

ELECTRONIC GAMING

32
GAMES
REVIEWED

**SEAMAN
CREATOR
INTERVIEW**

POKÉMON

- ▶ **GOLD & SILVER EXPOSED**
- ▶ **5 NEW GAMES**
- ▶ **LATEST CARD GAME INFO**



100
NEW
POKÉMON

Pokémon
#250
No. 01

JET GRIND RADIO



**MAT HOFFMAN'S
PRO BMX**



SPIDER-MAN



DISPLAY UNTIL, SEPTEMBER 4

September 2000
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WHAT A WASTE
OF A PERFECTLY
GOOD RAIL.



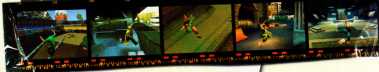
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TENCHU 2

BIRTH OF THE STEALTH ASSASSINS

笑謀二

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EDITORIAL

Payin' Props to Pokémon

What to bet your reaction when you saw this was Angt! Another Pokémon cover and feature! But perhaps we should delve deeper into the guts of this Pokémon Phenomenon (as we called it way back in *EGM* #114).

Pikachu, Jigglypuff and the rest of the Pokémon posse didn't become one of the biggest gaming phenomenons in history because they look cool

palette developers can use to add color and depth to the framework of a good (or bad) game. But the greatest license isn't going to make a bad game good, and a bad license can't make a good game bad. With all due respect to skateboard guru Tony Hawk, his games aren't top sellers because of his name, it's because the software bearing his likeness is really fun to play. Hands weren't any less clammy across the world as

What makes this cutesy and fuzzy and rubbery and spiky and squirly clan so compelling isn't their wimpy aesthetics, it's the fact that they've appeared in a growing lineage of addictively fun-to-play video games.

or cute, I mean, I could chew up a piece of gum, spit it out, and press a couple of googly eyes on it and boom—I've created a Pokémon.

To date, more Pokémon video games have sold worldwide than games starring one of America's most beloved licensed characters including Mickey Mouse, Superman, Batman, Yoda, Rescue P. Calatrane, Barney and Barbie combined. What makes this cutesy and fuzzy and rubbery and spiky and squirly clan so compelling isn't their wimpy aesthetics, it's the fact that they've appeared in a growing lineage of addictively fun-to-play video games. It is perhaps the ultimate example of turning the licensing formula upside down: Most characters are created in other mediums like TV or movies and then eventually migrate to a mediocre video game—in Pokémon's case, the reverse is true.

Too often in this industry companies miss that most salient axiom: focus on creating good, fun games. A license provides nothing more than a

players adjusted from controlling tradition-stepped James Bond for out-of-nowhere Joanna Dark—it's the spectacular gameplay that rivets us to the screen. And when Activision's long-awaited Spider-Man title finally hits the game may generate more genuine buzz because of Spider-Man's stature in American pop culture, but its ultimate success will depend much more upon the quality of the game.

There's probably a lot of you out there who still want to punch through walls and take down every Pichu you see with Joanna Dark's Super Dragon, but before going on a berserker frenzy take a moment to acknowledge that in the end, Pokémon stands among the finest examples of what game developers should aspire to.

Turn to page 138 to see Crispin Boyer's wonderful update on all things Poké—the card games, the movies, and oh yes, the video games....

Joe Funk

Contributing Writers



Frank Provo

Mr. Megalomania comes to us from such fine publications as *Pocket Games* and

video games.com. When not terrorizing the locals, he can be found playing *SF3*: Third Strike, enjoying his NeoGeo Pocket Color, or watching episodes of *Evangelion* and *Elchica*. To his credit he was once mistaken for the legendary E. Sak.



Andrew Pflister

Andrew is currently studying Political Science at the University of

Wisconsin. He has been a regular contributor to *EGM* as well as *Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine*, *Dreamcast Magazine*, and *videogames.com*. While he prefers the action and RPG genres, Andrew is an equal-opportunity gamer.



By Joe Funk • Joe.funk@effbot.com

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Featured pros:

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Leigh Ransdell, Mike Laird,
Troy McMurray, Kenan Harkin,
Joey Garcia, Shaun Butler,
Chad Kagy and Tim Mirra.

Killer soundtrack: Sublime, Cypress Hill, Rancid,
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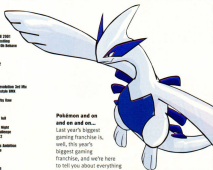
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Game Directory Features

Departments

100	2001 Ranking
100	1042
64	1&1 Evolution
62	1 World
101	Accumulus
102	Accumulus 2
100	All-Star Pro Wrestling 2001
98	All-Star Pro Wrestling
100	Asphalt Powerslide
98	Asphalt Powerslide 2
98	Asphalt Xtreme
98	Asphalt Xtreme 2
98	Asphalt Xtreme 3
98	Asphalt Xtreme 4
98	Asphalt Xtreme 5
98	Asphalt Xtreme 6
98	Asphalt Xtreme 7
98	Asphalt Xtreme 8
98	Asphalt Xtreme 9
98	Asphalt Xtreme 10
98	Asphalt Xtreme 11
98	Asphalt Xtreme 12
98	Asphalt Xtreme 13
98	Asphalt Xtreme 14
98	Asphalt Xtreme 15
98	Asphalt Xtreme 16
98	Asphalt Xtreme 17
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98	Asphalt Xtreme 19
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Pokemon and on

and on and on... Last year's biggest gaming franchise is, well, this year's biggest gaming franchise, and we're here to tell you about everything that's new in Pokéland, from the new games to the new masters to the new TV episodes, you'll find everything you crave in our 12-page blowout. **pg 198**



Jet Grind Radio We blow out this amazing Dreamcast game, and show you how to make some official ZGM graffiti! **pg 56**



R.I.P. SNK Ladies and Gentlemen, SNK has left the building. Read about R in News. **pg 26**



The Return of N64 Reviews Check out Kirby 64, Starcraft 64 and others. **pg 154**



Half-man, half-fish, all heart. Read our **Seaman** review on **pg 155**.

	Editorial	12
	Letters	18
	News	26

We look at SNK and details of their disappointingly quick exit from the U.S. market. We also sit down with the creator of Seaman and the aquatic one himself to get answers to the hard questions.

	Gossip	37
	Previews	54

Jet Grind Radio and Half Life for DC; Mega Man X2, Spyro: Year of Lunar 2: Eternal Blue for PS; Silent Scope and Smuggler's Run for PS2; Task 3 for N64 and tons more.

	Review Crew	154
--	--------------------	------------

Tons of reviews in this month's section. Seaman and Virtua Tennis for DC; Chrono Cross and X-Men Mutant Academy for PS; Crystalis for GBC and many more.

	Tricks	170
--	---------------	------------

We have a new installment of our Perfect Dark Insider column. Look for new secrets and scenarios.

	The Final Word	177
--	-----------------------	------------

ZGM staffers discuss the NGPC and how they feel about SNK pulling out of the U.S. market.

SYSTEM KEY

	Dreamcast
	Nintendo 64
	PlayStation 2
	PlayStation
	Game Boy Color
	Neo-Geo Pocket Color
	Arcade

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Ever felt like the whole world was against you?
You're about to experience déjà vu.

As if Mother Nature wasn't enough to deal with, now the number competitors you must climb over to get to the top just increased by a few million. Introducing 4x4 Evolution, the first game with internet connectivity for heavy-duty off-road competitions between Sega Dreamcast, PC, and Mac users simultaneously. The world is far from a level playing field.



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4x4 Evolution, the first (and only) the first for Sega's Sega Saturn, Sega Dreamcast and PC/Macintosh. It's another masterpiece and the most realistic off-road simulation ever. 4x4 Evolution is available on the PC, Macintosh and Sega Dreamcast. For more information on 4x4 Evolution, visit our website at www.4x4evolution.com or call our customer support at 1-800-4-A-SEGA. © 2001 Sega. All Rights Reserved. The Sega Saturn is a trademark of the Sega Saturn Software Development.



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Sega Dreamcast.





Letters to the Editors

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Reader Offers Pound of Crack

In your review for *Strider 2* (EGM #132) you say, "The unlimited continues destroy this game for a wider audience." And "unlimited continues turn *Strider 2* into a cakewalk." You seem to have come to the conclusion that this feature has deprived you of precious (skill building) suffering and therefore ruins the game. Well, if you're so f____in'

Congratulations. You win an Interact controller. You will be receiving a *Batman* (PS), an *Ally Arcade Stick* (3C) or a *SharkPad Pro 64* (964).

See page 179 for official rules.



Mark MacDonald responds: Well Jimmy, when we review games here at EGM, we play them—and rate them—as they are. That's right, we're 100% organic all-natural gamers. You see, when you start artificially adjusting games by imposing your own rules on them (whether it's by limiting your continues in *Strider 2*, or using only the knife in *Resident Evil*, or playing *Mario* with your feet, or whatever), you end up reviewing how you played a title rather than the game on its own merits. And if you read

hardcore why don't you just start over from scratch whenever you feel you've consumed your regular allowance of continues? Just because I offer you a pound of crack doesn't mean you have to smoke it. I'll admit infinite continues hurts...OK, maims the replay value. However, this is not bad enough to merit branding our mutual friend *Strider* with the scarlet M of mediocrity.

Peter A. Jacob
Camp Springs, MD

"...You (came) to the conclusion that this feature has deprived you of precious suffering and therefore ruins the game."

my review again Billy, I think you'll find I agree that if you are some wilpower buddha who actually possesses the self-control to limit yourself to, say, three continues over and over and over again, *Strider 2* would definitely score better than a 5 for you. That was the whole point of my comment about "a wider audience"—even if I was, as you say, that f____in' hardcore, 99% of everyone else out there isn't, so what's the point of reviewing the game that way? Thanks for writing in Jimmy!

WORLD EXCLUSIVE: X-BOX REVEALED!

Ex-East German counter-intelligence officer and loyal EGM reader Grayson Taylor managed to smuggle out this WORLD EXCLUSIVE photo of a prototype of Microsoft's upcoming X-Box console. Grayson, who obtained this photo at great personal risk and is currently in hiding, estimates the machine's dimensions at roughly 4 1/2 feet by 4 feet and 1 foot wide, and weighing over 500 pounds (although this could of course change in the next year before the console's release). Where the controller ports and DVD tray are



located (perhaps inside the hatch?) and exactly what the prototype was doing in an office park in Longmont, Col., remains a mystery. It is also unknown if the concrete base will be bundled with the system or sold separately like the PS2's horizontal stand. When reached for comment, a Microsoft spokesperson called us "idiots," laughed, and hung up the phone.

Local EGM Reader

LETTER FACTS

- % of state penitentiary inmates writing who asked for a job: [33](#)
- Number of Pokémon featured in letter art: [247](#)
- Number of those Pokémon involved in a violent act: [178](#)
- Game most often featured in letter art: [Dragon Ball Z](#)
- Number of *Dragon Ball Z* games released in the last two years: [0](#)
- Pages of single-spaced paper detailing "easy cheap moves" in *Marvel Vs Capcom 2* sent in by one reader: [5](#)

Getting Into the Game Industry

About a year ago you guys said that you would put a section in your magazine about how to get into the game industry. So what ever happened to that?

4outlaw@home.com

Great question, we'll be starting that section soon. (Seriously, for the 10th time, it's coming. Soon. We promise.) Really.)

Saturn Lover Demands Lie

I was wondering if there is a chance that we'll ever be able to play our favorite Saturn games on the DC1 I bought a Saturn long after its demise and felt completely stupid when I played *Panzer 3*. It appears that I missed out on one of the best shooters ever. Is there a chance that Bleem, or even Sega themselves will ever release a device that plays Saturn games on the DC? If not, then please lie and say it will happen anyway.



For icy cool breath that lasts.

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LETTERS

EGM@ziffdavis.com

Send us your thoughts, your wishes, your innermost weirdness... or your pictures, crazy screenshots or photos of bizarre game-related moments.

Question of the Moment

Are you looking forward to more Pokémon games?

I am looking forward to Gold and Silver very excitedly, but what I'm hoping for is a 3D Pokémon game on Dolphin. Not just battling or taking pictures, I mean a REAL Pokémon game. Gotta catch 'em all forever!

bleedybay0@hotmail.com
Are you joking?! If I see another yellow cat I'm gonna make it pay, Survivor style.

Lapalmabay@aol.com
OH GOD!!! PLEASE MAKE IT STOP! FOR THE LOVE OF ALL THAT IS GOOD, PLEASE MAKE IT STOP!!!!

h_wangbole@juno.com
die.

mailman@bigfish.com
OK I am sick of this Poké crap but then again it would be cool to play a Pokémon fighting game. A Pokémon game like Marvel vs Capcom a tone of my personal favorite!

Bre0doN4559@aol.com
NOOOOOO!!!!NOOOOOO!!!!NOOOOOO!!!!NOOOOOO!!!!I'm done.

RS.
NOOOOOO!!!!

tri-n-miller@juno.com
OH YEAH!! I can't wait for Gold & Silver!

KrazyCow@aol.com
Yes, as long as they aren't quick cash-ins, but quality RPGs like the best!

mpackshaw@nes.ru.com
Of course I'm looking forward to more games...SO I CAN FLUSH 'EM DOWN THE TOILET!!!

ThisObeseMushy@aol.com
ONLY if there is just one more Pokémon game, and Pikachu gets tables and kills every other Pokémon in existence, and then dies a very slow and excruciatingly painful death from either the torture rack or crucifixion, Roman style.

pdoug@hotmail.com

Next Month's Question of the Moment:

How do you feel about the death of SNK in the USA?

Send your short but sweet responses to: EGM@ziffdavis.com with the subject heading: **Dead SNK**

As much as we welcome the chance to lie to such a willing sap such as yourself, we just couldn't bring ourselves to mislead you on this one. No plans for such a magical device as of this printing, but one never knows what the future may hold, does one?

Video Game Enthusiast Insulted

Has anyone taken a gander at Sega's IRC network? It's simply atrocious! Not only is it not run by Sega, but it's run by a bunch of fellas who seem angry at the world. I've seen comments such as, "I'll continue to kline everyone until the rest do whatever I say," and I've seen kicks and bans with tags such as, "I'm bored" or "That's my nick." I'm really afraid to actually say anything on that network. The ops say that if we don't like it, we can create our own rooms, but that is simply absurd seeing as their sponsored rooms are linked to Sega's Web site and therefore get the abundance of traffic. I understand the need for moderation, but to ban people out of spite or boredom does not put Sega in a good light. There's even a posted list of rules that the operators and admins do not follow. Does Sega know what's actually going on? I can't imagine they wouldn't care. Until recently, I thought Sega themselves actually monitored the network. I found out that it's just a guy on a Wings platform and his buddies who run the show.

Something needs to be said about this matter. Whether it's to absolve Sega of any connection to the conduct of that network or to actually get Sega involved in the operation of it, Sega's not being given a good impression by those who've witnessed the adolescent antics that have gone on at Sega's IRC network.

D. Christopher Goodman
Evan@into3@worldnet.att.net

Since it's Sega's servers that are being used, you'd think that the company would monitor the kind of

activity going on on them. But in the meantime, you might want to find your dose of chat on another IRC server separate from Sega. Go to <http://www.inchelp.org/> for a list of servers. The most popular IRC server "networks" are EFeet, DALnet and Undernet. And let's hope Sega starts paying more attention to what's going on on its network.

Oh, and I forgot to add—you've gotta remember that in the world of Internet chat, no matter where you go, only the strong survive. And don't be a lazeo.

Better Living Through Parasites

I read in your August issue that someone became a better driver through playing racing games. Well, I have to say I too have been inspired by video games, but for me, I became a better student. You see, I wasn't doing so well in Science. We had an upcoming test on cell organelles, and I, as usual, was playing my PlayStation all night. Well lucky me, I was playing Parasite Eve! When I got my essay question it was, "Name at least 15 facts about one cell organelle." Well, with mitochondria fresh in my mind from Parasite Eve, I ended giving over 20 facts, and got 100% on the essay test, and ended up actually passing Science. At lunch time, my teacher asked where I learned all this information, because a lot of it she didn't teach, and even had to recheck some of it...she didn't believe me when I said from a video game.

Just goes to prove dumbass politicians should look at the good points of video games. Instead of saying kids who play video games generally have lower grades than those who don't. So what exactly can these politicians learn? Well, give us teachers who look like Aya Brea, give them guns, and have them act out Parasite Eve in front of us,

"...give us teachers who look like Aya Brea...and have them act out Parasite Eve in front of us, complete with mutated rats, living dinosaurs and the villain, Eve, and I guarantee you that nationwide, grades will go up."



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complete with mutated rats, living dinosaurs and the villain, Eve, and I guarantee you that nationwide, grades will go up. If we can't get the guns, we'll settle for teachers who look like Aya Brea.)

Yet more evidence that video games are more than just mindless fun—heck, they're downright educational. Where else can you learn how to raise a pocket monster, talk to a fish, or even fight an ice cream truck-driving clown? Huh?

Fans of Monster Parties Rejoice!

I demand to see a preview of Crispin's game, *Monster Parties*. Then when it's done I want him to send it to me via the deedive. If you guys don't do a preview of the game I demand that you make another RPG with all the Review Crew members as the characters for the game and a short little adventure that they went on... Shee and Sushi-X could be secret characters. Speaking of Sushi-X, what the hell happened to him? Did he die or something?



We'd like to show you more of *Monster Parties* (which Crispin based on an obscure sketch from HBO's supremely hilarious comedy series *Mr. Show*). But unfortunately the ESRB slapped the game with the rare Adults-Only rating—the first ever for a console title. As far as an EGM RPG goes, let's just say there's things about us you wouldn't understand, things you couldn't understand, things you shouldn't understand. You're better off making your own RPG. In fact, we're kicking off a contest next month in which we'll invite all you budding RPG makers to send in your creations. We'll play your games and preview the best of the heap, as well as cat looze with a few cool prizes. Check the October issue for full details.

"...this girl that I liked SAW ME reading it. She thought I WAS a Pokémon freak and a little kid. Damn, I felt so embarrassed (sick)."

Pokémon Ruins "Street Cred"

Your magazine is great, but the thing is, every issue I bought had to have at least five pages about Pokémon. I really did not have any problem with Pokémon, then. Ya, I knew how everybody was (is) addicted to it. But the thing is about a little b***** throwing a ball, and I'm tired of this s****. This piece of s**** is taking all the top 20 games in your mag. Always in the top five of the top 20, there's Pokémon. I bought issue 124, it had Pikachu on the front cover. And another issue had a bunch of pages on Pokémon. It looked like a damn Pokémon Bible or the address (sic). C'mon, can't you do something about that? This s**** is killing me, that's why I stopped buying EGM, cuz of Pokémon. One day I took issue 124 to

school to finish reading the letters in your mag, and this girl that I liked saw me reading it. She thought I was a Pokémon freak and a little kid. Damn, I felt so embarrassed (sick). Can you at least not put Pokémon on the front cover!! Damn Japanese (sic) people do too many Pokémon games of things like pinball, card game, etc. (By the way, I'm not a racist). Please can you stop putting a lot of Pokémon stuff in your issues. Pokémon is not interesting anymore!

wa-yo@hotmail.com

After much deliberation on this topic, we decided that you need to be more confident in your manhood, so as not to be so easily threatened by cute, fuzzy, little creatures. Therefore we decided to put Pokémon on the cover again this month to show you some "tough love." Enjoy.

LETTER ART

WINNER

Chao Sen Chee
Brooklyn, NY

Congratulations, Chao. Since you are our first hall of famer, you get a special prize in addition to the cool ASCII controller.



Put your creative skills to the test by decking out a B3 envelope (the long business type) with your own unique touch. Send your letter art to:

EGM Letter Art
PO Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL
60522-3338

This month we have something very special in letter art. Reader Chao Sen Chee has sent us countless beautiful pieces of art over the last couple years, and won more times than we can count. He did such an amazing piece this month, in both size and execution, that we decided to recognize his efforts and form a Letter Art Hall of Fame, of which he is the first and only inductee. We're sure he's up to his eyeballs in controllers by now, so we are going to award him a unique prize to commemorate this momentous occasion as well. Thanks for all your amazing contributions Chao, we look forward to them each month.



(All entries become the property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be returned.)



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BEGINS WITH ONE NAME



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 Sam Kennedy sam_kennedy@zd.com

Press Start

The Hottest Gaming News on the Planet

SNK USA RIP

Facing sluggish sales and internal strife, the company pulls the Neo-Geo Pocket off shelves and heads back to Japan



Illustration by Mike Heald

This decision came as a sucker punch. No one expected this."

That's how Ben Herman, vice president of sales at SNK Entertainment USA characterized his company's sudden withdrawal on June 13 from the North American market. Many gamers looking for a Neo-Geo Pocket Color or games were just as shocked when they went to their local stores and found no trace of the handheld. In a move "to regroup and reevaluate [SNK's] worldwide marketing strategy," an official press release stated the company had requested retailers return all unsold hardware and software immediately for full reimbursement. SNK plans to repackage

the merchandise (the flash ROM cartridges can be easily rewritten with other games and the guts of the unit refit into the smaller Japanese model's casing) and sell it across the Pacific, where support for the system will continue. Approximately 200,000 Neo-Geo Pocket Colors were sold in America since its release late last summer. Customers with products under valid warranty can call 1-77-PLAY-SNK for exchanges.

Bad Timing

The timing of the decision was especially surprising considering the company's sharing at the most recent E3 industry trade show in

May, just weeks before the announcement. After meeting with SNK at the show, four or five major American third parties were reportedly planning to start developing games for the Pocket Color, including big-name titles like *Army Men*. According to a source inside SNK "all signs at E3 pointed to a new direction for the company, with new U.S. leadership. I really believed what we told everyone at the show—that with the MP's player and some of the cool upcoming games (for the NGPC) like *Ogre Battle* and *Faselei* and *Mega Man*, plus some SNK vs. Capcom sequels, that things looked good. The holiday market was SNK's for the taking. Plus

SHIN Nihon Kikau

July: Shin Nihon Kikau is incorporated in Japan.



1976 Name changed to SNK Corporation in Japan. SNK Corp. of America is established. Soul Warriors (1982) released.



1982 Neo-Geo MVS system hits the shelves. Neo-Geo name system goes on sale at Segas, games cost \$25.



1988 Fatal Fury (1988) is released, the first of dozens of fighting games for the system.



1992 Samurai Shodown II (1992) is released, one of the best all-fighters ever. First King of Fighters (1992) game is released.



1993 Neo-Geo CD released in U.S. for \$249. Games cost between \$30 and \$50.

the company had just signed a five-year lease on a new facility in Torrance. "Other games on display at the show for other systems, like Metal Slug X (PS), Cool Cool Toon and King of Fighters Evolution (both DC) will most likely still be released, just not by SNK—titles are currently under way to license the titles to other publishers. U.S. sales and distribution for the Neo-Geo 16-bit arcade system and games will continue through Apple Photo Systems Inc., so new and future titles like Metal Slug 3 and King of Fighters 2000 won't be affected.

David vs. The Game Boy

Since a large part of SNK America was tied into the Neo-Geo Pocket Color, conventional wisdom would dictate that the system, and by extension the company, fell prey to the same fate as the Lynx and Game Gear before it—crushed by the almighty Game Boy. And indeed,

"I don't think Mr. Kawasaki, who basically owned SNK, spent five minutes telling them what to do. I think they had total freedom and they, on their own, were making wonderful games and somebody comes in and says we need you to make pachinko games and they got their feathers ruffled and left." Another more interesting rumor has Anze insisting all games in the future be in 3D, upsetting the 2D-loving developers enough to leave en masse and find work at rival fighting game creator Capcom. When we contacted SNK's Japanese offices to ask about the rumor, a spokesperson told us, "As in any other company in this industry, several personnel come and go occasionally. But we don't know where people go when they leave. I can tell you that there's been no whole team departures from our company." In any case, the NGPC never had very strong third-party support, so some kind of lapse in internal

One rumor has internal SNK developers leaving the company to work for Capcom rather than make 3D games.

development's ubiquitous handheld didn't help matters much. Recent TRST reports put the NGPC's share of the handheld market at 2%—guess who owns the other 98. As one source inside SNK told EGM, "The hugely phenomenal—I mean unbelievable—success of the Game Boy had really skewed the expectations for the market drastically. SNK would have been doing backflips to sell even like 500,000 units for the holiday season last year, but still most industry analysts would have panned at these numbers."

"Make 3D Pachinko Games? SCREW THAT!"

But the decision to pull the NGPC can't be completely attributed to the Game Boy; at least not directly; recent events at SNK's HQ in Japan may be just as much to blame. According to many reports, a large chunk of the internal development staff left after casino game maker Anze bought controlling interest in SNK early this year. According to one rumor, the developers walked when they were told they would be making pachinko (Japanese pinball-style) titles rather than the action and fighting games they were used to. Although he couldn't officially confirm it, that story made sense to Ben Hileman. "They probably had total creative freedom for the last 15 years, he told us.

development painted a bleak future for the already minimal U.S. sales, and gave Anze one more reason to pull the plug on American operations.

Too Hardcore For Their Own Good

Another possible factor to the demise of SNK in the U.S.? Their loyal audience of hardcore fans, some of whom regularly spent upward of \$300 per new Neo-Geo game, were often so hardcore that they didn't wait for the domestic versions of games to be released through SNK America; they imported them from Japan. "You can't blame the kids because they just want to play the games as soon as possible," said one ex-employee. "But you have to wonder how big a role the importers played in SNK's profits—It's say they took a significant chunk."

And now that SNK is gone from America, all that importing is only likely to increase—one consolation for owners of the NGPC is that imported systems can be set to English, and that games from Japan will work on U.S. systems and vice-versa (see sidebar). As Hileman put it, "These will still be (NGPC) products available in Japan, in Japanese that people will continue to import. So you'll still be able to get games. You may get some pachinko games, but you'll still be able to get games."



Aug. 88: Paper Neo-Geo 16-bit system is released in America.



Oct. 28: Original black-and-white Neo-Geo Pocket is released in Japan.



Aug. 6: Neo-Geo Pocket Color launched in America.



January: SNK becomes subsidiary of Anze. Nintendo releases Crystal Ball for SNK, one of SNK's well-known from American market.

NEO-Geo POCKET COLOR LIVES!

WHERE AND WHAT TO BUY

Just because SNK failed doesn't mean you have to miss out on some of the best portable games around. Fortunately, Japanese titles will work fine on your U.S. system, sometimes even in English! You'll find the NGPC goods on Internet auction sites (www.ebay.com) and importers (www.himali.com, www.nes.com), or check the ads in the back of game magazines. And watch EGM for continued coverage of upcoming imports like *Gate Battle*, *Castor*, *Mega War* and more. In the meantime, here's our top picks to last for.

Match of the Millennium: SNK vs. Capcom

The one game the Neo Pocket easily beats the Game Boy Color in is fighting games, and this is the best of the best you'll find for the system. An incredible lot of SNK and Capcom's AAA characters, crisp graphics and big-time gameplays.

Review Crew Rating: 9.0 9.0 9.0 8.0

Cardfighters' Clash: SNK vs. Capcom

Collectible card battle games just don't get more addictive than this. Start with either team and battle your way through this cart by yourself or against a friend through the link cable.

Review Crew Rating: 8.5 6.5 8.0 9.0

Metal Slug and Mission

The side-scrolling arcade game made the transition to the Pocket Color in style. A little slowdown aside, the huge bosses, different types of levels, and hostages hidden all over to find and collect make this one essential for action/shooting fans.

Review Crew Rating: 7.0 8.0 7.5 8.0

Sonic Pocket Adventure

Sonic always worked well in 2D, and this old school-style game reminds us of his glory days on the Genesis. The levels are huge and the gameplay is lightning quick—this one moves faster than you're used to seeing handheld games go.

Review Crew Rating: 8.5 9.0 7.5 8.0

Nyko Worm Light: The one must-have peripheral for your Pocket Color.

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TIDBITS

Monster Cable's Got Game

Monster Cable, a name familiar to videophiles everywhere, is getting into the game business with a new brand, Monster Game. The division will produce high-quality cables for use with PlayStation2. Products the company plans to introduce include a Standard AV Cable, Fiber Optic Audio Hookup, S-Video AV cable, a PowerStation and a Component Video Cable. All feature 24k gold connectors for the highest quality image and sound transmission. Prices on the cables have not yet been determined.

Sega Introduces Sports DC Set

On Sept. 2, Sega will introduce a Sega Sports edition of the Dreamcast hardware. The special jet-black DC system and controller set includes copies of NBA2K and NFL2K, for a suggested retail price of \$299.99.



SMALLER IS BETTER?

Only a few systems have not undergone redesigns to be smaller and cheaper to manufacture. Systems like the 2600, Intellivision, Nintendo Entertainment System (NES), Master System, Super NES, Genesis (had two revisions), Sega CD, Lynx, Game Boy and 3DO have all gone under the knife at one point. Makes you wonder what redesigned versions of the DC, PS2 or N64 might look like in five years, eh?

Hands-On With PS one

Last issue we told you about Sony's smaller, sleeker PlayStation hardware—dubbed PS one. The system was released in Japan on July 7 for a 15,000 yen price tag (about \$100). First thing you'll notice is how incredibly tiny the slightly lighter gray machine is. It's about the size of a plastic Anamir DVD case.

Because of its small size, those with larger hands may find it a little difficult to remove CDs from the system. It lacks any vents like the original PlayStation, causing it to get quite hot after extended use. The system itself runs quieter than the original PlayStation—the drive motor sound usually made when the PS accesses data is almost nonexistent.

In addition to the changes on the outside, Sony has made some aesthetic adjustments to the CD and memory card interfaces you see when you power-up the system. Everything has been given a simpler look and feel, and it includes graphical effects to watch while playing music CDs that were included in newer versions of the regular PS hardware.

SCA will release the PS one hardware in the U.S. one month prior to the PS2's Oct. 26 launch.



DEVELOPER PROFILE

Angel Studios

Location: Carlsbad, CA

Web Site: www.angelstudios.com

of employees: 125

Current projects: 1 PC (Midtown Madness 2/Microsift), 6 PS2 (with some SDKs for other new platforms) including Midnight

Club, Smuggler's Run, and four others we can't tell you about!

Games people on the team have worked on previously: Major League Baseball Featuring Ken Griffey Jr, Resident Evil 2, Midtown Madness, Jet Moto 3, Myst, Ren and Stimpy: Quest for the Shaven Yak, Hydro Thunder, NFL GameDay and many others.

Inspiration for Smuggler's Run and

Midnight Club:

Midnight Club's inspiration—Midtown Madness and all the cool car chase movie scenes we've ever seen. The inspiration for Smuggler's Run is a never-released N64 game we worked on with Miyamoto called Buggie-Boogie, the efforts of our fearless U.S. Border Patrol, and

the video "Crusty Demons of Dirt."

Favorite aspect of the PlayStation2 hardware: The cool black case it comes in, and the neat little lights.

If there was one thing we could change about this industry, it would be more women (and more time to play games).

During breaks from late-night programming sessions, we: go home, take "smoke" breaks out back, take "sloppy-wopies" of fine tequila, and peek through the keyhole of the artists' "lil' drawing sessions.

Our favorite game to play in the office (not by us): Quake II-III, Tekken Tag, Perfect Dark, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater and Metal Gear Solid (GBC).

Story behind our name: It's the last name of the center of our cult of personality, our CEO, and founding father, Diego Angel.

Favorite catchphrase or slogan: "It's basically done," "Sorry, that's not on my schedule" and "You ain't the boss of me."



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SEAMAN SPEAKS



Interview With The Seaman

Yoot Salta's creation is an epienated, wily creature. So to find out what really makes him tick, we sat down at the mine and interviewed the fish himself:

EGM: Who created you?

Seaman: I'm a freak! Well at least I'm not covered with hair like you, Sasquatch.

EGM: Who are you callin' Sasquatch?

Seaman: What do you want?

EGM: How does it feel to be a video game star?

Seaman: You called?

EGM: What do you think about PlayStation2?

Seaman: Yeah, good people over there. But their office smells funny.

EGM: What do you think of Sega?

Seaman: Coming your majesty.

