out of bed. Over the course of 10 issues, Madame Greener has so far scored 6 out of 50 predictions right. That's a correctness rate of 12% – or 38% less than you'd expect if you pinned 100 random predictions to the wall and got your cat to throw darts at them.

4 THE HIGHLIGHTS When Nintendo gave birth to *Chokkan Hitofude* on DS – after the tarot and the tea had repeatedly whispered "big new Nintendo-developed puzzle game" to our hag – Madame Greener wept dry, crusty tears of success. Her fattest failure, though? That'd be the candle wax's forecast about Nintendo Revolution, which had the D-pad taking pride of place on the next system's joypad. Next thing you know, the rumour factory is churning out the idea that the Revolution controller won't have buttons at all. That's what you get for listening to candle wax, see.



5 GREENER'S GAMES This bar chart – created at considerable expense – shows the number of new games that Madame Greener has predicted, versus the number that were actually announced. The official **NGC** statistician's verdict: she is an expert in wrongitude.



6 BUT WAIT! M Greener's rather obvious prediction that third-parties would be trotting out plastic carry cases for Nintendo DS sprang true after the issue we judged her wrong. But it's **NGC/103** that provides the real surprises. Two of her proclamations about überpublisher EA – namely "Def Jam Vendetta or other EA beat-'em-up to feature surprise cameo from rival company's character" and "EA to join forces with a big-name Japanese developer" – were pretty much spot-on, thanks to The Mario All-Stars popping up in *NBA Street V3*.

AND THE FINAL PREDICTIONS...

Next Nintendo console announced alongside US and Japanese launch dates; Europe launch date "to be decided."

American madfolk to scream like harpies when Reginald Fils-Aime walks on stage at E3 2005.

Mario to say "woo", "hup", "heh", "yup" in next three games. And "woo-hoo."

Shigeru Miyamoto to be asked in at least one interview if he still plays the banjo.

Mario Soccer.

Madame Greener is old, hungry and so very tired. She has gone away and will soon be forgotten.

PREDICTION RESULTS

After **NGC/100's** Christmas chart predictions, the only water flowing for Madame Greener was the bitter sting of tears...



1. Metroid Prime 2 to seriously underperform in the Christmas charts. Beaten by an EA game but that's the law.



2. Donkey Konga to be a surprise hit at Xmas. Not a bongo was stirring on Christmas morn.



3. A strategy game to be Christmas No. 1. Yesss... no. It was *Need For Speed Underground 2*.



4. Tales of Symphonia to climb Yuletide charts. Woeful licensed rubbish beats obscure RPG? Well.



5. Gamecube to come third in Chrimble sales battle. A hollow success. A chimp could have predicted this.

TOTAL SCORE

1/5

Madame Greener's biorhythm-based prophecies proved as inaccurate as a ruler made of tears (sob).

TOP 10: COMPANY IDENTITS

And you can't skip this by hammering the A button.



1 BITS STUDIOS

A shimmering galaxy of Matrix-like 1s and 0s... it's zooming out... it's the Bits logo! So preposterously over-the-top you could slap on Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts credits and call it a Hollywood movie.



3 SCI GAMES

You'd be forgiven for thinking a Batman movie is beginning as you're taken on a helicopter journey around the chunky letters S, C and i, accompanied by a noise that even God didn't know existed.



5 ATARI

The Fuji symbol fills up like a glass of water, the company name pops up... and then, inexplicably, the whole thing apologetically shrinks down to half its original size. The first shy ident ever recorded.



7 FREE RADICAL

A pretty weak replication of a car's headlights as seen through a crack in the curtains. Notable for the fact that the square blob is a treasure map to David Doak's fortune.



9 TDK MEDIACTIVE

Someone got a Yamaha keyboard for Christmas. Massively inappropriate sounds include the loudest steel drum in the world and what sounds like a rare electronic elephant.



2 LUCASARTS

Following the tradition of past *Star Wars* games, Lucasarts' Gold Guy (actually his real name) joyrides in an X-Wing before bailing out with a parachute. In space? Nice and accurate.



4 EMPIRE

The red Empire logo materialises like a shimmering desert mirage of fire. We could watch it all day. And, indeed, we have, specifically in order to avoid having to actually play *Starsky and Hutch*.



6 SEGA SPORTS

We're treated to some disorienting angles and the magic word SEGA clattering onto the screen. 'Music' provided by a one-man-band whose instruments consist solely of old pipes.



8 EA

A bit like a big blueish coin tumbling onto the floor, which is appropriate given how many coins regularly fall out of EA's overfilled cash-pockets. Probably specially-made \$1000 coins that only billionaires have.



10 UBISOFT

Giving you the chance to experience that backwards trip down a shiny purple tunnel you'd always dreamed of. Actually reminds us of a bit of a reverse Animal Hospital endoscopy we once saw.



YOUR INTERNET CORRESPONDENT

The best of the 'net several weeks after it happens.

- "Nintendo DS Tuesday at the Belgian Beer Bar in NYC." See how a clever double screen can bring the world together - and confuse bar patrons who may or may not have seen a videogame system since 1978. Try not to wince as several expensive Nintendo products are discussed and enjoyed perilously close to big wet pints of danger liquid. > www.themodsods.com/pages/BelgianBeerBar2.htm

- Music can be cuter than a bag of kittens, as proved by these real-life albums made with the help of a Nintendo Entertainment System (ask

- your gran). Check out the sample MP3s and decide if it's time to storm into your import music shop and demand they stock Does John Coltrane Dream Of A Merry-go-round?. It's mostly in Japanese but don't worry: the site as a whole speaks the international language of album covers featuring a bear, a frog and a piece of toast sitting in a bath. > www.ymck.net/e/sound.html

- Regularly find yourself wondering why the internet was invented? Besides monkey porn and illegal downloads, this fantastic online guide has to be it.

- Take a Smint box. Remove the white inner bit and cut away some of the plastic. Voila! A makeshift games case that has room for three of those laughably tiny Nintendo DS games. Now you need never again risk your loose carts being stepped on and crushed by a passing ant. > homepage.mac.com/jimyoungkin/PhotoAlbum15.html

- When someone showed up on Internet Island with photographic evidence of original Game Boy games working on the DS: you could almost hear the collective yelp of excitement. But it was a 'bad'. See the

- spottable mistakes the naughty hoaxer made. > www.livejournal.com/community/nintendo-ds/81844.html

- Did you know that the trait Alan Titchmarsh most deplores in himself is his inability to play the piano? The green-fingered fool won't like this *Super Mario Bros* sheet music, then. > whsprime.net/imases/mariopiano/
- //got a link?//
- Got a Nintendo-related link for Your Internet Correspondent? Then email it to nsocio@hotmail.com



THE MAKING OF...



ENTER THE MATRIX



ngc00.bboxes.matrix.jpg



▲ "Ms Niobe. I've been expecting you." Nah, doesn't work.



JACKING IN

"I've always been a hacker," says Dave. "It'd be fun to make something that felt like you're poking around inside your console. Atari lent us a programmer and artist from Australia, and they finished the hacking section off. Thanks guys!"



The Matrix – the first one, the one that was critically acclaimed and sold half a billion dollars worth of movie tickets – did not have a videogame based on it. And you can lay some of the blame for that at the door of Mr Dave Perry, president of Shiny Entertainment. That's right – the very developer that brought us the game based on the sequels, *Enter The Matrix*.

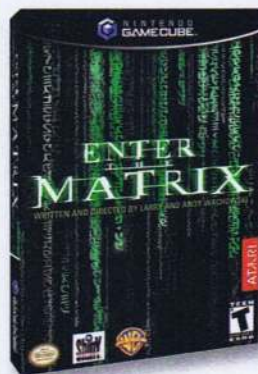
"It was the late '90s, and we were asked to come and visit the directors of *The Matrix*, Larry and Andy Wachowski," recalls Dave. "At that time it was just 'the next Keanu Reeves movie' and we were really busy working on [PC stunner] *Sacrifice*. So I declined, just like I had for *Godzilla* and several other movies at that time. Then I saw the film. And I was kicking myself. Sure, *Sacrifice* won lots of awards, but – heck – that *Matrix* was cool."

Luckily for Shiny, Dave got another chance to take the red pill. In 1999, his telephone rang, and Warner Bros were on the other end asking if he'd like to work on the upcoming *Matrix* sequels. Having learned from what he has since called "the worst mistake of my career", Dave naturally said yes.

