ZIFF-DAVIS a SOFTBANK company

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

April 1999

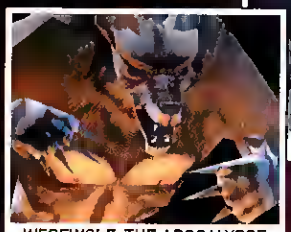
The #1 PC Game Magazine

Bite Me

Suck Down 3 Horror Games

VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE

NOCTURNE



WEREWOLF: THE APOCALYPSE

GAME of the YEAR AWARDS

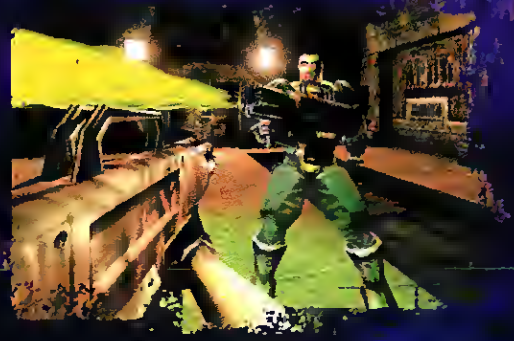
$4.99 USA, $5.99 Canada

04>

0 70989 06952 7

UNREAL™ TOURNAMENT™

✧ Train for combat in Novice mode. Or go Hardcore for even more intense action.



✧ All-new and enhanced big body-count weaponry - the Redeemer, the IMPACT Hammer and more.

✧ The most complete and challenging online multi-player experience ever.

✧ Completely customizable "bots" with

superior A.I. -"bots" take orders and team up with you.

- Over 30 unique environments torqued by the Unreal engine.

- A single-player experience like no other – Guide your team to the title of Unreal Grand Master!

A GROUNDBREAKING NEW 3D COMBAT EXPERIENCE FROM THE CREATORS OF UNREAL.
[DOES NOT REQUIRE UNREAL TO PLAY]

A NEW KIND OF SINGLE-PLAYER EXPERIENCE.

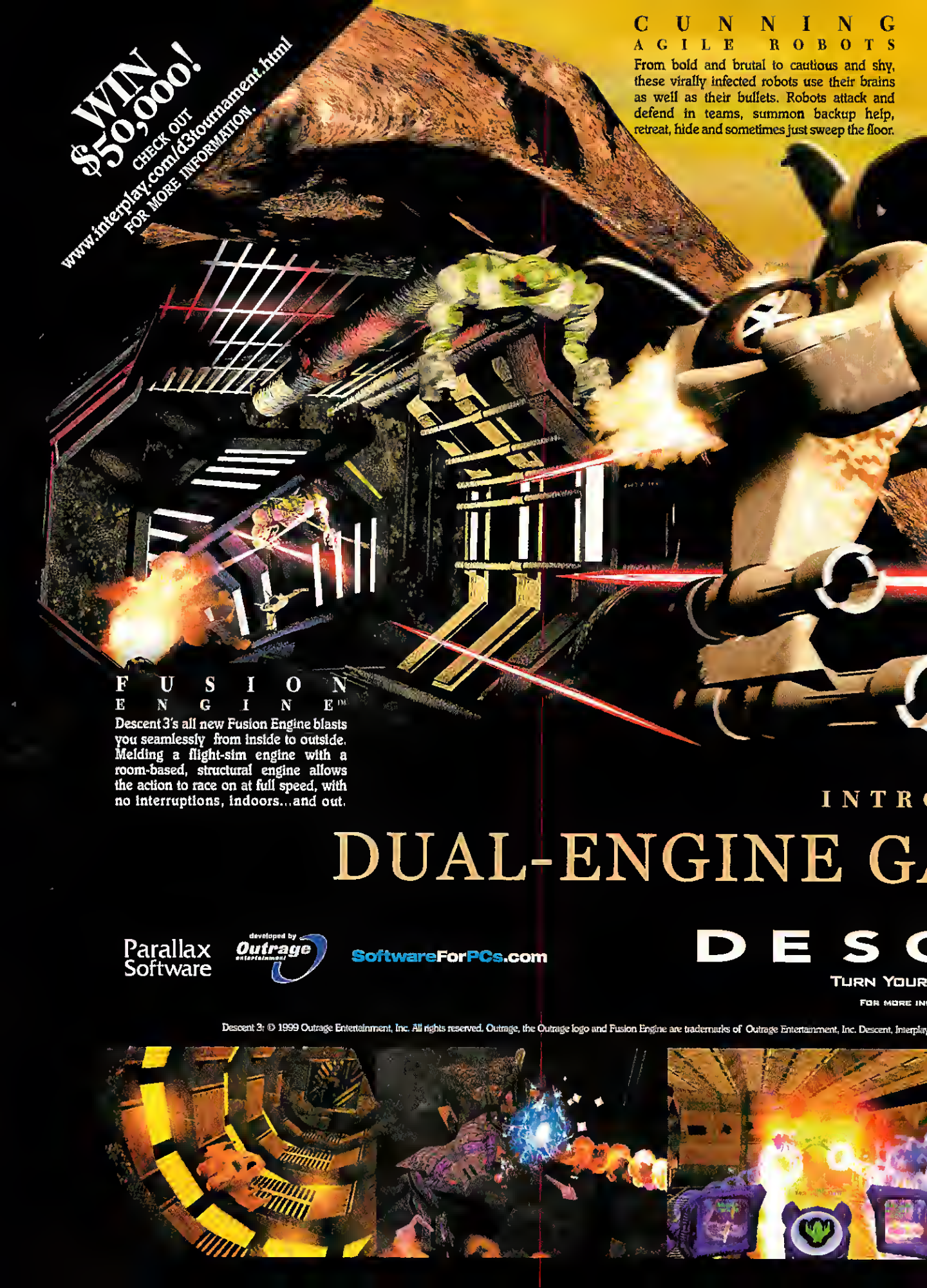
A RUTHLESS MULTI-PLAYER REVOLUTION.