EGM: Do you like Nintendo?

Seaman: No, I don't need anything.

EGM: Why are you called Seaman?

Seaman: This better be important. No, not today...maybe tomorrow.

EGM: Are you into Blue Oyster Cult, man?

Seaman: No, I'm not cold.

EGM: Do you party, Seaman?

Seaman: It's Seaman.

EGM: Ready to get weird?

Seaman: You have no idea.

EGM: Anything to say to Pikachu?

Seaman: Tell your friends to stop hitting on me.

VIDEOGAMES.COM ONLINE POLL

Will you still buy PlayStation games after you've bought a PlayStation?

No 28%

Yes 72%

Source: Videogames.com poll

Yoot Scoot Boogie

A Chat With the Creator of Seaman

Vivarian's Yutaka Salta—Yoot for short—is the father of the freaky new Dreamcast virtual pet, Seaman. We had a chance to sit down with him at E3 and ask about his quest to convince the world that his sea creature is alive.

"That is my enemy," Salta proclaimed as he points to a Seelk the Hedgehog outfit resting on a chair in the back of the room. Not exactly what you'd expect to hear out of the mouth of a game designer promoting a Dreamcast title, especially with a representative from Sega sitting right next to him. But, like his creation, Yutaka Salta freely speaks his mind, and makes no secret that above all, he wants his title to capture the attention of U.S. gamers.

"I'm an independent developer, so it's in my

best interest to try to get control of more of the market," he says. But realizing that he has now spoken out against Sega's mascot, he rewords his comment. "Actually, competitor is a better term to use than enemy." He smiles. He also calls the dancing Space Channel 5 models competition, as they certainly were capturing much of the attention in Sega's E3 booth. When we joke that it's a shame there aren't any pretty dancing girls in Seaman, he jokes back, "Well, I've had a lot of requests to add things like beautiful women in the game." But I've made the game so far with the policy of trying to get most people to hate it."

"I've made the game so far with the policy of trying to get most people to hate it."

He told us. "But everyone hating it is a good sign to me. When we were developing the game a while back, I showed it to one of my American friends. He really hated it. But it stuck in his mind, and he continually e-mailed me about the game. He was like, 'What the heck is up with that Seaman game you showed me? When is that coming out?' So I hope that you hate it. And then grow to be interested in it."

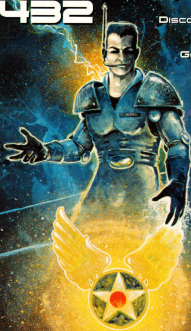
"The game is totally different from what you're expecting—it's not really a virtual pet type of software, it's more like mind-control software. When Americans apologize for something, they often smile. It's really odd—I see it all the time in movies. But in England they're always very serious. That's how it is in Japan as well. I'm very interested between the

differences of the American and Japanese cultures. For example, in Japan, people will predict someone's popularity by their blood type. But that's not popular in the U.S. I've tried to highlight some of these differences in the game. These are the types of questions that Seaman will ask users. Really strange questions that might make him or her think. They're intended to make the user forget that he or she is dealing with something virtual. Because this software—I don't call it a game—is about a creature coming out of the virtual display world and into the real world, Seaman will discuss some virtual things, but then he'll talk about real world things. It's only to confuse the human user and make fun of that user—so that he or she will say, 'Oh shit, this



Recognize that mug on the left? It's Yoot Salta, creator of Seaman as well as the model for his face (here with former president of Sega Enterprises Sheikhiru Irimajiri).

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IMPORT CALENDAR

Grandia II



Import Pick of the Month: Game Arts' Dreamcast RPG, *Grandia II*

PlayStation

- 7/27 Beamania Best Hits, Konami (Music)
- 7/27 Digimon World 2, Bandai (Action)
- 8/10 Tetsu with Cardcaptor Sakura, Anika (Puzzle)
- 8/10 Magical Dice Kids, SCD (Misc)
- 8/26 Dragon Quest VII, Enix (RPG)
- 9/7 Beamania APPEND GOTTAMIDZ Going Global, Konami (Music)
- 9/13 Dino Crisis 2, Capcom (Action)

PlayStation2

- 8/10 Gungriffon Blaze, Game Arts (Action)
- 8/10 Sunfold Surfer Legend, Aeci (Sports)
- 8/10 ReSolved, Konami (RPG)
- 8/31 Ganbare Japori Olympic 2000, Konami (Sports)
- Aug. X18E, EA Square (Action)
- 9/21 Keyboard Mania, Konami (Music)
- Sept. Silphoed: The Last Planet, Game Arts (Shooter)

Dreamcast

- 7/27 Virtua Athlete, Sega (Sports)
- 8/3 Grandia II, Game Arts (RPG)
- 8/3 F355 Challenge, Sega (Racing)
- 8/10 Giant Gram 2000, Sega (Wrestling)
- 8/10 Spawns: In The Demon's Hand, Capcom (Action)
- 8/10 Cool Cool Toon, SMK (Music)
- 9/14 Eternal Arcadia, Sega (RPG)

Nintendo 64

- 8/11 Mario Story, Nintendo (RPG)

Game Boy

- 7/28 Sakura Taisen, Media Factory (RPG)
- 7/31 Balloon Fight G2, Nintendo (Action)

*Schedule subject to change without notice. Consult your local import game store for the latest release information.

Yoot Saito Interview, continued...

thing's alive."

And that point—Seaman being alive—is something that Yoot really wants to stress to Americans. "In Japan, before releasing the first Seaman in an aquarium—but without telling people that it was for a game. Some of the tabloids like the *National Inquirer* picked up on it because they're interested in that sort of thing. Some people really believed the whole 'Seaman Creature Discovered' thing and we got a lot of complaints. And some of the aquariums that showed the models actually got a lot of complaints too. So that sort of triggered the Seaman movement in Japan. Before the game was released we released a lot of information on the Seaman creature to online sites—kind of like the Blair Witch Project website, and a lot of people really got into it. In fact, there are some people in Japan who still think Seaman is real."

"I don't think the people promoting Seaman in the U.S. really understand the idea behind it—that it's a completely new type of game."

This is where Yoot becomes a little worried Americans aren't getting the message that Seaman is real. "I don't think the people promoting my title in the U.S. really understand the idea behind it and that it's a completely new type of game. In the computer industry, movie industry and even music industry, Japan is three or some-odd years behind the U.S. market." He goes on, "But with games software, ultimately Japan is ahead. Most people in Japan get bored with the existing games—all those fighting games, shooting games, huge RPG worlds. It's happening day by day, even on the PS2 and Xbox. And what this means is that sequels of existing popular games are starting not to sell



that well. On the other hand, new things, such as the music games, are doing great. We had a big challenge to promote Seaman in Japan because there was no market for this type of game—it created the market. I think games are going through a transition period. People will have to change their mindset because

otherwise everyone will get bored. Even if the Dreamcast hardware were three times faster, or PlayStation3 was 30 times faster, that doesn't guarantee you a nicer picture—that just guarantees you a nicer picture. Take *Zelda* for example. I think it's a great game, but it doesn't attempt to achieve realistic graphics. What's going to be reconsidered now is what the key elements of a game are."

Seaman has been one of the most successful games for the Dreamcast thus far in Japan, so before ending our conversation, we turned to the inevitable questions about the sequel. "Well, for the Seaman sequel we're going to make it playable online," he said. "When we originally started work on the Seaman project in Berkeley, Calif. we designed to be played on a networked PC. We wanted Seaman to be able to obtain information about the user and then use that information to create an experience in which the user could be stunned—so the person would say, 'Oh shit, how the hell do you know that?'"

"We actually have a working version of the sequel. But actually, it's not really working that well," he comments while smiling. "The problem is, if you're not a good owner of the pet, and Seaman is unhappy, he escapes from the water tank and swims into the ocean." So it all comes down to that? Just keep your Seaman happy? Yoot agrees. "Yeah, keep your Seaman happy."





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PlayStation 2



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START

A NIGHT TO UNITE FOR KIDS

On Oct. 17 in San Francisco, the Interactive Digital Software Association will host the Night To Unite For Kids, a dinner/auction to help benefit several non-profit kids' organizations. You can do your part by going to amazon.com to participate in an online auction to run along with the event. Items like PlayStation systems will be auctioned off—so it's worth your while to check it out!

Metal Gear Solid 2 Trailer Hits DVD

It was an unexpected surprise when Konami debuted *Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty* at E3 instead of unveiling it in Japan. But Japanese gamers got the last laugh when Konami released *Metal Gear Solid The Trailer* on DVD in Japan on July 10. These Japanese gamers who didn't get to brave the crowds at the show now get to watch it in the comfort of their own homes—over and over and over again. Fortunately, we were able to get our hands on a few copies of our own (ha ha!).

It features not only the trailer, but short interviews with director Hideo Kojima and a documentary on the E3 showing—as well as interviews with slack-jawed showgoers after they watched the trailer. Additional features of the disc include an art gallery with characters and sketches by Yoji Shinkawa, scans of the press pamphlets given out at E3, and a trailer of another Konami PS2 game, *Zone of Enders* (Z.O.E.). Now if they'd only release a similar disc in the U.S.!



If you were looking for the best showcase of what the PS2 could do at E3, it was MGS2. The DVD includes behind-the-scenes E3 footage, sketches and of course, the trailer itself.



Quartermann - Game Gossip & Speculation

Summer is upon us and the Q's spies have combed the beaches for the latest and greatest gaming trinkets from around the globe. Thankfully the long black trenchcoat and hat the Q sports keep him from getting too burned and creates that fine farmer's tan the babes all dig. Onto this month's gaming dish, served up hot 'n' fresh for you...

...Word from the bowels of Capcom Japan HQ indicate that **Dino Crisis is a go for the Dreamcast**. With the way some DC titles are selling in the land of the rising sun (let Grind Radio selling under 40,000 copies its first week—yikes!) this is good news—the more blockbusters the better. Set to follow is a certain third chapter of a particular game series that rhymes with “President Weasel.” No, I will not get more specific! Both Dino and that other “myster game” will be conversions of their counterparts...

...After the quick exit SNK made from the U.S., the Q and his posse raided the dumpster behind their Japanese offices and dug up some seriously exciting or depressing news, we aren't sure yet. Seems that **Match of the Millennium and Cardfighters' Clash sequels for the Neo Geo-Pocket Color were in the works**. But since the recent departures of some key developers, no one seems sure about the future of the projects...

...Speaking of projects with uncertain futures, rumors abound that **Midway** is steadily bleeding employees from its arcade divisions, leaving several games the company was working on stillborn. It puzzles the Q that Midway would be downsizing the area of the company that produces its best games. Absolutecruous!

...Techno's **Dead or Alive 2 is coming to Dreamcast in Japan** this September with a whole bunch of additions not found in the U.S. DC or the Japanese PS2 version. New costumes, stages, hairstyles and endings will be among the new features. Hmmm. This console flip-flop reminds me of Capcom's many revisions of Super Street Fighter II...

...Despite having a strong game line-up of potential blockbusters, **Sega has been feeling the pinch**. In Japan, lackluster game sales haunt the system, Sega of America's advertising policy of “let's show as little actual gameplay as possible” seems to be catching up with them as fewer and fewer DC titles appear on the Top 20 charts each month. Now comes the rumor that Wal-Mart stores are considering pulling the DC off shelves if the price is not dropped to \$49 because the consoles aren't moving and the retailer must clear space for PS2. This and the piracy news (see pg. 38) are not good for Sega. But never fear, true believers, the Q is privy to a few choice titles Sega's got coming down the road that might just turn the tide... 'til next time, rumar-fendit!

-The Q

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FINDING FAELELL!

This strategy RPG was all ready to go when SNK pulled the plug, which is a shame 'cause it's quite unique (how often do you see this genre on a handheld?). But wait! There's hope—the English version was released in Europe in limited numbers. Check www.nserve.co.uk or other British importers on the Net.

OLD SCHOOL

We kick off our monthly look back at the best games of yesteryear with an SNK retrospective. They may've been known as the maker of one of the most expensive game consoles in history (and the most expensive home games), but SNK turned out some real classics back in the day. It's with a tear in our eye that we wave goodbye to their U.S. division. Hopefully they will be back soon. Until then, we have memories of these classic games to keep us warm:



Baseball Stars (NES)

Released: 1989

Why it was cool: Not only did it have great graphics (for the time) and all the gameplay and control you could ask for, you could create and save your own players and teams, a very novel feature back then.

What EGM rated it: N/A

Comments: Ah, for the days when you could just pick up a sports game and play and have fun! Lots of people remember Baseball Stars. The control was just tight—you had total control over your guys. The hardcore baseball geeks I grew up with loved it too 'cause of all the player building and management options. We played this one so much I still hear the music in my head sometimes. —Mark MacDonald



Magician Lord (Neo-Geo)

Released: 1990

Why it was cool: Magician Lord remains one of the finest examples of 2D side scrolling action and platform gameplay. The graphics overflow with detail and the music was killer. Transform into any of six different forms, each with its own different attacks, speed and jumping ability. It was a tough game too; even with unlimited continues, Magician Lord definitely presented a challenge.

How EGM rated it: 9.0/10.0/9.0/10.0

Comments: This game just blew me away. The range and depth of all the different playable characters, the optional sections of levels, the fact you could finish it on one quarter if you were good enough—they do not make games like this anymore, home or arcade. SNK actually started work on a sequel, and there were rumors of a Neo-Geo Pocket edition; it's too bad neither ever appeared. —Mark MacDonald



TIDBITS

Sega Whirlies with DC Piracy Issues

Sega's proprietary GD-ROM format has prevented piracy on the DC for the past year, but that ended on June 22 when a group calling themselves Utopia released a CD which allows hacked games copied onto standard CD-ROMs to boot on the system. A few games immediately found their way on the Net and the floodgates opened. Since GD-ROMs store more data than CD-ROMs, many of these illegally copied games have soundtrack data removed or compressed to fit on a CD.

To combat pirates, Sega has set up an e-mail address (piracy@sega.com) where people can anonymously report sites distributing copied Dreamcast content. Piracy in the U.S. alone cost the industry an estimated \$3.2 billion in lost revenue in 1998, according to the Interactive Digital Software Association. Companies like Nintendo, Sega and Sony fight continuous battles to stop the spread of illegally copied games.

Sega spokesman Charles Belfield told us that the DC hardware was altered last fall so that newer consoles will not boot CD-ROMs, but that claim has been refuted by sites promoting the boot disc.

Mattel Breathes New Life Into Robotech

When we finally heard over a year ago that the oh-delayed N64 game Robotech Crystal Dreams was killed we let out a sigh of relief—it looked and played like a train wreck. We thought we'd heard the last of Robotech. We were wrong.

Mattel Interactive has acquired the license to make games based on the Robotech universe for console and PC. The first games should begin appearing on store shelves in the fourth quarter of 2001.

"Acquiring this license is an incredible opportunity for us," says Mattel Interactive President and ex-Sega prez Bernard Stolar. "This is a franchise that both gamers and anime fans have been anxiously awaiting for some time, and we fully intend to deliver content that's going to make their wait worthwhile, both on console and PC."

Fans of the series have more than just the games to look forward to. AD Vision recently licensed the series from Harmony Gold and will release it on video and DVD in the near future. Anime company Animeigo will also release a box set of the first of the three Robotech "chapters," Maxross, on DVD in Japanese with English subtitles sometime this winter (visit www.animeigo.com for details).



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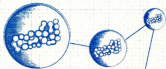


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PRESS
START

The Top 20 Best-Selling Games of May, 2000

1 - Pokémon Trading Card



Nintendo has made it easy on Pokémon card fanatics—no more messy rubber bands trying to keep decks together. All you need is a Game Boy, this game and a link cable to command your Pokémon to beat up your friends.

	1
8.5	4.5
Cy	Chr
9.0	
Jim	

2 - Perfect Dark



Joanna Dark sandwiched her way between two Pokémon this month to get to the number two slot. But can Nintendo/Rare's GoldenEye follow-up fend off the little critters long enough to outlast Band's record run on the charts?

	NEW
10	10
Craigs	Mark
9.5	
Kraig	

3 - Pokémon Yellow



With Gold and Silver just a few months away, you'd think that the original Pokémon games would begin to disappear from the top five, but no. Nintendo's critters seem to steamroll over any other game on other platforms.

	3
8.0	6.0
Chris	Craigs
8.0	6.0
She	Shaw

4 - Pokémon Stadium



The battle won't stop until the last Pokémon... (wait for it)... is dead! Nintendo is already planning a new Stadium game for when Gold and Silver make their way to the Game Boy, but for now, this is the best way to battle your friends.

	2
7.5	6.5
Chris	She
5.5	6.5
Craigs	Sean

5 - WWF SmackDown!



Don't just watch SmackDown on TV, live the American Dream on your PlayStation every night. THQ's WWF SmackDown! keeps its head just above water in the top five among hordes of Pokémon titles.

	4
9.0	8.5
Shaw	Sean
9.0	8.5
Craigs	Shawn

6 - Excitebike 64



Nintendo

	NEW
	11
	6

7 - Tony Hawk's Pro Skater



Activision

8 - Sphion Filter 2



989 Studios

9 - SW Episode I: Jedi Power Battles



LucasArts

10 - Pokémon Blue



Nintendo

11 - Tony Hawk's Pro Skater



Activision

12 - Pokémon Red



Nintendo

13 - Spec Ops



Take 2 Interactive

14 - Vagrant Story



Square EA

15 - Sphion Filter



989 Studios

16 - Triple Play 2001



Electronic Arts

17 - Gran Turismo 2



SCEA

18 - Super Mario Bros. Deluxe



Nintendo

19 - MLB 2001



989 Studios

20 - WWF ARM 2



SCEA

Source: NPD TRS'S Video Games Service. Call Mary Ann Pereira at (415) 433-3333 for questions regarding this list. Top 5 game descriptions written by the EGM staff.

JAPAN TOP 10

1	Shutoko Battle 2 Sun	
2	Excitebike 64 Nintendo	
3	My Summer Vacation Nintendo	
4	Super Robot Wars Alpha Banpresto	
5	Dance Dance Revolution 3rd Mix Banpresto	
6	Advanced World War Sega	
7	All-Star Pro Wrestling Sunsoft	
8	FIFA Soccer World Championship EA Sports	
9	Legend of Zelda: Major's Mask Nintendo	
10	Flower X Hunter Banpresto	

Weekly Famitsu, week ending 4/25/2000



The #1 game in Japan, Shutoko Battle 2 (Tokyo Xtreme Racer 2) is coming here this fall.



It's #1! Dance Dance Revolution 3rd Mix is finally approved here. Check it out on pg. 121



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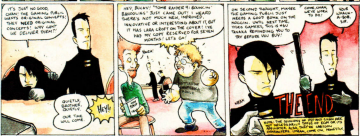
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Previews

This Month in Previews

Dreamcast

- 56-57 Jet Grind Radio
- 60 NFL 2K1
- 62 Ferrari F355 Challenge
- 64 Half-Life
- Ready 2 Rumble Round 2
- Namco Museum
- 484 Evolution
- 66 Tokyo Theme Racer 2
- Gundam: Green's Ambition
- Headhunter
- cySPiRA
- Street Fighter III: 3rd Impact
- Sorcerian
- Final Fight Revenge

Nintendo G

- 71 Turku 3: Shadow of Oblivion
- 74 Ogre Battle 64: Person of Lordly Caliber

PlayStation 2

- 83 Silent Scope
- 86 Smuggler's Run
- 88 Kessen
- Slipstream: The Last Planet
- Blizzard Movie
- 92 7 Blades
- Sungun/Blaze
- TYD
- 96 All-Star Pro Wrestling
- Dynhen
- Shadow of Dredge

PlayStation

- 97 Soryu: Year of the Dragon
- 98 Dragon Valor
- 100 Nat Hoffman's Pro BMX
- 102 Dave Mirra's Freestyle BMX
- Dino Crisis 2
- Blade
- Incredible Crisis
- 103 NFL GameDay 2001
- MTV Sports: Skateboarding
- 104 Mega Man 05
- Demolition Derby: Raw
- The Grinch
- 107 Lunar 2: Eternal Blue
- NCAA Gamebreaker 2001
- 110 Spider-Man
- Nadden NFL 2001
- 111 ESPN MLS Game Night
- MTV Pure Ride Snowboarding
- 112 In Cold Blood
- Nupperts RaceMania
- NASCAR 2001
- 116 Sleep
- 9GT Racing
- Chicken Run
- Butte Buddies
- Nuppet Monster Adventure
- 120 Slap Happy Rhythm Busters
- Punch the Monkey Game Edition
- NASCAR Heat
- Elder Gals
- 121 Dance Dance Revolution 3rd Mix
- Acropolis
- 124 Megan Run Extreme
- 125 Dragon Warrior I & II
- 128 Turku 3: Shadow of Oblivion
- Shien Majand Academy
- Austin Powers: In Behave
- Toy Hawk's Pro Skater 2



WARNING: Previews marked with international symbols may or may not be returned in the U.S. They are designed to run on Japanese or European PAL systems. Import at your own risk.

As we headed into the home stretch of this issue, Chicago experienced one of the hottest, most humid days of the year. Of course, the air conditioner in the EGW offices was out of commission. It's a bit of a blur, but two things stand out from that day: Shawn's incredibly hairy chest and the melodic crooning of one Billy Bass. Whenever we were feeling down he picked us back up. God bless that rubber fish.

Jet Grind Radio rules the Previews section this month, with a huge spread starting on page 56. But the fun doesn't stop there for DC lovers. We got other heavy hitters like NFL 2K1, Ferrari F355 and Ready 2 Rumble Round 2, plus the first DC screens of a the monster PC hit Half-Life.

In the PS section this month, Mat Hoffman and Dave Mirra go head to head (and surprisingly there's no clear-cut winner). Soryu, Spider-Man and Mega Man are all hanging out over in the PS section too.

As for the PS2, we locked onto a copy of Silent Scope for the PS2 this issue (page 83) and offer a more in-



The import Jet Grind's got us all hot 'n' bothered—we can't wait for the U.S. version. Check it out on page 56!

depth look at Smuggler's Run, plus a whole heap'n' helpin' of imports.

The Nintendo section is all about RPGs, if you can believe it. Feast your eyes on Ogre Battle 64 (page 74), then head over to page 125 for the skinny on Dragon Warrior I&II. Oh, the blue bomber can be found in the Game Boy section as well.

Wheel! That's a lot of stuff for this time of year. Now what should we cover next month? Maybe that cool little import RPG we keep hearing about...something Fantasy I?

TOP 5 Preview Picks

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Jet Grind Radio | Dreamcast, October |
| 2. Dino Crisis 2 | PlayStation, October |
| 3. Ferrari F355 Challenge | Dreamcast, September |
| 4. Silent Scope | PlayStation2, October |
| 5. Dragon Warrior I&II | Game Boy Color, October |

The Great White Hope



Senseless violence can sometimes be productive. Recently Chris and Greg made a trip to Cedar Rapids, Iowa in order to take in the Ultimate Fighting Championship. But when Greg got a chance to step into the ring the urge to beat the crap out of Rob "Pickle King" Fleisher was too great to ignore.

Fear not, even though Rob was beaten to a bloody pulp, both of them put on such a good show that the UFC is considering contracting them for the next event. Could Greg be the next UFC champion? The smart money says, "Not bloody likely!"



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Comic Mischief



PREVIEW

Jet Grind Radio

Platform: Sega
Developer: Sega AM2
Players: 1
Genre: Action
% Done: 100% (Japan)
Release: October
Web Address: www.sega.com

The Down: The graphics, the sound, everything!

The Best: The U.S. release date seems so far away.

And the Rest: Abysmal Japanese sales.



The fuzz will try to stop you of every turn, which usually means they're a major pain in the butt. Just skate 'em off.

Shake your can and follow the on-screen directions to create some true street art.



LOTS O' LEVELS

The Spice of Life

That's variety we're talking about, and Jet Grind Radio has it in spades. Missions include (top to bottom) painting over rival tags, painting on rivals themselves, races and more.



Trying to get the boys here at EGM excited about a game is kinda like trying to get a porno star horny—we see and play this stuff all day, everyday, so it really takes something special to get us going. And how did we react to Jet Grind Radio? Crowds of us gathered around just to watch. In fact, writing this preview took many more hours than it should have simply because we couldn't put the game down.

So what's got us so excited? The story goes kinda like this: As part of a rollerblading gang in Tokyo (sound familiar?), your mission is to paint the town with graffiti to stake out your gang's turf, doing all the skating, grinds (thanks to your special, magnetic inline skates), and tricks you can along the way. Standing in your way are enemy skatepunks and, of course, the local law enforcement.

The control scheme is simplicity itself: The A button jumps, the right trigger is a speed boost, and the left centers the camera or sprays paint when appropriate. Yup, that's it. All your other fancy moves are handled automatically—just jump up and land on any edge (railings, power lines, railroad tracks, etc.) and you're grinding; get up enough speed and catch major air for your alter ego to perform any number of point-earning tricks

(backflips, 360s, splits, all kinds of stuff). Once you get good you can even push off walls while in the air to jump combos and link more moves together for chain combos and more bonus points.

Painting graffiti—or tags, as the game calls them—is easy too. Small tags require only a press of the L trigger, while the medium and large are a little more work: Press the L trigger once to shake up your can, then follow a series of half and full-circle controller motions to create your masterpiece. You'll need to be quick, though, or you risk running out of time or getting nabbed by the man.



The Gang's All Here

The so-playable JGR characters are simply dripping with style and charisma. They each have his/her own power, technique and graffiti ratings, but they don't seem to differ much in the actual game. They do, however, all have different animations when they paint and unique sets of trick moves. Besides that, they're just so damn funky! When a new character is ready to join, the current gang will get a visit at their hangout. The member-to-be challenges them to a series of tests and if you beat them, your gang gains the respect of the new character and the privilege of using them in the game.





JACKSON GRIND RADIO

Janet Jackson's latest video, "Doesn't Really Matter," stars Sega's Jet Grind Radio. Watch the background, you'll see Sega's rowdy vandals skatin', grindin' and taggin' to the music.



Skitchin', grindin' and the wall hop are just a few of the moves your skaters can perform in Jet Grind. Simple controls means you'll be impressing your friends in no time flat with the sweetest moves this side of Tony Hawk!

Speaking of the cops, they're hilarious. The one you really want to watch out for is the captain, who sports a huge gun and the Dirty Harry attitude to match. Otherwise the troops are like the SWAT team from Blues Brothers, swarming at you chanting "hut hut hut hut" in unison. Later on though, things get more serious, with gun-toting paratroopers, tanks and even helicopters (bring 'em down by painting over their cockpit windows), all out to ruin your day.

Levels change as the game progresses as well. Sometimes you just need to paint like a madman, while other times you have to race another skater, or take out a rival gang by tagging three of their members with your logo. After some levels you get the chance to gain new playable characters. They challenge you to a series of tests, usually a simon-says trick contest (a la Tony Hawk) or a race; beat them and they'll join your gang.

Sound kick ass? We haven't even gotten to the



coolest part yet: making your own graffiti! with the built-in paint program. Check out the right sidebar for a glimpse at the versatility of this thing. No time to make your own ghetto art? Then boot up the Web browser, download a picture off the Net (must be in jpg format) and set it as one of your tags. Too cool.

Finally, the music. Ah the music. A bit of j-pop, a little rag, and a whole lotta hip hop, the tunes JGR pumps out of your DC would make George Clinton blush. The entire soundtrack is funky like three-week-old cheese and fits the urban jungle theme of the game perfectly. And there's more good news: Sega has tentatively confirmed the music for the U.S. version won't change outside of licensing some extra tracks. Can we get a "Hell yeah"?

Despite the critical acclaim it received in Japan, we're sad to report Jet Grind has sold pretty poorly over there so far. We already know JGR deserves to be a huge hit in America, but whether it becomes a system seller or is relegated to cult status is all up to the localization and marketing gurus at Sega of America now. Either way, we're sure this one will be remembered for years to come. 🚲



Insert an image into Jet Grind Radio and you have a sweet, custom tag that'll make you the most popular guy at school.

DO IT YOURSELF

Custom Tag



First type in the name of everyone's favorite editor.



Now use this cool warping tool to funky it a little.



Apply one of the 128 different color schemes.



Paint a background and leave your mark!



SEGA
SPORTS

NFL 2K1

Online gameplay is here. Now you and up to three buds can get on one console and school opponents nationwide—from pitiful Cowboys sympathizers in Tulsa to masochistic Bills fans in Schenectady. You can even exchange "pleasantries" in real time. There is a radically improved running game, franchise mode, and complete team-specific playbooks, and you've got yourself a full-contact chat room. Does technology rule or what?



PLAYERS



Dreamcast

IT'S THINKING



A wide-angle photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, a white road with a double line runs diagonally from the bottom left towards the center. Large white numbers '220' are painted on the road surface. The ground is dry, orange-brown soil with sparse, small bushes. In the middle ground, several prominent rock formations (buttes and mesas) are visible against a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds. The largest formation on the right is a tall, rectangular butte. Other smaller formations are visible to the left and in the distance.

SUDDENLY, THE WHOLE COUNTRY IS INBOUNDS.



PREVIEW



MONDAY NIGHT PUNKBALL

In a rare sign the world is coming to an end, ABC made funny-man Dennis Miller their new color-commentary guy for Monday Night Football.
http://sports Illustrated.com/football/ml/news/2000/04/22/mlf_crow_up/

NFL 2K1

Publisher:	Sega
Developer:	Visual Concepts
Players:	1-8
Genre:	Sports
% Done:	70%
Release:	Fall
Must try:	Madden 2000
Web Address:	www.sega.com
The Good:	Play with up to seven other friends via SegaNet.
The Bad:	Madden 2001 looms.
And The Info:	Game is so real it smells leathery.



It's now a bit easier to get your ground game on in Sega's sophomore pickup effort for Dreamcast.



The graphics in NFL 2K1 are way improved over the previous installment, which was no slouch to begin with.

IMPROVEMENTS

Mo' Betta!



NFL 2K1 features so much new stuff, we barely have room to mention it all. Here's a list of improvements over last year's game:

Eight-player Internet support; all trades, retirements, rookies and attributes reflect the 2000-2001 season; 2000-plus mo-cap animations; GM/franchise mode; better run animations and greatly improved blocking, swim moves, jokes, etc.; true team-by-team playbooks; "smart" VMU usage saves only what you need and doesn't always net up a whole VMU; stadiums are remodeled and crowds and sidelines are way more animated; high-res players can don historic uniforms. Go Johnny Unitas!

When Sega first unleashed Visual Concepts' gridiron tour de force late last year, you could feel the Earth move. After years of watching EA's venerable Madden series dominate the genre with little opposition, NFL 2K1 came in and shook up the status quo. Football games would never be the same again. Offering unparalleled graphics, hi-speed, hi-res dotps gameplay and the best passing game since the original Tecmo Bowl, NFL 2K1 was a mighty force. That's not to say it was perfect, however. It was very difficult, if not impossible, to get a ground game going and there was no franchise mode. That is all going to change as Sega is set to make real history this time with NFL 2K1, possibly the most

important sports game of the year. While the game retains the same overall look, the graphics have been touched up, giving the players and stadiums a slightly more detailed look; the game now features a franchise mode, which will let you field your team 'til they're older than the Dallas Cowboys.

While Madden 2001 for the PS2 might offer equally slick graphics when it launches later this year, will you be able to play with seven of your closest friends via a low-latency Internet link-up? No. The most exciting new feature for 2K1 is the Internet play, and we had the chance to try it out firsthand, playing against the developers in San Rafael, Calif. You meet in a virtual lobby and can hook up for a game with other gamers hanging around, or wait for friends to meet up with you, just like a PC game. While there is just a slight difference in feel than the one-player game, there's virtually no lag time, and control remains responsive and tight. NFL 2K1 also features downloadable mid-to-late-season VMU patches via SegaNet, so that should a team explode into contention out of nowhere (can you say, "St. Louis"?), their stats will be upgraded accordingly.

The competition may be a bit tougher this year with the impending PS2 football games looming ever closer, but NFL 2K1's awesome Internet play makes it the pickup contest to beat when it ships this fall. 🐾



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out there..."