But there was a shock in store. The license for *The Matrix Reloaded* wasn't just the usual 'logo and a disinterested approval process' from movie producers with better things to do. By the time the deal was signed in February 2001, The Wachowski Brothers (who loved videogames and counted *Splinter Cell* among their favourites) had written a full game script. It was filled with cut-scenes that they themselves intended to film and was detailed right down to the action in individual rooms.

This wasn't just about making a *Matrix* game. It was about making their *Matrix* game.

ARCHITECTS



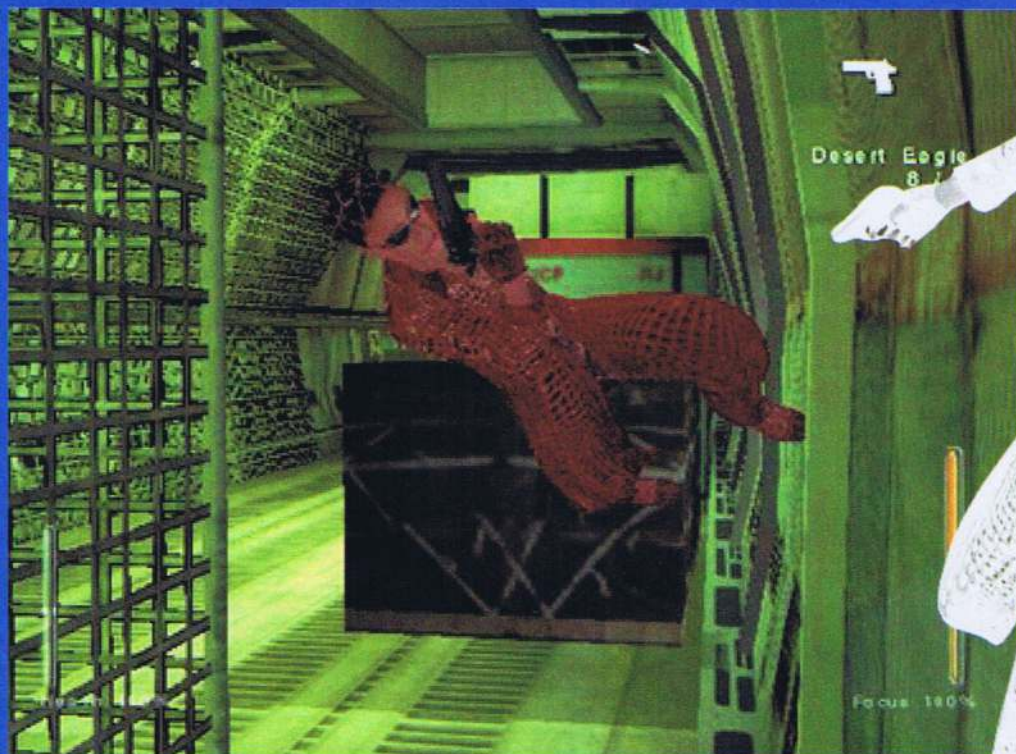
The byline on the box – "Written and Directed by Andy and Larry Wachowski" – was a special present for one man. During focus group research, an interviewee had doubts that the Wachowskis were so heavily involved in the making of the game – and said he'd refuse to believe it unless Warner Bros put their name to the game's packaging. So there they are.

"It was their blueprint," says Dave. "It inspired us. They had really good, emotional challenges they wanted us to attempt. We did attempt them, but I wish we had had more time and more people to really achieve the vision that they laid out. But, quite honestly, it was a pleasure to work with the Wachowskis. I think they've caused a lot of Hollywood directors to think very differently about how they want their games made."

Larry and Andy's *Enter The Matrix* script was a spinoff from the two films that would close the *Matrix* trilogy. Rather than putting players in the shoes of The One ("I always have magazine editors nagging me that they wanted to play as Neo," admits Dave), it gave them control of movie bit-parts Niobe (an expert pilot) and Ghost (a Buddhist assassin). The plot raced alongside the movies, weaving and criss-crossing with the movie's story of Zion under siege.

FILED BY: MARK GREEN

Publisher: Interplay/Atari	Release date: 15th April 03
Developer: Shiny Entertainment	Highest Gamecube Position: 1
Reviewed: NGC /81, 73%	



△ Tsk! Show off... The floor just isn't good enough for some people, they've got to indulge in a little wallrunning. We'll forgive Niobe, though, because she does it so well.



Jada Pinkett Smith and Anthony Wong, the actors playing Niobe and Ghost, assumed they'd be barking a couple of hour's worth of voice acting for the game. Their first glimpse of the game script came only on their first day of shooting (thanks to security that rivalled a presidential inauguration) – and

Wong about the background to their movie scenes – because it was only fleshed out in segments filmed for the game.

While Larry and Andy were busy with all that, Shiny spent 20 weeks on the most secretive set in Hollywood. 25,000 digital photos were snapped. The actors were

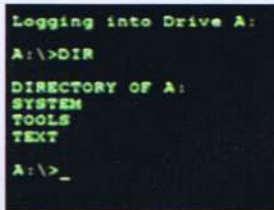
THE WACHOWSKIS CAUSED HOLLYWOOD TO THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT GAMES

they discovered they'd be starring in what was essentially another movie. An exclusive hour of footage would be filmed for *Enter The Matrix* – on the movie set, with the movie effects, and written and directed by the Wachowskis themselves. Movie leads like Laurence Fishburne (Morpheus) ended up asking Pinkett Smith and

scanned and photographed. A dedicated team of "interactive staff" was set up, travelling around with the movie to make sure Shiny got direct access to whatever they needed.

Enter The Matrix also benefited from the brain of Woo-ping Yuen – the legendary Chinese choreographer who made the

Q&A



Dave originally planned to build actual artificial intelligence into the hacking section – so you'd get unique, random answers to everything you typed in. But none of the many AI techniques he researched were halfway clever enough to make it seem that Trinity was actually on the other end of the modem. In the final Enter The Matrix, it's all fixed questions and answers.

Matrix the coolest place to get into a massive scrap. He helped Shiny recreate the movie trilogy's somersaulting, back-flipping, wall-trotting action for the game.

"He would be asked to come up with a variation on a gun being taken from a SWAT member," says Dave. "His guys would work something out where the enemy's arm gets broken during the process. Then Master Woo would walk in and mix it up a bit – and the difference visually was really quite remarkable. It's clear that he is thinking visually and not just getting through the motions. The problem with working with someone like him is, you wonder how you will ever be able to do it without him in the future."

By this point, it was clear that Shiny had massively underestimated the scale of its task. Just 20 people were working on *Enter The Matrix* – compare that to





△ Who said that Niobe's driving sections were boring? You could always play I Spy, or see what's on the radio. Zzzzzz.

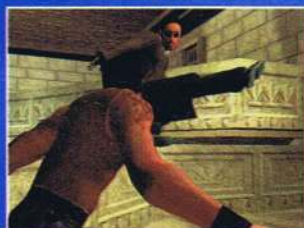


TAKE THE RED PILL

Forget all that red pill/blue pill nonsense: Dave had more important things to worry about as *Enter The Matrix* took shape.



1 "In the end our goal was to make you feel like someone important – a Captain who could grow and learn – instead of just copying the films. That was our decision. And it's funny, because that's exactly what *The Matrix* is all about. Choice."



2 "I think the biggest worry was that the actors and the martial artists wouldn't have time to worry about our game – considering they were also making *two* movies. But they ended up treating *Enter The Matrix* as a part of the project, so we got incredible support."



3 Controlling Ghost and Niobe was alternately criticised as overly tricky (complicated button layout) and too easy (moves too simple to pull off). "In the future, we're going to be careful about button choices. Hopefully, no-one will end up needing their Spock 'grip of death.'"



4 "Our animation team did a great job adding more and more moves into a very limited space on the Gamecube. Each time we played *Enter The Matrix* we saw some killer new combat technique appear. It was a fantastic moment every time."



the 160-odd who work on EA's *The Lord Of The Rings* games. "It was ridiculous," says Dave. "We brought in lots of new staff and contractors, and Atari pitched in to help get the

one step forward, a batch of around 40 different noises were being mixed and combined to create an authentic footstep.