A TEAM SPORT FOR 3D TERRORISTS EVERYWHERE.

Win $50,000!+

Enter the UNREAL MOD CONTEST
in association with MPATH.

THIS IS A CHALLENGE.
TO ANYONE WHO EVER
TOOK A MAN DOWN IN A 3D SHOOTER.
AND LIKED IT.
THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE.
TO PROVE THAT YOU ARE THE BEST OF THE BEST.
THIS IS THE GLADIATORIAL ARENA OF THE FUTURE.
THIS IS A SINGLE-PLAYER TRIAL BY FIRE.
A HEAVYWEIGHT DEATHMATCH
CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE UNIVERSE.
FOR THOSE WILLING TO BUILD A MOUNTAIN OF BODIES.
AND CLIMB TO THE TOP.
IN ENVIRONMENTS THAT STUN.
AGAINST A.I. THAT KILLS.
FOR THOSE WILLING TO STAKE THEIR LIVES
IN THE PURSUIT OF VICTORY...
WE SALUTE YOU.
Unreal™ Tournament™ © 1998 Epic MegaGames and GT Interactive Software, Inc. All Rights Reserved. GT and the GT Games logo are trademarks and the GT logo is a registered trademark of GT Interactive Software Corp. Unreal and the Unreal logo are trademarks of Epic MegaGames. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies.
RP
ESRB
www.unreal.com
ENTER THE UNREAL WORLD NOW – Download the demo at unreal.gtgames.com
Look for the UNREAL LEVEL PAK. Available Now.
GT Interactive Software
www.gtgames.com


WIN $50,000!
CHECK OUT
www.interplay.com/d3tournament.html
FOR MORE INFORMATION.
CUNNING
AGILE ROBOTS
From bold and brutal to cautious and shy, these virally infected robots use their brains as well as their bullets. Robots attack and defend in teams, summon backup help, retreat, hide and sometimes just sweep the floor.
FUSION
ENGINE™
Descent 3's all new Fusion Engine blasts you seamlessly from inside to outside. Melding a flight-sim engine with a room-based, structural engine allows the action to race on at full speed, with no interruptions, indoors...and out.
INTR
DUAL-ENGINE G
Parallax Software
developed by Outrage entertainment
SoftwareForPCs.com
DESC
TURN YOUR
FOR MORE IN
Descent 3: © 1999 Outrage Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. Outrage, the Outrage logo and Fusion Engine are trademarks of Outrage Entertainment, Inc. Descent, Interplay

MERCILESS WEAPONS

From the Flame Thrower to the Black Shark, show oo mercy as you crush enemies, set them on fire and watch them suffer.

BEST MULTIPLAYER OUT OF THE BOX

Descent 3 arrives fully optimized for Internet play over a modem. Remember the intuitive simplicity of Descent 1 and 2 oetwork play? Now it's THAT EASY to battle hordes of Descent fanatics around the world.

TRUE RADIOSITY AND SPECULAR LIGHTING

Now you can lurk in the shadows and sneak up on your enemies. Specular and reflective surfaces allow for incredible special effects that portray Descent 3 in an all new light.

POLYGON ACCURATE COLLISION DETECTION

All objects have mass, velocity, moments of inertia, and other real-world properties. Blow off a robot's arm and watch it bounce off a wall and fall to the floor. Launch a missile and see your enemies rocked back from the blast impact.

CING

ME TECHNOLOGY

E N T 3™

INSIDE OUT

INTERPLAY

Interplay™

BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™

WWW.INTERPLAY.COM

o, Tantrum, the Tantrum logo, "By Gamers. For Gamers." are trademarks of Interplay Productions. All other copyrights and trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

"Brood War completely revitalizes Blizzard's everlasting real-time strategy game."

- GameSpot

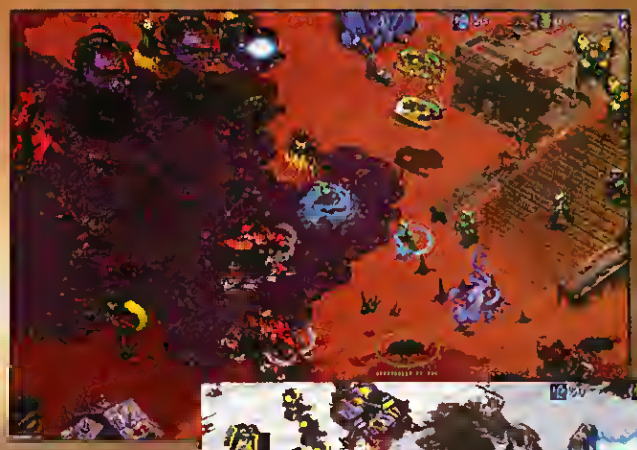
BLIZZARD ENTERTAINMENT

WWW.BLIZZARD.COM

Starcraft and Brood War are trademarks and Blizzard Entertainment is a registered trademark of Davidson and Associates, Inc. © 1998 Blizzard Entertainment. All Rights Reserved.