Game Fan Magazine

over 25 g-force eating planes

battle head to head in VS mode

combat intensive, armed to the teeth gameplay

01:23
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ACQUIRE SOME TAIL



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FAST CARS AT RIDGEMONT HIGH

<http://www.ferrari.com> will give you all the information you could ever want about cars you could never afford, or at least, that game editors could never afford. The site has a pile of information regarding the 355. Vroom vroom!

PREVIEW

Ferrari F355 Challenge

Platform	Acclaim
Developer	Sega/AM2
Players	1-2
Genre	Racing
% Done	75%
Release	September
Star On	None
Web Address	www.acclaim.com

The Good The first AN2 racer to come home since Daytona CCE.

The Bad The three-window display is gone.

And The Why AN2's love of helms and guitar rock.



The graphics in F355 Challenge are SWEET. Everything moves at a solid 60fps and never bogs from that, even in split-screen mode. The DC's puts do a fine job juggling out these incredible graphics. Sure it's only got one car model to render, but no racing game in the world has better-looking cars than F355. Amazing.

GIMME A BRAKE!

Stop Me!

The biggest challenge in F355 Challenge is mastering the precise braking that will lead you to victory. There's no powersteering going on here! Thankfully the game provides an option where the braking is assisted by the computer, giving you a fair chance against your CPU rivals.



Racing games are everywhere these days. You can't back out of your driveway without knocking over a pile of them. But when the name Yu Suzuki is associated with the game in question, then it's an altogether different matter. Yu Suzuki and his AM2 crew are responsible for the most legendary racing games ever designed—OutRun, Virtua Racing, Daytona USA, Scud Race, Daytona 2. He's also responsible for a couple of other lesser-known games. Ever hear of Virtua Fighter? How about Shenmue?

The man's credits are bulletproof, one of the most respected in his field and treated like a rock star in his native Japan. So when AM2 unleashed Ferrari F355 using a triple-NAOMI-board setup in Japanese



arcades last year, people quickly wondered how AM2 could possibly re-create the experience on the less-powerful Dreamcast.

AM2 is pretty crafty, so what they did was ditch the wrap-around three monitor view, widened the perspective in the remaining in-car camera setting (there is no third-person perspective) and kept everything else arcade-perfect. AM2 did extensive research at Ferrari's Italian headquarters to get all the relevant data necessary to replicate the performance of the F355 model. The game includes six F1-styled courses, which are accurately modeled after their real-life counterparts. Following each race you'll see a detailed diagnostic of your race, highlighting racing lines, time, RPM, speed and gear selection. An innovative Intelligent Braking System is implemented to help tutor racers with the finer points of brake management under high-speed conditions. This is purely optional, and pros can switch it off at any time. Fans thinking this is less of an arcade-style game and much more a racing sim, but anyone with a penchant for PlayStation' F1 racing games or F1 World Grand Prix will find themselves right at home.

Developed by Sega and published by Acclaim (because Acclaim holds the Ferrari license in the U.S.), Ferrari F355 Challenge should ship this fall. 🏎️





Danger Never Looked So Good!

3rd person action-adventure has never been sexier with DANGER GIRL, the only videogame based on the best-selling comic book series by J. Scott Campbell and Andy Marshall.

Be the first to take control of 3 beautiful yet lethal Danger Girls in an espionage-themed thrill-ride deemed too dangerous for any man to handle!

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ITEM!

Includes features
Exclusive character
statue, box and
artwork from
the creators!



Varied modes of play:
stealth, sniper and more



Dozens of weapons
(whip—need we say more?)



Original art
by the creators



Classic Danger Girl
signature moves



Animated Violence
Animated Blood
Suggestive Themes

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BIG IN JAPAN

Back when the PlayStation Volumes of Namco Museum came out, there was a big multi-disc collection available. The boxed set included all of the Museum Volumes as well as an extra "Treasure" game disc. A perfect exotic gift for any retro fanatic.

Half Life

Even though this **late-summer** release from **Sierra Studios** and **Captivation Digital Laboratories** is essentially a port of the amazing PC version, there are a number of DC-specific enhancements being made. Look for an all-new one-player mission created by **Gearbox Software** (the team behind the *Opposing Force* add-on for the PC), new visual effects and a higher polygon count. By the way, these are DC screens.



Ready 2 Rumble Round 2

Midway is finding all sorts of ways to make their popular boxing game even zanier. Eleven of the previous game's boxers are back (with tons of new speech and improved graphics), along with new celeb fighters **Shaq** and **Michael Jackson**. Currently, the gameplay is more tactical than last year's, but it doesn't stray too far from its arcade roots. Get ready to lace up the gloves in **September**.



Namco Museum

If you haven't played any of the *Namco Museum*s on the PS, chances are you've played at least one of the arcade originals included in this retro compilation at one time or another. This **summer** release from **Namco** gives you perfect versions of *Pac-Man*, *Ms. Pac-Man*, *Galaga*, *Galaxian*, *Pole Position* and *Dig Dug*—arguably the best of the best. If you're an old-school game junkie, buying this one is a no-brainer.



4X4 Evolution

Off-road games have been done to death, so it takes a special one to stand out. **Gathering of Developers** might have just the answer: online play. In *4X4 Evolution* you can race real off-road vehicles such as the *Toyota 4-runner* series, *Lexus LX470*, *Toyota's RAV4* and *Land Cruiser*, in addition to *Nissan's Pathfinder*. There should be no shortage of opponents since you can play against PC and Mac opponents over the DC network, in addition to the game's two-player split-screen mode. Due this **August**.



光 速度 危険 死

Tokyo Xtreme Racer 2



悪魔達はover 100 miles of highway上で
他者の安全も省みずにレースをする。



Hundreds of comments から逃れる事は
不可能だ。何故なら彼らもまた strong
competition を持っているからだ。



危険死

この脅迫者達は自分達を
ultra-super cool だと信じて
疑わない。彼らはその持てる
力の限りを尽くし闘う。
Emperor of the Streets の名を
手に入れる為に。

速度

路上にたむろする
流浪の一群は名譽ある
シンボルを create and
edit logos する。彼らの
忠誠心はこのシンボル
しか share しない。



www.cravegames.com



Tokyo Xtreme Racer 2

Soon after *TXR2* tore up the charts in Japan, **Genki** posted a public apology about the bugs in the game. Things like camera problems, slowdown and the game crashing once in a while (the last one we've never encountered) were all reported multiple times to the developer. However, **Crave** has stated that, besides adding a handful of new cars and Americanizing the money system, they plan on having their QA people root out every bug before the U.S. release. Based on our experience with the import, if *TXR2* makes it over sans slowdown and sparring more cars, Crave has a real winner on its hands. This fall DC gamers could be proud owners of a unique racing game that rivals even the mighty *Ridge Racer V* graphically.



Gundam: Giren's Ambition

This **Bandai** title, a compilation of two previously released PlayStation games, closely follows the original one year war story line from the first three *Gundam* anime movies. It generally fits in the Super Robot Wars strategy RPG mold—amass and move your forces, then, when two opposing armies meet, they fight it out in split-screen combat with the computer automatically determining the outcome. It's out **now in Japan**.



Headhunter

This Resident Evil-style adventure puts you in the role of a bounty hunter. That's all we know about this game but hey, looks pretty cool doesn't it? Developed exclusively for Dreamcast by a Swedish company called **Amuze** and published by **Sega**, *Headhunter* is currently slated for release **April 2005 in Europe**. No U.S. release has been announced yet.



Threads of Fate

One World

Two Adventures



He transforms into monsters
Play as both characters



She uses powerful magic spells
It's a whole new game



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Mild Animated Violence
Mild Language

Sega GT

BENNY MOTO PRO RACER TIP:

CUSTOMIZE

GO KICKY FAST OKAY!



1

Famous pro speed racer Benny Moto says, in life and in racing we must know how to SLOW DOWN. Benny uses carbon fiber wheels and 4 piston calipers because he says the cool factor, the detail.



2

Are you fast now? Have this lovely spring placed. It's good for you. Without a shock suspension the track's track will shake your head up and down like one of those stupid dogs in the back window.



Driver 1 starts off in the lead. But did he listen to Benny? He didn't! He tried to save money on brakes. He's cheap. He's stupid. He couldn't get quickly fast through the turn. Now Driver 2 passed his ass. Now! And look at Driver 3! He's making power! How to be the leader? Customize and drive like a freak with Benny parts.

3

A big, 10 inch, 2 piece magnesium wheel is your fast friend in the speed for a sweeter contact patch. It's not too.



YOU FOLLOW MY ADVICE.
YOU CUSTOMIZE. YOU BEAT
EVERYBODY. POW!



Tear it up in this total competition speed trip where you can build original machines from scratch or tweak over 130 GT sports cars that reproduce exact handling and performance specs. Then use your VMU to trade machines, parts and laptimes on the net. Assuming you got anything worth trading, Grandpa.

6

The shock absorber is often overlooked, but here in Benny's shop everyone concentrates on the shock. A good shock when it really counts will bring forth wonder handling and quicker transitions.



5

Oh my God! Look at that engine! Yes, that's a baby big slaver motor. Benny likes the superhuge V12 for slung-pulling power. But only for the big bad lumber cars. Ohmawapya V-4.



4

Oh! What a loud muffler! Loud noise mufflers indicate chunky air-vents. Get a big pipe for greater flow at high rpm levels.



 Dreamcast

IT'S THINKING



PREVIEW
GALLERY



Gimme Gy Soda

KICK ASS NOW

Ever want to unleash a barrage of punches and kicks on your nearest soda machine when it eats your quarters? Well now you can. Check out <http://www.meritinfo.com/Styles/wingfun.asp> and you'll be kicking soda-machine ass in no time flat! Shoykian!

deSPIRIA

Osaka, Japan 2092. World War III has ravaged the Earth and, thanks to biological weapons designed to destroy human genes, mankind isn't doing so hot either. Mutants and freaks are everywhere and it's your job to use your psychic powers to dive into their minds (which you can collect and combine) to save them. Most of this **Atlas** game, due **this year**, is point-and-click adventure style, with standard RPG battles.



Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike

Following the release of *Double Impact* (reviewed this issue), **Capcom** is bringing over the third and final (I!) arcade installment of the *SFIII* series, *3rd Strike*, this **September**. Featuring all-new backgrounds, a new grading system that rates you based on skill, the return of Chun-Li and four other new characters, *3rd Strike* is the hardcore standard-bearer of 2D fighting games. No fancy-schmancy 3D antics here, buddy.



Sorcerian

If you remember **Nucon**, give yourself 25 hardcore points—they're the guys behind the *Ys* games and other popular old-school RPGs. They're back making console games after a long hiatus with this update to one of their old action/RPGs, out **now in Japan**. The graphics are simple (think *Evolution*) and so are the real-time battles, but the ability to make your own characters and huge number of job classes sets this one apart.

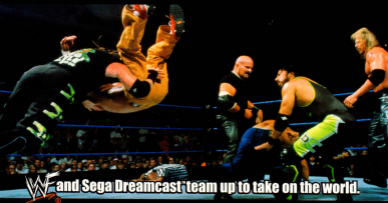


Final Fight Revenge

If you still harbor any kind of fond memories for either the old **Sega Saturn** system or the *Final Fight* game series, for the love of God turn the page quick! Now, for those brave souls still with us: Feast your eyes on the travesty that is *FFR*. This home version of the little-seen *Titan* arcade fighting game was released in Japan a few months back (yup, a Saturn game was released this year), but it took us until now to build up the courage to play this piece of crap long enough to take these screens. Yes, all your favorite *FF* characters are here, and yeah it's cool how you can pick up and use weapons, but good Lord! It's so ugly it could be a *3AK* title. And it requires the 4-Meg RAM card! As for the gameplay...oh man. Not good, not good at all. For shame **Capcom!**



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Animated Violence
Suggestive Themes

Sega Dreamcast



PREVIEW

Turok 3: Shadow of Oblivion

Publisher:	Acclaim
Developer:	Acclaim Austin
Players:	1-4
Genre:	Shooting
% Done:	75%
Release:	August
Made by:	Perfect Dark
Web Address:	www.acclaim.com
The Good:	Sweet graphics and two characters to play.
The Bad:	The N64 isn't aging particularly well.
Get the Story:	The editor's stomach after a Burger King run.



Like Perfect Dark, T3's story line is told through voice-dubbed real-time cinematics.

The environments in T3 are much more alike than the previous games. Acclaim Austin calls them "living environments."



THE LOST WORLD

Old School



If this screenshot looks slightly familiar, that's because it damn well should. At a certain point in Shadow of Oblivion, you happen upon the first level from the original Turok. This isn't any mere regurgitation though. The level shares very little of the original code from the first game. This version of the Lost World is many years into the future, and everything has been rebuilt, retextured and redesigned for the current game. The level was included to not only add a sense of history but as a treat for gamers who've stuck with the series. Thankfully, those annoying platform jumps have all been removed, and anything that remains is far more forgiving this time around.

The original dino crisis is back for one last run on the Nintendo 64. A cosmic entity named Oblivion is on a world-devouring spree, and it seeks the final bits of game energy that created our world. That energy is located in Turok's Light Bunker.

Titled Turok 3: Shadow of Oblivion, the series makes its final stand on the N64. Designed by Acclaim's Austin team without the benefit of a Meg Expansion packs in their dev-stations, Turok 3 promises to avoid the framerate problems that plagued Turok 2 and even Perfect Dark.

But why stick with the N64 anyway? Why not move on to the more powerful hardware like the Dreamcast or PlayStation2? "We have always

stood by Nintendo and the N64 with the Turok franchise," says lead designer Dave Dierentzler. "It would have been easy to abandon the platform in order to develop for something more 'sexy' and new, but that would really have been the wrong motivation. This chapter in the Turok Saga ends where it began, the Nintendo 64."

The game features five different worlds across which to sling arrows, only this time, you get to choose from two characters to do it: Danielle and Joseph. Danielle, the older sister, carries big guns and is the more athletic of the two. Joseph is smaller, can fit into places Danielle cannot, and relies more on stealth, resulting in two almost completely different games. Acclaim calls the levels "living environments" due to the constant events taking place regardless of your character's actions. Sounds a little too much like marketing buzzspeak to us. What we do like to hear about are the whopping 48 multiplayer maps promised, new save-anywhere function (addressing the biggest problem many had with Turok 2), over 40 new enemies, and of course plenty of new weapons.

Sounds good yes, but we still have a bad taste in our mouths from the last Turok game, Rage Wars. To make up for that game and warrant purchase next to games like Perfect Dark, Turok 3 better not just be good, it better be great. 



FLICK THE COMPETITION



Acclaim
SPORTS

NFL
QB CLUB
2001



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PREVIEW



A MOMENT OF SILENCE

Witness the Neo-Geo Pocket Color version of *Ogre Battle*. Now we'll probably never get the chance to play this baby in English... there aren't enough tears in the world to convey our sadness.

Ogre Battle 64

- Publisher:** Atlus
- Developer:** Quest
- Players:** 1
- Genre:** Strategy/RPG
- % Best:** 90%
- Release:** September
- Web Address:** www.atlus.com
- The Good:** Finally, a true strategy/RPG for the N64!
- The Bad:** That it took so long to finally hit the system.
- And the Why:** Rhade's collection of angry four-letter words.



Troop placement is important. Putting the right group of soldiers together yields powerful combo attacks during battle.

The spell effects are the only really spectacular graphics in *Ogre Battle 64*. Nonetheless, the game looks really good.



POTTY MOUTH

Holy %@&!

Some characters in *Ogre Battle 64* (particularly Rhade) curse more than a drunken sailor on shore leave. This is an odd (though seemingly growing) recent trend in Nintendo games. There are actually harsher words used within *OB64* than the screens below indicate, but this is a family magazine. Atlus says the game will carry a Teen rating, and as of yet Nintendo has not fought them on the use of expletives presumably because of their new, adult-oriented image. We think that's pretty @#\$%ing cool.



So long we've waited for a true strategy RPG on the N64, Atlus has finally stepped up to the plate and localized *Ogre Battle 64: Person of Lonely Caliber*. Bringing this game to the U.S. was a no-brainer according to Gail Salamanca, product specialist at Atlus, "The only strategy/RPG on the N64...one of the biggest names in RPGs...yes, must do *Ogre Battle 64*."

Like the original, *OB64*'s melees are played out automatically, although you can intervene and change which targets your troops focus on mid-battle. It's not very fast-paced, because the point of this game is to deploy your troops across the terrain and then methodically outmaneuver and destroy your enemy. You've got to keep your men equipped

and well rested for them to be effective in battle.

As *Ogre Battle 64* begins, you play a new recruit thrust into the role of a commander in the government army as rebel forces are gathering to attempt to overthrow the monarchy. Predictably, our hero soon begins to question the royal family's motives, and general confusion ensues. While it may not be an original story, it doesn't diminish the premise of this game.

For those of you who may have been overwhelmed with the complicated navigation and battle system in *Ogre Battle* on the SNES and PS, *Ogre Battle 64* contains a full tutorial. Trust us, it helps. After playing through it, even Greg had a good idea of what to do in each part of the game. That in itself speaks volumes!

Currently the translation is looking pretty smooth and should satisfy discerning RPG fans once Atlus finishes polishing up the text. They aren't dumbing down the game for the coveted "E" rating either—the complicated plot and presence of a few choice expletives make that very clear.

It's only natural to be skeptical of the game's length and music, since it is on cartridge. Let's clear that up right now: *OB64* will contain 40-plus hours of gameplay with a branching story line, and the music is on par with most SNES RPG fare. If any of you remember how good those games sounded, you should be very happy right now. 🐸



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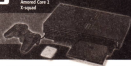
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Silent Scope



Sure, *Sniper* (1993) might be a pretty lame movie, but the effects of the bullet-cam can be seen sparsely in this flick. And it's available on DVD so you can see all these effects crisper and clearer than ever before.

Publisher	Konami
Developer	KCE Yokohama
Players	1
Genre	Action
% Done	60%
Release	Oct. 26
Also In	Dreamcast
Web Address	www.konami.com

The Good: Konami has duplicated the feel of the arcade game without a light gun.

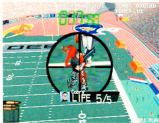
The Bad: What are these bikini babes doing around guys with guns?

Not The Best: Metal-clad dominatrix Monica as she slashes your face.



Your night-vision scope can be rendered temporarily useless when a flare is tossed out.

In one of the coolest missions, you have to save the president's daughter from kidnappers as they run across a football field in the middle of a game.



DREAMCASTIN'

Solid Scope

Konami is bringing *Silent Scope* to the Dreamcast too. Both versions are set for a simultaneous release. The screenshots below are from the DC version. There's virtually no difference between the games. DC owners won't get screwed this time.



Gun games have become a staple in most arcades. They're about the only games (next to racing) left anymore, and for the most part they're all the same. So when Konami released *Silent Scope*, it caught our attention immediately. A sniper game where the gun mounted on the machine has a separate screen, allowing you to pick off targets at close range. The question was, how would they duplicate that experience at home?

The answer—control the scope with the analog pad, and press Li to zoom in. Red or yellow indicators appear above enemies (the color depends on how big a threat they are to you), you move the scope to them and zoom in for the kill. A gun game without a gun is usually a disaster, but this setup works surprisingly

well. Besides, just imagine how much a gun peripheral that had a screen in the scope would cost! In addition to sniping enemies, you can also zoom in on bikini-clad women who will replenish your life.

Some of the first PS2 games (*Ridge Racer 3*, *Tekken Tag Tournament*) were without anti-aliasing, making people question the power of the system. But there are no "jaggies" in *Silent Scope*, making the PS2 and DC versions of the game look nearly identical.

All the modes from the arcade game are there—Story, Time Attack and Shooting Range. Konami is adding new modes of play to the home version, but these will not include levels from the newly released arcade sequel, *Dark Silhouette*. In the version we played, an outdoor shooting range had been added, accompanying the indoor range from the arcade. For the master marksman, there's an extra mode that disables the zoomed scope so you have to hit enemies from afar.

At the end of each level you face a boss character. One hit won't do them in unless you can get a good head shot. Other levels, like the football field chase are timed when you've got to prevent the terrorists from getting away with the president's daughter (see above picture).

The only concern at this point is that the game has only six stages. If it has unlimited continues, it might be a tad too easy. Hopefully they'll add more stuff to keep replay high. 🚗



IT'S HARD TO SAY
UNCLE
WHEN YOU DON'T
HAVE ANY
TEETH



CRAVE
THE MOVIE

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PS2

PREVIEW

Smuggler's Run



This tiny green box is the object of your affections. It is the contraband and it is your singular consistent objective throughout the game.



Ever dreamed of the life of "El Bando"? Does the thought of barreling down an open (or not so open) freeway, carrying a super-illegal hot-potato get your juices flowing? Does the roar of police sirens on your tail keep your pacemaker ticking? If so, Smuggler's Run might be just what you're looking for. And who better to bring it to you than Rockstar (remember Grand Theft Auto) and Angel Studios (developer of the popular PC game Midtown Madness, whose "cops and robbers" mode also had you running from the fuzz, but in the big city). For Smuggler's Run, you're thrust into any one of three vast outdoor environments with the primary goal of grabbing the stash and getting to your destination. Easy, right?

Not so fast. There's plenty of cops hanging around the borderlands, and they aren't gonna just let you waltz on by. Since so much of the game comes down to you versus the man, the AI in Smuggler's Run is receiving particular attention. The cops will take the high road, the low road and anything in between in order to catch you and run you into the ground. Thankfully, the environments pose as much of a problem for the boys in blue as they do for you. Since their vehicles take just as much damage as your own, savvy smugglers will race past rocks, steep inclines and other natural hazards in the hopes of guiding the cops into vehicle-crushing encounters with Mother Nature.

The control is being designed with an arcade-style setup in mind—simple and responsive (including a handbrake for quick skids), giving the gamer every honest opportunity to make his way to the finish line. As we mentioned before, there's only three principal environments (a forest, desert and winter level), but within those huge levels are 30-plus missions. Melee (race with or against a friend) and joyride modes will also be available for two players.

Angel Studios has long been known for great visuals (they've done CG for movies like *Lowrider* Man and *FMV* for games like *Mr. Bones* and *Ecco the Dolphin*), but when Smuggler's Run launches with the PS2 in October we'll see if they've got the gameplay chops to match.

Publisher:	Rockstar Games
Developer:	Angel Studios
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Racing
% Done:	70%
Release:	Oct. 26
Age R:	None
Web Address:	

www.rockstargames.com

The Good: Smuggling is fun.

The Bad: PS2 could use some more V-RAM.

Get the Guts: A six-car pileup involving pedestrians and wildlife.

HEAVY MAN

Gravity Kills

The control in Smuggler's Run is enhanced by an advanced physics-engine created by Jeff Roodis, the main programmer of vehicular dynamics. When pressed to describe the various nuances of the physics model, Roodis explained, "Gamers will be able to tell the difference of various surfaces in the game by sound and feel. Tires sink into different surfaces depending, naturally, on the surface. Sand patches will feel like sand, ice will be slippery."

But realism is not always the goal. This isn't a simulation, after all—if something needed to be exaggerated or changed to make Smuggler's Run play better, Angel changed it. "Our gravity is set at twice the normal amount," Roodis told us, "because real-world physics made the cars seem too floaty. We also modeled the physical characteristics of each car so you'll be able to tell the difference between buggies and trucks, and different gear ratios."



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SLIP NEED
No no, it's Slipheed (pronounced sill feed). The Sega CD version was supposed to show us the polygon-pushing power of the system, but ended up being an FMV shooter on rails. Still, it looked pretty spectacular for a 32-bit system.

Kessen

Kessen, which means "strategic battle" in Japanese, is now being published stateside by **Electronic Arts for Xbox**. Since its Japanese release, it has consistently been a top-five hit. In Kessen, you become Ieyasu, one of 17th-century Japan's most fearsome warlords, in a struggle for power. You make all of the calls, and have control over 100 3D soldiers at a time in battle...literally. It's set for release in the **Fall**.



Silpheed: The Lost Planet

Everything we've heard indicates that **Game Arts' Silpheed** on the PS2 will very closely resemble the Sega CD version, except this time the backgrounds will be fully rendered in real time rather than simple, prerendered FMV. Six stages of shooting action await those who import the game **later this year**. Silpheed is kind of an odd choice for an update considering its relative obscurity, but we aren't complaining.



Bikkuri Mouse

You probably see this painting game and instantly think "Mario Paint," but it's actually much more. Just released by **Sony Japan**, Bikkuri Mouse doesn't just let you draw, but also interprets everything you make into full pictures. So say you draw an orange circle—the game might change it into a sun. Or a straight green line could turn into a flower. How your designs are transformed depends on which of the six stages (each has its own theme) and what color paint you choose (with brown paint that same straight line could become a monkey on a vine [right] instead of a flower). A few super-simple Game and Watch-style mini-games are also included, in case you get bored of all the drawing. The other cool feature is you can use almost any USB mouse to play BM—just plug it into your PS2 and go!



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PS2

PREVIEW
GALLERY

TVDJ

If DVDs played video clips instead of music, it would probably turn out just as obvious as this game. SCE's just-released TVDJ, one of the few DVD-ROM PS2 games, is a combination puzzle/music game featuring celshaded graphics. The object is to place video sequences inside set blocks of eight by pressing buttons (one button for each length of video clip, one through four). It gets more difficult when the game lays out suggested clips in the sequence. Then you have to set up the right number of clips to fit around the suggested one. Once each stage is finished, you're treated to a replay of the show and given a ratings score. In between levels you get a peek at behind-the-scenes footage of the actors talking amongst themselves and the TV station's owner praising the work you're doing. When you beat the game, a more difficult Director's Cut mode opens. After completing that, you are given the freedom to play any of the stages over as many times as you like. Too short and annoying to be entertaining.



7 Blades

This action title, due in the U.S. late this year or early 2005, reminds us a little of another Konami game, Soul of the Samurai: As a sword-wielding male or pistol-toting female warrior (each character has his/her own story, although they do overlap), you're up against a group of evil space ninjas (seriously) who are attacking the islands of Japan. Apparently, you can take on 20 enemies at once.



Gungriffon Blaze

Game Arts and Capcom are teaming up to resurrect a Saturn classic on Sony's PS2 this August in Japan. You pilot a huge mech and set out on mission after mission with a variety of objectives, be it shooting anything that moves or escorting a helpless convoy through unfriendly territory. This sequel will promise much more action on the battlefield, along with mission objectives that get altered in real time during battle.



MECH WARRIOR

Most Game Arts classics were all but overlooked due to bad system choices: Sighnd and Laser on the Sega CD and Sangrelin on the Saturn all fall into that category. It's too bad, GG remains one of the best mech simulators on any console to this day.

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the Ring

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Sega Dreamcast



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WHO WANTS TO BE A
MILLIONAIRE
2nd Edition

All-Star Pro Wrestling

We recently received the import retail version of **Squaresoft's** eight-filled wrestling game, and we have to say the technique-based control isn't quite as intuitive as some of the titles that came out here. But it certainly looks incredible—you can see real facial expressions, and a number of fancy visual effects in the arena and on the fighters. Plus, the arenas are filled with literally hundreds of cheering fans.



Shadow of Destiny

Before you even start playing this **Konami** adventure game, your character is stabbed and dies. Luckily, your soul can travel back in time. So back you go, sometimes as far back as 5500, in order to unravel your mysterious past and prevent your future death. There are tons of puzzles to work through (but absolutely no battles to fight) and multiple endings. Expect a U.S. release this fall.



Orphen

This 3D action-adventure game, currently in development by **Kodokawa Shobun** and due to be published by **Activision** this spring, is based on the anime series *Sorcerous Stabber Orphen*. The star is a 20-year-old sorcerer named Orphen who is trained in the black arts. The basic gameplay sounds a lot like *Castlevania*: lots of platform jumping and real-time combat with both a sword (for close-quarterly fighting) and magic (for long-range and multiple targets). At one point in the game, Orphen meets other playable characters and the story branches—each character has his/her own set of levels. The action in Orphen is displayed in a third-person camera view, and every so often it will change to show off a cutscene or action sequence. There is also a targeting system that can be used for magic, but details on it are currently sketchy. Orphen will also feature lots of *Castlevania*-esque platform jumping and 100 different enemies to fight (including some giant-sized bosses).



People born during the Chinese Year of the Dragon are said to be easily excited or angered; however, they are particularly trustworthy because they are honest, brave and kindhearted. The last few have been 1964, 1976, 1988 and this year.



Spyro: Year of the Dragon



First seen in *Ripto's Rage*, Agent 9 is a blaster-toting, super-intelligent lab monkey.



Spyro's visuals still impress, a testament to the depth and quality of this series.

Spyro's back, and he's en fuego! The dragon eggs have been stolen from Dragon World, and it's up to our diminutive purple hero to rescue them all.

Year of the Dragon features the same cartoonish graphics, secret-laden levels and kid-friendly learning curve that made the original *Spyro* games popular; however, developer Insomniac Games has tossed in a bunch of new extras to make this third edition to the series stand out.

First of all, there are four new playable characters—Sheila the kangaroo, Sgt. Bird the flying penguin, Bentley the Yell, and Agent 9 the super-intelligent monkey—each with his or her own special abilities. For instance, the flying Sgt. Bird can pick up



objects and drop them onto desired targets with great precision, while Agent 9 is equipped with a blaster gun and zoomable sniper scope. He can also lob bombs over walls or other obstacles to give enemies a nasty surprise.

Year of the Dragon also expands on the mini-games found in the last *Spyro*, including boxing, skateboarding and sharp shooting. Once unlocked, gamers can play these areas as either Spyro or as one of the other new characters. Plus, you still get the same racing bonus rounds and Spax stages found in previous *Spyro* titles. (For those unfamiliar with the series, Spax is Spyro's dragonfly sidekick/health gauge. His hidden rounds play like old-school, top-down shooters, complete with shot power-ups like tracking missiles and smart bombs!) As if that weren't enough, the developers tossed in a bunch of new controllable vehicles, including a submarine, tank and speedboat. There's even a rocket that lets Spyro ascend to all-new heights.

Perhaps most impressive of all, the game's main levels are said to be 150-200% larger than those found in *Spyro 2: Ripto's Rage!* Each is chock-full of secrets and spoils directly off the disc with virtually no load times.

Even though hardcore gamers might scoff at *Spyro*, simple but solid games like this make it clear Sony is committed to keep their current PS2 audience happy, even as the PS2 launch approaches. 🐉

Publisher:	SCEA
Developer:	Insomniac Games
Players:	1
Genre:	Action/Adventure
% Done:	90%
Release:	November 2000
Also On:	Crash! WARPED
Web Address:	www.sony.com www.insomniac.com

- The Good:** New playable characters and mini-games.
- The Bad:** Same ol' *Spyro*.
- Get The Deal:** Your little brother is going to play it over and over...

MINI-GAMES

Special Treats

From boxing to submarine battles, *Spyro's* got it all.





PREVIEW



DRAGONS-A-GO-GO

Find yourself fascinated by those giant creatures? Don't worry, you're not alone. <http://www.dragonfire.org/> has more links and information about dragons than you can possibly imagine.

Dragon Valor

Publisher:	Namco
Developer:	Namco
Players:	1
Genre:	Action/RPG
% Done:	82%
Release:	October
Also by:	Legend of Mana
Web Address:	www.namco.com
The Good:	The Dragons look totally cool.
The Bad:	Humans were neglected due to the Dragons.
And The Ugly:	It has to compete with FFXIII this fall.



The opening FMV is breathtaking and amazingly detailed, all the way down to the scales on the dragons.

Most of Dragon Valor will be familiar to Action/RPG fans: Hit points, magic points, a lot of platform jumping and real-time combat.



GENERATIONS

Family Ties



Remember mom's advice about carefully choosing who to marry? The thought even applies in Dragon Valor. In the first chapter of the game, Clovis meets a pair of ladies, and the gamer is given the choice which to marry. The new pair has a child, who will be the star of chapter two, carrying on the legacy of dad. That son eventually gets married, his son continues to fight, and so on.

Each son uses the same weapon and the same moves, but is visually different and faces a different dragon at the end of the chapter.