Shiny felt the pressure piling on from their customers, too. This was

IT WAS CLEAR THAT SHINY HAD UNDERESTIMATED THE SCALE OF THE TASK

game complete. Sounds easy? No. We ran out of office space."

The sheer amount of work that went into *Enter The Matrix* is demonstrated perfectly by the game's sound. Over 95% of the audio was created from scratch (the majority of the movies' effects were unusable), with around 40,000 different bits of sound rustled up for everything from body falls to bullet ricochets. Every time Niobe and Ghost took

a *Matrix* game. Millions of rabid fans expected it to live up to the legend. The Wachowskis decided early on to cram in three different game styles – shooting, martial arts (with shooting), and driving (while shooting) – in order to magic up that *Matrix* feel. But it wasn't until when the infamous slow-mo Bullet Time was up and running that Dave and his team really felt like things were coming together.

"What's interesting is that the

WB SPAT

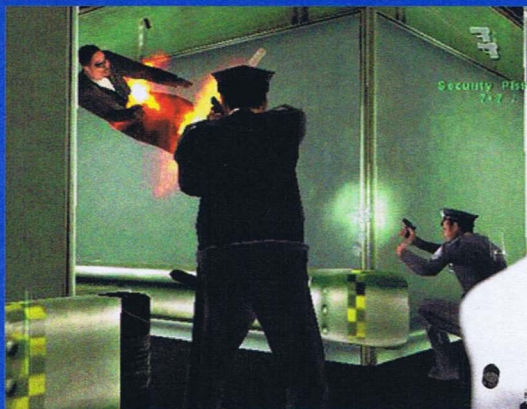


Warner Bros announced last year that it would use an "escalating royalty rate" to punish licensed developers for every point below 70% their games scored. Atari president Bruno Bonnell commented, "[Enter the Matrix] sold \$250 million worldwide. And WB would penalise us because we didn't achieve 70 per cent? Are they joking?"

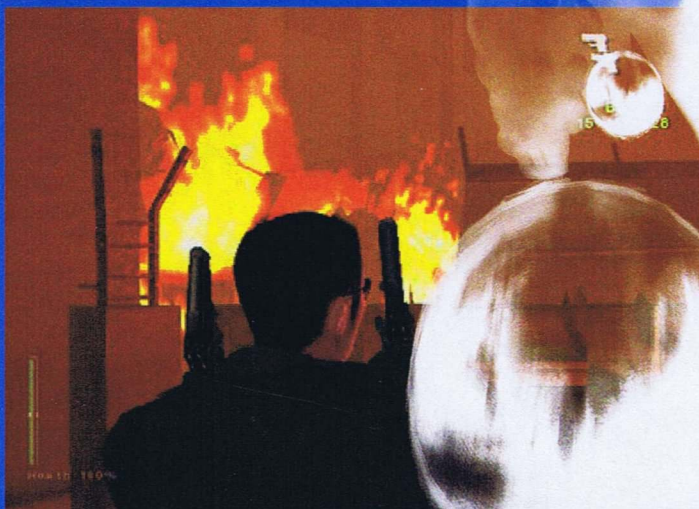
audio is about 50% of the feeling of it," says Dave. "So it took the combination of visuals and sounds to make it feel good. Once that was working properly, and we were kicking butt in slow-motion, it was really fun."

Unable to deliver the immediate buzz of playing through the actual movie, Dave and company packed in crossover moments for fans – such as Niobe kissing Persephone in a scene that mirrored the Neo/Persephone snog in *The Matrix Reloaded*. But Shiny's biggest problem was pleasing all the people, all of the time. It was trouble enough mapping 4,000 moves to the Gamecube joystick – without also having to ensure that Agent-slapping was challenging enough for the hardcore and easy enough for 'casual' gamers who had pulled the game off the shelves just because of a certain green logo on the box.

On top of all that, the



△ Shiny crowbarred in plenty of blasting and mid-air acrobatics into the game.



△ Yep – twin Berettas will see off those flames no problem. Oh, hang on...

Wachowski brothers were demanding the near-impossible – such as a branching story that would mean you actually *missed* parts of the game if you took a certain route. The hour of movie footage was a mixed blessing, too, delivered to Shiny as 1 terabyte of data – around 120 DVD's worth – all of which had to be squeezed onto a Gamecube disc 1/700th of the size (in the event, Shiny gave up: *Enter The Matrix* came on two Gamecube discs).

In early 2003, the deadline loomed. With over 1,000 bugs left to fix, the Wachowskis iffy about sending out approval versions in case of a plotline leak, and the studio itself in the middle of being sold to Atari (then Infogrames), Dave admits it was "getting kinda crazy."

"I'm amazed that everyone survived. We had a localization team working night and day on getting the game finished in

THE END



What Shiny did after Enter The Matrix had finally been sent down the rabbit hole to our world, is unrecorded. But Dave gives special mention to "the team's focus through all the craziness – when publishers are prodding a company before buying it. Thank goodness for our girlfriends, wives and children being so patient and supportive." Aww, shucks Dave...

multiple languages. We had the strategy guide guys asking questions. I was doing sales meetings and game demos. And, in the middle of it all, we had to move to a temporary office. But then, almost by surprise, Nintendo approved the game immediately. Suddenly we were done and the

it was 2.5 million. So you can forgive Dave for feeling pretty pleased with himself and his hardworking team at Shiny.


"The game was number one all over the world, won Movie Game Of The Year at the Spike TV awards and sold \$200-\$250 million worth of games. Jada Pinkett Smith even

WE FELT THERE WERE MANY MORE THINGS THAT COULD BE ADDED TO THE GAME

game was out of our hands."

The rest is history. *Enter The Matrix* clearly wasn't a great game. Reviews took some of the shine off Shiny – poor animation, short playtime, and predictable shoot-this, protect-that play were all criticised. But these reviews were ignored. Within a week, the game had sold 1 million copies; by June,

got Actress Of The Year from the Academy Of Interactive Arts & Sciences. We felt there were many more things that could be added to the game – we could have spent another three years on it. But I figure we must have done something right."

"And, yes, we have learned a lot from our mistakes." 



NGC

TOP 100

THE BEST GAMECUBE GAMES YOUR MONEY CAN BUY...

WHY YOU NEED IT!



Your up-to-date guide to the hottest PAL titles.

Games aren't cheap. Even when you buy pre-owned games, it's still a bit gutting to get your bargain treasure home and find you've splashed out on a box of gaming garbage. Hence this buyer's guide – it's got:

■ The 100 top-scoring games, listed in score order so you can begin with the very best.

■ We tell you which issue it was reviewed in, so if you want to know more you can look through your back issues. You do have them, don't you?..

■ A brief description of the game, so if you don't have that issue you can find out the most important points about it.

■ Highlighted games, with a little more detail. As games join the list, the highlights will change!

1 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA THE WIND WAKER 97

NINTENDO ■ NGC/BI

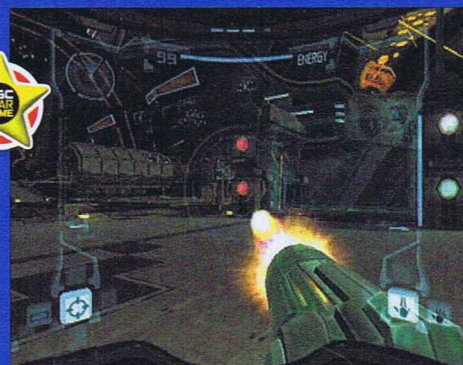
The babbling of the internet whingers faded to a stunned silence when this hit the shelves. It's as exquisitely fashioned as a Disney feature film, and doesn't lose any of the gameplay for it. Some sailing sections spoil it a bit, and it's pretty short, but this is as close to 'art' as 'games' have been yet.



2 METROID PRIME 97

NINTENDO ■ NGC/76

Looks absolutely incredible, and there's no slow down at all, despite the fact that the environments are huge and detailed. The action's varied, with a broad range of bosses, and the puzzles are mind-bending. One of the finest games you'll ever play – on any system.



3 SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE 96

NINTENDO ■ NGC/73

Yet again Mario shows other platform 'heroes' how it's really done – in stunning 3D, with responsive controls and an engaging story. Plus a giant water-filled squirty backpack. You need one of those...