Go to #266 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

The Universe Has Expanded



Command New Weapons of War

Call in Valkyries, Devourers, Dark Archons and more as you devise unique strategies to unleash the power of six all-new combat units.

Master 26 New Scenarios

Experience more explosive strategic combat in 26 all-new scenarios set within three epic campaigns.

Wage War in Over 100 New Battlefields

Launch intense multiplayer battles against up to eight human or computer opponents in over 100 all-new multiplayer maps.

"Not just the greatest computer game of 1998, Starcraft is one of the greatest in the HISTORY of the genre."

- Gerard Van Der Leun, PENTHOUSE Magazine

StarCraft™

EXPANSION SET

BROOD WAR™

COMING SOON

To learn more about this title Call Toll Free: 1-877-ALL-LOL3

EXPANSIVE JOURNAL RECORDS EVERY EVENT—NO NEED TO WRITE THINGS DOWN

TRAIN HARD WITH FOUR GUILDS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR MIND AND BODY.

DEVELOP VALUABLE SKILLS BY COMPLETING QUESTS.

Westwood STUDIOS

www.westwood.com

©1998 Westwood Studios, Inc. Lands of Lore is a registered trademark and Westwood Studios is a trademark of Westwood Studios, Inc. 3Dfx and the 3Dfx logo are registered trademarks of 3Dfx Interactive Inc. All rights reserved

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Easy to play. Hard to resist.

ENLIST A MAGICAL FAMILIAR TO FIGHT BY YOUR SIDE AND DO YOUR BIDDING.

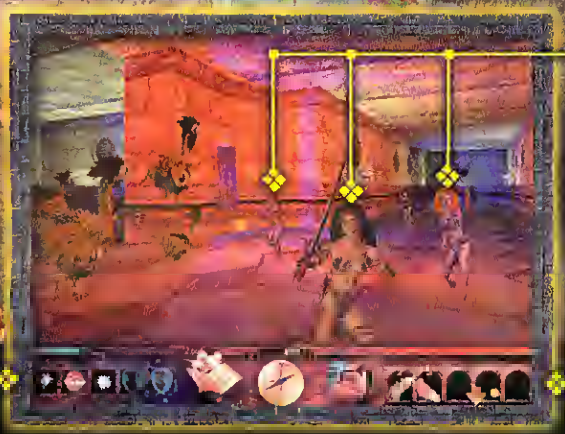
LANDS OF LORE III

ENGAGE IN REAL-TIME COMBAT AGAINST A HOST OF POWERFUL AND DEADLY CREATURES.

MASTER UP TO 65 SPELLS WHICH YOU CAN CAST QUICKLY AND EASILY USING HOT KEYS.

MANIPULATE YOUR INVENTORY SYSTEM WITHOUT LEAVING GAMEPLAY.

INTERACT WITH INTRIGUING CHARACTERS THROUGHOUT 6 WORLDS.



ROTATE THROUGH SPELL AND ITEM HOT BELTS TO IMMEDIATELY ACCESS WHAT YOU NEED.

CUSTOMIZE HOT BELTS WITH YOUR FAVORITE WEAPONS AND MAGIC ITEMS.

Go to #255 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

ONLY A SELECT FEW IN THE GALAXY
HAVE FLOWN THE *MILLENNIUM FALCON.*
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
www.lucasarts.com/products/alliance • www.starwars.com
© Lucasfilm Ltd & TM. All rights reserved. Used under authorization.

AND UNLESS YOU REACH THE FINAL BATTLE, IT WILL STAY THAT WAY.

STAR WARS X-WING ALLIANCE

A rival family imposes peril on the future of your livelihood. The evil Empire's presence is looming. Your only hope for survival is to join the Rebel Alliance in epic *Star Wars* conflicts. As full-scale galactic battles begin, you will be called upon to command Rebel starfighters, including X-wings end other new spacecraft. You and up to seven other Rebel players will clash with Imperial fighters in spectacular 3D missione. Finally, if you're worthy, you will find yourself in the cockpit of the legendary *Millennium Falcon*, flying against the massive Imperial fleet in the climactic Battle of Endor. Ultimately, it will be your agility, resolve and combat skills in these meneuvers that will determine your destiny. Not to mention, the fate of the entire galaxy.

LucasArts

Go to #097 @ www.computergeming.com/infolink

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD
The #1 PC Game Magazine

APRIL 1999

The *CGW* Premier Awards

91

It was very hard work. We slaved, we sweated, we cried, we ate pizza. But when the hours of behind-closed-doors bickering and petty sniping had ended, we emerged, bleary-eyed, into the daylight, with envelopes in hand. Yes, it's time once again for *CGW*'s Game of the Year Awards. We break it down by genre by genre, and present the overall Game of the Year for 1998. Oh yeah, we also have everyone's favorite: the year's worst games.