Phantasy Star III: Generations as the Genesis had a very similar feature. It's surprising it took so long for someone to emulate it.

Dragon Valor, loosely based on the old arcade game Dragon Buster, seems to avoid categorization. Strength and defense statistics, along with magic and the medieval setting, create an RPG feel to a certain extent, but the gameplay is firmly action-based: You duck, jump, run and (of course) attack your way through the scrolling platform levels. Defending is simple enough—don't hit a button, and you automatically block. The stripped-down statistics system is pretty plain too: Hit points, magic points, strength and defense. Defeated enemies leave booty behind, money or items you can use to boost your stats, or recover your magic and hit points. Dragon Valor mixes elements from a number of games, but in the

end feels like a hack-and-slash platformer more than anything else.

The plot follows a family of dragon hunters. The main character, Clovis (yep, that's really his name and no, he doesn't live in a trailer) is understandably upset when his sister is murdered by a dragon. Bent on revenge, he sets out to kill as many of the big lizards as he can find.

But fighting dragons isn't the only kind of action he's looking for. During his travels, Clovis meets a pair of ladies, and you get to choose which one he will marry. Your decision affects the next chapter of the game, where Clovis' son carries on his father's quest for vengeance against those overgrown lizards (see sidebar for more details).

The dragons appear in amazing detail during the introductory FMV, and some of the spell effects (especially invisibility) are truly impressive. Unfortunately, most of the graphics seem pretty dull for a modern PlayStation title. The lack of camera control also gave us a few problems in the previewable version—it's tough to jump around on 3D platforms without it.

Still, there's a surprising lack of action RPGs for Sony's system—just Vagrant Story, Alundra and...not much else worth mentioning. Dragon Valor does introduce a few intriguing new elements; whether or not it has the overall gameplay to back them up remains to be seen. 🐉



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PREVIEW



KNEE CAPPIN'

Broken knees got you down? Check out www.medmedia.com/ea/118.htm. This page details the trials and tribulations of all manner of broken knee dilemma, just like the kind Mat Hoffman has had nine stinker times!

Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Runecraft
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Extreme Sports
% Bros:	50%
Release:	Fall
Also On:	Dreamcast, NG4, GBC
Web Address:	www.activision.com
The Good:	Uses the Tony Hawk engine to great effect.
The Bad:	Perhaps too similar to <i>Mt. Hawk?</i>
And The Biff:	A face-plant from a 40-foot-high drop.



Mat Hoffman is also called the Condor because of the massive air he gets when riding in a vert ramp.

Using the Tony Hawk engine developed by Neversoft, Runecraft has been able to achieve a similar level of quality fast.



HOFFMAN BIKES

The Condor



Can you say "dynasty"? Well, that's what Mat Hoffman has turned his favorite sport into. Founded in 1992 with the release of his namesake signature bike, the Condor, Mat turned this fledgling empire that started in Oklahoma City, producing 200-300 bikes a year, into a gargantuan empire which now ships nearly 30,000 bikes annually. That's how much the sport has grown. At a recent retrospecting session, EGM spoke with Mat about the new prototype top of the line Condor bike he was riding for the session. He told us that a bike of this caliber goes for roughly 700 clams. Yikes! Guess we'll be sticking with our \$300 Wal-Mart Specials! But if you get the dough check out www.hoffmanbikes.com

The world of BMX racing isn't quite where professional skateboarding's at, but it's getting there, and Activision hopes to jump aboard the gravy train before it leaves the station with this new biking title. A vert ramp specialist and nine-time world champion of the sport, Mat Hoffman seems to be the Tony Hawk of the BMX scene, amazing onlookers with the butt-clenching height he still gets at the ripe old age of 27. He's also nicknamed "the Blonic Man" due to the nine major knee operations he's endured for the sake of the sport. Thankfully Activision and L.J.K.-based Runecraft are devising a way for you to experience the thrill of catching mega-air, while keeping your knees intact.

Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX looks to further enhance Activision's "extreme" lineup with their first salvo into the world of BMX riding. Using the Tony Hawk Pro Skater engine and rendering tools, Runecraft has

been able to fashion a game that looks and plays fairly similar to Neversoft's classic. The game, if anything, almost moves faster than the original THPS, and the sense of height is dizzying (not surprising since the Condor gets two to three times the height of other BMXers, let alone skateboarders). Activision claims there will be hundreds of tricks spread among the eight professional riders, which include Mat Hoffman (naturally), Rick Thorne and Mike "Rooftop" Escamilla. Each rider has his own particular strengths and weaknesses, too. For example, Mat will likely grab the most air, but other riders such as Rooftop will be able to bunny-hop higher. The game also features street, vert and dirt tracks, the ability to modify your bike, a 3D course editor like the one coming in Tony Hawk 2, and various two-player modes such as Demolition Derby, Graffiti and HORSE.

We had a chance to play an early build of MHPBL, and we're happy to report it plays extremely well—a lot like THPS, as you might expect. Numerous tracks are featured such as a Central Parkesque course and also a subway level. As a bonus, Mat Hoffman's own Hoffman Bikes headquarters will be included as one of the many courses. 🚲



LEVELS

RIDERS

COURSES



9

8

Street, Vert, Dirt

12

10

Street, Vert, Dirt



NASTY SPILLS

Z-Axis has a new technology called Skeletal Dynamics Crash System. It assures each wipeout will look different from the last.



Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX



The bread and butter of Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX is the extensive line of tricks. Over 1300 and counting. Thanks to the trick modifier it's crazy with potential. To admire your work you may freeze the game and rotate a camera 360 degrees around your rider for a rolling 3D perspective.

Publisher:	Acclaim
Developer:	Z-Axis
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Extreme Sports
% Done:	60%
Release:	Fall
Web Address:	www.acclaim.com

The Good: Once you master the move modifier it's tricks galore.

The Bad: That posky Mat Hoffman game slipping at your heels.

Bad The Best: The Skeletal Dynamics Crash System. Never before have we witnessed such menacing-looking wipeouts.

Ever since *Extreme* let us bounce around on a BMX bike, producers and gamers alike have been drooling over the possibilities of the agile little two-wheeler. Oddly enough it took a couple skateboard games to provide the means. Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX uses Thrasher's engine while Activision's Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX takes advantage of the celebrated Tony Hawk engine.

What sets Dave Mirra's game apart from Mat Hoffman's? Here's what the folks at Acclaim had to say: "Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX has a trick modifier that enables the player to do 1,300+ tricks and combos. Hoffman has about 500 default tricks. Dave Mirra and Ryan Nyquist motion-captured all of the moves in our game so they would be authentic to BMX. Hoffman's tricks are animated. Our game also has a unique Skeletal Dynamics Crash System that

reacts to the environment so no two crashes are ever alike. Hoffman's game has nothing like it. We have 30 pros and 52 levels while Hoffman's game has eight pros and nine levels." Sounds good, but is it the whole story?

Having played early versions of both, we noticed a few notable differences as well. In Mirra's trick system the "X" button is not an accelerator. Instead, it's pressed just before a jump and released at the top for maximum height. In Hoffman's game it's held down as a momentum builder in preparation for the big ramps (similar to Tony Hawk). Needless to say, it took us a few tries to get familiar with the system. That's not to say it's not as intuitive, just different.

Mirra's trick modifier is a bright spot in the game. Launch off a ramp or other like object, perform a move, hit the "O" button in flight and tack on a few more. It's intuitive and pretty easy to master on a basic level. Exploiting all the tricks will take some time however. The developers hope it'll keep gamers motivated for the long haul.

Obviously the biggest question on anyone's mind is: is it as fluid and intuitive as Tony Hawk's Pro Skater? Unfortunately it's just too darn early to tell. The best we can say is, it's not quite as natural feeling as Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX but it's very competent in its own right. 



Both Mirra and Ryan Nyquist had a say in the design of the game. Mirra requested the riders be fully geared to promote safety.

THE ROSTER

Pro Riders



There are several other pros in the game besides Dave Mirra. They include:

- Ryan Nyquist
- Troy McMurray
- Chad Kagy
- Mike Laird
- Joey Garcia
- Kenan Harkin
- Leigh Ramsdell
- Tim Mirra
- Shaun Butler



TRACK EDITOR

Yes

TRICKS

300+

2-PLAYER GAMES

Yes

Freestyle BMX

No

1300+

Yes





INCREDIBLY CENSORED

Backs are nice, but not nearly as nice as the U.S. version of *Incredible Crisis* makes them sound. In the U.S. game you are instructed to "find the pressure points" to give a great backrub to a girl on a Ferris wheel. When you do the good deed, she moans and talks as if you're doing something a little more... *ouch*. Which, of course, you would have been doing if you played the racier Japanese version.

Dino Crisis 2

We got our hands on the first short demo of Reginald's new adventure *Capcom* was showing at E3 and we're really impressed by how it's shaping up. When they promised to up the action, they weren't kidding: *Dino Crisis 2* is more of an arcade game than a *Resident Evil* clone.

First of all, there's a lot more dinos about; they attack almost constantly in packs of two and three. Luckily the controls are more combat-friendly: You dash automatically and can fire while running forward or walking backward. You've also got two weapons accessible at any time now, a main gun and a secondary weapon (like a knife). Points earned for killing dinos, with bonuses for "combos" (killing multiple buddies within seconds of each other) and for getting past rooms without being injured, can be exchanged for new weapons, ammo and healing items at save points. You may also notice the backgrounds are pre-rendered now, to allow for outdoor jungle locations and more nasties on screen at once. More on DC2 as the October release approaches.



Blade

Blade is the one of four games based on Marvel Comics characters Activision is producing. In this action/adventure title *Blade* does what he does best—track and kill bloodthirsty vampires. If you're not familiar with the comic or the movie, the point is to rescue Whistler from the Vampire Overlords. Using his signature martial-arts moves and a bounty of weapons (projectile or otherwise), gamers have 21 levels to hunt vampire. Levels range from dark, sprawling sewers to the granddaddy of them all—The House of Erebus. There are over 34 creatures to squash including the ultimate Night Beast. We haven't had a chance to play this title but it looks like standard 3D action fare in the style of *Nightmare Creatures* or *Castlevania*. *Blade* is being developed by Hammerhead Ltd. for *Activision* and is due out this fall.



Incredible Crisis

We're not sure what's more incredible: this game's concept or that *Titan* is actually bringing this game to the U.S. In **September**, you assume the role of Taneo, a typical middle-aged business man who has his normal boring life interrupted by space aliens, construction accidents and even an intimate encounter or two. The gameplay consists of a collection of basic mini-games that string together a rather well-rendered movie. Some of the interactive scenes are mundane, such as the button-tapping scenes where you must escape an Indiana Jones-esque boulder, but there are livelier ones down the road. One of them, for example, puts you in charge of making Taneo dance to woo his coworker while another has you massage her. Sucky.





GRAPHICS PIONEER

With the PS2 looming closer, it's obvious there won't be another edition of GameDay for the PlayStation. Graphically the series has come a long way. In the beginning it was sprite-based (see GD '97). The next year they introduced us to polygonal graphics in a football game. Presently it seems they've tapped just about all the power the PS has to offer.

NFL GameDay 2001

It's no secret **gig Sports** is focused on GameDay for the PS2. Word on the street is many of the original development squad are back on the RedZone Interactive team, hoping to recapture the 'ol magic they had with the GameDay '98 on the PS2. ZGM is getting an early look next month. In the meantime, the not so hotly anticipated final edition of GameDay for the PS needs some attention.

As you'd expect, there are no major surprises, just some tweaks and upgrades to this **August** release title. Remember how the players skated across the field last year? It's fixed. The AI is jacked up thanks to the help of 17 NFL players including Derrick Brooks and Aeneas Williams. The developers did away with the post-play breakdancing as well—thank God. A "play-as-any-skill-player" option lets you experience life as a receiver, running back or tight end. And last but not least, 200 new mo-cap animations spice up the realistic edge somewhat.



MTV Sports: Skateboarding

We recently had some play time with this **fall** release from **TNQ** and **Darkblack**, and can't say we're terribly impressed. Granted, the game is only about 85% done (so there's still time to improve the awkward control and grainy graphics, among other things), but at this point it just doesn't feel as natural as (you guessed it) the upcoming Tony Hawk sequel. We'll let you know with a review soon.



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PREVIEW
GALLERY

Mega Man X5

Surprisingly, the blue bomber will appear in fall 2D glory yet again in the U.S., and hardcore MM fans couldn't be happier. X5 is what you'd expect: loads of upgrades for Mega Man and Zero, the ability to gain weapons from each boss and some of the best platform action anywhere. **Capcom's** adding the element of time to the game now, too. The faster you finish, the better the ending. Snap this one up in **October**.



Destruction Derby Raw

Just when you think a series is dead in the water, it comes back to slap you in the face. With physics and handling on par with *Driver* (the vehicles look similar as well) and equally impressive framerate, things are coming together nicely for this **August** release. Twenty-four cars, 30-plus tracks and several play modes will no doubt keep replay value high. The game is created by the U.K.'s **Studio 33** and published by **Midway**.



The Grinch

Last month we told you that **Kanami/Universal Interactive's** *The Grinch* was based on the book and not the upcoming Jim Carrey movie, but we have since found out that it's the other way around (based on the movie). As the Grinch, you wander around Whoville completing objectives in each level, such as defacing a picture of the mayor, collecting parts to weapons you can assemble and use, and infiltrating City Hall. *The Grinch* is set to wreak havoc on PS, DC and GBC in **October**.





FISTICUFFS

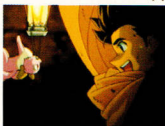
Anyone who preorders Lunar 2 in the coming months will score one of these sweet, custom-made Ghaloon punching puppets from Working Designs. Now you can finally see who'd really win in a fight: Ghaloon or...Ghaloon.



PREVIEW
GALLERY

Lunar 2: Eternal Blue

We're happy to report Working Designs' follow-up to last year's popular RPG Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete is nearing completion. Well, we hope it is anyway. This **Game Arts'** developed update to their Sega CD masterpiece was scheduled for an **August** release, but we just got word it's been delayed again (a Working Designs game, delayed? Can you believe it?). If you just can't wait you can always check out the demo included with Vanguard Bandits. Our quick demo impressions? The new run feature for the dungeons is a welcome addition, and the voice acting and writing seem just as good as the last Lunar so far. Our only worry now is further delays—we can only play the demo so many times!



NCAA GameBreaker 2001

Here's a good example of a title marking its time before the jump to the PS2. Aside from the prerequisite updates (rosters and play-by-play) it doesn't push the envelope too hard. Just the same there are changes. First off, there's a larger variety of tackles and broken tackle animations. Players don't go down after the first hit. Often after a shuffle or a glancing blow they're moving down field again. It's definitely entertaining to watch. In general it seems like the special moves are more effective too. The once-cumbersome "super-move" controls have been simplified to a single tap. Time your juke, spin, stiff-arm and jump and you're racking up big running yards in no time. The college atmosphere is helped along by 30 new fight songs, play-by-play from the king of college football—Keith Jackson and 60 more historic teams. Currently **989** is fixing a few bugs but they promise GB 2001 will make its **August** release date.



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STICKY SITUATION

Soon, the name "Spider-Man" will be more synonymous with delays than crime fighting. The game has taken forever to get finished, and even worse, after a year of speculation the movie's director (Sam Raimi rumored) and cast (millions rumored) still hasn't been decided or announced. Our Spidey Sense is tingling.

Spider-Man

At long last, **Activision's** Spider-Man is almost done and should be swinging sometime in **August**. The game is close to completion, and we're impressed with the attention to detail that has been given to each of the major villains (such as Venom, Rhino, Doctor Octopus, Mysterio and Scorpion.) To defeat them, you'll have to use a combination of web attacks (projectile, shield, entrapment), tricky wall climbing and a flurry of punches. You might get a little vertigo—after all, most of us aren't used to attacking something while perched upside-down on the side of a wall. Luckily, the game has a smooth learning curve, and if that's not enough, you can select the handy "Kids Mode." And finally, as a nod to the fans (and symbolic of the thought that has been put into this), Stan Lee has been tapped to narrate the game—pretty cool, eh?



Madden NFL 2001

While the bulk of our pixels attention will be focused on the PS2 edition of EA's Madden NFL 2001, it's important to tell you that our old trusty PlayStation is getting another update and it's looking damn good. The improvements in this year's version are widespread, ranging from speedier gameplay to the new "Madden Card" system, which is basically an improvement on last year's Madden Challenge. With it, you earn tokens by accomplishing on-field feats which can then be used to buy "Madden Cards," which unlock codes and other bonuses and can also be traded with friends. Think of it as PokéMadden. Other new features include team-tailored playbooks, a "Two-Minute Drill." This is really looking good, and you'll see it in **August**.



ESPN MLS Game Night

If you get a sense of déjà vu when you look at these screenshots, it's because this is the new edition of Konami's renowned ISS Soccer, but with a shinier coat of paint. Finally, the ISS series has been fully licensed with all of the world and MLS teams, in addition to having the familiar sights and sounds of ESPN's soccer coverage. This could definitely be a hard kick in FIFA's shins this August.



MTV Pure Ride Snowboarding

At first glance THQ's Pure Ride might look like your average snowboarding game, but upon further review you'll find that it's a lot like Tony Hawk's Pro Skater on snow. There's a variety of gameplay modes punctuated by free-roaming courses where you can go virtually anywhere to do your flips and stunts. The highlight of the game is the course editor, so have your designs ready by fall.



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IN MEMORIAM

Despite his tragic death earlier this year, Adam Petty will appear in NASCAR 2001 with the Petty family's blessings. His royalties? 100% of the money is being donated to Adam's favorite charity. He was 19 years old...

In Cold Blood

Two months ago we brought you info on **Midway's** *In Cold Blood*, a Resident Evil/Metal Gear Solid hybrid developed by **Revolution Software** set in post-Cold War Russia. As British agent John Cord, you must revisit the events that lead up to your capture and uncover an evil scheme of world domination (see July's issue for more story details). We received a playable version this month and things are coming along nicely. The cinematic presentation is done very well—CG cutscenes keep the story moving, and all of *In Cold Blood's* dialogue is done solely in voice (with competent voice acting, thankfully).

There are a few problems that will hopefully be worked out before the release date hits. The most serious of which is the character control, as navigating Mr. Cord is a frustrating task not made any easier by the fixed camera angles and press-up-to-move-forward control scheme. There might not be enough time to fix these problems, but fans of the genre might want to keep their eye on it **this fall**.



Muppets RaceMania

If some major tweaking isn't done to this cart-racing game from **Midway** and **Traveller's Tales** before its release in **October**, another uninspired cart racing game will be coming our way. Of course the game is still in its preview stage and has more of a simple, kiddie game feel. Fans of the Muppets will enjoy all of the characters from the show and snazzy FMV sequences from the most recent Muppets movie.



NASCAR 2001

The Daytona 500 will grace **EA Sports'** NASCAR series for the first time this **Fall**. Otherwise this game feels like the same old update thus far. The control is solid, if a tad touchy with the analog controller, and all the race options such as length, damage and yellow flags are present. **NASCAR 2001** looks to suffer from the same affliction as other PS games lately: old hardware. Nonetheless, the game should still be sweet when finished.





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Our games go to 11!



PREVIEW GALLERY

Sheep

Easily the weirdest game to hit the PS in a while, **Empire's** Sheep is actually looking quite good. Sure, these screens don't look like muck, but herding your flock around the many obstacles in each area of Sheep is so addicting. You push the flock with your "circle of influence" through each area, avoiding traps like wheat sharks, tractors and deadly sheering machines. Meanwhile, driving the little balls of yarn over ramps and through "sheep dip" (see top picture) yields bonus points. Each world gets progressively weirder, including a space level that promises lots of low-gravity antics. Empire's guaranteeing a variety of unique multiplayer games when Sheep is released this **October**. The developer, **Mind's Eye**, is touting Sheep as a "great rockin' game." Well...what the heck else could they call it?



007 Racing

We can already imagine the soundtrack—dum-duh-duh-duh-dum-dum-dum-dum-dum-dum-dum...in this head-cocking entry from **EA Games**, you get behind the wheel of some of the most legendary cars driven by Secret Agent oop. This mission-based driving game (dubbed a "combat racer" by EA) places you in the driver's seat of an Aston Martin, Lotus and BMW—completely tricked-out with all the gadgets made famous in the James Bond films. In each mission, your assignment is to take advantage of each vehicle's unique characteristics and top-secret features, while racing to complete objectives and beat the clock. Bond fans will surely appreciate the inclusion of some of the series' most infamous archrivals including Jaws and Oddjob. Look for it this **Fall**.



Chicken Run

Eidos is set to release a game based on the claymation Dreamworks movie of the same name in **November**. As one of the game's two main characters (Rocky or Ginger), it's your job to collect items in order to help the chickens of Tweedy's Farm achieve their ultimate goal—freedom—while avoiding being made into a pie. The game features voices from the film throughout its 14 levels of play.



Battle Buddies

We previewed this one as **Team Buddies** back in our February issue, when it was coming from **Psygnosis**. Now it's coming our way from **Midway** and **Oskar Studios**—and that's the only thing changed in this strange but addictive hybrid that combines puzzle, four-player action and strategy elements. Think *Command & Conquer* meets a bucket of Lego blocks meets *Worms Armageddon*. It's a lot of fun. Look for it in **July**.



Muppet Monster Adventure

It looks like **Midway** developer Jim Henson Productions might know a thing or two about video game puppets. In this retool platform game, our worst nightmares have come true—the Muppets have transformed into monsters. You control Robin, who can turn into a bat and is armed with a blaster and spin move. New abilities can be gained by grabbing items as you hop around its levels in **October**.



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Slap Happy Rhythm Busters

Despite the odd title, this is a very cool fighting game from **Ask** (developed by **Polygon Magik**) with a very unique look and feel. The graphics are a combo of 3D celshaded fighters in 2D environments. The "Rhythm" part of the name comes in during super combos—you press button combinations to the beat of each character's special song (music performed by well-known Japanese DJs). **Available now in Japan.**



NASCAR Heat

Nasheo isn't taking the responsibility of the NASCAR license lightly. **NASCAR Heat** is planned for a **holiday release** and looks great! Currently the game runs at a nice, smooth framerate (better than **NASCAR 2003**), but it might be said that there are only eight cars on the track right now. Bobby Labonte, 2000 Winston Cup contender, is the chief technical advisor on the game. Besides multiplayer, single race and championship modes, **NASCAR Heat** features a Boat the Heat option which recreates some of the most thrilling moments in various drivers' careers for the player. At this point it's hard to tell if **Heat** is meant to be a hardcore simulator or an arcade game, but we should have a better idea of its direction in the coming months. Just wait until you see the planned PlayStation 2 version in 2001!



PUNCH THE MONKEY AT HOME

Lupin the Third may not be a household name in the U.S., but his exploits have appeared on video here. The latest is Manga Entertainment's DVD and VHS release of *The Castle of Cagliostro*, directed by Hayao Miyazaki (*Kiki's Delivery Service*, *Porco Rosso*). Some may also remember him from an early '80s LaserDisc video game, *Cliff Hanger*.

Punch The Monkey! Game Edition

In the '70s, manga (comic) artist Monkey Punch penned a series covering the exploits of master thief Lupin the Third. Lupin was turned into a series of TV shows and movies. **Bandai** has used remixed versions of songs from the series and turned it into this musical game. You can play with the regular PS controller or GunCon, and there are minigames and about a half dozen movies to unlock. **Available now in Japan.**



Elder Gate

In most ways this **Novena** RPG, available **now in Japan**, is pretty standard stuff: a fully 3D overworld that could be mistaken for any recent *Final Fantasy* game, complete with stock battle scenes (although you can control the camera during them) and anime-influenced cutscenes and characters. But here's the twist: **Elder Gate** generates towns, dungeons, items, even the world map randomly for each game. Replay like that might be enough to make us overlook the blocky graphics if **EG** comes to the U.S.



Dance Dance Revolution 3rd Mix

Konami's series of rhythm and dancing games continues with DDR 3rd Mix. Basically, you dance along with on-screen steps by using a special floor mat controller. Do well and your score goes up, do poorly and it falls. This is by far the best incarnation of DDR yet, with over 40 songs (some familiar, others not). The best new addition is Diet Mode. It allows you to use the game as a workout, counting the calories as you sweat them off groovin' to the tunes. Other new modes include the near-impossible Step Step Revolution (SSR, 3rd Mix's Maniac mode—press select on the title screen) and 3rd ReMix mode (press select one more time on the title screen). In Nonstop mode you select from groups of four songs of varying difficulty and take them on one after another with no pause. Konami hasn't brought any version of Dance Dance Revolution to the U.S., despite the fact that U.S. third party peripheral companies already make dance pads for use with the game. DDR 3rd Mix is **available now in Japan**.



Aconcagua

Ever wondered what the movie *Alive* would be like as a PS game? OK, we haven't either, but this "survival adventure" out **now in Japan** comes pretty close anyway. You control (and can switch between on the fly) a group of survivors stranded on Aconcagua mountain after their plane goes down in the Andes. Now they have to battle the elements and the terrorists who sabotaged their flight in order to survive. The characters—an American engineer, Japanese reporter, South American freedom fighter, and more—each have their own unique abilities (one's good with a knife, another a rockclimber, etc.) you'll need to progress through puzzles. There isn't a ton of action, and nobody eats anybody else, but the unique storyline and thoughtful gameplay make us hope **Sony** brings this one over to the states.



PlayStation 2

SMUGGLERS RUN

RELEASE DATE: PlayStation 2 Launch

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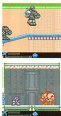
INTRODUCING
MLS GAME NIGHT





Mega Man Extreme

Publisher	Capcom
Developer	Capcom
Players	1
Genre	Action
% Done	60%
Release	October
Also In	Mega Man 8 (PS)
Web Address	www.capcom.com
The Good	A new Mega Man game on Game Boy Color.
The Bad	Another Mega Man game.
Get The Info	You'll love every minute of it.



THEN AND NOW

Color Blind

Within the past six months, a majority of Game Boy Color releases have been "color only," meaning only on the Game Boy Color as opposed to earlier black and white units.

Knowing that the black and white Game Boy still has a significant user base, Capcom is bucking the trend and making Mega Man Extreme a dual mode title. Whether you own a Game Boy, Game Boy Pocket or Game Boy Color, you'll be able to enjoy the action-platform splendor of Mega Man Extreme.



With the advent of Game Boy Color, the cry for new versions of classic games has reached a deafening crescendo. Super Mario Bros., R-Type, Bionic Commando and Crystalis are just a few of the many titles that have seen their rebirth on Nintendo's pint-sized handheld. Not to be outdone, Capcom is staking out their own territory in the retro realm—already with 1992 and Ghost 'N Goblins, and now a Mega Man X remix entitled Mega Man Extreme.

The plot of Mega Man Extreme is a familiar one. The mother computer of the Mega Man hunter base has been hacked by the nefarious Techno. As a result, Mega Man Extreme—the man who put the "Mega" in Mega Man—finds himself awakened from years of peaceful cryogenic slumber. Along with his cybernetic partner, Wily, you'll have to help him remove the viruses from the mother computer and put an end to Techno's mischief. Thankfully, as a heroic being engineered for just such an emergency, Mega Man Extreme isn't simply your average guy in a mechanized suit.

He packs a variety of neat superhero abilities, like a pimped-out laser, a speedy dash and the ability to cling to walls. As the game progresses, you'll encounter a number of bosses, nine in all, each of which possesses a certain unique power. Vanquish the boss and you'll steal their power. To combat linearity, each level contains a number of possible exit points, some of which only open up once you've acquired new powers or abilities. Furthermore, enemies exhibit unique strengths and weaknesses to Mega Man Extreme's weapons. While an initial romp through a level may require multiple laser or saw blade attacks, later visits can be made easier via ice or flame attacks. If you've played any of the blue bomber's other games, you know what we're talking about. As an added twist, you'll also have the opportunity to utilize mechanized robot walkers in the game, as well as conjoin with your Mega partner, Wily. Just how Mega can one Mega

Man get anyway?

Mega Man games are usually notoriously short—beat eight bosses, fight their leader and it's over. But Mega Man Extreme battles that mold with the most levels we've ever seen. As if the game's 36 initial levels weren't enough, 42 new levels open up after your first completion of the game. In addition, all the main bosses are joined by a number of classic Mega Man X big bads who return as mid-bosses. While you might think you ended the careers of Chill Penguin and Storm Eagle a long time ago, they're making a return, and they're really pissed. Wisely, Capcom is also including an instant-save battery backup, so you can pause and exit the action anytime you want without having to retrace your steps through any of the 78 levels.

After 13 years and over 20 releases, one would think the Mega Man series would be played out by now. But thanks to a series of evolutionary tweaks, we can't help but get excited with each new edition. Mega Man Extreme may seem a lot like Mega Man X in disguise, but with new bosses, a new plot and new abilities, fans have something new to sink their teeth into. 🦾

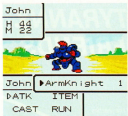


When Nintendo released the original DW sales were underwhelming. What to do with all those extra cartridges? Why, give them away of course! And so, for a while, anyone who subscribed to Nintendo's own mag got a free copy of the game.



PREVIEW

Dragon Warrior I&II



- Publisher:** Enix
- Developer:** Armer Project
- Players:** 1
- Genre:** RPG
- % Done:** 85%
- Release:** August
- Also On:** NES
- Web Address:** www.enix.com
- The Good:** Two classic RPGs for only \$30!
- The Bad:** Why not Dragon Warrior III&IV?
- And The Why:** "Dracolor?" Please.

Back in 1989, Nintendo of America released a nifty little RPG for the NES called Dragon Warrior (Dragon Quest in Japan). The game, which almost single-handedly spun off the console RPG genre in Japan, became somewhat of a cult hit in the U.S., spawning three NES sequels (and two more Super NES ones, only in Japan) before completely disappearing in 1992. Last winter, the series resurfaced on the Game Boy Color in the form of Dragon Warrior Monsters, and now Enix is bringing back the classics with an all-new GBC compilation of the first two DW games, titled aptly enough, Dragon Warrior I&II.

If you're unfamiliar with Dragon Warrior, it's basically a traditional old-school RPG where you venture from town to town, gathering information, battling monsters and upgrading your equipment. Typical RPG fare, one might think, but the DW games have a certain undeniable appeal, with their well-balanced gameplay and carefully crafted stories. The series is extraordinarily popular in Japan, having sold over 22 million copies since the first DW was released in 1985.

Both Dragon Warrior I and II have been dramatically improved for the GBC release. In addition to better graphics and sounds, the game speed has picked up quite a bit, thanks to a more

user-friendly interface and much quicker battles. Speaking of battles, the monster AI has been improved significantly to match up with that of the more recent games in the series. There's also a host of minor improvements, including new intro cinemas, more items, vaults for storing excess belongings, and, best of all, a new Field Log save system that allows you to save your place from anywhere in the game. (Sorry, cheaters—the log gets deleted as soon as you resume play!)

Old-school DW fans will notice that a lot of names, items and places in DW I&II have been changed from the NES versions. This was done to make the games more true to the Japanese originals (Lota instead of Erick, Lorasia instead of Midenhall, etc.). It takes a little getting used to for fans of the old games, but the translation is otherwise very good, and hopefully a sign of things to come from the newly reformed Enix of America.

Whether you're an old fan of DW looking to "relive the magic" or just a recent RPGer looking for a decent handheld quest, you'll probably want to give Dragon Warrior I&II a try. By today's standards, these aren't groundbreaking RPGs by any means (after all, the action didn't really heat up until DWIII), but for classic RPGing on the go, this compilation really can't be beat. 🚗



THEN AND NOW

DW Evolution

Shows here, a scene from Dragon Warrior II as it has evolved over the years. From (top to bottom) the NES, to the (Japan only) SNES and finally the Game Boy Color.





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From the award winning designers of Wing Commander comes a game beyond the reaches of your imagination. Battle for control of the galaxy as a lone gun in this premier first-person combat game. Or take on the evil Coalition in multi-player mode as a member of the elite 45th Squadron. With every hour, the Coalition grows stronger, and the fall of the Alliance is at hand.

Fight for Freedom! The 45th Wants You!