**4 METROID PRIME 2
ECHOES**

NINTENDO ■ NGC/101

Another outstanding outing for Samus Aran as she switches between dimensions to save the Luminoth from the Ing. The story is enriched by the logs you find, and Samus has useful new weapons and abilities. The landscapes aren't as varied and awe-inspiring as *Prime's*, but that's our one complaint.



94



**5 MARIO KART
DOUBLE DASH!!**

NINTENDO ■ NGC/88

Crazy courses littered with Chain Chomps and pickup boxes, weapons from slippery bananas to green shells and giant Yoshi eggs, and all your favourite Ninty faces doubling up to race recklessly. The AI's a bit cheaty (a shell just as we're about to win? Hmm...) but it's a whole lotta fun.



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93

6 F-ZERO GX

NINTENDO ■ NGC/85

Blisteringly fast racer that manages to keep the pace up without getting the frame rate jitters. You will never accept glitchy graphics again. A few more tracks would've been nice, but with editable vehicles (in addition to the 30+ that come with the game) and a Story mode, why complain?



92



7 PIKMIN 2

NINTENDO ■ NGC/99

Louie, Olimar's assistant, has proved less than efficient at managing the business. Happily, it means they've had to return to earth for a longer session of collecting 'treasure'. They've got two new types of Pikmin to help them out, too. Bigger, better and even more enjoyable than the original.



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92

8 SOUL CALIBUR 2

NAMCO ■ NGC/85

Excellent fast-paced fighting. Weapon Master mode is your key to unlocking the three hidden characters – but the real star of the show's not hidden! For the Gamecube version, Namco have dropped in Link, complete with bow and arrow. It's the best fighting game on any system.



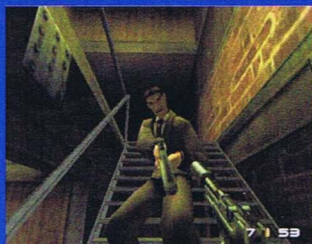
91



9 TIMESPLITTERS 2

NINTENDO ■ NGC/73

Travel back through time on the trail of the nefarious 'Splitters. This means shooting things. Your weapons are time-zone appropriate and you'll wage war everywhere from the Wild West to the near future. And you will love every minute. The multiplayer's the icing on the cake.



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91

**10 SUPER SMASH
BROS MELEE**

NINTENDO ■ NGC/68

All your Nintendo favourites (and a few Nin-non-entities) get together for a phenomenal ruck across a whole range of game worlds. Think Samus could beat Mario? Or that three Jigglypuffs are better than one Link? You'll have massive amounts of fun proving it, by yourself or with friends.



91



**1 ADVANCE
WARS 1 & 2**

Cute-looking turn-based strategy, with a frighteningly addictive, super-challenging core. Honestly, it's better than it sounds. *AW2* is essentially *Advance Wars 1.5*, but it's tweaked to perfection.

2 WARIO WARE

Imagine the simple graphics and gameplay of *Game & Watch* fired at you in five-second bursts. Loopy fun that you'll keep returning to.

**3 MARIO & LUIGI
SUPERSTAR
SAGA**

An RPG with puzzle and platform elements starring our two top plumbers.

**4 THE LEGEND
OF ZELDA:
A LINK TO
THE PAST**

One of the most memorable outings for Link (alongside *Ocarina of Time*). Comes with bonus *Four Swords* multiplayer adventure.

**5 SUPER
MARIO
ADVANCE 2**

This tweaked version of the SNES classic boasts a massive game world and some of the tightest level designs ever.

**6 POKÉMON
RUBY &
SAPPHIRE**

The same structure as before – catch 'em all, send 'em into battle – but still the most entertaining RPG out there...

**7 MARIO KART
SUPER
CIRCUIT**

Nicks the best bits from the SNES and N64 versions, and if you've got four friends, GBAs and cables, they can play too.

**8 METROID
FUSION/
ZERO
MISSION**

Everything that has ever made *Metroid* great can be found in these two games. A sprawling environment littered with enemies and an imposing difficulty level.

**9 HARVEST
MOON**

A slow burner, *HM: Friends of Mineral Town* is a farming/charming sim to die for. It'll last you months.

**10 STREET
FIGHTER
ALPHA 3**

An incredible conversion of one of the best fighters ever. Massive single-player and a brilliant two-player.

11 HARVEST MOON A WONDERFUL LIFE 91

NINTENDO ■ NGC/91

Romance the ladies, keep cows and grow veggies as the seasons change... Despite a new 'chapter' structure, this farm sim loses its way a little when you've got your bride and have few new goals apart from hybridising crops, but you'll keep returning to do a bit of milking...



12 HITMAN 2 SILENT ASSASSIN 91

EIDOS ■ NGC/82

Bald barcoded assassin 47 comes out of retirement and takes on the bad guys with a range of weapons. Not bad for a bloke who spends his time in a shed. You're rewarded for doing things quietly - but how else you go about it is up to you, because this is freeform gaming at its finest.



13 PRINCE OF PERSIA THE SANDS OF TIME 91

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/90

Ubi Soft show other developers how to update classic games without ruining them, as the brilliant 2D platformer gets transformed into an outstanding 3D platformer. Maybe there's too much fighting, and maybe the puzzles are too samey... but really, it all reeks of quality. Superb.



14 PAPER MARIO: THE THOUSAND-YEAR DOOR 91

NINTENDO ■ NGC/100

With Mario's papery ability to fold himself into a paper plane or turn sideways to become nigh-invisible, plus a great fighting mechanism and rippling scenery, this is a brilliant example of Nintendo doing what they do best - making the games only they can make.



15 WAVE RACE BLUE STORM 90

NINTENDO ■ NGC/67

A few tiny frame rate problems hamper the PAL version of this aquatic racer, but it is still a fabulous game. It's convincingly speedy, and it looks wonderful - the water effects will leave you staggered. The controls are intuitive and effective. In short, this is absolute magic.



16 VIEWTIFUL JOE 90

CAPCOM ■ NGC/84

Some people love the unusual looks, some people hate them. Either way, get past the cel shading and this 2D-yet-3D beat-'em-up impresses. Elements like speeding up and slowing down time during battles only adds to the cinematic feel. It can be frustrating, but you'll love it anyway.



17 SECOND SIGHT 90

CODEMASTERS ■ NGC/97

Excellent psychic stealth-'em-up. Who are you? Why are you here? All will be revealed - if you survive. The levels are tightly designed, offering scope for replay, while its distinctive style and original touches make it one of the most memorable games we've played in years.



18 METAL GEAR SOLID THE TWIN SNAKES 90

KONAMI ■ NGC/91

Superb stealth action and a great story combine with revamped graphics to make this old PlayStation title blossom on Gamecube. The voice acting and music are superb. The only problems are the long, unskippable cut-scenes, the short length and possibly too many bosses. We're just picky...



19 BURNOUT 2 90

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/80

The best realistic racer on Gamecube. It looks great, it's wonderfully fast, and then there are the crashes... When you've had fun roaring round the streets, Crash mode gives you the opportunity to beat up your car in the most spectacular manner possible. Accessible and entertaining.



20 WARIO WARE INC. MEGA PARTY GAMES 90

NINTENDO ■ NGC/97

A quickfire succession of hilarious five-second minigames are blasted at you and up to three friends. With tasks like nose picking, cat poking and banana peeling, it's wholeheartedly original, outlandishly quirky and good fun. What's more, because you can put in your own name and store your records, it handicaps experienced players so less able ones can play on an equal footing.



21 PHANTASY STAR ONLINE 1 & 2 90

ATARI ■ NGC/78

This online RPG will devour huge chunks of your life. Get ready for lots of menu screens, numbers and bashing crates. Note: 1) you'll need a broadband adaptor to play online - good luck finding one of those. 2) Third-party memory cards are prone to corrupt with this. Don't risk 'em.



22 1080° AVALANCHE 90

NINTENDO ■ NGC/89

More of a racer than a trick-based snowboarder, although jumps, spins and flips are all there. Short courses and a fair bit of pace keep things feeling tight. The time trialling modes are the best bits - Gate Trial will have you trying to shave seconds off your time for months.



23 ANIMAL CROSSING 90

NINTENDO ■ NGC/98

Ever fancied leaving home and living in a town populated by animals? The full 'teenaged Dr Moreau' experience can be yours, complete with N64 graphics and strange noises. Somehow it's horribly addictive, as you improve your house, fill the museum and get a life.