108

The Horror, The Horror!

Keep the lights on. Wear two pairs of pants. Read it with your mommy. Just do something to get ready to be scared, as *CGW* gets behind the scenes with three terrifying (and cool) new horror games—VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE, WEREWOLF: THE APOCALYPSE, and NOCTURNE.

COVER STORY

Cover photo of Angel Carter by Robert Houser. Makeup by Sherrie Long. Visit Angel's Web site at www.bombshellempire.com

PREVIEWS

Planescape: Torment
Half-elves rejoice! Hot on the heels of BALDUR'S GATE, Interplay's RPG division tackles another *AD&D* game 62

Magic & Mayhem
The original X-COM team conjures up a fascinating blend of strategy and fantasy 70

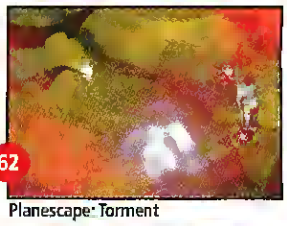
Man Of War II
Take to the high seas and kill stuff once again in the upcoming sequel to Strategy First's game of naval warfare 74

Midtown Madness
Ever want to drive the new Beetle through midtown Chicago? Now you can. Really. That's the game. No, seriously, it's cool. 79

Machines
A real-time 3D strategy game with giant robots. It's everything everyone wants, minus the deer 80

Septerra Core
An original, console-style RPG bounces out of development oblivion thanks to the folks at Monolith 82

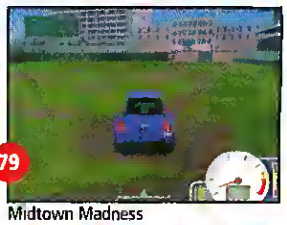
Soldier Of Fortune
Raven Software puts away the sissy magic wands and gets manly with this QUAKE II-based mercenary game 84



62 Planescape: Torment

70 Magic & Mayhem

74 Man Of War II



79 Midtown Madness

82 Septerra Core

Swords and Sorcery
A quick update on D.W. Bradley's epic RPG, which is not dead yet 84

Inertia
Microsoft abandons world domination for an auto-combat-in-space game 86

Kingpin
The jokers behind REDNECK RAMPAGE have a gangster game that you can't refuse 86

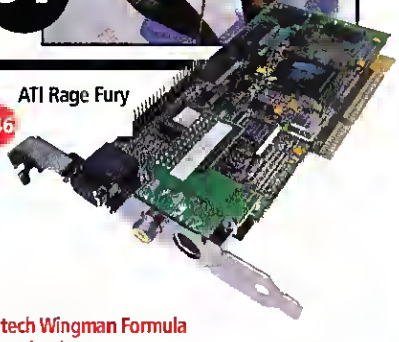
Rayman 2
A charming 3D platform game guaranteed not to offend anybody 86

READ.ME

- Drakan: Beauty and the Beast
- Sierra Sports' FOOTBALL PRO 99 recalled
- Empire's MIG ALLEY finally set for release

51

HARDWARE



Hardware News 139
- Hands-on test of the Pentium III
- A look at nVidia's TNT2 graphics accelerator

Loyd Case
Loyd finally tells us what all those big words he always uses mean. 142

Killer Gaming Rigs 146

ATI Rage Fury 149

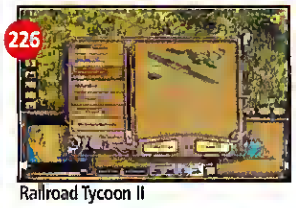
Diamond Homefree wireless network ...150

Logitech Wingman Formula Force wheel 150

AVB FBW-1 Force Feedback Racing Wheel 152

Plextor UltraPleX 40Max CD-ROM drive ...152

GAMER'S EDGE



Railroad Tycoon II

Baldur's Gate

Half-Life
CGW's own Doctor Df Death, Greg Fortune, shows you how to surgically remove all those troublesome bad guys in HALF-LIFE. ... 218

WWII Flight Sims
Air ace Jeff Lackey offers hints and tips to get rookies up and flying in the latest crop of WWII flight sims. 222

Railroad Tycoon II
All together now: "I think I can, I think I can." But if you think you can't, then check out Samuel Baker's sure-fire strategies for keeping the trains running on time in RAILROAD TYCOON II. 226

Baldur's Gate
Spending more time reloading your game than saving the world in BALDUR'S GATE? Then sit down, grasshopper, and let RPG guru Scorpia show you the light. 230

DEPARTMENTS

Johnny Wilson Is the Mac really back, or is Johnny having flashbacks again? 21
Denny Atkin Denny shows you how to land successfully in FALCON 4.0 24
Terry Coleman Suggestions for jump-starting the adventure genre 27
Letters Email missives and submissives 31
On the CG-ROM Demos, tools, and goodies on CD 37
Reviews Introduction 157
Reviews Index Three months of game ratings 161
Hall of Fame The greatest games of all time 237
CG-Tips CG-Tips takes a month off in April, but will return in May!!!
Top 100 Readers rate the top games 238
Greenspeak The geeks have taken over This one has a column 240