• Fight one-on-one with a friend in dogfight mode or play cooperatively with up to eight other players via the Internet.

• Whether engaged in a dogfight or escorting a torpedo run, the Starlancer 3-D engine provides unparalleled fluidity of gameplay.

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PREVIEW GALLERY

Turok 3: Shadow of Oblivion

Continuing the legacy of Game Boy Color games that have little in common with their console counterparts is **Acclaim's** *Turok 3*. This five-level game is basically an amalgamation of 2D side-scrolling and overhead-view levels where you mow down hordes of aliens and dinos with so different weapons and three combat-ready vehicles (tank, jeep and gunboat). Dino-busting starts this **August**.



Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

You want it for your PlayStation and now your Game Boy too. A full complement of 32 pro skaters will grace THPS2 when it comes to GBC. The game features both street and vert skating, and seven different locations. Hopefully **Activision** will be sure to make this better than Tony's first GBC outing when it releases *Pro Skater 2* this **September**.



GROOVY!

If having Austin Powers gurgling his little catchphrases on your GBC isn't enough, you could always check out <http://www.austinpowers.com> for all sorts of AP-related memorabilia. The best way to view this "Web site" is to use the "Internet." Throw me a bone.

X-Men Mutant Academy

Choose from 30 of those stinkin' mutants and all their wily ways, with link support and all. Developed by **Crawfish Interactive** (they of *Street Fighter Alpha* GBC fame), *Mutant Academy* lets you choose from Wolverine, Sabertooth, Magneto, Cyclops, Storm and more. Skip to our review section in this issue to see what we thought of this one.



Austin Powers: Oh Behave

Exercise your mojo this **July** with **Take-Two's** Austin Powers adventure on the GBC. Along with a revival of mini-games comes a collection of sound bytes from the back-toothed man of mystery himself. There'll be a battery backup and GB Printer Support, and you can even link to the other upcoming Austin Powers game—AP: Underground—for two-player action.



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Rob VAN DAM

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The weak obey the law. I break it.

I do not believe in mercy.

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By folding chair and kendo stick.

By fire and tables.

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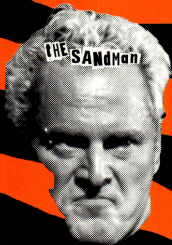


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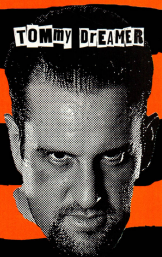


Animated Blood
Strong Language
Suggestive Themes

In the USA



THE SANDMAN



TOMMY DREAMER

The Historic Divisione Match! • Killer tracks from Bone and One Minute Silence! • 2-man commentary by Jovv Styles & Jed Gorkart!



Extreme Championship Wrestling.
No rules. No limits. No pity.

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DREAMCAST™WORLD SERIES
BASEBALL
2K1

Welcome to the Show, meat. It's all here — detailed player profiles, full 3D ballparks, and ultra-realistic stat-based gameplay. Use it up while you can, though. Because our nastiest pitching engine yet has been designed to find your weaknesses, then hammer them mercilessly. And eventually it's going to be a cert in Saiter Martinez's turn in the rotation.



Sega © Dreamcast

IT'S THINKING



A wide-angle photograph of a grassy field under a dramatic, cloudy sky. Numerous wooden stakes are planted in the ground, each topped with a red balloon. In the foreground, a large bouquet of red and white flowers is placed on the ground. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The background shows rolling green hills and a line of trees.

SOONER OR LATER,
PEDRO COMES FOR US ALL.

A photograph of a locker room scene. In the foreground, a large, out-of-focus leg of a person is visible on the left side. In the center, a man with a worried expression sits on a bench, looking towards the camera. He is shirtless and appears to be in a state of discomfort. Behind him, another man in a white polo shirt and glasses is looking down, possibly at a tennis racket. In the background, a man in a dark suit and glasses is looking towards the camera. The setting is a locker room with wooden lockers and a patterned carpet.

TENNIS WITHOUT THE UNCOMFORTABLE
LOCKER ROOM MOMENTS.

Virtua Tennis™

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Sega © Dreamcast

IT'S THINKING



I will not mate outside my species. I will not mate outside my species.
I will not mate outside my species. I will not mate outside my species.
my species. I will not mate outside my species.



Tough as it is, you must resist. Otherwise, you could end up with something like Seaman on your hands. Oh sure, treat him nicely and he's your buddy. Slack off, though, and he becomes just another verbally abusive mutant. Remember that the next time you feel the urge to fiddle with Mother Nature.



SEAMAN ON LOVE:
"Don't make me vomit."



SEAMAN ON THE 'Y' WORD:
"I'm too polite to use that word, so I'll just say, 'Bite me, you baboon-faced ass-scratcher.'"



SEAMAN ON HIS ASTROLOGICAL SIGN:
"I need a middle finger to show you."



Sega Dreamcast

PEGI 3

IT'S THINKING

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Meet your new Pokémon: Across the top of this feature, we've scattered Gold and Silver's 100 new monsters, starting with Chikorita, Totodile and Cyndaquil to the right and Ho-Oh and Lugia below.

POKÉMON AND ON AND ON AND

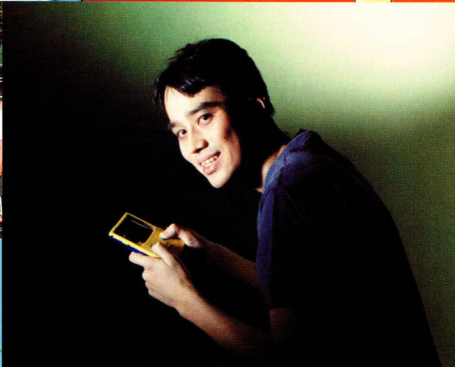


Of course you don't play with Pokémon. That's kid's stuff, a done fad, and you're ready for something new. At least, that's what the mainstream press wants you to believe. Last year's anti-Pokémon headlines—"Children Mugged for Pokémon Cards," "Schools Ban Pikachu"—have been replaced this year with predictions of doom for the franchise—"Kids Sell Their Pokémon Collection," "Pokémon: The Fading of a Fad."

But are we really that close to the day when we'll say, "Pika-who?" Not according to the folks who keep track of this stuff. "Our research shows that Pokémon is still just as strong as ever," said Reyne Rice, director of the NPD Group's Toys Services Division, "and we think it's getting a shot in the arm with this summer's new movie and Gold and Silver, with its 100 new characters."



Satoshi's story: Game Freak founder Satoshi Tajiri (right) is the shy genius who invented Pokémon, along with card-game inventor Tsunekazu Ishihara (above, with NOA's Gail Tilden).



here for the long haul, despite what a few papers might say. "Our television ratings and what's going on at retail doesn't back up the sentiment of these newspaper and wire stories," said Gail Tilden, Nintendo's vice president of Product Acquisition and Development, who left her position as head of *Nintendo Power* to launch Pokémon in America. "These are just anecdotal stories that get blown out of proportion to the point where people question whether Pokémon is fading."

Toy-industry analysts say Pokémon is the biggest thing since the Mighty Morphin Power Rangers—a franchise that maxed out its staying power by gradually introducing new TV series and characters. Sound like a familiar formula? Pokémon follows the same plan (just look at Gold and Silver's 100 new monsters), while also managing to snag the rapt attention of girls as well as boys. And in addition to the video games and merchandise from the 150 licensees, there's the Pokémon card game, which rakes in 43 percent of the money made by all licensed Poké-products. "Young kids like to collect the cards and look at the creatures," Rice told us, "but then they grow into the

continued on page 150

Pokémon Timeline

1991

Satoshi Tajiri and his company, GameFreak, begin designing Pokémon for the Game Boy

February 1986

Pokémon Red and Green launch in Japan

July

- Pokémon hits Japan's Koro Koro Comics
- Nintendo releases Pokémon Blue in Japan

November

• Pokémon Strategy Card Game hits in Japan

April

• Pokémon TV show debuts in Japan

December

• While watching the Pokémon cartoon, 700 Japanese children suffer sudden seizures

May

• Pokémon unveiled for U.S. audience at Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles

July

• First Pokémon movie, *Mewtwo Strikes Back*,



10 Reasons Why Pokémon Gold and Silver is Better than Red and Blue

The new flick, trading cards, toys, T-shirts, keychains, cereal, bubble bath, Pop Tarts, TV episodes, etc., etc., etc., are all fine and dandy for Pokémon aficionados, but none of that stuff is the real reason you picked up this magazine. You're here for the full scoop on Pokémon Gold and Silver, due for your Game Boy Color Oct. 16. After all, it's the Pokémon Game Boy game that launched this craze, and it's the sequel that'll unleash the characters and monsters you'll be spyin' on your kid brother's lunchbox six months from now.

Unlike Pokémon Snap and Pinball and Stadium and all that sidestory stuff, Gold/Silver is the bona-fide follow-up to the original Pokémon Red and Blue that debuted here in '98. It took Game Freak and Creatures four years to craft this 16-megabit sequel, which hit Japan last November and promptly sold 5 million copies in five weeks. Hiro Makamura and his team at Nintendo of America have already finished reaming 60 of Gold and Silver's

100 new pocket monsters for the U.S. market (the other 20 will retain their Japanese names). And the folks at NDA are having a much easier time localizing this game than when they worked on Red and Blue, which had to be reprogrammed because of the



fragile code of the Japanese originals. "There will be less changes from the Japanese versions this time," NDA's Gail Tilden told us. "It's pretty much just text translation."

The big question, though, is whether Gold and Silver can possibly offer the gameplay depth and astounding novelty of Red and Blue. We'll answer that right now: You betcha! But whazzat? You want details? Then here, without delay, is a feature-by-feature breakdown of why Gold and Silver pack everything you'd want in a Poké-sequel.

100 New in Pocket-monster: Sure, Pokémon Yellow kinda sorta supported the GBC's color palette, but not like Gold and Silver. Designed from the ground up to take full advantage of the system's 52-color capabilities, this sequel is downright vibrant and rich with more color gradients than Dennis Rodman's head. In fact, the graphics here are far more detailed overall. Just take a gander at the monsters shown in the battle screens and you'll see what we mean—and keep in mind that the battles themselves pack a bit more animation than those of the prequel. Gold and Silver also have subtle differences in their monster art; some Pokémon pose differently in battle depending on which version you're playing.

But visuals ain't everything, and if you don't give two squats about seeing the Pokémon world in living color, fret not: You can play Gold and Silver on the regular of Game Boy, too.

It's in with the old: Once you fix Gold and Silver's special Time Capsule (which—although broken for the first half of the adventure—is located on the second floor of every Pokémon Center), you can link up and trade with Red and Blue to transfer your favorite old monsters into the new game. Some Pokémon will even evolve when you bring them into Gold and Silver. We'd be a little more jazzed about this handy bit of backward compatibility if it didn't come with so many limitations. You can't have any new Gold/Silver Pokémon in your party when you're using the time

debuts in Japan along with the short Pikachu's Summer Vacation

August

- Nintendo launches U.S. Pokémon in Topeka, Kan., which the major renames "ToPikachu."

- Ten VW Beetles modified to look like Pikachu travel throughout the U.S. to introduce gamers to the Poké-phenomenon
- Pokémon Web site, www.pokemon.com, launches worldwide

September

- Pokémon TV show hits North America in syndication
- Pokémon Red and Pokémon Blue Game Boy games launch in North America

November

- Pokémon Pikachu, pocket virtual pet, is released in North America

December

- Hasbro launches Pokémon toy line



capsule, nor can you have monsters with attacks exclusive to the new game.

8) Port support: We already told you Gold and Silver takes full advantage of the GBC's palette, but this thing doesn't stop pushing the hardware there. For starters, Gold and Silver interfaces with the Game Boy Printer to print out Pokémon data and pictures of your favorite monsters, making it easy to build your own real-life Pokédex.

The game also uses the GBC's infrared port to link with Pokémon Pikachu 2, which comes out this September. In case you're unfamiliar with this little gadget, Pokémon Pikachu 2 is a thumb-size odometer you clip to your belt and, well, take for a loooong walk. The device rewards every 20 steps you take with one

Watt, which Pikachu chows on for a treat. Once you get far enough in Gold and Silver, you can transfer your Watts from Pokémon Pikachu 2 via the infrared port and transform them into rare and useful items. Heck, it seems like Game Freak thought of everything.



7) A brand-new adventure: OK, so maybe the basic premise of Gold and Silver isn't all that different from Red and Blue; you guide a young would-be Pokémaster on a journey to catch all the world's pocket monsters, defeat eight gym trainers and thwart the plans of an obnoxious rival.

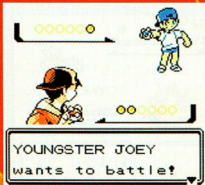
But bear in mind that this game is set in an entirely new land. You control an all-new character and get three new Pokémon from which to choose your initial monster at the game's outset (see below). And your rival is an order of magnitude more evil than the first game's Gary. The adventure here is just far more robust all around. You'll find mini-games, events held on particular days, and a highly interactive populace. Gold and Silver's world just feels more real. Read on—you'll see what we mean.

6) The end-of-game bonus: We're not about to spoil any juicy hush-hush stuff for you here. Let's just say a special surprise awaits those who beat Gold and Silver. It's almost like getting two games for the price of one.

5) New types of Pokémon: Gamers who played it long enough complained that a few monster types—especially the Psychic Pokémon—were just too powerful. So Game Freak added two new Poké-types to Gold and Silver to balance out the battles a bit. Meet the Dark-type and Steel-type Pokémon. Both are nearly immune to Psychic attacks, and Dark monsters can unleash critical blows on Psychic Pokémon.

Just don't expect these two new types to rule the playground. Steel monsters are vulnerable to Fire- and Ground-type attacks, while Bug-types can dish out serious hurt to Dark Pokémon. Fighting-style attacks'll take out both of these new types.

The upshot: If you've always relied on Psychic-type Pokémon to beat your buds in quick bouts by the



- **Wizards of the Coast** unleashes Strategy Card Game in the U.S.
- **Nintendo and KFC** launch nationwide Pokémon holiday promotion

- **March**
- **All-Nippon Airlines** introduces Pokémon-decorated airplanes for select flights between Tokyo and the U.S.

- **June**
- **Nintendo releases**

Pokémon Pinball for Game Boy in North America

- **July**
- **Pokémon Snap** for N64 hits North America
- **Nintendo launches** a 20-market Pokémon

League Summer Training Tour in the U.S.

- **2 Be a Master TV** soundtrack launches

August

- **Nintendo steps up** anti-piracy efforts to curb influx of counterfeit



Pokégear



Pokégear, a high-tech ultra-handry wristwatch that functions as a clock, town map, cellular phone and radio. Exchange phone numbers with trainers and they'll call you for a rematch. Tune into the radio's music channel to change the game's background tunes. Or listen to Professor Oak's Pokémon Channel to hear locations of different monsters.



water cooler, you better begin retooling your strategy. Starting now.

4) Red-hot Poké-love: Monsters now come in male and female varieties, which makes for some interesting gameplay twists when you think about it. First—and go ahead and get your mind in the gutter—it means you're in for some down-and-dirty Poké-mating. Just don't expect Spice Channel-style displays of gratuitous sex. (Heck, don't even expect the kinds of stuff you see on the Discovery Channel.) Poké-sex is handled quite tastefully in Gold and Silver. All you do is take your male and female Pokémon (they must be of the same species) to a special farm and leave 'em for a half hour or so. You'll find they produced an egg, which eventually hatches into a baby Pokémon.

Mating is crucial in Gold and Silver if you're serious about catching 'em all. A few of the new Pokémon can only be captured by breeding or evolving monsters imported from Red and Blue (old morphers are automatically assigned genders when they're transferred in). And the gender difference itself adds more to the gameplay than just the possibility of Poké-humping: male Pokémon have a slightly higher attack rating, while females are faster and better at defense and special attacks. Don't squint your eyes looking for anatomical correctness, however—both genders are identical.

3) New Pokégear: Gold and Silver packs gadgets so nifty you'll expect to see them in a Sharper Image catalog for Pokémoniacs. Take the new Pokédex, for example, which lets you organize Pokémon in three different ways. Then there's the slick new

The ever-important Pokéballs come in a few new varieties. You'll find a blacksmith who forges specialized balls in exchange for rare fruit. New types include the Speedball, which snags monsters who tend to flee, and the Lureball, which you'll want to keep handy when fishing. Even the Pokémon themselves get their own gear in Gold and Silver. In addition to new Technical Machines and Hidden Machines, you'll find healing and status-altering items you can equip on your Pokémon. Give a special nut to your favorite monster, for example, and it'll eat it when it gets confused to restore its status in battle. Some items even make certain attack types stronger when equipped, such as the Burn Stick, which enhances fire attacks.

Your new backpack makes life on the road a heck of a lot easier. Saving you from the cluttered menu of Red/Blue, the pack neatly auto-sorts items into different pockets for you by type: Single-use items, important items, Pokéballs and TM's. Spend much time with any of this new stuff, and you'll wonder how you got through Red and Blue without it.

2) 100 new Pokémon: We really only need to say two words here: "Baby Pikachu." But little Pichu is only one of 99 reasons why Gold and Silver will be Christmas 2000's most-wanted game. It packs 251 Pokémon in all—151 from Red and Blue (although you'll have to trade in a few of those from your



Pokédex

Pokémon products

- The second Pokémon movie debuts in Japan

September

- Second season of Pokémon TV shows launch in U.S. on the WB network

October

- Nintendo releases Pokémon Yellow Version: Special Pikachu Edition, along with a limited-edition Pokémon Game Boy in North America
- Pokémon Red and

Pokémon Blue debut in Europe

November

- Pokémon: The First Movie premieres in North America, along with Pokémon soundtrack

- Pokémon Gold and Pokémon Silver launch in Japan
- Pokémon appears on the covers of EGM and Time



Red or Blue cartridge) and 100 brand-new ones. You get re-evolved forms of popular critters like Clefairy, Jigglypuff, Electabuzz and Hitmonlee, as well as new evolutions for Onix, Scyther, Eevee and Chansey. You'll find special versions of different monsters, the list goes on and on.

But which Gold and Silver Pokémon will become the franchise's new Pikachu, who grew to be the most recognizable, most-loved character from the first game? Some point to rotund, blue-faced, white-bellied Marowak, who many have begun nicknaming "Pikablue." But Tilden has another theory: "Pikachu was really the one chosen by the people involved with the animation to be the flagship character that would broaden the appeal to include girls and people beyond traditional video gamers," she told us. "But in terms of the video game, players latched on to the Pokémon they got very involved with and played with a lot, and typically those were the three monsters available at the beginning of the game." Want proof? Tilden said Charizard and Blastoise are by far the best-selling Pokémon action figures.

So, following that logic, it'll be Gold and Silver's initial three monsters—Chikorita, Cyndaquil and Totodile—that'll become gamers' faves first. Of course, that's your decision to make when you tear into the game this October, and that Pichu is awfully adorable...

1) Around-the-clock monster huntin': Here's the biggest and best twist to the classic Pokémon formula: The game prompts you to enter the time when you first start playing. Now you're stalking

Pokémon in real time, baby! Or nearly so, anyway. The clock divides the day into three basic periods—morning, midday and night—and you'll find certain Pokémon species to be more plentiful during particular parts of the day. For example, in Pokémon Gold, Rotic 29 teams with one type of Pokémon during the morning and day, but they're completely absent at night, replaced instead by the owl-like Hoo-hoo.

But wait—the real-time clock'll do more than force you to hunt particular critters via flashlight under your bedsheets. "It encompasses not only day and night but days of the week," Tilden said. "So, for example, say there's a situation where you buy a train ticket, and the train leaves Tuesday. If you don't play your cartridge on Tuesday, you miss the train." Every Tuesday the Bug Park hosts a bug-catching contest, and trees scattered throughout the world grow fruit on a daily basis, providing an unlimited source of healing items.

The implications here are staggering. Instead of playing Gold and Silver in your free time, like you could with Red and Blue, you'll need to devote specific times of the day and even days of the week to this game if you really want to catch 'em all. "You have to plan your life around this game," Tilden said.

Ahh, the pressures of being a Pokémon Master.



- December**
- Pokémon is the top-rated gift item for the holiday season in North America
 - Nintendo and Burger King launch holiday Pokémon promotion
 - The Pokémon franchise has about 150 licensees in

North America, with more than 1,500 toys, trinkets, T-shirts and other stuff available

- February**
- The Pokémon 2000 Stadium Tour kicks off, visiting 20 cities across the U.S.

- March**
- Nintendo launches Pokémon Stadium for Nintendo 64 in North America
 - Pokémon: The First Movie arrives on video

- April**
- Nintendo launches Pokémon Trading Card Game for Game Boy in North America
 - Wizards of the Coast introduces Team Rocket Set of Pokémon Trading Card Game



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Beyond Gold and Silver...

Try not to let rabid hunger pains for Gold and Silver blind you to the other big Poké-titles hitting this year—especially since one of these games is based on the most addictive Tetris clone we've ever played. **Pokémon Puzzle League**, in stores Sept. 24 for your Nintendo 64, takes the classic gameplay of *Super NES Tetris Attack* and dips it into the Pokémon universe established by the TV show (so don't expect any monsters from Gold and Silver).

If you never played *Tetris Attack*, which was based on a Japanese game called *Panel De Pon*, pluck your head from the sand and pay attention: When you match three blocks of the same type in any direction, they disappear, and the ones above fall into their place. But your goal here is to do more than just clear blocks—you want to chain massive combos that in turn dump garbage blocks on opponents. You'll pick up the gist quick, but this game can take a lifetime to master.

Nintendo Software Technology is developing **Pokémon Puzzle League**, which has Ash and Pikachu battling 16 trainers in head-to-head puzzle competition to become the new **Pokémon Puzzle Master**. The game features six different play modes in either 2D or



3D. You'll battle Team Rocket in **Pokémon Spa** mode, for example, or learn the game by mimicking a master in **Mimic Mansion** mode. Of course, you get a two-player head-to-head mode, too.

Nintendo is also readying a Game Boy Color version of **Pokémon Puzzle League**. Due Nov. 20, this handheld incarnation offers six single-player games and three two-player modes, as well as a tutorial. Better still, it packs new monsters from Gold and Silver.

Nintendo's other big N64 Pokémon title doesn't come out until after **Gold and Silver**—and this game couldn't be more different from Red and Blue's sequel. **Hey You, Pikachu!**, due Nov. 6, comes packed with a microphone that snaps into your **Controller Pak** port. With it, you can talk to your very own Pikachu pal thanks to the game's voice-recognition software. This ain't *Seaman*, though, and your conversations are pretty simple (after all, little Pikachu never had much to say).

For the most part, you just bark orders at Pikachu to accomplish special missions, such as gathering food for other monsters, hunting treasure, that sorta thing. Your goal is to become best pals with Pikachu, so you'll need to keep him happy and entertained. **Hey You, Pikachu!** was designed for a kiddie audience. But if you always wanted to tell the little spark spitter exactly what's on your mind, here's your big chance.

As for other new Pokémon games, we'll have to wait until August's **Space World** to see what the future holds. At the very least, we know a **Gold and Silver** version of **Pokémon Stadium** is in the works for the N64. And you don't actually think Nintendo will keep this big-money franchise from making the jump to **Dolphin** and **Game Boy Advance**, do ya? "There will continue to be products in the Pokémon franchise," NOA's Gail Tilden said, "whether it be products like **Snap** and **Pinball** or core products in the story line. But we have to give Mr. Tajiri a little time to refresh here. It takes considerable time to create a whole new chapter similar to **Gold and Silver**, after all."



May

- **Pokémon: The First Movie** premieres throughout Europe; becomes second biggest animated film in France; biggest movie opening ever in Israel

July

- **Pokémon: The Movie 2000**, the second Pokémon movie, debuts in North America
- Nintendo and Kellogg's team up for a summer promotion

September

- **Pokémon Puzzle League** for N64 will launch in North America

October

- **Pokémon Gold** and **Pokémon Silver** will launch in North America

- **Pokémon Puzzle League 2** will launch in North America

November

- **Pokémon Puzzle League** for GBC will hit stores
- **Hey You, Pikachu!** for Nintendo 64 will launch in North America

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Pokémon, the Pope and the State of the Card Game

Although sales of Wizards of the Coast's Pokémon trading card game (TCG) cards remain strong, they aren't at the fever pitch they were at this time last year, when original Base Set, Jungle and Fossil boosters flew off store shelves almost instantaneously—at \$5 a pack, in some cases. Single-card, secondary-market prices have cooled a bit, as well. A non-first-edition Charizard, which once fetched as much as \$70 in card shops and online auctions, now goes for a much more reasonable \$30.

The April release of the Team Rocket expansion, with its powerful "Dark Pokémon," reversed the trend, albeit temporarily. Pokémon, like all TCGs, is essentially a work-in-progress—new card expansions change the dynamic of the game, rendering old deck designs obsolete and sparking new interest with players. The day the Team Rocket cards went on sale at Wizards' Game Keeper stores, eager customers waited in line for up to an hour to snatch up first-edition boosters. (Whenever the company releases a new TCG expansion, the first three days' worth of production typically bears a "first-edition" stamp, highly sought-after by collectors.)

A surprise bonus card, Dark Raichu, not found in the Japanese version of the series, only added fuel to the fire; however, after the first-edition cards were gone, demand slowed. Today, the cards can be found virtually anywhere.

Somewhat surprisingly, the biggest news on the Pokémon TCG front comes from Europe, where French-, Italian- and German-language cards went on sale earlier this year. Italian Poké-fanatics alone snatched up 50 million booster packs in just over a month.

Concerned parents, worried about potentially harmful side effects of the game, looked to the Vatican for guidance. After careful deliberation, the Pope



gave the game his full blessing via Sat2000, the Vatican's satellite TV station. The man with the funny hat reportedly said Pokémon games are "full of inventive imagination" and are based on "ties of intense friendship." His Holiness went on to say that he had a Lv. 70 Electabuzz that could "tear Blastoise a new one." (OK, we made that part up.)

Back in the States, Pokémon is still the best-selling TCG, and nothing except for Wizards' Harry Potter card game—due early next year—could dethrone it anytime soon. The July release of *Pokémon: The Movie 2000*, accompanied by four new promo TCG cards (including Japanese favorite Ancient Mew), may spark all new interest in the collectible cards. And then there's Wizards of the Coast's new Pokémon Gym Heroes set, due August 14. This expansion includes 126 new cards, four theme decks and 19 holo rares (as in Base Set 1; these holo rare cards don't come in a non-holo form). Wizards will release a second Gym expansion after this one, and then it's on to the Gold and Silver cards, known as the Neo Expansion in Japan. Wizards is now in negotiations to bring this expansion to the States this fall.

Contributed by Gary Mollohan, assistant editor of *Pojo's Unofficial Pokémon News and Price Guide Monthly*. Check www.pojom.com for the latest news on all your favorite trading-card games, anime and more.

















Clash of the Poké-clones

In our day, Transformers begat Gobots. Then Power Rangers begat Masked Rider. Now, phenom of the moment Pokémon is inspiring its own imitators. Here's the breakdown...



	Pokémon	Digimon	Monster Rancher
The name's short for:	Pocket Monsters	Digital Monsters	Er. Monster Rancher
It started as:	A Nintendo Game Boy game	A Bandai keychain	A Tecmo PlayStation game
Name of the spikey-haired hero:	Ash 	Tai 	Genki 
TV show premise:	Three spunky kids travel the land in search of new monsters, while thwarting plans of evil Team Rocket.	Seven spunky summer-camp kids unleash their monsters against Digimon controlled by a dark power.	A spunky boy and friends meet and make new monsters to defeat an evil being named Moo.
Does it have a card game?	Yes 	Yes 	Yes 
Its too-cute monster mascot:	Pikachu 	Agumon 	Mocchi 
You unleash monsters via:	A Pokéball	A Digivice	A magic CD-ROM
Art style:	Hello Kitty meets Walt Disney 	Manga meets a GWAR album cover 	Your worst nightmare meets H.R. Pufnstuf 

Pokémon TV 2000

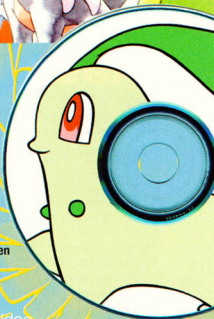
If you're a true Pokéfan you've seen the U.S. release of the second Pokémon movie by now—but what's in store for Pokémon this fall? The new season of Pokémon begins on Kids WB! (check your local listings) in September, with episodes to begin with more monsters from Gold and Silver in October. To match these new episodes the show will be retitled *Pokémon GS*, although the show will still feature Ash as the main character. If you remember the episode guide in EGM #124 we mentioned a few episodes that

were skipped in the U.S. All but the infamous Porygon seizure episode are rumored to have been dubbed into English and should be playing on Kids WB! in the near future. The third Pokémon movie, *Legend of the Unknown Tower* is currently playing in Japan along with the drippingly cute short, *Pichu and Pichachu*. That movie will probably be brought to the U.S. next year. Over 160 episodes of *Pokémon* have run in Japan on TV Tokyo (Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7 p.m.)—so the U.S. is slowly catching up.





Remember the Pikachu Beetles? Get ready for deja-vu Labor Day weekend, when Nintendo unleashes special Chrysler PT Cruisers tricked-out like Lugia on a cross-country tour to a city near you. Meanwhile, if you pre-order Gold and Silver at select stores, you'll get a CD-ROM that delivers info on the games, TV show—even access to a special area on www.pokemon.com.



strategy part of it and collect it for a reason. Then they get into the video games and realize how some of the characters are more collectible or powerful over others. It's like a layering effect."

Without a doubt, the main game on everyone's mind right now is Pokémon Gold and Silver, which hits here Oct. 16. Designed by the same guys who crafted Red and Blue—Game Freak and Creatures—the game introduces the new pocket monsters that will maintain Nintendo's stranglehold on kiddie culture for the foreseeable future. In fact, no industry analysts we talked to for this story could predict when the Poké-party will finally be over. We know Pikachu and company will rule the world until the end of the year, and in 2001 they'll make the jump to Game Boy Advance and the Dolphin.

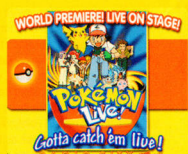
Chances are, you'll know that Pokémon has run its course before you read about it in the paper. "Don't expect Pokémon to suddenly cool down and become a closeout," Rice said. "You've got three of the mega companies in the industry—Nintendo, Warner Bros. and Hasbro—supporting this very big franchise and doing

whatever they can to make sure it continues to be strong.

But kids follow different cycles, too. When they feel like something's old news, they're eager to move on and be early adopters of the next big thing."



Need a little more Pikachu in your life? Nab the Pikachu N64, due this fall. Or just head to New York and see Pokémon Live! at Radio City Music Hall. It runs from Sept. 20 to Oct. 1, with a 30-city tour to follow.



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The next big Poké-thing...

Pokémon's worldwide popularity may be mightier than a 40-story Mewtwo right now, but—trust us—Pikachu and his cuddly kin won't rule the world forever. Fads fade. Always. So what up-and-coming franchise has the momentum and merchandise to push Pokémon out of the spotlight? We eyeball a few flavor-of-the-moment phenoms, as well as some near-future sure-things, to see who's got the goods.

The Olsen Twins

What's the deal? Like it or not, these twin teenyboppers are finding even greater fame and fortune since *Full House* got booted off the air. Young Mary-Kate and Ashley have starred in dozens of videos and books, recorded albums and are otherwise sitting square in the middle of a licensing maelstrom. Oh yeah—Acclaim signed the gals to a six-game deal.

But can they topple Pikachu? Doubtful. This franchise lacks crucial boy appeal, and we know how puberty works—these twins won't keep their cute-as-a-button looks forever.

Harry Potter

What's the big deal? Credited with singlehandedly expanding the children's literature market, J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter books have set sales records and spawned midnight crowds eager to snap up her latest novel, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. But these coming-of-age tales of a young wizard in training are more than just hardcover hotcakes. "It's definitely going to be a very, very strong franchise," NPD's Rayne Rice told us. "There's going to be quite a bit of product going across a lot of categories and a lot of age groups." A Harry Potter Dolphin game is reportedly in the works. Wizards of the Coast will release a trading-card game early next year. Casting is now under way for a flick due next year. Expect a bonanza of merchandise—everything from action figures

to chocolate frogs—in 2001. "You can just see how sequels will keep folding from this," Rice said, "so kids will continue to grow with Harry Potter."