24 SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS 90

ATARI ■ NGC/81

Vast boat-based RPG ported from the Dreamcast. "It'll devour vast chunks of your life," our RPG fanatic assures us. The spaces in between the meat of your quest (for some missing moonstones) are stuffed with the usual RPG battling, puzzle solving and shopping. Looks dated now.



TOP FIVE PLATFORM GAMES



SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

A tour-de-force of everything good gaming should be.

PRINCE OF PERSIA

An innovative time-rewarding twist and excellent puzzles make this essential.

LUIGI'S MANSION

Yes, it's a little easy, but you'll enjoy every second.

RAYMAN 3 HOODLUM HAVOC

Can't touch Sunshine, but it's entertaining and looks 'the bomb'.

WARIO WORLD

Not that tough to beat, admittedly, but still bags of fun.

TOP FIVE RACING GAMES



MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!

Single-player mode looks as cute as ever, but it's rock hard.

F-ZERO GX

Expertly crafted arcade fun. Really rockets along.

WAVE RACE BLUE STORM

Classic Nintendo action with dazzling water effects.

BURNOUT 2

Fast car racing combined with steel-crunching crashes.

EXTREME G 3

The weapons are what make this future racer shine.

25 CONFLICT DESERT STORM 2 90

SCI ■ NGC/86

Even better than the last CD5, but again very brown and set during the first Gulf war. There's a new aspect to this one: you're not allowed to let any of your men die, which leads to all sorts of life-saving heroics and more opportunity for you to 'get to know' your squad members.



26 WORMS 3D 90

SEGA ■ NGC/87

You know the score. You have four worms. Your worms must kill other worms. The special weapons are as crazy as ever (Sheep, the Holy Hand Grenade). The only real difference is, it's now in 3D, which will affect your strategies. For the better. A multiplayer blast.



27 ETERNAL DARKNESS 89

NINTENDO ■ NGC/74

Lovecraftian horror that sees you playing as a dozen different characters to fight off shambling evil. As you see more, your sanity meter falls, and when that drops to the bottom... Let's just say you'll be glad your mind has gone. There are a few weaknesses in the combat, but it's nearly perfect otherwise.

28 LEGEND OF ZELDA FOUR SWORDS 89

NINTENDO ■ NGC/102

An obscure Zelda game that's hard on the pockets - in multiplayer mode, each of the four players needs a GBA and link cable. Nonetheless, it's great fun, very amusing, and would've scored more highly if the best bit of the Japanese version, Tetra's Trackers, hadn't been chopped out.

29 RESIDENT EVIL 89

CAPCOM ■ NGC/72

Compelling survival horror. Play as Jill if you want to take things gently, Chris if you're feeling hardcore. Then immerse yourself in this puzzle-solving, zombie-battling frightfest. There's a bit of backtracking and the puzzles are annoying, but they don't hamper it too much.

30 SPLINTER CELL 89



UBI SOFT ■ NGC/81

Ageing special agent Sam Fisher's first outing. Sam stealths his way around the realistically gritty Clanciverse. Only he and his various high-tech, highly improbably gadgets like sticky bombs and camera disruptors stand between terrorists and the Free World. It's your usual silent-man-takes-on-bad-guys fare, but done with a fair degree of flair and polish. Not a great port, but a good game nonetheless.

31 SSSX 3 89

EA ■ NGC/87

Snowboard around one giant mountain, entering races or showing off tricks. Complete all three peaks and you'll get the chance to spend 15-30 minutes tricking your way down the whole mountain. The frame rate can be glitchy, and it's not quite as free-roaming as it seems at first, but it's a superb game.

32 DONKEY KONGA 88

NINTENDO ■ NGC/99

Drum along to a soundtrack, following the symbols on screen for left bongo, right bongo, both bongos or clap. It's the sort of game that almost anyone can pick up and play. It's also completely addictive and tremendous fun. Despite the extra bongos costing £20 a set, the multiplayer's worth the expense.

33 PRINCE OF PERSIA WARRIOR WITHIN 88

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/102

The Prince is older and his game's got more 'mature' (so, scantily-clad ladies and smart-arsed comments have been dropped in). It's still great to look at and great to play, with trickier puzzles than the first game, and although the fighting's a bit dodgy, the rest of it more than outweighs that.

34 TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005 88

EA ■ NGC/98

This is a big game. There are probably lost tribes in there if you play for long enough - but you won't see them if you have other interests, like a job or social life. More ball control, famous opponents, the ability to create your own golfer, 14 courses (11 of them new)... You can't get bigger or better than this.

35 LUIGI'S MANSION 88

NINTENDO ■ NGC/67

The most annoying thing about Luigi's own adventure is that it's TOO SHORT. That apart, his escapades in his newly-acquired haunted house play like a combination of *Super Mario World* and *Ghostbusters*. The man in the green hat has done himself proud with this one.

36 SUPER MONKEY BALL 88

ATARI ■ NGC/67

The first ingenious update of old classic *Marble Madness*, with encapsulated monkeys rolling around bizarre landscapes collecting bananas. Minigames include obvious ballgames like pool and golf, oddities like a tilting boxing ring and even a monkey version of *Mario Kart*.

37 NBA STREET V2 88

EA ■ NGC/84

You don't need a serious basketball sim - this one is stacks of fun, and unless those real-life stats are really vital to your enjoyment of a game, *NBA Street's* got everything you need. Three-on-three action, stunt combos and special moves, all crammed into a fast-moving game.

38 DONKEY KONG: JUNGLE BEAT 87

NINTENDO ■ NGC/103

Get out those bongos, it's time to change your gaming habits. Guide DK through the jungle to collect bananas by tapping the drums, and beat bosses by clapping your hands. It'll you in so much you'll need a Radox bath to soothe aching arm muscles. The only real slip up is lack of a multiplayer mode.

39 MADDEN NFL 2005 87

EA ■ NGC/99

The main change in this bitterly tough latest instalment in the franchise is Hit Stick, which lets you decide how much physical impact your tackles have. Apart from that and a few tweaks to defensive plays and Franchise mode, it's pretty much business as usual for Madden.

40 DEF JAM VENETTA 87

MAJESCO ■ NGC/82

All your favourite rappers get together to give wrestling games a kick up the booty. Starting as a mere rookie, fight your way through the likes of DMX, Redman and Ludacris, and play the part of your girlfriend as she catfights with other lissome lovelies. Need we mention the great hip-hop soundtrack?

TOP FIVE FIGHTING GAMES



SOUL CALIBUR 2

Gorgeous Link-fuelled beat-'em-up from fight kings Namco.

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

All your favourite Ninty types pounding each other's faces in.

VIEWTIFUL JOE

The only one-player beat-'em-up in our top five. Stunning.

DEF JAM VENETTA

The wrestling game that appeals to non-grapple fans as well.

MK DEADLY ALLIANCE

"Mind if I remove your spleen?" "Ooh, go on - finish me."

TOP FIVE SHOOTING GAMES



METROID PRIME

Tough as nails shooting-heavy sci-fi adventure.

TIME-SPLITTERS 2

Classy first-person shooting from the *GoldenEye* boys.

STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER

Looks great and lacks the ropy on-foot sections of the sequel.

XIII

Euro-shooter with comic-book looks and very serious violence.

IKARUGA

A pure arcade shooter that's tougher than most.

41 TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3 87

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/67

Absolutely stinks of PS2 - go on, smell it! - but is such good fun that it doesn't really matter. You'll find masses of grinds and stunts, a range of locations... Come on, this is Tony Hawk. Before he got in with Bam Margera and started clowning around in cars. You know exactly what this is like...



42 LOST KINGDOMS 2 87

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/81

Lovely looking card-based RPG - not quite up to *Phantasy Star 1&2's* standards, they're still the RPG benchmark, but stapophiles are going to love building their decks, collecting new cards to add to it and crunching numbers.

Essentially *Lost Kingdoms 2* is a string of bite-sized gaming morsels that you can chomp away at at will, putting the game down and returning to it later with ease.

43 STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER 87

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68

Without a doubt the best Star Wars game on Gamecube, both in the way it looks and the way it plays. Take part in the battle of Hoth and whizz your ship down the trench to destroy the Death Star. Note: the whole thing has since been included as a two-player co-op game in *Rogue Squadron III*.