REVIEWS

Action
Dddworld: Abe's Exoddus 162
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Mission Pack: Eagle Watch 164
Rogue Squadron 168
Carmageddon 2 170
Fireteam 173
Carnivores 174
3D Ultra NASCAR Pinball 174
Megaman X4 174
Uprising 2: Lead And Destroy 175
Extreme Paintbrawl 176
Iron John Hawk 176
Street Fighter Alpha 2 176
Fatal Abyss 177
Glover 177
Godzilla Online 177
Starsiege: Tribes 181
Global Domination 183

Simulations/Space
Falcon 4.0 184
Luftwaffe Commander 188

Adventure/Role-Playing
Baldur's Gate 190
King's Quest: The Mask Of Eternity .192
Return to Krondor 194
Quest for Glory V: Dragon Fire 196

Sports/Driving
Moto Racer 2 203
Test Drive 5 205
Newman/Haas Racing 206
Test Drive Off-Road 2 206
Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling 206
Powerslide 207

Strategy/Wargames
Alpha Centauri 208

Myth II: Soulblighter 210
StarCraft: Brood War 212
Retribution 213
Profitania 213
Dragoon Battlepack 3: Zorndorf 213
Gangsters 214
Settlers III 216

Puzzles/Classics
You Don't Know Jack 4: The Ride ..217
After Dark Games 217
Head Rush 217

TAKE CIVILIZATION® FARTHER...

COMMAND, DEFEND, AND CONQUER

Command powerful armies and make every social, economic and political decision. Deploy over 65 beautifully-detailed units, 7000 years worth of weaponry, and over 100 technological advances.

COLONIZE THE PLANET AND BEYOND

Retrace the steps of mankind across the globe. Build orbital space colonies and add speed to your arsenal. Discover and harvest vast oceanic resources to grow immense underwater empires.

Civilization: Call To Power © 1999 Activision, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and Call To Power is a trademark of Activision, Inc. CIVILIZATION computer games © 1991-1998 Hasbro Interactive and MicroProse, Inc. MICROPROSE and CIVILIZATION are U.S. registered trademarks and HASBRO INTERACTIVE, the HASBRO INTERACTIVE logo, and related marks are trademarks of Hasbro or its affiliates. MicroProse is a subsidiary of Hasbro or its affiliates. This product is made and sold under license from MicroProse. All rights reserved. All other trademarks and trade names are the property of their respective owners.

ACTIVISION.

The Next Generation of the Greatest Strategy Game Series of All Time.

CIVILIZATION
CALL TO POWER

CALL TO POWER ADVANCEMENTS

All-new strategies, including unconventional warfare • More units, buildings, Wonders and technologies • Vast new realms: Space and Sea
Fully-animating, hi-res, 16-bit graphics • Breakthrough time-saving interface • Enhanced diplomatic and trade options
Scenario Builder • Internet and LAN Multiplayer • All-new Wonders of the World in stunning cinematics

IN STORES NOW.

COMING SOON TO
SoftwareForPCs.com

www.activision.com

Go to #145 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

"Stunning"
"Unbelievable"
"Amazing"
"Innovative"

"...a sure fire recipe for chaos and mayhem that no sane player would want to miss."

–Computer Games Strategy Plus

"...a fantasy tag team match on a global scale. It's melodrama, it's excitement, it works."

–Computer Gaming World

"...Total Annihilation: Kingdoms is completely unbelievable. Everything in the game moves with a grace and realism that is stunning."

–Imagine Games Network

"...fit to sit on the throne of RTS gaming."

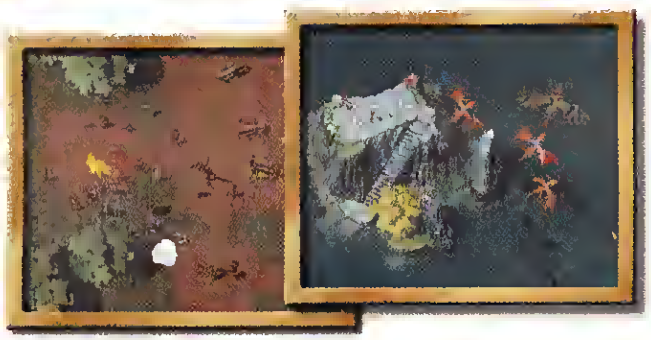
–Gamer's Republic

"Never have we seen a game that goes to such great lengths to create an innovative, engrossing, story driven RTS of this magnitude ... we could be looking at something amazing ..."