But can it topple Pikachu? The outlook here is very good. Boys, girls and a surprising number of adults are wild about Harry, who may just beat Pokémon with his wand arm tied behind his back. But not until next year at the earliest.

Star Wars: Episode II

What's the deal? Remember last year's pre-movie-release rush to snatch every last trinket of Phantom merchandise? Well, expect the same initial enthusiasm in 2002, when Lucas releases the second prequel.

But can it topple Pikachu?

Highly doubtful. After all, "We thought Phantom Menace would be big and take away from some of Pokémon's sales," said NPD Group senior project director Mary Ann Porreca. "But it didn't, despite all the hype." As Jar-Jar might say, "Mesa got a bad feeling about dis."

Big Mouth Billy Bass

What's the big deal? You've seen this singing fish advertised 10 times a day on TV and piled high in Wal-Mart's across the country. He's taken the heartland by storm. He's broken Father's Day sales records. Believe it or don't, this annoying animatronic fish is this year's number-one novelty gift.

But can it topple Pikachu? Yeah, right. "As seen on TV?" More like "As seen choking up landfills for years to come."



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All new character settings






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Review Crew

This Month...

A little bit of last-minute excitement around the offices this issue: While reviewing a supposedly final copy of NCAA GameBreaker 2005, we stumbled across a horrendous bug that let us beat even the best teams by insidious margins. When we asked 989 Sports about the problem they assured us it would be fixed in time for release, but we decided to hold off on our review just to be sure. Tune in next month to see how it all pans out. In the meantime, if you see reviews of GameBreaker 2005 in other publications, bear in mind that they either don't know about the bug, or are taking 989's word that it'll get fixed. And that's just not the Review Crew's style. 🏠

Our Philosophy

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

EGM rates games based on how they compare with other titles on the same system. The highest score we'll give a game is a 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured it's one of the best games ever made—a revolutionary title that truly stands above everything else in its genre for its time. At the other end of the spectrum sits the lowest score a game can receive: a 0. This is the kind of game you want to avoid at all costs. It's pure crap, as our scale (above) explains. In the middle lies the average grade, 5.0. We repeat: 5.0 IS AN AVERAGE GRADE. Simple, ah? IT!

Our Awards



Platinum Awards go to games that get three 10s, the best and rarest review a game can get.



Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.



Games that average at least an 8.0 receive **Silver Awards**.

The Players...

Crispin Boyer

Crispin was sentenced to traffic school five more times. Finally, in desperation, the county made him instructor. Now nobody talks the course.

Favorite Games:
Action, Adventure

Dean Hager

He more cheese eggs for Dean. The doctor says his cholesterol is too high for a man his age. Nothing but soy burgers and bananas from now on.

Favorite Games:
Sports, Racing

Sam Kennedy

Thanks to Chrono Cross and the Metal Gear Solid 4 Trailer DVD, Sam has locked himself away and won't come out. Even for food! This guy is nuts!

Favorite Games:
Action, Archiving Chrono

Dan Leahy

After witnessing Sammy Sosa's home run Barry at this year's All-Star HR derby, Dan finally broke down and said, "Freak, he's pretty good. I guess."

Favorite Games:
Sports, Action, Fighting

James Mielke

The Milkman is spending his guth 8-day getting destroyed in a resort in Palm Springs, then he's off to Hawaii. Pity the poor Milkman.

Favorite Games:
Action, RPG, Fighting

Greg Sewart

Greg ODed on Jet Grind this month. He bought skates and painted some... "art" all over Mark's sublim. Understatingly, there's some tension there now.

Favorite Games:
RPG, Racing, Action

Joe Funk

Having reviewed one of the worst games ever, Joe decided to burn stuff to release the aggravation. He's got a barbeque going in the parking lot right now...

Favorite Games:
Sports, Action

Chris Johnston

CJ has once again become hopelessly addicted to Kazumi's Dance Dance Revolution 1st Mix. It's getting more play on his PS2 than any PS2 games.

Favorite Games:
Adventure, Puzzle, Music

Kraig Kujawa

The football games are ending to end Craig would have practiced up on them, but then an addictive wussy Dreamcast tennis game led him astray.

Favorite Games:
Action, Sports, Strategy

Mark MacDonald

After scoring a million in R-Type, Mark was selected to defend the frontier against Bar and the Kofun parade. At least we think that's what he was screaming.

Favorite Games:
Action, Adventure, RPG

Andrew Pfister

Andrew visited the Okinawa crew this month. Highlight of the trip? An excursion to GameWorks, where he defeated JO's Kenneth Miller in a bout of Virtual Tennis.

Favorite Games:
RPG, Action

Shawn Smith

The summer is here and Shawn couldn't be happier. Although this also marks the beginning of some changes. Is it true Shawn is going back to college soon?

Favorite Games:
Action, Adventure

Game of the Month



Chrono Cross Pg. 162

All four major systems enjoyed strong showings in Reviews this month: Street Fighter III and Power Stone 2 for the GC, Starcraft and Kirby for the N64 (finally some games!), and Crystals for the GBC, but the PlayStation enjoyed the best of the lot with Valkyrie Profile and especially the amazing Chrono Cross, which narrowly missed the coveted EGM Platinum award (by .5, too! Send hate mail to Greg_Sewart@ziffdavis.com) but easily won Game of the Month. As so often before, we're just now seeing many of the best PS games in the system's twilight months. We can only hope Final Fantasy IX is this good—there's something you don't hear often. 🏠

EDITORS' CURRENT FAVES

- 1 Jet Grind Radio
Sega
- 2 Chrono Cross
Square GA
- 3 Perfect Dark
N64
- 4 Valkyrie Profile
GBA
- 5 Season
Sega
- 6 Dragon Warrior III
GBA
- 7 Virtua Tennis
Sega
- 8 Power Stone 2
Dreamcast
- 9 Kirby 64
Nintendo
- 10 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater
Activision/Gaem



Power Stone 2



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured In: EGM #131
Players: 1-4
Supports: VGA Box, Jump Pack
Best Feature: Awesome environments
Worst Feature: Can be confusing with four players
Web Site: www.capcom.com



When the original Power Stone appeared, Capcom showed the world what a free-roaming 3D fighter with interactive environments was all about. Squaresoft and Erigetz be damned. And for as unique a game as it was, Power Stone was a fantastic first effort. Now that the sequel has arrived in a timely fashion, **Capcom doubles the pleasure with additional characters, four-player mayhem, and 3D environments that easily eclipse those seen in the first game.** The four-player game is a blast. It's a frantic free-for-all filled with loads of weapons that fall into the arenas randomly. The best part, though, might be the new levels—they often change as you play, adding another element to the chaotic gameplay. Battles may be interrupted in mid-fight by all manner of cataclysm: subs that surface and submerge periodically, a sky-fortress that explodes, sending all combatants hurtling earthward, or a screen-filling boulder tumbling your way, turning the arena into a side-scrolling platformer. And in item shop where you can purchase goods with money plundered from other modes and you have a neat little game filled with loads of replay incentive. Unfortunately, Capcom didn't add a network mode for Internet play, but the four-player chaos should suffice. If you missed the first Power Stone, there's no reason to skip the sequel.

Milkman

I wasn't a big fan of the original Power Stone, but for the sequel **Capcom fixed most everything that I didn't like about the first game.** The stages, while relatively few in number, are highly imaginative and interactive, changing even as you play (the skydiving and boulder chase in particular). The sheer number of weapons and items is great by itself, but the Item Shop adds another dimension. And of course, the four-player mode is obviously a worthy upgrade. The fighting system is still pretty simple, but sometimes simple is good. Power Stone 2 fulfills the awesome potential demonstrated by the first game and is definitely worth checking out.

Andrew

I found the first Power Stone pretty boring. I understand the concept, but in a fighting game with such little technique you need a lot of flash to make it interesting (read: *MvC2*). The biggest advancement in Power Stone's sequel is the insane levels you fight on. At certain points on every level something happens to completely change the playing field. If you're on a ship it may crash into an iceberg. A building you're on may catch fire, forcing you to climb to safety. All the while the fighting action never lets up. **Fans of the first game will absolutely love this one,** as the fighting action really hasn't changed. Those who disliked the first game should try this one.

Grog

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	8	9



Seaman



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Vivarium
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1
Supports: Microphone, VMU
Best Feature: Deadpan humor, opinions on life
Worst Feature: Little loose on voice recognition
Web Site: www.sega.com



In the past, virtual pets have been less about interaction than pampering, feeding and burping—more like a baby than a pet. Seaman is different. It takes just shy of a month to navigate from beginning to end successfully (though there isn't really an end unless you want there to be), experiencing birth, growth, first words, death, rebirth and so on. Needless to say it's a lot more exciting than Sea Monkeys™. As Seaman grows he talks to you more and frequently asks questions. It begins to feel less like a game than a trip to the psychiatrist. Seaman does get a bit preachy, but he almost always has something witty to say—making you momentarily forget you're talking into your Dreamcast. **The dialogue in Seaman is why the game is so captivating—you never know what he'll say next.** You'll listen to him expand on political ideology only to have him ask if you'll turn on the heater in the tank right after. Seaman isn't without pitfalls, though. The quality of voice recognition ranges from great (when answering questions) to not so great (any other time). It would've been nice to be able to view Dr. Gasse's notes, pictures, X-rays—some representation of the extensive backstory Vivarium created for the game in Japan. The plain interface also lacks the right kind of "lab" feel. As groundbreaking as Seaman is, it makes me more excited for future applications of voice recognition in games.

Chris

In a word: Bizarre. Just...bizarre. Seaman is a game like fishing is a sport: it only falls into that category "cause no one knows what the hell else to call it. The concept is truly original and captivating, but when it comes down to the day-to-day gameplay, Seaman dries up quickly. He doesn't actually converse much outside of his prompted questions, the humor is hit-or-miss, and the fact that he sometimes misinterprets speech can get frustrating. **Plus, there's often just nothing to do—**mini-games or something else to keep you busy during the lulls would have done wonders. Overall a fascinating novelty title, but not actually that much fun.

Mark

This is the coolest game ever made. While many gamers out there just won't "get it," those who do will enjoy an incredibly immersive game. You don't really "play" Seaman, you live it. Anyone expecting to finish this in a set amount of time is missing the point. When the little Gilmenut utter their first words, you'll almost have tears in your eyes. And when they get old enough to sass you back, watch out, it's the Jellyfish gang at work. Adding to the thrill is the most bizarre (and need we say "only") birthing scene in the history of video games. Leonard Nimoy as narrator is the final brilliant touch. **These are Sea Monkey's for the new millennium.**

Milkman

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	10	8



Silver



Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Spiral House
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pack, VMU
Best Feature: Story line, voice-overs
Worst Feature: Battle system
Web Site: www.infogrames.com



Hardcore role-playing gamers won't be impressed by Silver—it's more for casual fans of the genre. The story line and characters are interesting (although it gets convoluted toward the end), the voice-overs and music are excellent, and it won't rob you of 60 hours of your life (the ending could've been more rewarding, however). Of course, it's not problem-free. **The awkward battle system is the most glaring problem here.** Granted, it has a decent amount of technique and various magics and weaponry, but it's difficult to see what's going on thanks to the position of the fixed camera. And the clunky control, retooled from the PC version, doesn't help matters. It's also annoying how you can't leave a particular scene until all of the enemies have been killed. It gives the game a certain Final Fight feel (in other words: repetitious). Finally, you have up to two other characters in your party at a time (AI takes control when you don't have them selected). Sounds cool, but the problem is they don't always take the initiative in battles, so you end up taking on multiple enemies with little or no help from your chums, making combat a whole lot more tedious than it needs to be. My coworkers heard me hollering more than a few times at my lazy comrades. But even so, Silver is pretty easy overall. In fact, the last boss is easier than some of the regular enemies later in the game. Even with its shortcomings, Silver is worth trying out.

Shawn

One of the most important things in a good adventure is compelling characters, and Silver is check-full of them. **This is one of the few games with voice acting better than your average Pokémon show** and it really makes a difference. I only wish the other parts of the game were as polished. The interesting story made me want to trade on, but that and the visuals are the only reason I wanted to play it. Everything else about the game had major faults: the controls are clunky, and the environments are difficult to navigate. Even worse—the game crashed three times while I was playing it, ensuring that Silver is a tarnished bronze.

Kraig

Silver is a respectable addition to the DC's growing library of RPGs. The story line is standard and the gameplay is solid, but the static backgrounds just don't cut it for me any more in this budding era of totally immersive 3D worlds like those in *N64 Zelda* and *EverQuest*. The graphics are decent (although the characters are a bit too tiny), but when I see something cool I want to be able to walk around the buildings and landscapes and examine them from every angle. It's just frustrating since **we all know the DC is capable of much better.** However, if you're starved for an action RPG for your DC, you might want to check this one out.

Joe

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	8	7	4



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured In: EGM #127
Players: 1-2
Supports: Jump Pak, VGA Box
Best Feature: Smooth animation
Worst Feature: No 3rd Strike
Web Site: www.capcom.com



Capcom finally releases and adds the number "3" to the end of the name "Street Fighter," and all I have to say is "is this it?" The most successful arcade series of all time finally gets a sequel and a "pfffttt." No big whoop. In case you don't already know, this is actually two games in one: SFIII and SFIII 2nd Impact. Despite the "3," and some small adjustments to the fighting engine, both are still basically Street Fighter. The greatest enhancement to previous games is a stunning increase in animation—each character moves almost like a Disney cartoon. Of course when the game gets going you don't notice those enhancements too much since the focus is on the fighting. Specials arrive in the form of three different "Super Arts," which are selected pre-match, and the game adds parrying (an offensive-block performed like Alpha Counters), but they encourage turtling and can slow down matches. **Although this package includes both of the first two SFIII games, you'll really only play and impact** since it has more characters and a more evolved fighting engine. This essentially renders Double Impact a Single Impact, with the first game merely an afterthought. Too bad; this really should have come as a trilogy—especially considering that 3rd Strike, the final chapter in the series, will be out in less than two months. Unless you're a hardcore fan, rent before you buy, or check out the identical arcade version.

Milkman

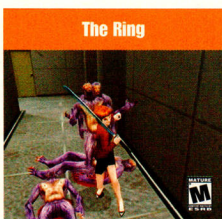
Why oh why did Sega ever go for this strange controller design? If you can stand choosing your super move before each game, got a good fighting controller handy and have nothing against fighting the Jesus-like boss character, this is the 2D fighter for you. The quality of animation on the huge characters in SFIII is staggering—it makes Street Fighter Alpha 3 look like a Genesis game. And hey, you even get two perfect arcade conversions on this disc (including 2nd Impact, a game many call the best in the series). Well, I'm more of a fan of the vs. series, there's no question that SFIII:D1 drips quality. Lose that mushy controller and get in on!

Greg

I know a lot of people didn't like SFIII in the arcade, but I could never quite figure out why. Some lame characters yes, but overall this is a damn solid 2D fighter. The gameplay is familiar and comfortable, but with the graphics (which are amazing—2D fighting fans are gonna be in heaven) and a couple new features to make it interesting. Like the risk/reward involved in parrying effectively, although I hear it can be abused by master players. And a nod to Capcom for packaging both games in one—honestly, though, they are too similar to warrant purchase separately. **Normally I'd say buy, but with 3rd Strike coming so soon you might want to just rent.**

Mark

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	7	5	8



Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Asmik Ace
Featured In: EGM #127
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pak
Best Feature: Detailed environments
Worst Feature: Sound or controls, it's a toss-up
Web Site: www.infogrames.com



I have to start off by apologizing to all the games I previously called Resident Evil rip-offs: T.R.A.G., Carrier, Countdown Vampires—I'm sorry. It's only since playing The Ring, a totally shameless and utterly pathetic attempt to mimic Capcom's adventure series, that I realize how stunningly original you all really are. This game has identical controls, boxes to store excess items, radios to save with instead of typewriters, even the same damn "door opening" sequences. **But the attempts to mimic RE are not what's sad about The Ring; how horribly it still fails in almost every category is what's sad about The Ring.** The combination of idiotic enemies and bad controls (sluggish response and no instant 180° turn) makes combat alternately way too easy or incredibly frustrating. Camera angles are confusing, the animation is average at best, and the lack of any real puzzles or bosses is just sad. A potentially interesting plot—with psychic girls, killer viruses and alternate dimensions—is hindered only by two small problems: one, you usually have no idea what you're supposed to do next and two, none of it ever makes any sense whatsoever. I will admit the environments look pretty nice, and the flashlight you often carry in the dark is spooky fun. But other than that, I have the same reaction to this game that one of its developers did when I asked him about it on a recent trip to Japan: He just shook his head and sighed.

Mark

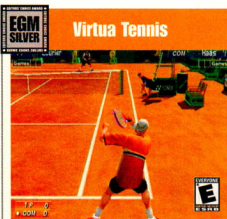
Despite the **seriously lame translation**, the Ring boasts a higher level of quality than one might expect from a smaller developer like Asmik Ace. The fully 3D graphics especially are pretty impressive. Animations are a bit jerky though and the music is just horrible—the same damn four-bar ditty repeats almost everywhere in the game. The game lacks a bit of polish, but the eerie techno-vibe/Matrix-meets-The Exorcist story line compels further investigation. It's no Resident Evil, don't get me wrong, but if you need another survival-horror fix and have already beat that Capcom classic, The Ring is worth inspecting.

Milkman

I've always wanted lurk around a quarantined office building questioning frumpy secretaries and grumpy office jockies. Now if only it were repetitious, confusing and at times bizarre, I'd really be pumped—hello? Sarcasm aside, **Ring is mildly intriguing at times and I'll admit the "alternative universe" portion is creepy** in a Resident Evil-kind of way, but that's the extent of my endorsement. It's often unclear what you should pursue next. At one point, Meg (the main character) wonders to herself, "Hmm, maybe I need to find a laptop to help me out of here?" That wouldn't be my first thought after killing a couple mutant freaks in a pitch-black chamber of death.

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	3	4	4



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega
Featured In: EGM #132
Players: 1-4
Supports: VMU
Best Feature: Awesome graphics and animation
Worst Feature: Limited replay value
Web Site: www.sega.com



I've said this several times in the last year (thanks to the 2K games), but here it goes anyway—this is the most incredible-looking sports game I've ever seen. Sega has managed to power pack the characters with polys while keeping them fluid as a waterfall and as lifelike as you or I. But the truly beautiful thing about Virtua Tennis (besides the graphics) is the learning curve. Anyone can pick up a controller and perform moves Pete Sampras would be proud of. The intuitive control and character reaction time are right on target. Beginners just move toward the ball and hit the button, but it's much harder to exploit the techniques needed to really jam. For example, the strength of a shot depends on how hard you charge the ball (the direction you're coming from also factors in). Aiming, ball-spin, and tapping the potential of each pro takes time. You'll even find some nifty mini-games to prepare you for the harder tournaments. One has you beating back giant beachballs with your returns while another involves a bevy of bombarding service machines. **My only knock on the game is its replay value.** I know Virtua Tennis is essentially an arcade game but I can't see staying with it for even a tenth of the time I've devoted to NBA or NFL2K. It's one of those games you'll pull out to impress your friends but probably won't keep playing after they leave. In my opinion it's tailor-made for non or casual sports fans.

Dean

With an emphasis on easy gameplay and an arcadey feel, I wonder how Virtua Tennis would compare with its sim cousins of the vaunted "2K" series. **Well, for all the sim features that may not be present, the foundation of the game succeeds in fast, fun and varied action.** Each mode, singles vs. the CPU, singles vs. a friend, doubles et al, adds a new layer of fun and depth. Throw in the World Circuit mode, which requires the player to progress through a series of challenging mini-games, and you have a game which offers high replay value. Sure, the players could have had signature shots, and there could be more options, but it's still a winner.

Dan

Wow. I'm not usually the sort of person that is hankering to play a tennis game—I haven't thoroughly enjoyed one since the SNEES Super Tennis. But, lo' and behold, it appears there is another. Virtua Tennis has the elusive magic (like Hot Shots Golf) that draws everyone in—hardcore sports fans and casual gamers alike. As I was playing the game in my cube, fellow editors seemed just as entranced watching the action as I did playing the game. This is more than a **hopelessly addictive tennis game**, my friends, it is a tennis experience. I haven't yelled at a game, rejoiced at a game, and cried with a game the way I did in T.V.'s matches. Buy it. Buy it now.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	8	8	8



Wacky Races

Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Sheffield House
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1-4
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Cel-shaded graphics
Worst Feature: Gets too hard
Web Site: www.infogrames.com



For all the racers on the Dreamcast, it still lacks a good "kart" game. Well the wait is over; Wacky Races fills the void in fine style. This is the first DC game to use cel-shading and the result is impressive. **Never has a 3D game ever looked so close to being hand-drawn.** Coupling the look with the music and voices of each character makes it feel like you're actually playing a cartoon. Unfortunately the racers seem to get confused sometimes and say they're in the lead when they're actually fighting for position in the middle of the pack. And that's something you'll see a lot of. The differences in each vehicle are negligible, so the entire pack stays together on each lap. The end result is more than a few infuriatingly close finishes. In fact, that's the game's biggest downfall: the irritation factor. After the first few events the game gets difficult to the point of being ridiculous. I could see that being OK if this was a hardcore simulator, but for a kart racer it's unforgivable. As you unlock more and more tracks, the events become things like collecting so Muttley statues and still finishing first. Considering how hard it is to finish first at all, these events border on the impossible. Sure, there are weapons and power-ups to help your cause, but they don't seem to have enough of an effect to really decide the outcome of a race. Unfortunately these few, important problems turn what could have been an exceptional racer into an OK one.

Greg

Who in the hell are these cartoon characters racing around in this game? I vaguely remember them from my childhood. Anyway, this has to be the most impressive-looking kart racing game I've ever seen—that is, if it consistently ran at 50-60 fps. The thing drops to a somewhat chunky framerate at times, making the nicely polished graphics lose some of their shine (and losing what little sense of speed the game had). It's hard not to love that cel-shading stuff though. Unfortunately, it's easy to hate awkward control that lacks technique. But all in all, thanks to its array of course and modes, it does a decent job at helping fill the kart-racing niche on the DC. **Shawn**

The warm and fuzzy ones fast and furious whenever I review a game rooted in childhood memories, but the nostalgia wore off quickly as it became apparent WR is basically a Mario Kart-style racer dressed up in 128-bit graphics. That's not a bad thing though, as **WR does a decent job of filling this niche for DC owners.** The DC still has the ability to dazzle and does here in bringing this 2D cartoon classic into a stunning 3D environment. The third dimension can sometimes become a problem however: in WR the computer players have an annoying habit of edging up from behind and blocking my view of my vehicle. Outside of that, a solid game for its genre. **Joe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	7	7	7



Aerowings 2

Publisher: Crave
Developer: CRI
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1-2
Supports: Jump Pack
Web Site: www.cravegames.com



On paper, Aerowings 2 packs the kind of stuff air-char jet jockies dream about: true-to-life flight dynamics, realistic control systems, plenty of zippy jets and the welcome addition of air-to-air combat. Console flight games rarely offer this level of realism. Unfortunately, AW2 just doesn't offer enough action, and **only the most hardcore would-be pilots will wanna play this thing more than a day.** You get 30 training missions that teach raw basics, formation flight and some nifty dogfight zig-zags. Eventually, you learn how to lock on to bogies with sidewinders and pound away with your cannon, but since these are all training missions, you never actually launch live missiles. Lame. In the 15 Tactical Challenges, however, you can cut loose with real guns—but only against balloon targets and a few enemy fighters. I was hoping for a full-on campaign mode with actual combat missions and some good ol' mud-moving air-to-ground attacks. Instead, the only real fun I had here was when Shawn and I tried to crash into each other in the two-player mode.

Crispin

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	5	4



Bust-A-Move 4

Publisher: Taito
Developer: Taito
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2
Supports: None
Web Site: None



A mark of a good puzzle game is the addiction factor—do you lose interest after a few sittings, or does the game seep into your system and not let go? The Bust-A-Move series has always fit into the latter category, and luckily for DC puzzle fanatics the latest version is no different. Almost every console has seen at least one iteration of the series, but the features of this DC version make it stand out: plenty of cutesy characters and levels, multiple modes of play, and a nifty Puzzle Editor. **The best new feature of BAM 4, however, is the combo system—going from one bubble length away from a loss to almost completely clearing out your board is quite the thrill.** It would have been nice to see some network support, though, as a game like this practically begs for it. Still, it's fun to play with a pal in the same room. It's hard to expect much from the graphics given the genre, but everything from the bubbles to the character sprites is sharp, bright and colorful. Bust-A-Move 4's gameplay is more of the same, but when it's this enjoyable, more is good.

Andrew

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	9



South Park Rally

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Tantalus Interactive
Featured In: EGM #132
Players: 1-4
Supports: Jump Pack
Web Site: www.acclaim.com



When a game completely sucks, the logical thing to do would be not to port it to another system—or at least make it better if you do. Apparently, Acclaim didn't buy into the whole logic thing after the N64 Rally, since they brought out an identical PS version a while back. And now we have this new Dreamcast version: **While the graphics are way better than any other SPR offering, the game is just as bad otherwise.** The courses are confusing (especially in multiplayer modes) and filled with unnecessary obstacles. Why exactly do the tracks need to double back and loop around as much as they do? It's just poor design. And really, that can be said for the whole rest of the game. It has a variety of modes, and interesting objectives within certain courses, but these are as cryptic and sloppy as everything else. Thankfully, a good portion of the South Park humor is in place (although sometimes forced). I can see why Matt Stone and Trey Parker were quoted in saying these SP games are terrible. If you want cart racing, go with Wacky Races instead.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	3	5



Toy Story 2

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Traveller's Tales
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2
Supports: Jump Pack
Web Site: www.activision.com



Has anything in this DC version of Toy Story 2 changed since it was released on the PS and N64 seven months ago? No—this is exactly the same game (sans Bandito). Sadly, the graphics in the DC version are tainted by the use of the same low-res textures from the PS one, making the game look **horribly tacky when it doesn't need to—and shouldn't be.** The graphics have been spruced up slightly by adding fog and a few lighting effects in some levels, making them seem "darker." The analog control is so touchy that it's nearly impossible to use effectively, and there's no option to adjust its sensitivity. I sometimes forgot to avoid the analog stick (partially because it's so natural just to go for it), which messed me up on more than one occasion. If the PlayStation2 hardware can clean up PlayStation 1 textures, I don't see why Traveller's Tales couldn't have gone in and smoothed some of these down so they didn't look so bad. Gameplay is average platform fare with the reward of clips from the film. If you've fan of the film and didn't play the PS version, go nuts.

Chris

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	7	6	3



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: HAL Laboratory Inc.
Featured In: EGM #131
Players: 1-4
Supports: Rumble Pak
Best Feature: Old-school 2D gameplay in 3D
Worst Feature: None
Web Site: www.nintendo.com



At a time when many companies are putting all their franchises into 3D, it's good to see one that remains firmly grounded in its 2D roots. I've always had a soft spot for the Kirby games, and this is one of his best adventures yet. As Congressmen hem and haw over how violent popular video games are, titles like this slip under the radar unnoticed—and that's a shame. It looks like a kid's game, but do not be fooled! It's easy enough to finish that kids will like it, but finding every crystal is challenging enough for experienced gamers to get something out of it too. Perhaps the best part of playing Kirby 64 is finding ways of combining enemy powers to use to your advantage. I could spend hours finding combinations that work best for each level. The Swiss Army Kirby and the two different lightsabers/swords he can wield are personal favorites. Despite its simplistic look, there's a lot to interact with in each environment. I didn't have much trouble beating any of the bosses except the last one (which took a while). Music...oh man, the music. You will not get the music out of your head easily. The tunes are too hummable and infectious—I love 'em. Grab a friend and play one of three hopelessly addictive mini-games. This is a must-have if you're a platform game fan, and one of the best I've played on a home system in a while. One of the first announced N64 games finally comes home four years later, and it's been worth the wait.

Chris

Kirby does most everything right: the graphics are simple, but bright, clean and very colorful. Gameplay is solid—tons of different abilities for Kirby to gather, a variety of huge levels and plenty of bosses. The little secrets, hidden crystals and special areas on some stages make a good case for replaying the game, and the mini-games are about Mario Party caliber (stupid fun). But there just isn't enough new or exciting, and the game's slower pace and low difficulty made it hard to stay interested after a while. Overall, I still think the Kirby series is underrated for its simple, addictive fun, but Kirby 64 in particular never had me dying to play more.

Mark

I have to tell you, Kirby is the absolute cutest little guy I've ever seen in the world of gaming. He's one of the few ridiculously wholesome-looking characters that still has an edge—and it shows through in this amazing new Kirby installment. Even with its cuteness and cartoon graphics, Kirby 64 is for anyone (male or female) who loves a solid platformer. It's filled with more fun gameplay than you can shake a stick at—just be careful not to accidentally skewer Kirby and start roaring him. The sheer number of things Kirby can change into, and the way these personas can be used against a particular enemy, or to find a hidden item is really entertaining.

Shawn



Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Sheffield House
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-4
Supports: None
Best Feature: Real courses
Worst Feature: Too hard to pick just one
Web Site: www.infogrames.com



Golf, when done right, can make for a downright addictive video game. I've sunk countless hours into Golden Tee (arcade), PGA Tour (Genesis), Hot Shots Golf (PSX) and, most recently, Mario Golf (N64). From the arcade to the sim-tastic, I've enjoyed all the great ones over the years. PGA European Tour is not a great one, nor is it even a good one. Like John Daly after a three-day bender, this game misses the cut by a long shot. Poor camera control prevents you from getting a good read on where your shots are going, which tends to be kind of important on the 'ol links. The game's graphics are putrid, consisting of blurry scenery and players who are almost entirely faceless. Also, in case you're considering a rental to beat the game, figure that you'll need about a week just to enter the Tour portion. That's right, you need to qualify through three different levels before you even begin the tour. I appreciate the realism, but I want to beat down those Euro-slobs as soon as possible. I did work my way up the charts eventually, but who cares? Those of you still considering this title probably want to know what the game does have, so here goes—full PGA European License, four authentic courses, all the requisite playing modes (four-ball, matchplay, etc.), and BBC-style commentary. Still, it's a very unimpressive experience that I wouldn't recommend. Save the 50 bucks and hit some real golf balls.

Dan

There's something strange about the graphics in this game. Yeah they're ugly, but ugly in way I've never seen before. During any kind of movement the golfers and greens seem to modulate at a high frequency. Or, it looks like you're seeing everything through heat vapor. In stark contrast, the bunkers are nothing more than beige blobs, no texture whatsoever. This is also the loneliest game I've ever experienced. As you play all you hear are birds, the wind, and an occasional smart-alec quip from commentator Peter Allis. The gameplay mechanics, physics and aesthetics are all average at best. Plus who knows half these European golf pros?

Dean

If Mario Golf is the Pebble Beach of N64 golf titles, ET is the strip of grass running between north- and south-bound lanes of a busy expressway. Everything about this game is subpar. The motion of the golfers has the fluidity of marionettes. Ball physics are so bad that when I lined up and took a perfect swing, the flight and trajectory of the ball were represented so poorly that I couldn't tell if the shot was good until I looked at the distance meter. The feel on the putting green is equally blunt—instead of trickling to a standstill my ball would just stop rolling abruptly. Even the license is weak as barely recognizable players bear only a slight resemblance to their real-life counterparts.