44 BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL 86

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/90

Wonderful-looking action adventure with you finding rare animals and tackling an alien invasion. The visuals are stunning, and the speech and effects make the grade too. Even the minigames are fun. The world is huge and detailed, but the slightly easy difficulty means it won't last as long as you'd like.

45 FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES 86

NINTENDO ■ NGC/91

Multipayer RPG for up to four players - but each one will need a GBA and link cable, making this expensive if you're to play it properly. The order in which you pick up spells can be a bit random and the players' shared 'air bubble' can be claustrophobic, but all in all this is good looking and ambitious.

46 WARIO WORLD 86

NINTENDO ■ NGC/83

Punching, pounding portly fun. That's fun with a capital F (and U and N)! The meths-swilling anti-Mario gets his very own game, and it's every bit as mad as you'd expect. Gather garlic to boost your strength and embark on a (too short) escapade that combines platforming and fighting. Wah-hah-haaaa!

47 BURNOUT 86

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

Absolutely killer racer in its day that was improved on massively by its sequel. Despite the spectacular crashes, inch-perfect handling and smooth frame rate, we'd still recommend you buy *Burnout 2* because it's got all that and so much more. Not that you'd be unhappy with this, far from it!

48 BILLY HATCHER AND THE GIANT EGG 86

SEGA ■ NGC/87

Bright and bouncy, you'll have the 'la-la-la' theme tune stuck in your head for days after playing this bizarre, very Japanese, platformer. Were it not for the annoyingly glitchy later levels and the poor camera, this would be a classic. Who'd have thought rolling an egg around could be so much fun?

49 PIKMIN 86

NINTENDO ■ NGC/80

Only Shigys could've come up with a real-time-strategy game set in a garden. Olimar's first visit to Earth was a resource-management revelation. You have 100 Pikmin to carry out your commands as you try to rebuild your ship before you run out of air. And it looked as wonderful as it played. Just too short.

50 XIII 86

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/88

Unusual graphics - cel shaded characters and scenes, plus comic-style effects (sequences of images, guns that literally go 'bam') set this FPS apart from the gun-toting crowd. Your sixth sense and a bit of stealth help to vary the pace as you set about solving the conspiracy and recovering your memory.

51 NFL 2K3 86

ATARI ■ NGC/79

Possibly not as much fun as *Madden*, owing to the amount of work you have to put in to get your 11 bruisers playing effectively together. However, the enormous Franchise mode and great sound and graphics make this a decent enough game of American Football, if a tad out-of-date.

52 THE LORD OF THE RINGS RETURN OF THE KING 86

EA ■ NGC/87

Orc-slashing, goblin-gutting goodness featuring your favourite film fellowship. With more playable characters than *The Two Towers* (most notably, Gandalf is now in the mix), this takes you from Helm's Deep through to the defeat of Sauron at the Crack of Doom.

53 NBA LIVE 2004 86

EA ■ NGC/88

Under the polished EA Sports surface lies the expected impressively deep layer of substance. The licensed music and players are supported by a strong bedrock of stats and facts and character creation tools. Overall control has been improved, and you've more offensive options. It's soulless but slick.

54 RESIDENT EVIL ZERO 85

CAPCOM ■ NGC/78

Controlling two characters (Rebecca and Billy), you shoot your way through the usual hordes of zombies and monsters, solving puzzles to progress. Fab cut-scenes and in-game visuals mean this looks a treat, and it's got bags of the old Resi atmosphere. A coppery, bloody, fear-filled atmosphere...

55 MARIO GOLF TOADSTOOL TOUR 85

NINTENDO ■ NGC/95

For a Mario game, there's a surprising lack of Ninety in many of the courses. It's just not as whacky as we'd like. And there's plenty of room for sensible in, say, *Tiger Woods*. That aside, it's easy to pick up the controls and the graphics are crisp and shiny. Plenty of modes and unlockables add longevity.

56 IKARUGA 85

ATARI ■ NGC/80

Its toughness is the stuff of legend, even on the Easy difficulty. Your little spaceship fires white and black projectiles, and you have to shoot the black and white nasties with their opposite colour. There are only five of the well-designed levels, but it will take you a while to see them all.



DIRECTORY

Every Gamecube game ever... rated!

57 FIFA FOOTBALL 2004 **85**

EA ■ NGC/87

The best footie sim on Gamecube (unless you import *Winning Eleven* from Japan), with around 400 licensed, face-scanned players and licensed teams and stadia. The free kick system's been tweaked, and corner-taking's menu-driven. So, a single game or a whole career? It's all here.

58 EXTREME G3 **85**

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

An underrated gem, this. It's very fast, the tracks are huge, sprawling and well-designed, and you'll find some very cunning uses for the inventive weapons you acquire. The only down side is that it's a bit soulless. The multiplayer's also nowhere near as good as it could – or should – have been.

59 SPIDER-MAN 2 **84**

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/96

How long have we been waiting for a game that actually makes us feel like a superhero? Well, it's here! Freely swinging through an enormous city, you'll actually feel the joy of doing whatever a spider can. It's not detailed, and some of the quests and missions get samey, but still... that swinging!

60 JUDGE DREDD DREDD VS DEATH **84**

VIVENDI ■ NGC/89

Mega City One comes to life. Sadly, it's not an especially long life, but while it lasts you get to play as ol' chinny himself, solving crimes, nailing perps and eventually tracking down the Dark Judges. The setting and story are spot-on. Apart from the length, the fiddly controls are the other letdown.

61 POKÉMON COLLOSSEUM **84**

NINTENDO ■ NGC/93

The Pokémon series gains an RPG! Your task is to save the Shadow Pokémon from Darkness and destroy the powers of the people corrupting the poor critters! Aww. Really, though, it's an awful lot of fighting, and you'll need a GBA Pokémon title to get the most out of the Colosseum mode.

62 TALES OF SYMPHONIA **84**

NINTENDO ■ NGC/100

A 'traditional' RPG, and good looking one at that. The characters are beautifully designed and the specific locations you enter throughout the adventure are stunning. The only downer in the visual stakes is the relatively ugly overworld. The rubbish, clichéd dialogue will irritate, though.

63 RAYMAN 3 HOODLUM HAVOC **84**

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/78

Rayman manages to create a fun platformer, despite his inability to add anything new to the genre. It's bright, it's solid, and it's got some enjoyable minigames. It doesn't get boring and the difficulty curve is scaled just right. When you've played all the Mario you can handle, give Ray a go.

64 ISS2 **83**

KONAMI ■ NGC/68

Once upon a time, this series was untouchable, but the FIFA games have ramped up their quality while the GC ISS seemed much slower than its predecessors and your players had huge turning circles. ISS2 is a great game, but we expected so much more of it. However, it's MUCH better than ISS3.

65 ROGUE SQUADRON III REBEL STRIKE **83**

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88

Star Wars is about screaming TIE fighters and taking on Star Destroyers, not poncing around on foot. So, whether you're playing Luke Skywalker's storyline or Wedge Antilles', the on-foot sections ruin the rest. Which is a shame, because it looks and sounds near-perfect, and the two-player *Rogue Leader* rules.

66 SERIOUS SAM NEXT ENCOUNTER **83**

TAKE 2 ■ NGC/94

Don't be fooled by the name, this is very silly indeed. For a mere £20 you can spend hours gunning down wave after wave of brightly-coloured aliens across a range of historical locations. Okay, the killing can get a bit relentless, but for a bit of blasting fun, Sam's the man. Never mind the depth, feel the speed!

67 BATEN KAITOS **83**

NAMCO ■ NGC/103

Role-playing adventure, with card-based battles that change the face of combat. This game is unique and delivers a wonderful magical, fantastical world; the stunning vistas, towns and interiors are awash with a lavish colour palette. It is only let down only by stilted and painfully wooden voice acting.

68



FREEDOM FIGHTERS **83**

ID ■ NGC/86

Less serious than the *Desert Storm* series, this squad-based third-person shooter is enjoyable and involves a big degree of strategy. Many of the levels interact with each other, so objectives completed in one mission will affect the events in another.

So forget rubbish like bullet trajectories and get your plumber and his team out on the streets of Noo Yoik to take on the Russians. This solid shooter will not disappoint.

69 TONY HAWK UNDERGROUND 2 **82**

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/100

Tony Hawk rumbles on. This time the graphics have a more cartoony feel, and Story mode features a lot of Bam Margera. Some bits don't belong in a skateboard game, like driving vehicles and walking. Those bits are rubbish. The rest is great, and includes chunks of the first three games – with timer!