–Gamefan

TOTAL ANNIHILATION

KINGDOMS™



boneyards™
ONLINE GAMING

CAVEDOG®
ENTERTAINMENT
A GT Interactive Company

www.cavedog.com

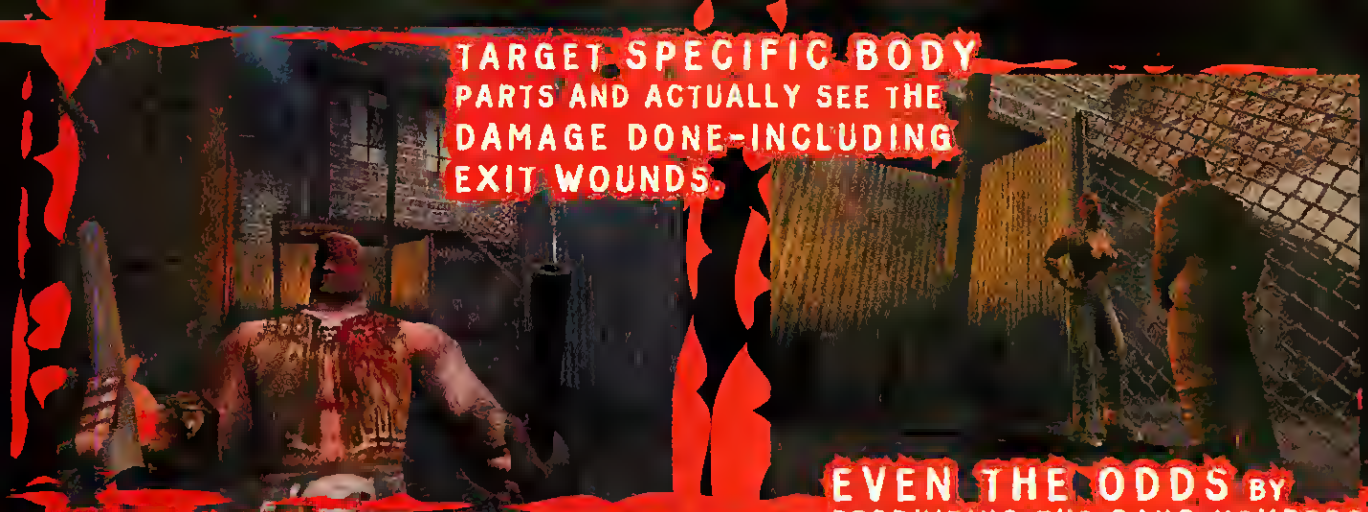
©1999 Humongous Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Total Annihilation and Total Annihilation: Kingdoms are trademarks of Humongous Entertainment, Inc. Cavedog Entertainment and the Cavedog Entertainment logo are registered trademarks of Humongous Entertainment, Inc. Created and published by Cavedog Entertainment, a division of Humongous Entertainment, Inc. Distributed by GT Interactive Software Corporation

Go to #172 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

YOU'RE GONNA DIE.

KINGPIN: Life of Crime: ©1999 Xatrix Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. This product contains software technology licensed from Id Software, Inc. ("Id Technology"). Id Technology ©1996, 1997, 1998 Id Software, Inc. All Rights Reserved Kingpin, Kingpin. Life of Crime, Interplay, the Interplay logo, and "By Gamers For Gamers." are trademarks of Interplay Productions. Xatrix and the Xatrix logo are trademarks of Xatrix Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

TARGET SPECIFIC BODY PARTS AND ACTUALLY SEE THE DAMAGE DONE-INCLUDING EXIT WOUNDS.



EVEN THE ODDS BY RECRUITING THE GANG MEMBERS YOU WANT ON YOUR SIDE.

STEAL A BIKE OR HOP A TRAIN TO GET AROUND TOWN.

TALK TO PEOPLE THE WAY YOU WANT ...FROM SMACK TO PACIFYING.

BUILT ON TOP OF THE REVOLUTIONARY QUAKE II ENGINE, INCLUDES MULTIPLAYER GANG BANG DEATH MATCH FOR UP TO 16 THUGS.

ACTUAL GAMEPLAY SCREENS

KINGPIN™

LIFE OF CRIME™

FEATURING THE MUSIC OF

Cypress Hill

FROM THE RELEASE

"CYPRESS HILL IV"

cypressonline.com

Windows 95/98 COMPATIBLE

Interplay FOR GAMERS BY GAMERS

XATRIX entertainment

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

FOR MORE INFO OR TO ORDER CHECK OUT WWW.INTERPLAY.COM/KINGPINCORPSE

OR CALL 1-800-INTERPLAY

Go to #299 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

REAL SOLDIERS DON'T FIGHT LITTLE PLASTIC MEN.

Enlist the aid of the **Dirty 1/2 Dozen** as you venture behind enemy lines in COMMANDOS: BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY, an engaging stand-alone game with the same popular gameplay as the original hit.

This eight-mission mini-epic spans Europe. from the East to the Mediterranean, immersing the user in the thrills of WWII tactical action.

- Improved photo realistic graphics
- New weapons like the Enfield Rifle
- New Panzer and Luftwaffe enemy units
- Locations include a zoo and Luftwaffe airbase
- Added decoys like the rock toss and cigarette distraction
- Two skill levels to indoctrinate new Commando recruits
- Enjoy multi-player mode over the internet

GO TO WAR AND GET THE DEMO AT:
www.eidosinteractive.com

COMMANDOS

BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY™

Tiny

PYRO STUDIOS

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

EIDOS INTERACTIVE

GO TO WAR!

COMMANDOS: Beyond the Call of Duty and Eidos Interactive are trademarks of EIDOS Plc. ©1997-1998 Eidos. All Rights Reserved.

Go to #276 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Eat Lead, Fritz!

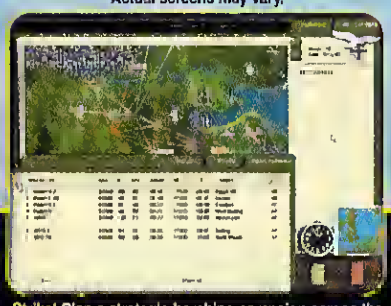
Europe 1940-1941, the German war machine has just conquered all of France. Hitler's hordes look out across the English Channel to the White Cliffs of Dover and are ready to cross and bring Britain to her knees. Only one obstacle remains in their path—The British Royal Air Force!