Joe



Publisher: Nintendo of America
Developer: Blizzard
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1-2
Supports: Expansion Pak, Rumble Pak
Best Feature: Best RTS console controls ever
Worst Feature: Slowdown
Web Site: www.nintendo.com



Console systems and real-time strategy games haven't been able to coexist very well, but I think that StarCraft 64 has finally found a formula to make them get along. I never thought it would happen, but I felt as comfortable playing StarCraft on the N64 as I did on the PC—and believe me, that is no small feat. The game hasn't been dumbed down to work with a console controller, but to tell you the truth, StarCraft isn't the most complex of real-time strategy games to begin with. In fact, it's actually reasonably simple to play—it's the battlefield chemistry between the three vastly different races that makes it complex. There are no intricate attack commands or high-brow strategic features—the popularity of this game comes from its compelling story line (which suffers a bit without speech—the whole plot unfolds through printed dialogue) and intuitive gameplay. SC 64 also comes complete with the "Brood War" expansion pack that continues the game's saga (albeit at a harder difficulty level) by adding roughly another 20 hours of gameplay. Suffice to say, you could waste your whole summer playing this. The only problem with the game is a surprising one—slowdown. When there's lots of units on screen (and with the Zerg there often is), the game bogs down, and it gets to be a problem in multiplayer. It's annoying, but it isn't the end of the world. Surprisingly enough, this is one of the year's best N64 games by far.

Kraig

Sure, this better-late-than-never PC port has a few things working against it: The interface takes a while to get used to, graphics drag during big busy battles and the two-player versus mode just ain't thrilling since each player can see what the other's up to. But StarCraft 64 delivers such a robust and satisfying single-player experience—not to mention an excellent two-player cooperative mode—that you'll overlook minor gripes. Actually, the control interface becomes almost fluidly once you get the hang of it (a task made easier by handy tutorials). SC64 really packs more missions and scenarios (StarCraft football?) than you'll ever need.

Crispin

You'd think a PC port of StarCraft would be a nightmare to play on the N64. It's not. Mass Media has done a great job of adapting the controls to that machine. Once you memorize the commands it becomes second nature to direct multiple actions. It's also nice that you can save at any time. Missions (50+) are entertaining and deep with strategy. If you're unfamiliar with the game you can still count on hours upon hours of quality play time. There are a few drawbacks however. Multiplayer battles are silly because your opponent sees exactly what you're doing. The graphics are a little chunky as well. Still, StarCraft 64 is worth the money.

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	8	8

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
2	2	2	2

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	9

SUPER RUNABOUT

SAN FRANCISCO EDITION

A



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Back up the cash by smashing through buildings and landmarks, over turning cable cars and taking out taxis.

Z

"...may just give the taxi boys a run for their money."
-Gamers Republic, April 2000

"Take the playability and polish of Crazy Taxi, throw in the seamy underbelly of GTA 2, then add a healthy dose of the interactive factor found in... Destruction Derby..."
-Official Sega Dreamcast Magazine, July/August 2000



www.interplay.com/superrunabout



Sega Dreamcast

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Fighter Destiny 2



Publisher: SouthPeak
Developer: Genki
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2
Supports: Rumble Pak
Web Site: www.southpeak.com

Best Feature: Unique point scoring system
Worst Feature: Unresponsive control

The N64 lacks more than just RPGs. Owners of the system have suffered a perpetual drought of quality fighting games (Super Smash Bros. notwithstanding). Fighter Destiny from Konami was the first to garner notable acclaim. Much like the first, the sequel features a point system in determining the winner of a match. For this, the game deserves some recognition—it's nice to see something unique in a maturing genre. Unfortunately, other aspects of the game are decidedly uninspired, most notably the character design (come on, a warrior from Japan named "Ninja?") The visuals, while looking reasonably adequate for a late-generation title, are hampered by a low framerate and the trademark N64 blurry texture. By itself, this isn't necessarily bad (Soul Blade for PlayStation had a low framerate as well), but when combined with unresponsive controls the game has an overall sluggish feel. In the end, **Fighter Destiny 2 just isn't very much fun to play.** Its innovative features are best left for a more powerful system.

Andrew

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	4	6	3

Rally Challenge 2000



Publisher: SouthPeak
Developer: Xicat Interactive
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1-4
Supports: Rumble Pak
Web Site: www.southpeak.com

Best Feature: Race options
Worst Feature: Graphics, especially in the multiplayer modes

In my role as a reviewer here at EGM, I've played quite a few games—some of which have been racing games. I've worked my way through some real gems and others that are best left on the retail shelf. RC 2000 is one of those titles. No matter how well I performed on a particular course, I couldn't place above fifth. It doesn't make sense. I tried different cars, different driving techniques—even a different controller—but just couldn't make my way to the front of the pack. I don't suck at playing games, do I? I blame the game. The control certainly may have had something to do with it, as it's awkward and doesn't give the kind of "rally" feel I've come to expect from such games. Courses are rather short as well, with sparse scenery. Outside of this, the graphics (especially that silly motion blur) and overall feel of the game is like something that should've come out within the first year or two of the N64's launch. With all of the above-average N64 racers that have come out before it, it's strange RC 2000 doesn't look and play better. It's unfortunate.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	4	3	5

Bust A Groove 2



Publisher: Enix
Developer: Metro
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Some cool level effects
Worst Feature: Music isn't very good
Web Site: www.enix.com

To make a music game feel complete, the music has to be good (duh). The first game had memorable tunes like "The Natural Playboy," Kitty N's theme, and "Flyin' to Your Soul." This has no standout tunes. I can't understand why Enix did not stick with dance music label Avex Trax for the music. This stuff is not nearly as danceable. The first game's character designs were great—cartoony yet realistic. This feels too plastic and too stylized to me. Returning characters don't have the same attitude they once did. The environments you dance in are all really well-done and have special effects that pop open as you dance. If you mastered the first game, you'll have no trouble breezing through this one quickly, opening all the secret characters along the way. The only way I can think of to make this game more difficult is to use one of the many third party dance pads to control the game with your feet. And there's no reason to play through it with every character since none of the characters have ending movies. Two-player battles quickly turn into who can do every step perfectly, as it's too easy to dodge attacks and not easy enough to "reflect them" (an addition for this sequel). Music games like PaRappa, Llammy and Konami's DDR games all get more difficult as you progress through the stages, but BAG2 doesn't. This is a good one-night-stander but **sadly isn't much improved from the first game.**

Chris

The return of some great characters and the addition of some graphically impressive backgrounds can't help the fact that **Bust A Groove 2's music leaves far too much to be desired.** The original game's music was superb, but the tunes here fall completely flat, and it has nothing to do with the broken English lyrics. The music just ain't good. In fact, neither are the new characters. Shorty, Heck, Kitty N, et al had style; the new characters in BAG2 are simply boring. The dance engine itself, though sporting more options, seems limited as well. Unfortunately Bust A Groove 2 is useful as little more than a short diversion. Translation: rental.

Greg

I loved the first BAG, and the sequel certainly isn't bad, but I can't help feeling disappointed. In most ways it's identical to the first game—a few minor game-play tweaks (the motions darkening as you press them is nice), and the graphics and animation are fine but not much of an improvement. So what it comes down to are the characters and the music. **The new dancers are, how should I put it...lame.** The music isn't bad—a wide variety of styles and a few catchy tunes—but nowhere near the overall quality of the first game. No tracks crawl into your head and stay there for weeks. Not a step forward in terms of quality, but worth it for big fans of the genre.

Mark

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	5	6

Indy Racing 2000



Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Paradigm Ent. Inc.
Featured In: EGM #132
Players: 1-4
Supports: Rumble Pak
Web Site: Infogrames.com

Best Feature: Fast and fun racing gameplay
Worst Feature: The graphics are slightly blurry

Indy 2000 is to IRL racing as Daytona USA is to real NASCAR. The control is overly sensitive, the cars slide like mad and the graphics are dark and slightly blurry. **But, as a diversion that's heavy on arcade driving and adrenaline-fueled gameplay, it's right on target.** The vehicles behave more like dirt track machines than the ultra-precise, road-hugging machines they're modeled after. So if you're expecting a stodgy, Formula One driving experience (like Paradigm has given us in the past), forget it. For my money this is the way a racing game ought to be. Screw the overblown attention to detail. Give me some good tracks, a greeasy-fat framerate and edge-of-your-seat racing gameplay and I'm happy. That's exactly what Indy 2000 delivers. Other things I like include a draft meter which lets you suck off a car's wind stream then shoot by like a slingshot. Another cool option lets you gain experience by graduating through the ranks of Midget, Sprint and Formula cars. The fast and furious gameplay and decent challenge make this one worth the money.

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	8	7	8

Iron Soldier 3



Publisher: Vatical
Developer: Eclipse Software
Featured In: EGM #125
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.vatical.com

Best Feature: Two-player cooperative mode
Worst Feature: Some missions too darn frustrating

If nothing else, Iron Soldier 3 will go down in history for packing more pointless FMV than any game ever. Movies play before and after every battle, when your mech keels over, during the Title Screen, on and on and on. (The developers musta got a deal on surplus CG flicks.) If only the actual game here deserved all those decent-at-the-time Iron Soldier games on the failed jaunt, **you'll find IS3 to be about as average as games get.** Visually, it's pretty bland—even with the extra-chunky explosions made famous in the two prequels. The first of IS3's 25 missions are more frustrating than fun—mainly because you start the game with crap weapons. You do get some nifty big guns later on, cool stuff like cruise missiles you can guide Gulf War-style right into enemy mechs' fannies when they're not looking. And the two-player cooperative mode is both novel and nifty; one of you drives the robot while the other aims and shoots buddies. That nifty feature alone knocks IS3's score past the average mark, but not by much.

Crispin

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	4	3

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Chrono Cross



The massive scale of some bosses is staggering. Everything in the picture on the left is being rendered in real time by the PS, and it animates beautifully. And let's not forget the kick-ass special effects.



Square may have become its own worst enemy. As it stands, this is the one RPG that could steal Final Fantasy IX's thunder later this year. **Chrono Cross is a masterpiece, plain and simple.** This game introduces you to a world with two possible futures, both tragic in their own way. The result is a superb story line weaved around different time periods and fates. I particularly like the unique battle system in CC. There is no magic, but rather the ability to use different colored elementals once each during any fight. Opposite colors are more effective against one another, as are people with opposite innate colors. Of course, people who are innately red do best with red elementals, etc. On top of that is the "field effect" during battle. As elementals are used, the field becomes endowed with the same color: Turn the entire field a certain color and like-colored elementals are more effective, opposite-colored less. It all seems confusing at first but after a couple of hours becomes intuitive, proving that games don't have to be as cumbersome as Vagrant Story or FVIII to have depth. Graphically, the best thing I can say about CC is that we ran it on a PS2 with texture smoothing on and the characters looked no better than before. That in itself should tell you how good the models and colors are. And like Vagrant Story, true completists will find themselves playing CC over and over again to unlock all its secrets.

Greg

Yes, I barely played the original Chrono Trigger (and yes, I'm ashamed), but the fact is you don't need to in order to fully enjoy Chrono Cross. **There just isn't a weak link to this game.** The translation is top-notch (complete with events and humor). The sound effects are crisp and visceral, and the music inspired. And the battle system? Totally unique, strategic but never cumbersome; in a word: genius. Graphically no game looks like it—not only is every location, character, and monster lovingly rendered and expertly textured, but the whole game has a bright, colorful style that makes me notice how drab and cold even some of my favorite RPGs have been.

Mark

As an ardent fan of the original Chrono Trigger (it's my favorite RPG of all time), I had nothing but the very highest expectations for Chrono Cross. So it shouldn't be taken lightly when I say that the game completely blew me away. Chrono Cross is beyond incredible. The graphics? Stellar—the best I've seen in an RPG so far. The music? One of the finest game compositions ever. The gameplay? Never before have I played an RPG as deep as this. There is just so much to do. The elements system and everything involved with it is pure genius. Next to the original, Chrono Cross now stands as my second favorite RPG of all time. **EGM readers: Buy this game!**

Sam

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	10	9	8

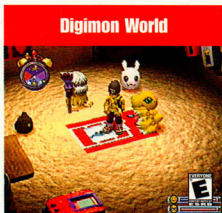
Publisher: Square EA
Developer: Squaresoft
Featured In: EGM #123
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Stunning music
Worst Feature: The game ends
Web Site: www.sqaqa.com



The quality CG cinemas we expect from Squaresoft drive the dramatic story. Here, Kid and Serge share a moment...

especially Kid and Harle, simply read horribly. Broken English and poor French don't make for an enjoyable reading experience. However, the characters are well-developed and very likable right off the bat. Not surprising, since Square's the master of good character development. Another thing they excel at is creating the tortured villain—one who, in his own mind, is just in attaining his goals. Chrono Cross' Lynx is no exception. But it's the time-travel aspect that really makes this game stand out from the crowd. You can never get lost in Chrono Cross, because getting lost always means it's time to visit the alternate dimension (which you can normally do on a whim). It's almost eerie to watch a rich character's alternate-dimension-ego suffer from poverty or disease in another time. It draws the worlds together over the span of 35-plus hours in a way no other RPG has done before. Chrono Cross is one of the last great RPGs on the PlayStation. Much like their Super NES days, Square's going out on the PS with a bang!





Publisher: Bandai
Developer: Bandai
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Tamagotchi-esque breeding
Most Feature: No analog control
Web Site: www.bandai.com

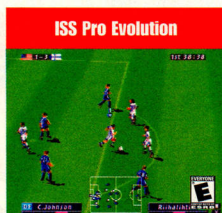


I liked Tamagotchis when they came over from Japan, so it's not so much of a surprise to me that I enjoyed this monster-raising game. Digimon World takes the Tamagotchi theme and, using pre-rendered backgrounds and polygonal characters, makes an RPG out of it. Thrust into the world of File City, your character must save the world (naturally), using his collection of digital monsters. Anyone familiar with the Digimon roster will find all their familiar favorites here, which is great for fans. Depending on how you raise, train and treat your Digimon, it may grow up to be an attentive, well-trained servant or a bratty, spoiled whiner. It's taken Bandai long enough to get Digimon World here, as this game is almost two years old, and it does show its age in terms of aesthetics, but that doesn't detract from the fun quotient at all. There are tons of Digimon to find and train, and the interface is clean and simple. It was a little slow at times, but I didn't mind the shortcomings so much because I love the character designs (like Angemon and Garurumon), and especially cute lil' Potamon) and found the theme of raising critters rewarding. **The lack of analog control is unfortunate though,** as the D-pad makes this a bit of a thumb-buster, but DigiManiacs certainly won't mind. Fans and other junior monster-breeders sick of Nintendo's critters will find an edgier alternative here. I find it an endearing RPG-lite. **Milkman**

Does your existence revolve around watching the Digimon TV show, collecting the figures and playing the card game? If so, maybe you'll be able to overlook all of this game's shortcomings. But if you could care less about the care and pampering of digital monsters, then forget this one. **It's Tamagotchi with battles.** Graphics? What graphics? While not the worst I've seen, they're nothing to get excited over. Gameplay isn't nearly as deep or involving as Pokémon and the load times are ridiculous—it takes forever to go from area to area and begin battles. Two years ago this might've been a decent PlayStation game. **Chris**

Unless you're a Digimon freak of the highest proportion, **the only endearing aspect of this game is the novelty of having monsters take a poop on screen** once in a while. Otherwise, the characters are uninteresting, the game's pace is slow and the battle system...my god. What did I do to deserve this? You have almost zero control over combat once it begins. While you can give them the odd general order once in a while, you'll mostly be watching the screen helplessly. Unfortunately, too many of the battles break down to what looks like a staring contest between your Digimon and its attacker. The translation is superb as well. Avoid this junk. **Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	3	3	2



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock, Analog
Best Feature: Spiffy graphics and animation
Most Feature: Automatic player switching
Web Site: www.konami.com



I'll be the first to pay homage to the ISS Soccer line—I've loved every edition from way back. Unfortunately my sweet feelings have ended with ISS Pro. It's not a bad game by any means but let me get this off my chest—**soccer games should never use automatic player switching!** For some reason they've implemented this frustrating feature in Pro Evolution. It does a number on control and makes you not want to slide-tackle or perform any aggressive moves. Why is that? Say you're on defense, you're charging the ball-handler like the madman you are. You decide to slide-tackle. But wait! The instant before you hit the button the computer switches your control to the next defender. Now you've sprayed that man on the ground with your misapportioned tackle move. The ball-handler simply trots around him and makes a bee-line for the goal. There is a manual player-switch option, but with no way to disable the autowitching, it only makes things even more crazy. If you can adjust the way you've played soccer games for years to this "quadrant" player-switching, and you don't mind the lack of some licenses—you're golden. The animation is wonderful, the graphics, while not as eye-catching as years past, are great as well. Passing is intuitive but I could do without all the intercepted balls. I won't tell you to avoid this game but be forewarned. Automatic player switching dictates you play in a very awkward style. **Dean**

I love the fact developers can still make games on the PlayStation that look really sharp. Granted, the PS can't compare to the Dreamcast or the upcoming PS2, but it sure can hold its own, and ISS is a perfect example. Even with the slight jaggies found on the players and other graphics in the game, the polygon models and animation are fantastic. I also like the nice use of lighting in the night games. As far as the gameplay goes, **the automatic player selection is the only problem I could find.** Sometimes a player was selected I didn't want, or it'd switch around too fast leaving the player standing still for a moment. **Shawn**

In the past ISS has arguably been the best playing soccer game, and the same holds true this year. ISS is a perfect blend of realism and solid gameplay. The control is responsive and intuitive and while the graphics won't blow you away, they're smoothly animated and nothing to thumb your nose at. The Achilles' Heel of the franchise has always been its lack of big-name licenses, and that's turned off some sports fans. It will get that, under the name ESPN Game Night, which is coming out soon. **I don't know why Konami has released this game when they have Game Night on the way.** Unless you need soccer now I would hold out for that one. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	7	8



Publisher: Tecmo
Developer: Tecmo
Featured In: EGM #123
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Random monster generator using CD
Most Feature: Repetitive gameplay
Web Site: www.tecmoinc.com



The Monster Rancher series has always been the excellent alternative to Pokémon. While this has less to do with collecting than it does raising and breeding, the anime-style similarities are too significant to ignore. Monster Rancher Battle Card Episode II (Episode One is the Game Boy Color game), adopts the Magic the Gathering-style card collecting craze and welds it on Suezoo and company. As always with the Monster Rancher series, your CD collection comes into play, as the game reads your CDs to generate monsters. You pick from five different cards at a time, with any unused cards adding to your GUTS level. GUTS points are basically attack points culled together, and various attacks or defensive moves cost varying amounts. While the translation is stiff and spoken in a deadpan, literal tone, **the game is surprisingly deep, offering some rich strategy and plenty of replay value.** It can get tough sometimes, though, and you had better learn the rules well if you plan on beating the latter parts of the game. On the downside, unlike Monster Rancher 1 and 2, Battle Card ditched the endearing 2D character models for faster-loading 2D bitmaps, which look fine but offer little in the way of animation and special effects. Anyone looking for eye-candy will be sorely disappointed. Still, what do you expect from this genre? If card-battle games are your thing, Monster Rancher BCE:II will satisfy. **Milkman**

I didn't like the Pokémon card battle game, but games like this and SHK's Card Fighters' Clash have made me reconsider my hatred of card games. Deck management is more intuitive and it's a lot easier for the beginner to get into than Pokémon. The battle system here is cleaner and more logical as well. Too bad it suffers from the same dry, boring English translation that most Tecmo games do with frequently misspelled words, awkward sentences and card descriptions that often don't make any sense. The two-player mode is disappointing, an area where it could've excelled. A solid one-player trading card game, but nothing special. **Chris**

The problem I have with most card battle games is the amount of stupid rules that do nothing but bog things down in micromanagement. Thankfully, Monster Rancher isn't like that. In fact, it's almost simple to a fault. **I had a handle on the battle system within the first five minutes** and never looked back. However, one of the catches that really bugs me is this: Since you can only use one team of three monsters at any given time, why can't you have the same monster set for multiple teams? It's not like they conflict. Anyway, Battle Card is a simple game with mostly decent mechanics, but feels like it belongs on the GBC, not the PlayStation. **Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	6

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Directions. Follow the directions below to fill in the puzzle. Check the boxes on the entry form to specify the contests you are entering. Add up the entry fees and send that amount with the entry form to the address below. Remember, you can't win if you don't enter. Only one entry per person. Prize totals are described below puzzle. **ALL ENTRY FEES MUST BE PAID IN US FUNDS ONLY. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT CANADIAN CHECKS. 80 entries must be post marked by Oct 25, 2000.**

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- WORLD - U WATER - T
- SPACE - W COAST - A
- HAPPY - O FIELD - B
- SHARE - Z BLADE - D

DIRECTIONS

Fill in the puzzle with the correct words going across. Transfer each word's corresponding letter to the line at the end. This should spell the secret word going down.

HINT: Read the secret word clue.

		T			
H					
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		S			
				L	

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NCAA Football 2001



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Electronic Arts
Featured In: EGM #333
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock, Multi-tap
Best Feature: Still a very competent sim
Worst Feature: Not much different than last edition
Web Site: www.ea.com



I truly love EA's NCAA Football series. I look forward to each new edition with the fervor of a child on Christmas morning. I even prefer it over Madden if you can believe that. That's why it's hard for me to report NCAA 2001 [s...sob, weep] only slightly changed from last year. But, keep in mind "99 percent changed" for **NCAA is still better than 99 percent of football games**. It seems like EA has this niche-avor on cruise control. No doubt they're focussing on the forthcoming PS2 version (they better hell). Outside of a few tweaks and upgrades it's a clone of NCAA 2000. One new feature is the Advanced Player Control option. This lets you control any player (on offense) rather than just the ball handler. It's fun, especially when you play as a receiver. Run for the open flat and call for the ball by raising your arm. If you're open the quarterback will toss it your way. Other additions include a slightly deeper Dynasty mode (new BCS poll and junior college transfers), the option to name your players, and a momentum meter. It's also evident the AI is better. I couldn't pull off my favorite movie plays as frequently. Strangely there are a few bugs. Refs get knocked down constantly, players get tangled too often and occasionally the collision detection breaks down. I still love the game but unless you're a hardcore NCAA nut like me you won't miss a lot if you pass on 2001 (assuming you already own NCAA 2000).

Dean

This annual offering from EA Sports is so much like last year's (the reference standard for 32-bit football) that I had to go back and play the old one to inspect the differences between the two. I'm pleased to report that **EA has done a good job of keeping the things that made NCAA 2000 a hallmark** (particularly the rock-solid gameplay), and ironing out the few kinks in last year's code. While the new additions like extended custom-team selections and expanded dynasty mode aren't anything revolutionary, they accomplish enough collectively to validate this new edition and perhaps provide a glimpse into EA's online plans for the new consoles.

Joe

After playing the previewable version of Madden NFL 2001, I really noticed how little effort goes into EA's NCAA Football series. This is essentially the same game that we've been playing for the past few years, and while that was good enough then, it isn't now. I realize that EA wants to make this game look and play differently as well as Madden, but it should at least look and play just as well. NCAA does have a legendary amount of features—more than you could ever want, but it really doesn't matter. Why use new features on the same old game? I realize some of you need your college fix, or if you just want a football game, wait for something else.

Kralg

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	8



Valkyrie Profile



Publisher: Enix
Developer: tri-Ace
Featured In: EGM #333
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Battle system, beautiful graphics
Worst Feature: Sometimes a little monotonous
Web Site: www.enix.com



This is a great first step as Enix's first self-published RPG in the U.S. since the Super NES days. The story closely follows Norse mythology, all the way down to place and character names. The richly detailed, hand-drawn 2D graphics and animation match the attention to detail and accuracy in its storytelling. Depending on your actions there are three different endings to the game. Dungeons are entirely 2D, but are multi-layered, giving them a 3D feel. But what makes this such an excellent game is the innovative battle system. Timing is everything—each character is assigned a button, and you have to time it so your party members hit enemies together for the maximum effect. Hitting their buttons at different times or orders affect how much damage you do, so you've got to develop the right timing. Build up enough hits and you can perform special finishing attacks. Unlike Final Fantasy and many other RPGs, you can't go through the game without managing every aspect of your characters. You have to distribute a lot of the extra experience points you get amongst the characters yourself. Enix did a fantastic job with the English translation too. At first, the voiced dialogue seems a tad cheesy, but it gets better as the game progresses. Plus, there are a few familiar voices from the Pokémon TV show and the U.S. Metal Gear Solid. **Close behind Vagrant Story for the best RPG I've played this year.**

Chris

Valkyrie Profile dishes out the most novel RPG experience this side of Panzer Dragon Saga. Along with the amazing visuals and swelling soundtrack, you get a character-development as deep as previous tri-Ace title Star Ocean. You can build dozens of items and weapons, and **combat is—gasp!—actually fun**. Well, most of the time. Battles often require you to experiment with combos to topple certain enemies, although you still tap, tap, tap your way through fights with weaker foes. The story is hard to follow at first. Stick with it. The Norse theme here is bold new territory for an RPG. And I always thought Ragnarok was just the title of a GWAR album.

Crispin

This is what games would be like nowadays had the 3D revolution never started. Valkyrie Profile is refreshing in a genre that's otherwise crowded by very few bonafide classics and tons of me-too wannabes. While the breathtaking sprite-based graphics immediately make this game stand out, it's once you start to understand the unique fighting system that the true beauty of VP becomes apparent. **While everyone else is trying to copy Square, tri-Ace succeeds by being original.** That's a lesson other developers would do well to learn. Although the learning curve is pretty steep, this game is an enjoyable experience from start to finish.

Grog

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	9	7

X-Men: Mutant Academy



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Paradox Entertainment
Featured In: EGM #330
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Great for fans
Worst Feature: Lame AI/combos
Web Site: www.activision.com



This is interesting. Scheduled to come out just in time for the movie, X-Men: Mutant Academy is an X-Men fan's dream come true. Featuring all the characters found in the movie, it features some nice 3D characters and backgrounds, non-embarrassing vocal samples, responsive controls and a wealth of X-Men-related paraphernalia to unlock by beating the game. It also offers a neat-o take on the typical training mode by offering the "Academy Mode," set in the Danger Room where you learn your character's techniques. A Cerebro Mode contains all the sketches, CG renders, intro movies, and even the theatrical trailer from the X-Men movie. The usual survival modes and versus modes abound, and the game makes good use of the Thrill Kill/Wu-Tang graphics engine. So what's the problem? Well for one thing, the game doesn't let you move in 3D, only left and right. That would be permissible, since it just plays like a 2D fighter, but there just isn't enough to it—the fighting system is incredibly basic. And **while the game has responsive controls, the enemy AI is surprisingly dimwitted**. It was able to juggle Gambit, Cyclops and others, in the corner, using only Beast's strong uppercut, pressing only one button. Other simple routines will see you to the end just as easily. For fans, this is a keeper, for everyone else, XM:AA is a short-lived button-masher. Hardcore fighting game fans will be disappointed.

Milkman

After seeing the X-Men so many times in the Capcom versus fighting games—looking just like their comic book selves in 2D with silky-smooth animation—they look pretty horrible here in semi-clunky polygons. This is not the best-looking game in terms of graphics and effects, and let's admit it—that's an important part of any fighting game. Gameplay-wise Mutant Academy fares better, but not great: There's enough characters, moves and special attacks to keep it fun against friends for a bit, but **after extended play or against the CPU it gets dull**. Nothing special, but if you're a fan who needs more after seeing the movie 10 times, this'll work.

Mark

As far as "third-party" fighting games go (games out of the Namco and Capcom camps), Mutant Academy is damned amazing—especially considering it's part of a big movie license. In fact, I had more fun with Mutant Academy than I've had with some of the recent Street Fighter games. Granted, the game isn't as deep as Soul Calibur or the Alpha games, but its fighting system can stand on its own. The interesting combo and counter system, plus an imaginative series of power-up attacks and a decent amount of secret stuff to open is all included. And I don't know about you, but I've always enjoyed knocking ass with Wolverine in a vid game.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	7

ESRB Rating System: www.esrb.com



EARLY CHILDHOOD RATING: Deemed Suitable For Children 3 Or Older. Products Carrying This Label Have Absolutely No Material That Would Be Considered Inappropriate By Parents.



EVERYONE RATING: The E Replaced The Previous K-A Rating Last Year. Suitable For Kids Ages 6 And Up, E-Rated Games May Contain Minimal Violence Or Crude Language.



TEEN RATING: Contains Suggestive Themes, Mild Or Strong Language And Animated Violence. Some Parents May Want To Supervise Children Playing T-Rated Games.



MATURE RATING: These Games Contain More Adult Themes, Such As Blood And Gore, Stronger Language And Sexual Themes. Deemed Not Suitable For Those Under 17.



ADULTS ONLY RATING: The Extreme Of The Ratings, Suitable For Adults Only. Packs Sexual Themes And Extreme Violence. Console Manufacturers Have Yet To Allow An AO-Rated Game.





Crystalis

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo/SNK
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1
Supports: None
Best Feature: Graphics
Worst Feature: Aggravating play mechanics
Web Site: www.nintendo.com

Every time Nintendo releases one of these GBC conversions of a NES classic it's exciting. Originally developed by SNK (may they rest in peace), Crystalis was one of the best, most underrated games on the classic system, so it's great to see it hit Nintendo's handheld wonder. Much like Bionic Commando, it's been reworked both to take advantage of the tiny screen and to make the plot flow a little better. But here's the bad news: While both adjustments, for the most part, worked, they could have used a little more tweaking before Nintendo pushed this one out the door. First of all, the game scrolls so quickly that it's far too easy to run into your enemies before you actually see them, something that gets annoying really quickly. **Crystalis also feels like it was never tested enough after the reworked plot was in place,** as many times you find yourself wandering aimlessly until you mistakenly stumble upon the clue to your next objective. And it's annoying how you have to build your hero's levels for hours at a time. When I first started playing Crystalis the nice graphics and variety of weapons, items and magic made me think I was playing an above-par action/RPG for the system. Unfortunately, playing for a few hours more brought me to the realization that the variety and balance needed for a game like this to succeed just weren't there. Adventure lovers may enjoy this, but it doesn't hold a candle to Zelda.

Greg

OK, so it isn't exactly Zelda DX, but Crystalis offers solid action-RPG gameplay that's hard to find even on the big consoles. Combat does get a little annoying; enemies sometimes swarm you, and the spotty collision detection helps 'em score cheap hits. Your best off keeping your distance and blasting badies with your sword's charge-up projectile attacks. The story here moves along at a decent pace; NPCs give you new quests—and items to complete current ones—all the time. I had to do a bit of blind wandering later in the game to solve certain quests (more hints would be nice), but otherwise Crystalis suffers from only a few dull moments.

Crispin

First off, Crystalis is a solid, old-school RPG well-suited for the GBC. Although, I didn't like the way enemies hit me when I didn't seem close enough to be hit. And they didn't drop much money either, which made buying pricey items a pain. But aside from this stuff, the game is quite fun. One thing that's not really the game's fault: I find it really tedious playing RPGs on a screen the size of my palm. I'd much rather play the thing on a TV, so I can sit back and enjoy Crystalis in all of its 2D glory. So in that respect, fancy enhancements or not, I personally wouldn't buy this game. But if you don't mind RPGs on the tiny screen for hours at a time, go for it.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	3

1942

Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Digital Eclipse
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1
Supports: None
Web Site: www.capcom.com

Best Feature: Old-school vertical shooter
Worst Feature: Horrible, horrible "music"

Capcom's vintage vertical shooter is the latest in a string of classic games to be remade for the Game Boy Color. 1942 is a direct translation of the NES version, which in turn was a direct translation of the original arcade title. What's unfortunate about this remake is that **Capcom neglected to add or enhance 1942 in any meaningful way.** In fact, the addition of a password system removes a lot of the challenge (as does unlimited continues). Since a new password is issued every four levels, and the levels themselves don't get much harder throughout the game, getting to the last level isn't that formidable of a task. Graphically, it's pretty much what you'd expect of a port of such an old game, and since it's an almost-direct translation of an NES game, you'll want to turn the music off (unless you enjoy random high-pitched beeping intermixed with equally random tinny drum beats). Still, it's a solid old-school shooter with a lot of replay value if you want to just zone out. The sentimental value just might not be enough to warrant a purchase.