70 SUPER MONKEY BALL 2 **82**

ATARI ■ NGC/78

If games teach you one thing, it's this: out of balls, monkeys want you dead. And they probably carry guns. Inside balls (WHERE A MONKEY BELONGS!), the little creatures are a delight. *SMB2* offers you a wide array of minigames and over 100 levels to roll your imprisoned simian around.

71 METAL ARMS GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM **82**

VIVENDI ■ NGC/88

Hard – like Ray Winstone in a steel top hat. This robot shoot-'em-up is tough right from the difficult training level. The enemies are extremely resilient and have superb AI, so you need to be accurate and quick. The camera can be awkward, and landscape hazards (eg water is instantly fatal) can be unfairly harsh.

72 PHANTASY STAR ONLINE EP III CARD REV. **82**

SEGA ■ NGC/94

A new idea for PSO – card-based battling. Following on from the events in *PSO TR2*, you now have to choose a side (Arkz or Heroside) and do battle by rolling dice and selecting cards. You really need to be familiar with PSO to get the most out of it, and you'll also require an elusive broadband adaptor...

TOP FIVE ADVENTURE /RPGS



ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER

Phenomenal. A reason to own Gamecube itself.

METROID PRIME

Tough as nails shooting-heavy sci-fi adventure. Again.

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE

A number-cruncher that turns epic with a bit of t'internet.

SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS

If 'classic' RPGs are your bag, this boy'll be a sackful of joy.

LOST KINGDOMS II

Polished RPG with card collecting elements. Neat.

TOP FIVE ACTION ADVENTURE



HITMAN 2

Compelling assassin sim that kills the competition dead.

SECOND SIGHT

Brilliant psychic stealth-'em-up from the *SplitTERS 2* team.

MGS: THE TWIN SNAKES

Beautifully updated version of Solid Snake's first outing.

ETERNAL DARKNESS

Another Nintendo exclusive that never fails to entertain.

SPLINTER CELL

Captivating stealth-laced adventure from the hand of Tom Clancy.

73 THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT **82**

EA ■ NGC/89

Having spent their previous game imprisoned within the four walls of their home, this one sees your virtual people playthings freed from their luxury prison as you send them out to work. It's still rather ugly, and it doesn't sound too great, but it will last you a very long time.

74 NFL STREET 2 **81**

EA ■ NGC/103

The American football game that tears up the rulebook and gives you a licence to run like hell. This sequel boasts a new ability that allows you to run around the walls *Prince of Persia*-style to gain height when running, catching or passing a scrum. A quality package for all American football fans.

75 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA OOT MASTER QUEST **81**

NINTENDO ■ NGC/80

Free with *Wind Waker!* You may have played this beauty back in the days of the N64 version, and it still looks pretty much the same, although the Master Quest version has tougher dungeons and different puzzles. Forget the rosy graphics and immerse yourself in Rinkydink's earlier outing.

76 AGGRESSIVE INLINE **81**

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/72

Top-class roller skating sim. Having wheels that stay attached to your feet when they're off the floor means you can pull off moves like swinging round lampposts. There's even a Career mode. On the negative side, the soundtrack is rubbish and the graphics are bland. Still, the frame rate is smooth.

77 THE SIMS **81**

EA ■ NGC/79

Life, Jim, but not as we know it. Your Sim has to do all the things a real person would – leave home, make friends, find a partner, eat, sleep and go to the lav. Yet it's all done in a bizarrely addictive way. Like *Animal Crossing*, there's no point to it, but that's life for you: meaningless, but you want to keep doing it.

78



F1 CAREER CHALLENGE **81**

EA ■ NGC/83

Ever wanted to indulge in the life of an F1 driver? Now you can... minus the model girlfriends, huge salary and celeb-packed parties. Get behind the wheel as a rookie driver and earn your super licence. There are no three-point turns or emergency stops here, just a series of trials to prove you can handle the F1 disciplines. Then you can get on with the racing which looks good, shifts well and handles nice.

79 NHL 2005 **80**

EA ■ NGC/89

Plays a slick, quick game of hockey, but if you dislike the sport, you won't be convinced by this. Although ice hockey does work well enough as a videogame – it's easy to learn and you can rack up huge scores.


80 MORTAL KOMBAT DEADLY ALLIANCE 80
MIDWAY ■ NGC/77

The fighting system's been vastly overhauled from earlier MKs, although it's far too easy to get an 'infinite' by button mashing. The lack of ring outs and stage-specific finishers is disappointing. Still, you've got three fighting styles per character, a ton of unlockables and loads of gore. Best with two players.


81 BALDUR'S GATE DARK ALLIANCE 80
VIVENDI ■ NGC/81

A traditional RPG based on a long-established PC series. Endlessly battling goblins and their ilk can get tedious, but if you've ever played DRD you'll enjoy levelling up and spending your EXP. However, it's a lazy port from PS2, with slowdown and a jittery frame rate when the screen is full. Nonetheless, the game still looks a treat; stuffed full of detail, even given the viewpoint and tiny characters.

82 PAC-MAN VS 80
NAMCO ■ NGC/90

This tiny gem is free – but only when you buy another, inferior full-priced title (*R: Racing Evolution*). While *Pac-Man Vs* isn't a complex title, the four-player mechanic works well. Think of it as a trifle to have fun with between 'serious' gaming sessions. You'll need a Game Boy and link cable to play it properly.

83 DEF JAM FIGHT FOR NY 80
EA ■ NGC/99

More fighting style/ More stylin' fight/ If only they'd/ Got the frame rate right. Yes, this is actually much better than *Def Jam Vendetta*, with a great fighting system and brilliant have-a-go crowds, but the jerkiness (graphical scratching...?) ruins it.

84 THE SIMPSONS HIT AND RUN 80
VIVENDI ■ NGC/87

After a succession of gaming stinkers, the Simpsons take a tip from the Grand Theft Auto series and set about stealing cars, taking on missions and doling out a bit of cartoon-style violence. Not original, but loads of fun.

85 MARIO PARTY 5 80
NINTENDO ■ NGC/89

Ain't no party like a Mario Party. Except all the other parties in the series. This console-based boardgame is one of the best yet, but is still really only good as a multiplayer game. The boardgame bits are a little slow and dull, but the minigames – popping other players' inner tubes, mech fights – are hilarious.

86 DIE HARD VENDETTA 80
VIVENDI ■ NGC/74

WARNING: Do not play this in earshot of old people. We're sure The Vest never swore quite like this. However, he did enjoy a fair bit of gunplay, excellent set-pieces and cheesy dialogue. This has plenty of all three, all hampered by cumbersome controls and frustrating sections. Yippee-kay-ay, melon farmer.

PAUL'S SENSE TALK

GIG TIME FOR KORTEZ

Now here's some sense talk for you. Get to the following venues, and get yourselves unquestionably rocked out by our art monkey, and the rawk-tastic 'Kortez'.

Thurs 10 March
Wunderbar,
Radstock
01761 410904
www.wunderbar.co.uk

Weds 23 March
The Croft
Bristol
01761 410904
www.the-croft.com

Plus, keep up to date by visiting www.kortez.co.uk and check on the latest gig dates, news and reviews.

You can also download a couple of free tracks – result!



Er, anyway, on with some sense...

NON-LESSON IN 'TALK'

It's saddening, how many 'sense talks' get beaten down by stupidity. There's genius in everything you know, you just gotta know where to look, even if 'there' is elsewhere... anyone still listening? No, good! Almost lost it there...

Do you have more 'sense' than our Sense-spewing Art monkey?

More than likely! So go on, send 'em in. The best get printed, and if you're really lucky, he may send you a hair from his dog's underbelly.

Send them to him at paul.edwards@futurenet.co.uk or to Sense Talk at the usual address.

87 POOL PARADISE 80
IGNITION ■ NGC/92

Not just UK pool – poke your cue at eight-ball, nine-ball and stunt tables too, if that's what fits your triangle. Using the analogue stick to power your cue is a nice touch, and darts and *Dropzone* feature as minigames. Earth shattering? No. But it's all solid and playable, as you'd expect.

88 PUYO POP FEVER 80
SEGA ■ NGC/91

Puyo Pop: if you've never heard of it, you must have started gaming all of a week ago. It's quite simple: match coloured blobs that drop from the top of the screen and – hey presto! – they disappear. How radical is that? Two-player's a whole lot more fun than you'd think, too.