Gary Grigsby and Keith Brors, creators of the famous Steel Panthers™ series, have teamed up with TalonSoft® to deliver a revolutionary new strategy wargame. TalonSoft's BATTLE OF BRITAIN™ combines an intensity and variable depth of play never experienced before in a computer wargame.

Turn-based Planning, Real-Time Execution

TALONSOFT'S BATTLE OF BRITAIN™

Actual screens may vary.



Strike! Plan a strategic bombing campaign across the English Channel.

Scramble! Send up fighters to intercept incoming Luftwaffe raids.

Direct hit! Check damage assessment on individual targets—airfields, railroads and industrial facilities.

TALONSOFT

©Copyright 1998 TalonSoft Inc., P.O. Box 43730, White Marsh, MD 21236 Call (410) 933-9191 or visit our web site at www.talonsoft.com
TalonSoft's Battle of Britain™ is a registered trademark of TalonSoft Inc All other trademarks are property of their respective holders

JOHNNY WILSON

Look Out! Ole Mac Is Back

Will Apple Really Reach the Core with New Initiative?

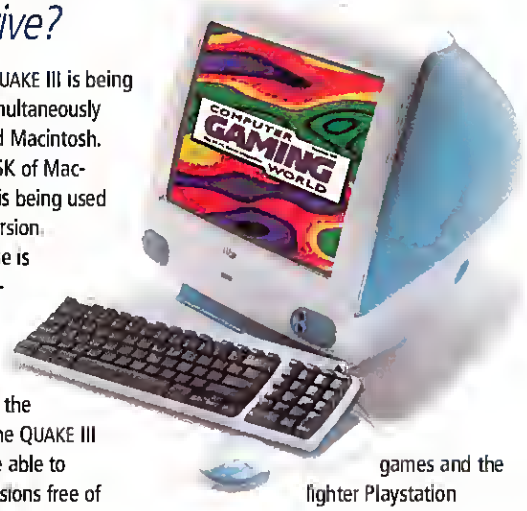
I've just returned from the best medicine show I've seen since the last time I visited Knott's Berry Farm. At Knott's Berry Farm, Disneyland's little-known competitor "behind the Orange Curtain" of California's bastion of political conservatism, an actor plays the role of a con man selling some ungodly panacea for every ill known to man. He has rigged up some special effects to add credibility to his spiel, but it's pretty easy to see through the charade. At MacWorld (not to be confused with anyone's amusement park, since Macintosh enthusiasts take their machines seriously), it was difficult to separate the special effects from the test results.

Steve Jobs can be a fast-talking showman whose patter may well be the equivalent of a W.C. Fields role. His keynote address at MacWorld, demonstrating the superiority of the new PowerMac G3 with ATI Rage 12B as standard equipment, was such a show. He worked the crowd with an incredible mixture of polished showmanship and "Gee, Shucks" jeans-clad charm. He proved how the Mac was still the champion in graphic production applications. (What a surprise! Adobe Photoshop, originally designed for the Mac OS, runs significantly faster on a Power PC G3 than it does on a Compaq Presario with Pentium II at 450 Mhz!) Then, he threw us a slider. He proved how the Mac was now champion in real-time, 3D graphics by putting the new G3 in a race with a Voodoo^2-enhanced Pentium II at 450 Mhz. (Another surprise! DARK VENGEANCE, a first-person shooter from longtime Macintosh developer, Reality Bytes, runs faster on the new G3 Macintosh!)

Still, the hometown fans of MacWorld loved it. Clearly, Wintel should shake in their boots after such a demonstration. Then, Jobs began to recount the virtues of the new G3: the expandability up to 1GB of RAM and hard disk storage up to 100GB; I/O ports for Ethernet, USB, and FireWire; the door that opens to let users have full access to the guts of the machine; the four expansion slots

(three 64-bit 33Mhz and one 32-bit 66Mhz PCI slots) and the new, sleek design. By the time he finished with three stirring video-clips, even yours truly—the AntiMac—felt ready to walk down the aisle to repent as though I were at a Pentecostal tent meeting.

Speaking of tent meetings, guess who they had get up to "testify?" None other than id Software's own John Carmack! When John Carmack says that he's speaking because Apple has finally gotten its act together with 3D graphics, any gamer is going to have to pay attention. According to Carmack, he uses the Macintosh in DeathMatch play sessions at id and competes favorably with people on PCs. He also says that Apple's embrace with Silicon Graphics, Inc. (Apple is adding OpenGL to the Mac OS) means that QUAKE III is being developed simultaneously on the PC and Macintosh. Only about 15K of Mac-specific code is being used in the Mac version. Everything else is platform independent. Better yet, Carmack promises that the licensees of the QUAKE III engine will be able to build Mac versions free of additional charges.