Andrew

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	1	5	7

All-Star Baseball 2001

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Knowledge
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1
Supports: None
Web Site: www.acclaim.com

Best Feature: Simple, yet still fun
Worst Feature: No multiplayer

In a way, All-Star Baseball 2001 on the Game Boy delivers something that I have really missed in sports video games—**simple gameplay that is mindless and fun to play.** ASB doesn't have fancy 3D graphics, it doesn't have 500 motion-captured animations, but it still works as a simple game where you try to hit and catch the ball and score more than the other guy. It's the sort of thing that is perfect when you're on the road. And even if you're into simulation-style sports, you won't be totally turned off by this game. ASB has plenty of features on and off the field—you can pick the speed and location of your pitches, intentionally walk and do lineup changes, complete with warming up your pitchers; it just isn't as complicated as the stuff we've gotten used to. There's also a robust slate of modes like a Home Run Derby, All-Star game and even batting practice. The big drawback for ASB is no multiplayer mode. And while it's always difficult to play anything via link cable, it makes any sports game only half as fun as it should be.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	5	7

Wacky Races

Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Infogrames
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1
Supports: None
Web Site: www.infogrames.com

Best Feature: Smooth 3D scrolling on the GBC
Worst Feature: The whole experience is far too brief

Racing games have never been the Game Boy's forte, so it's always with apprehension that I try out the latest in the genre. Luckily Wacky Races does just about everything right. **The 3D scrolling is the best I've seen on the GBC—**fast and smooth, with a decent smattering of obstacles and roadside objects. The racers themselves are well drawn, though simplistic, and animate as well as can be expected. The entire game represents the cartoon very well, though the racing engine itself could be applied to just about any license. By finishing each cup in the game with multiple characters players can unlock a myriad of new vehicles. Each one has unique handling aspects and advantages regarding weapon collection. That's right, Wacky Races is a weapons-based racer, and in order to win you will have to take down your opponents' with extreme prejudice. Unfortunately this game doesn't have very long legs. With no link feature, once you've finished collecting all the characters there's little to nothing left to accomplish. Oh well, it's fun while it lasts.

Greg

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	7	6

X-Men: Mutant Academy

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Crawford
Featured In: EGM #134
Players: 1-2
Supports: Link Cable
Web Site: www.activision.com

Best Feature: Graphics
Worst Feature: Way way way too simple

X-Men is a perfect example of why game companies shouldn't even bother bringing out a GBC version of a proper home system title. Apparently, these games sell well even though we try to warn you about them. At best, this sorry excuse for a fighting game is the next generation of Tiger handbells. **There were times when I could smash on the buttons without even looking at the screen and win a fight—**seriously. Not exactly what I call technique. Just imagine how easy it was when I was looking at the screen. Well, believe it or not, it got easier. Each character has a power-up move that builds up as you punch and kick. This special move can take most if not all of your opponent's health bar. Valid! Another round won. True, this special doesn't connect every time it's thrown, but it lands more often than not. I'd say this was a kid's game, but I don't think most little ones will find this thing very fun. So does it have any redeeming qualities? The graphics are decent, and you can open up secret characters by finishing the game. Not near enough to redeem it.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	2	4



Tricks of the Trade

By Trickman Terry
tricks@ziffdavis.com

TRICK OF THE MONTH

Grand Theft Auto 2

For Broadcast: Incredible Cheats

On the Main Menu Screen, choose "Play" and then at the next menu, move up to the player name and change it to one of the following names to unlock these cheats as shown.

Invincibility

Change the name to INFINITY.

99 Lives

Change the name to BIGCATS.

Every Weapon

Change the name to BIGGUNS.

Level Select

Change the name to SESAME.

HEY, WANNA WIN FREE STUFF?

If your trick is selected as Trick of the Month, you will win a free GameShark provided by InterAct, and a Pro Stick, or a Hyper4, or WiFer controller from Fire International. If you get credit for submitting a hot trick in this section, you will win a free game. See page 129 for rules.

Send your best tricks, codes, Web sites, anything that can help make games more fun or interesting to:

Notes: If you send your trick by e-mail, you must include your real name and address.

Tricks of the Trade

P.O. Box 3338

Oak Brook IL

60522-3338

or send e-mail to:

tricks@ziffdavis.com



4 Wheel Thunder

Super Start

1 When you begin your race, wait for the countdown to reach "Go." As soon as this appears, press L-Trigger+A at the same time. You'll get a boosted start and a four-second boost as well.

Clean Pause

While the game is paused, press Y+X simultaneously to get rid of the text and see a clean action shot of your current game.

2 Infinite Slot Machine Retries

Once you finish a race, save your game. You may be awarded with a slot machine jackpot bonus game after the race. If you do poorly on the slots or want to try it again, just load up your saved game and the slot machine will be available to play once again.

Dead or Alive 2

Uncut Demos

1 On the Mode Select Screen, choose Option. On the "Option" Screen, choose Game Setting. From "Game Setting" choose



Others.

On the "Other Setting" Screen, change Your Age to a number higher than 21 (99 is optimal). Now go back to the Mode Select Screen and pick Survival Mode. Play through this mode until you get onto the top 10 ranking list and put in your name as REALDEMO. Now go back to the Title Screen and wait until the demo starts. You will then see the uncut demo with one of the scenes showing Kasumi in her birthday suit, lying in a gelatin-like substance.

Rainbow Six

Incredible Codes

In the middle of your game, press the following buttons to activate these special modes in the game. You'll hear a noise and see text on the left side of the screen to confirm that they worked. To turn off any of the codes, just enter them again. Note: Don't pause the game before entering these!

Avatar God

Simultaneously press Up on the Analog Stick, Down on the D-Pad and A button. Your charac-



ter becomes invincible, but the rest of your team won't be affected.

Team God

Simultaneously press Left on the Analog Stick, Down on the D-Pad and A button to gain invincibility for everyone on your team.

1 Big Heads

Simultaneously press Up on the Analog Stick Up, Down on the D-Pad, and X button.

Humongous Heads

Simultaneously press Left on the Analog Stick, Down on the D-Pad, and X button.

Paika

Simultaneously press Down on the Analog Stick, Down on the D-Pad, and X button.

2 Heavy Breathing

Simultaneously press Down on the Analog Stick, Down on the D-Pad, and A button.

Sonny

Simultaneously press Left on the Analog Stick, Down on the D-Pad, and Y button.

Brains

Simultaneously press Up on the Analog Stick, Down on the D-Pad, and Y button.

Side Scroller

Simultaneously press Down on the Analog Stick, Down on the D-Pad, and Y button.

Clothopper

Simultaneously press Left on the Analog Stick, Down on the D-Pad, and B button.

Rule

Simultaneously press Down on the Analog Stick, Down on the

The PERFECT DARK insider

Your monthly source for anything and everything Perfect Dark

PERFECT DRINK

That's right, it's EGM's very own Perfect Dark drinking game! This game makes use of those pesky awards you receive at the end of multiplayer games; just use the following chart along with



One...more...game...

some cheap beer (kids under 21 just drink grape juice or something).

2 drink = 2 big swig from the can or bottle

Most Deadly - Cool Good work. Distribute four drinks among any of the players (even some to yourself if you want, you bad manba jamba!).

Most Harmless - Pathetic. Have one drink per player. And use a straw, you loser.

Most Professional - Quite the sniper. Shoot three drinks to the player of your choice.

Most Cowardly - Try to run from this, you damn coward. Have three drinks.

Most Honorable - Never shoot anyone in the back? How sweet. So tell someone to their face they need to take one drink.

Most Dishonorable - Poppin' a cap in someone's back? Good for you! Sneak someone over two drinks and then have one for yourself. Cheers!

Longest Life - You know how to make things last. You can decline any two drinks other players give you.

Shortest Life - Since your body in the game doesn't last long, your brain in real life shouldn't either. Take five drinks quick, mate man.

Most Frantic - Always on the move, big guy! Move yourself to your glass and have two drinks.

Most Scandalous - Kill off those brain cells, suicide king. Five drinks!

Best Protected - Shield yourself from a bang-over and deflect all drinks any one player gives you back at 'em.

Least Shielded - Too bad. Have 4 drinks.

Marksmanship - Good shot, huh? Prove it. Hold your glass in your hand as high as you can and pour two drinks down into your mouth.

Who needs ammo? - Who needs a drink? You del! Gulp down as much as you can in four seconds.

Double Kill - Make two people have four drinks.

Triple Kill - Make three people have six drinks.

Quad Kill - Everyone has eight drinks. Yay!



IMPOSSIBLY DARK 2

This month's custom scenario re-enacts *Mission: Impossible 2* (also known as *Mozz* for some stupid reason.) Play as the good guys, the bad guys, teams, or free for all. Thanks to Nick Horton for sending it in!

Characters:
 Swan—(the main bad guy) Presidential Security body, PerfectJudgeSim
 Hugh—(his right-hand man) NSA Lackey body, PerfectKazeSim
 Wallis—(computer guy), Treet Estate body, PerfectFestSim
 Luther—(Pelagic II Guard) body, PerfectJudgeSim
 Ryan—(none of the faces really look like her, so you'll have to make do) JoAnna Arctic body, PerfectKazeSim
 Ethan—(nobody's as studly as Tom Cruise, except Miyamoto of course) Pilot body, PerfectJudgeSim
 Terrorists—(optional) 3 G5 SWAT Guards (head doesn't matter), HardSims
 Weapons: Falcon 2(s), CMPyo(s), Shotgun, AR34
 Level: Villa



UN-CHALLENG-ING

Here's a great cheat for completing those annoying challenges! First choose Combat Simulator, then Advanced Setup. Move down to Load Settings and press A, but don't choose any of the presets yet. Now, as Player 2, press start and then left with the analog stick. Move to any unopened challenge (without stars) and press start and accept so it says you're ready and waiting. Back as Player 1, choose one of the presets, then press start to enter the game. The challenge will only have Player 1 and 2 in it, and once it's over you'll have a star in the second position saying you beat it! Huzzah!

More Scenarios

Puppet Master



Scenario: Combat

Options: No Radar

Arena: Complex or Sewers
Weapons: Combat Knives(s), Shotgun, DY357 Magnum, Cyclone

Limits: 10 Min.

Simulants: 2 FloSims for every human player (any difficulty)

Teams: 1-4 players vs. FloSims

Matthew Wilson
via e-mail

Alien Rodeo

Scenario: Combat, The G5 Building (no change in options from default)

Weapons: (my preference) Falcon 2, The normal Magnum, Remote Mine, Shotgun, Laser, Laptop Gun

Simulants: How many Evtl you can take? (Version 2.0, Elvis meatsims) (Version 2.000000 add a Hard JoAnna Sim and a Hard Jonathan Sim on the Elvis Sim Team)

Teams are humans versus sims.
 Kiel Nale
via e-mail



TRICKS

TOP 10 TRICKS

The top 10 games of the last month given the fall-on-Trickman treatment.

1. Pokémon Trading Card (GB)

Find Codes

Send in codes for this game, if we print yours, you'll score a free game!

2. Pokémon Stadium (NG4)

Plasma Balls

Note: You must have the yellow version of the Game Boy Pokémon game for this to work. Upload Pikachu from the game to Pokémon Stadium. Don't register Pikachu. Now start a battle and use Pikachu. When battling, Pikachu will say its name and have new animations for some of its moves.

3. Pokémon (Yellow) (GB)

Easy Level Gain

To easily gain experience, switch the Pokémon you want to train with the top Pokémon on your list. When you go into battle, the Pokémon will grow. Switch to another Pokémon. Once you win the battle, the beginning Pokémon and the fighting Pokémon both gain experience points. This is especially useful if the Pokémon you want to build up has no initial attack in its first form.

4. WWF SmackDown! (PS)

Find Codes

Send in codes for this game, if we print yours, you'll score a free game!

5. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater (NG4)

Anonymous Cheats

Slow Motion

Choose Career Mode from the Main Menu and begin your game. While playing, press Start to pause. Press and hold the L button. While holding it, press Down, Down, Up, C, Right, C, Left. The screen will shake if entered correctly.

Turbo Skater

Choose Career Mode from the Main Menu and begin your



Rainbow Six continued

D-Pad, and B button. If you have the "Team God Mode" on, your team will be yelling at you to watch your fire.

Victory Conditions

Simultaneously press Up on the Analog Stick, Down on the D-Pad, and B button. This will prevent the mission from being aborted if an alarm is triggered or a hostage is shot.

Infinite Ammo

If you shoot all the bullets in your clip except one and put in a new clip, you will not lose the clip! Keep repeating this to have an infinite amount of ammo!

NINTENDO 64

GoldenEye 007

Cheat Menu Button Codes

Enter these codes on the Cheat Menu Screen with the L-Shoulder and R-Shoulder buttons, C buttons and D-pad. A beep will confirm correct code entry. Exit the Cheat Menu and enter it again to make each code appear. These are tricky, so hold the buttons for about two seconds before going to the next step of the code.

Invincibility

Press R-Shoulder/Left, L-Shoulder/Down, Left, Up, Down, R-Shoulder/C-Left, L-Shoulder/C-Left, hold L/R-Shoulders and press left, hold L/R-Shoulders and press Right, L-Shoulder/C-Left.

1 OK Mode

Hold L/R-Shoulders and press



Up, C-Right, R-Shoulder/Left, R-Shoulder/Up, Up, R-Shoulder/Right, Up, hold L/R-Shoulders and press C-Down, hold L/R-Shoulders and press Down, hold L/R-Shoulders and press C-Left.

Turbo Mode

Press L-Shoulder/Down, L-Shoulder/C-Down, hold L/R-Shoulders and press Up, R-Shoulder/C-Down, Left, R-Shoulder/Down, L-Shoulder/C-Down, Up, R-Shoulder/Down, L-Shoulder/Right.

2 Paintball Cheat

Press L-Shoulder/Up, C-Up, R-Shoulder/Right, hold L/R-Shoulders and press C-Left, L-Shoulder/Up, R-Shoulder/C-Down, L-Shoulder/C-Down, hold L/R-Shoulders and press C-Down, hold L/R-Shoulders and press Up, L-Shoulder/C-Down.

No Radar

Press R-Shoulder/Up, C-Down, C-Left, C-Up, L-Shoulder/Down, R-Shoulder/Up, C-Left, Right, R-Shoulder/Left, R-Shoulder/Right.

Tiny Bond

Hold L/R-Shoulders and press Down, R-Shoulder/Down, L-Shoulder/C-Down, Left, R-

Shoulder/C-Left, hold L/R-Shoulders and press C-Down, Right, Down, R-Shoulder/C-Down, R-Shoulder/Right.

3 2X Throwing Knives

Press R-Shoulder/C-Left, L-Shoulder/Left, Up, hold L/R-Shoulders and press Right, Right, hold L/R-Shoulders and press C-Left, R-Shoulder/Down, R-Shoulder/Left, R-Shoulder/C-Left.

Fast Animation

Press L-Shoulder/C-Down, L-Shoulder/C-Left, C-Down, C-Right, C-Left, hold L/R-Shoulders and press Right, C-Right, hold L/R-Shoulders and press Up, R-Shoulder/C-Left, L-Shoulder/Left.

4 2X Lasers

Press L-Shoulder/Right, hold L/R-Shoulders and press C-Left, L-Shoulder/Down, R-Shoulder/Left, R-Shoulder/Down, L-Shoulder/Right, C-Up, Right, R-Shoulder/Right, hold L/R-Shoulders and press Up.

5 2X RCP-ges

Press Up, Right, L-Shoulder/Down, R-Shoulder/Down, L-Shoulder/Up, L-Shoulder/C-Left, L-Shoulder/Left, C-Right,



C-Up, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Down.

Enemy Rockets

Hold L+R-Shoulders and press C-Down, C-Left, R-Shoulder+C-Down, C-Down, C-Down, hold L+R-Shoulders+C-Down, hold L+R-Shoulders+Up, C-Down, R-Shoulder+Up, L-Shoulder+Up.

Slow Animation

Hold L+R-Shoulders and press Left, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Left, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Left, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Left, C-Right, R-Shoulder+Up, C-Down, L-Shoulder+Down, C-Left, C-Up.

Invisible Bond

Hold L+R-Shoulders and press C-Left, hold L+R-Shoulders and press C-Down, L-Shoulder+C-Left, R-Shoulder+Right, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Left, L-Shoulder+Right, Left, hold L+R-Shoulders and press C-Left, L-Shoulder+Down.

Silver PPY

Press L-Shoulder+Left, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Up, L-Shoulder+Right, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Up, hold L+R-Shoulders and press C-Left, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Left, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Down, C-Down, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Right, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Left, L-Shoulder+Down, R-Shoulder+Left, L-Shoulder+C-Left.

zX Hunting Knives

Press R-Shoulder+C-Down, L-Shoulder+Right, R-Shoulder+C-Left, R-Shoulder+Right, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Right, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Up, L-Shoulder+Down, R-Shoulder+Left, L-Shoulder+Right, L-Shoulder+C-Left.

Infinite Ammo

Press L-Shoulder+C-Left, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Right, C-Right, C-Left, R-Shoulder+Left, L-Shoulder+C-Down, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Left, hold L+R-Shoulders and press C-Down, L-Shoulder+Up, C-Right.



Cyber Tiger

More Characters

From the Title Screen, choose Play, Pick Stroke or Match Play and choose to edit a golfer. Go to Edit Name Option and enter one of these character codes.

- 1. Unlock Tiger Woods Fan**
Choose any character and change the name to Cyberw. **Unlock Cindy**
Choose any character and change the name to Instyle.
- 2. Unlock Festus the Ghost**
Choose any character and change the name to Goldgdt.

Unlock EA Gamer

Choose any character and change the name to WiiE. **Unlock the Bengal**
Choose any character and change the name to Tigerrr. **Unlock Elvis**
Choose any character and change the name to Gelvis.

Unlock Bobby

Choose any character and change the name to Brat. **Unlock Robert**
Choose any character and change the name to Ice.

Rocket: Robot on Wheels

Ceal Codes

Pause the game, then press the button codes below.

- 1. Lower Gravity**
Z-Trigger, R-Shoulder, Z-Trigger, R-Shoulder, Down, R-Shoulder, R-Shoulder, Right, Right, R-Shoulder.
- Lower Friction**
Up, R-Shoulder, R-Shoulder,



Left, Z-Trigger, Z-Trigger, Down, Left, Up, Right.

Rocket is Heavy

Up, Right, Right, R-Shoulder, R-Shoulder, Z-Trigger, R-Shoulder, R-Shoulder, Up.

Increased Grab

Down, Left, Right, Z-Trigger, Down, Right, Down, Down, Down, Left.

Increased Speed

Z-Trigger, Right, Down, Up, Down, R-Shoulder, Up, Down, Left, Up.

Turn Off Cheats

Up, Z-Trigger, Right, Up, Down, R-Shoulder, Up, Down, Up

PLAYSTATION

MediEvil II

Cheats Menu

- 1. Press Start to pause the game, then press and hold the L2 button. While holding it, press Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Left, Circle, Up, Down, Right, Circle, Left, Left, Triangle, Right, Circle, Left, Left. "Cheats" will appear at the bottom of the Pause Menu. Access this new option to receive Complete Level, Invulnerability, Dankhand Ability, All Levels Open and Head Size. You'll also see options that add health, money and weapons!**

tricks@ziffdavis.com

We want to include your trick codes and photos in every issue. To get along with all our great tricks packed into every issue, you'll need to email if we ask you to "Try it on the Beach!" You can't be caught here!

TOP 10 TRICKS (CONTINUED)

game. While playing, press Start to pause. Press and hold the L button. While holding it, press Right, Up, Down, Down, Up, Down. The screen will shake if entered correctly.

Stats Raised to 10
Choose Career Mode from the Main Menu and begin your game. While playing, press Start to pause. Press and hold the L button. While holding it, press Down, Right, Up, Right, Up, Left, Left-C. The screen will shake if entered correctly.

All Types
Choose Career Mode from the Main Menu and begin your game. While playing, press Start to pause. Press and hold the L button. While holding it, press Right-C, Left, Up, Up-C, Right, Down, Up. The screen will shake if entered correctly.

Faster Specials
Choose Career Mode from the Main Menu and begin your game. While playing, press Start to pause. Press and hold the L button. While holding it, press Up-C, Left, Down, C-Down, C, Up, Down, Right. The screen will shake if entered correctly.

6. Syphon Filter 2 (PS)

Level Skip
Pause the game in the middle of play. On the "Pause" screen, highlight Map and press and hold these buttons in this order: Right+L+R+Circle+Square. With these held, press X. You will hear a sound when entered correctly. Now go to the "Options" screen and enter the "Cheats" option. You'll find an option to end your current level and go to the next one.

7. Star Wars Ep. 1: Jedi Power Battles (PS)

Find Codes
Send in codes for this game, if we print yours, you'll score a free game!

8. Pokémon (Blue) (GB)

Infinite Items
With this cheat, you can give yourself an unlimited supply of whatever item you have in your sixth inventory slot. Keep in mind that this trick only works in the Red and Blue versions of the game. First, head to Wilder City and talk to the old man who instructed you how to use Poké Balls. When he asks you, choose to watch his demonstration again. After that, immediately fly to Cinnabar Island. Choose one of your Pokémon who has the Surf Ability. Ride up and down the west coast of the island (being ping the shoreline) until you get



TRICKS

TOP 10 TRICKS

(CONTINUED)

into a battle. Eventually, you will encounter one of two glitchy Pokémon, either one with a name made up of scrambled boxes or the infamous Wiggynia. Whatever you do, do not catch any Pokémon that you encounter here. Repeat. Do not catch any of them. It will ruin your saved game. Run from every battle as soon as you get into one. After running from a battle with a glitch Pokémon, check your inventory. Whatever item was in the sixth slot should have a strange symbol where the quantity used to be. This usually means that you have well over 99 of that item. This trick can be done repeatedly, so you can essentially have infinite items. Now, you can have a ton of Master Balls or enough rare candy to power up all your Pokémon to level 100. Just don't power them up just that because you then run the risk of damaging your save game.

9. Pokémon (Red) (GB)

Fight Safari Zone Pokémon
This will allow you to fight and catch the Safari Zone Pokémon outside the Safari Zone. To begin, you must have a Pokémon with the Surf Ability. Now go to the Safari Zone and enter the area where the Pokémon you are trying to catch is found. Stay in the sector until the time runs out. Go to the Seafloor Islands by surfing south of Pachia City. If you don't encounter any enemies on the way, or the trick won't work (this does not include the Pokémon in the water on the way there). On the edge of the islands, there is a strip of the screen that is half land, and half water. Now, surf on this section and just keep going up and down on it. When you run into an enemy, it will be the Pokémon from the Safari Zone section you just left. This time though, you will be able to fight them and use the other Balls.

10. Resident Evil: Code Veronica (DC)

Find Codes
Send in codes for this game. If we print yours, you'll score a free game!

PLAYSTATION

Rainbow Six

Awesome Cheats

Press Start to pause the game in the middle of play. Then hold the L1 button and press the following buttons to activate the codes shown below.

All Doors Unlocked

Triangle, Square, Square, Triangle, X, Circle, Square, Triangle.

Invincible Hostages

Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle, X, Triangle, X, Circle.

Reload Ammunition

Square, Square, Circle, Triangle, X, Triangle, X, Triangle.

Terrorists Removed

Triangle, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle.

Remove All Operatives

Triangle, Triangle, X, Circle, Circle, X, Square, Square.

Who Wants To Be A Millionaire: 2nd Edition

Replaced Millionaire Name

Go to the "Enter Your Name" screen. Entering the name, DAW BLOMSKY (one of the millionaire winners), will get you a replacement name, such as PHORX.

Street Fighter EX 2 Plus

More Characters

- After unlocking these fighters, they can be found on the Character Select Screen.

Play As Garuda

At the Main Menu, highlight "Arcade" and press Select, Select, Select, Right, Select, Select, Down, Select, Select, Select.

- Play As Shadow Geist

At the Main Menu, highlight "Versus" and press Select, Select, Select, Down, Select, Select, Select, Up, Select, Select, Select.

Play As Kairi

At the Main Menu, highlight "Option" and press Select, Right, Select, Select, Select, Down, Select, Select.

Play As Hayato

At the Main Menu, highlight "Bonus Game" and press Select, Select, Up, Select, Select, Select, Select, Up,



Select, Left, Select, Select, Select, Select, Select. These next codes will unlock bonus games and more.

Satellite Fall and Excel Bonus Games

At the Main Menu, highlight "Bonus Game" and press Select, Select, Select, Select, Select, Left, Select, Select, Select, Up, Select, Right, Select, Select.

Blaze It Bonus Game

At the Main Menu, highlight "Bonus Game" and press Select (3) times, Up, Select, Select, Select, Select, Down, Select (3) times.

Maniac Mode

At the Main Menu, highlight "Practice" and press Select, Select, Select, Select, Select, Left, Select, Select, Select, Select, Select, Down, Select, Select, Select, Down, Select, Select, Select.

Gekido: Urban Fighters

Two New Modes

Play the game until you get a high score. When the HI Score Screen appears, enter one of the following names for the results shown below.

- Deformed Mode

Enter the name, DEFDEMMAMA on the HI Score Screen. On the Main Menu, choose "Options" to see this new mode.

- Skeleton Mode

Enter the name, BONEBRACK on the HI Score Screen. On the Main Menu, choose "Options" to see this new mode.



Grind Session

All Tricks Enabled

Press Start to pause the game, then press Down, Left, Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, Right. "All Tricks Enabled" will appear on the screen. Now when you access the Trick List, you will see all of them are enabled.

Sim Theme Park

Many Cool Codes

Free Equipment

Go into your park and without pausing, enter this code eight times: Left, Down, X, Circle. You will hear a sound. Now all your rides, employees, etc. are free!

- Everything Enabled

To get all the rides, etc., go into your park and, without pausing, enter this code eight times: Up, Down, Up, Down, Left, Up, Down, Up, Down, Right. Once you do this you will hear a sound. You will have access to everything to build in the park.

More Gold Tickets

Go into your park and, without pausing enter this code four times: Up, Down, Left, Right, Circle, Right, Left, Down, Up, Circle. Once you do this you will hear a sound.



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FFIX 2004	\$7.99	\$24.95	Play Ball 7	\$6.99	\$24.95
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FINAL WORD

SNK Kinda DOA in the USA



Chris Johnson

Chris: It brings a tear to my eye to see SNK leave the U.S. Even though I could never afford the exorbitant prices for their console systems or games (Izno for one game? Chrono!), I loved the NeoGeo Pocket Color. Some of the best portable games not made by Nintendo were developed for the system. Sure it didn't have Pokémon, but it had arguably the best portable fighting games and SNK Vs. Capcom Cardfighter's Clash. Sure, portable systems in general don't have the flash or graphics of today's home systems—but does any real gamer care about that? No. Was there more SNK could've done with the NGPC to make it a bigger success in the U.S.? Yeah, but when you look at how small a company SNK is, it didn't do too badly. Heck, how

sayin'? I'm glad all the KOF and Fatal Fury guys bolted to Capcom. Maybe there they won't have to design Pachinko games.

Kraig: It's never a good thing when a quality video game company goes under, but to tell you the truth, anyone could see coming. The fact of the matter is that like Game.com and TurboGrafx-16 (remember the Turbo Express), SNK half-assed their handheld console launch like a mere afterthought. It's amazing to me, and pathetic of the industry, that not one company wants to step up and take a piece of this huge portable gaming pie that Nintendo has an MS Windows-like domination of. There is room for someone to wedge and take a good share of it away—the Game Boy Color is a horrendously outdated piece of



James Mizell



Kraig Kalman



Greg Stewart

"Next to the Nintendo marketing juggernaut, everything else is bound to look half-assed unless you're Microsoft or Sony."

many retailers see Atari in with Jaguar or Lynx in its first year of availability? Now I just hope that more Japanese releases for the system have that English option.

James: I think Aruze shutting down SNK in the U.S. sucks. I don't really enjoy any games on the GBC, Pokémon and MGS included, and the NGPC was the best thing to happen to handhelds in a long time. THE best fighting games are on there, and with games like Digte Battle, Rockman, Motzto and more coming out, it was going to be a good year. The MPJ player is great, but it ain't so great when it ain't here, know what I'm

technology begging to be rendered obsolete. But why should Nintendo bother pushing technological limits if no one dares to challenge them? Goodbye, SNK. You probably deserved it.

Greg: I disagree. The NGPC was SNK's sole hardware in the U.S. and the focus of all their advertising. I think they could have done better as far as their marketing, but it wasn't a result of not trying. Next to the Nintendo marketing juggernaut, everything else is bound to look half-assed unless you're

Microsoft or Sony. I do agree that most of us probably saw this coming. I mean, let's face it, lots of bigger companies have tried to take on the Game Boy and failed. With an installed userbase like Nintendo's, the third-party support for any opposing console is bound to be little-to-none. Much like the Saturn, the NGPC suffered from having only a single company provide the lion's share of the games. No

matter how good a few of those games were, the outcome was pretty much predetermined in my eyes.



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NEXT MONTH

October 2000

On sale Sept. 3

Fall Lineups

Without a doubt, the PlayStation2 is gonna be huge when it launches here Oct. 26, and having just received our debug unit, we're playing fast and furious to give you the latest scoop on the lineup of U.S. launch games. We aren't forgetting the original PS though. We'll have a full preview of the much-anticipated Final Fantasy IX, along with Medal of Honor Underground and Dino Crisis 2. Also big reviews like Ecco the Dolphin, World Series Baseball 2K1, Perfect Dark GBC and more.



Next month: a full hands-on preview of Square's latest—Final Fantasy IX!



ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

- All-new Metal Gear Solid 2 pics and info
- Full Preview of Final Fantasy IX for PlayStation
- Plus Medal of Honor Underground and Dino Crisis 2 Previews for PlayStation
- Reviews of Ecco the Dolphin and World Series Baseball 2K1 for Dreamcast
- Also: Reviews of Mario Tennis (N64), Perfect Dark (GBC) and Pokémon Puzzle League

OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE Sept. 2000

On sale Aug. 15

Demo Disc Playables

- Grind Session
- Ms. Pac-Man
- Rayman 2
- Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX
- Tyco RC Racing

Non-Playables

- Chrono Cross
- Nat Hoffman's Pro BMX
- NFL GameDay 2001
- NCAA Gamebreaker 2001

Legacy of Kain... The Sequels

Fans of last year's sleeper hit, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, will appreciate OPM's coverage of Crystal Dynamics' upcoming Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver 2 and Legacy of Kain: Blood

Omen 2. Find out all you ever wanted to know about Raziel, Kain and all your other favorite vampires. Also, OPM's got more PS2 previews and news than any other magazine, so be sure to check out their early coverage of Metal Gear Solid 2, Orphen, Spyno: Year of the Dragon and Parasite Eve 2!



EXPERT GAMER

Sept. 2000

On sale Aug. 22

Perfect Dark

As if we had to tell you, next month's Expert Gamer will continue with more Perfect Dark coverage. Look for more secrets than ever, fantastic multiplayer tactics and final boss strategies. The N64 beat goes on with a look at Kirby 64. It's a great game, and Kirby's strategy will leave nothing to chance. Moving on to everyone's favorite little gray box, there's a full walk-through of Chrono Cross, the latest RPG in Square's "Summer of Adventure." Also, look forward to some early coverage of Mario Tennis.

- Perfect Dark "perfect secret" tips and strategy
- All you need to get through Kirby 64
- Mario Tennis special shots and character breakdown
- Chrono Cross battle system coverage
- X-Men fighting action, moves list



A man is lying in a hospital bed, appearing to be asleep. He is shirtless, and his chest is visible. To his left, an IV stand holds a drip chamber. In the background, there is a medical monitor on a stand displaying a green ECG waveform. The room has light blue walls and a framed anatomical diagram of a human torso.

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Player

Fully
Analog

Fully Analog Buttons & D-Pad

You'll need skill, endurance
and a reliable blowhole.



Sega Dreamcast
IT'S THINKING



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Stay away from jellyfish. Remember to come up for air. Don't eat bad fish. Or you could die. Of course, a shark could kill you too. On top of all that, the ocean's in a downward spiral and it's up to you to save it. Tough job, but you'll figure it out. You're the chosen one. The big fish (although you're not a fish). Too bad you can't even count on Greenpeace. The weight of the ocean rests on your dorsal fin.

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