89 NFL STREET 79
EA ■ NGC/90

American Football isn't quite brought to the masses by *NFL Street*. Even though the strategy's dumbed down it's still very stoppy-starty and so can be slightly drawn-out. We'd also have liked a custom play editor or a whacky training mode to help players get to grips with the basic plays.

90 HARRY POTTER & THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN 79
EA ■ NGC/95

A Potter title that actually works pretty well as a game! Whatever next? The way you use the differing skills of Harry, Ron and Hermione to solve problems adds interest to a (we're being kind here) rather thin storyline. The controls are a bit iffy, but the atmosphere's spot-on. Not just for Potter fans.

91 BEACH SPIKERS 79
ATARI ■ NGC/72

Not to everyone's taste – although developers AM2 have at least abandoned the 'jiggles' and concentrated on making a proper sports sim. You'll need lightning-quick reactions and good team control to succeed. Its single-player appeal is limited, so you'll need to play with friends to get the most from it.

92 CAPCOM VS SNK 2 ED 79
CAPCOM ■ NGC/72

Enormous depth and an avalanche of play modes give the game longevity – Versus mode will last you for ages – but it doesn't work well with the GC's joystick (specials on the C-stick? Cheapness abounds!) and so you'll really need to shell out for an arcade stick. It's pretty ugly too.

93 DAKAR 2 79
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/80

Two problems with this: it's basically one big time trial (and you can find a Time Trial mode in any racing game) and there aren't any real opponents. The handling of your vehicle and the varied courses between Paris and Dakar make up for it. A fun drive, just not a very competitive one.

94 NBA COURTSIDE 2002 79
NINTENDO ■ NGC/68

There's a wealth of basketball games available for your Gamecube, and this is far from the worst, with all the passing, dunking and other ball-based moves you could ask for. However, it's not the best or most recent either. *NBA Street V2* or *NBA Live 2004* would be our preferred choices.

95 NHL HITZ 20-02 79
MIDWAY ■ NGC/67

Ice hockey's probably the most Brit-friendly of North American sports – no slowing down, fewer strange-seeming terms to get used to – and this is a fast, slick game. *NHL 2005* is more recent and slightly better, but if you can't get that, *NHL Hitz 20-02* is going to be your next best ice hockey option.

96 KNOCKOUT KINGS 2003 79
EA ■ NGC/75

Decent boxer. Slightly better than – and very different from – *Rocky*. The camera's really dynamic, and the control system can feel disorientating at first. There are plenty of modes, and you can build your own boxer to punch his way through Career mode. Looks rather nice, too.

97 SPLINTER CELL PANDORA TOMORROW 78
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/97

Sam Fisher returns for more spying, sniping and skulking around in the dark – but his first adventure was far superior. The quality of the conversion's not great and some serious gameplay flaws from the Xbox original haven't been addressed, but we kept coming back. Until the glitchy last level, anyway.

98 HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS 78
EA ■ NGC/76

A competent and attractive adaptation of the second film, but not too challenging either. Experienced gamers will be flinging spells around and getting through it in no time, so Harry's basilisk-locating escapade is best left for Potter Fans or the very young. Better than *Philosopher's Stone*, though...

99 ROCKY 78
RAGE ■ NGC/74

Five Rockies for the price of one as you fight your way through all the films, complete with all the great opponents. Are you ready to take on Mr T, fool? Then this solid fighter will let you do it. It's not exactly imaginative, but there's plenty to unlock and the two-player's good fun.

100 EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING 78
KONAMI ■ NGC/79

This snazzy-looking Tony Hawk's clone should keep you happy, but it's a bit like going to see an Elvis impersonator when the King's in town: while the real thing's available and is of a higher quality, that's what you're best off with. Happily, unlike Tone's later excursions, this features no walking or driving.





NGC
END GC

EXCLUSIVE! Secret character revealed...





CHEATS UNLIMITED

A SIMPLE CALL AND YOU'VE GOT THE CHEAT



Cheats & Walkthroughs also available for all these consoles.

TOP WALKTHROUGHS PLUS OVER 20,000 CHEATS & TIPS

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 A Wonderful Life
 Ace Golf
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 American Pro Truckr
 Animal Crossing
 Army Men: Sarge's War
 ATV Quad Racing 2
- B = 02**
 Bad Boys: 2 Miami Tdown
 Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance
 Batman: Dark Tomorrow
 Beach Spikers
 Bladeblade
 Beyond Good and Evil
 Big Mutha Truckers
 Billy Hatcher and Giant Egg
 Blood Omen 2
 BloodRayne
 BMX XXX
 Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
 Burnout
 Bustin' Out, The Sims
- C = 03**
 Catwoman
 Clone Wars, Star Wars
 Conflict: Desert Storm
 Conflict: Desert Storm 2
 Crash Nitro Kart
 Crush Hour, WWE
- D = 04**
 Dakar 2
 Darkened Skye
 Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2
 Day of Reckoning - WWE
 Dead to Rights
 Def Jam Vendetta
 Defender
 Desert Storm
- E = 05**
 Eggo Mania
 Enter the Matrix
 Eternal Darkness
 Euro 2004
- F = 06**
 Fantasy Star Online 1 & 2
 FIFA 2002
 FIFA 2003
 FIFA 2004
 FIFA Football 2005
 FIFA World Cup 2002
- G = 07**
 Fighting Live
 Final Fantasy C. Chronicles
 Fire Blade
 Four Swords Adventures
 Freedom Fighters
 Freakstyle
 Future Tactics: The Uprising
 F-Zero GX
- H = 08**
 H.Potter & Chamber of Sec.
 H.Potter & Philosopher's St.
 H.Potter & Pris. of Azkaban
 H.Potter: Quidditch W. Cup
 Harvest Moon 2: Wond. Life
 Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
 Hulk
- I = 09**
 Ikaruga
 Inter. Superstar Soccer 2
 Italian Job: L.A. Heist
- J = 10**
 James Bond 007: Nightfire
 James Bond: Agent Under F.
 James Bond: E. or Nothing
 Jedi Knight 2: Jedi Outcast
- K = 11**
 Kirby's Air Ride
- L = 12**
 Leg. of Kain: Blood Omen 2
 Legends of Wrestling 2
 Looney Tunes: Back in Action
 Lord of the Rings: R.of King
 Lost Kingdoms
 Lost Kingdoms II: Rune
 Luigi's Mansion
- M = 13**
 Madden NFL 2005
 Majora's Mask
 Mario Golf: Toadstool Tour
 Mario Kart: Double Dash
 Mario Sunshine
 Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2
 Matrix, Enter the
 Medal of Honor Frontline
 Medal of Honor: R. Sun
 Metal Arms: Glitch in System
Metal G. Solid: T. Snakes
 Metroid Prime
 Mission Impossible: O.Surma
 Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.
 MX Superfly
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- N = 14**
 NBA Live 2003
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 Need for Speed: H.Pursuit 2
 Need for Speed: 2
 Second Sight
- O = 15**
 Ofarcina of Time: Zelda
 Oo7 Agent Under Fire
- P = 16**
 Phantasy Star Online
 Pikmin
 Pikmin 2
 Point of Impact
 Pokemon Channel
 Pokemon Colosseum
 Primal Fury, Bloody Roar
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 Prisoner of Azkaban
- R = 18**
 Rainbow Six 3
 Rebel Strike, R. Squadron 3
 Red Faction 2
 Res. Evil: Code Veronica X
 Resident Evil
 Resident Evil 2
 Resident Evil 3: Nemesis
Resident Evil Zero
 Ribbit King
 Rise of Sin Tzu
Rising Sun, the Akkadian
 Rising Sun, Medal of Honor
 Rocky
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- S = 19**
 Sands of Time, P. of Persia
 Sanity's Requiem
 Sarge's War - Army Men
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 Scorpion King
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- Serious Sam Next Encounter**
 Shrek 2
 Shrek: Extra Large
 Simpsons: Hit & Run
 Simpsons: Road Rage
 Sims
 Sims: Bustin' Out
 Smugglers Run 2: Warzone
Sonic Adventure 2 Battle
 Sonic Adventure DX
 Sonic Heroes
Sonic Mega Collection
 Soul Calibur 2
 Sphinx & Cursed Mummy
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