Of course, Apple has been known to destroy their potential in the game market before. There is a corporate hubris that goes back a long way with plenty of aphorisms to dredge up regularly to support the idea that games are frivolous and peripheral. Yet, they definitely seem to be moving the right direction right now by listening to developers about OpenGL and pinpointing the hottest titles for Macintosh versions expected to be superior to the PC games. The first round of announcements includes AGE OF EMPIRES, BATTLEZONE, FLY!, HERETIC II, IMPERIALISM II, MYTH II, QUAKE III, QUEST FOR GLORY V, RAINBOW SIX, SIMCITY 3000, STARCRAFT, and TOMB RAIDER III. Plus, there is a larger number of announcements to be made in the wings. (FALCON 4.0 will be one of those.) Also, some Macintosh owners will be excited about the new software-based emulator for Sony Playstation games by a company called Connectix. Casual gamers should really enjoy the flexibility of being able to play the "big" PC games and the lighter Playstation games on the same platform.

Still, there are challenges ahead for Apple. I can't see core gamers moving to the G3 and accepting a smaller list of available titles. The Playstation emulator adds to the title mix, but that's addressable simply by purchasing a Playstation. Further, most gamers are not going to be happy with what Carmack calls the "silly one-button mouse," or the inability to expand the iMac beyond its aging 3D card, near-Chiclet keyboard, and tinny built-in speakers. Finally, Apple will be challenged to get out some unique Macintosh games. Without something unique to the Mac, I can't see even early adopters making the switch.

In spite of Steve Job's impressive medicine show, I'm not going to buy the impressive new Macintosh as my next gaming panacea. But unlike my stance on previous Macintoshes, I'm not going to tell my friends to avoid them like London during the plague, either. Finally, the Mac looks like a viable platform again. It's about time. CGW

When John Carmack says that Apple has finally gotten its act together, even the AntiMac has to listen.

SIERRA™
STUDIOS

©1999 Sierra On-Line, Inc. All rights reserved. Sierra, Sierra Studios, Return to Krondor, Caesar, Half-Life, Valve's Dawn, and the Valve logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sierra On-Line, Inc.

3D Action

Strategy

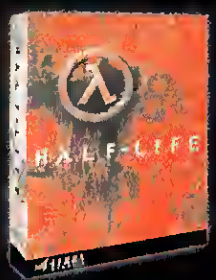
"Positively radiates with cool."
– Computer Gaming World

"Caesar III is a Resounding Success!"
– Computer Gaming World

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD ★★★★★

"★★★★½"

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD EDITORS' CHOICE



HALF-LIFE™

CAESAR™ III

E-Ticket Rides

www.sierrastudios.com

3D Adventure

"One of the year's biggest and most exciting new adventure games."

– Computer Gaming World

Role Playing

"...an 11-chapter epic, which...sets a new standard for PC role playing games."

– Antagonist Games Network

KING'S QUEST®
MASK OF ETERNITY™

RAYMOND E. FEIST'S
Return to Krondor™

Go to #194 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

DENNY ATKIN

Happy Landings

Yes, Virginia, You Can Land Successfully in FALCON 4.0

When you've flown flight sims for a while, you start to get complacent. Except for a few times when I've been distracted by a phone call or surprise spousal shoulder rub, it's literally been years since I crashed an undamaged plane on landing. So imagine my dismay when I broke the landing gear off my F-16 on seven of my first eight landing attempts in FALCON 4.0.

Luckily, I had a chance to talk to MicroProse's Gilman Louie before I trashed my squadron's entire allotment of F-16s. He shared the landing technique he learned from F-16 pilot Pete Bonnani. After a few touch-and-gos practicing this technique, my only crashes have come when flying heavily damaged aircraft. So here's the official Gilman/Bonnani Landing Course, with a few tweaks by yours truly.

Use the Flight Path Marker, Luke

To practice landings, choose Mission 9 in the Tactical Engagement section. You'll enter the sim on an extended final approach. Contact the tower by pressing T and request an emergency landing, in order to get clearance for a straight-in approach.

As you near the runway, extend your airbrakes and drop your speed to about 180 knots. Don't retract your airbrakes when reach your target speed, however. Leaving them open will give you better response to throttle movements at slow speed. Once you reach 180 knots, drop your landing gear.

Also, rather than just pressing B to open the brakes all the way, hold down Shift-B for a count of four to open them to about 60 percent of full extension. (The left cockpit view has a brake percentage indicator.) This will help keep you from scraping the brakes on the ground if you pull the nose up too high. Real F-16s now limit the brake extension to 43 percent when the gear is down.

The key to successful landings in FALCON 4.0 is learning to use the flight path marker on the HUD (heads-up display). If you're not familiar with how the marker works, read the description on pages 1–5 of the FALCON 4.0 manual, and fly training mission 1.

Place the flight path marker on the black overrun area at the close end of the runway. Use the throttle to keep the marker on the overrun area and your speed around 180 knots. The marker should be about two to three degrees below the HUD's horizon line—more than that and you're too high on final approach.

I broke the gear off my F-16 on seven of my first eight landing attempts.

Landing with Flare

Now watch the altitude tape on the right side of the HUD. When it reaches 100 feet—no sooner—start to pull the nose up and "walk" the flight path marker to the far end of the runway. You can start pulling the throttle back now.

Watch your nose angle—the optimal angle will have the 10 degree HUD marker lined up with the gun cross. If you've done everything right, you should hear the gentle squeak of the tires hitting the runway, rather than the all-too-familiar screech of your fuselage scraping the ground.

Once you've touched down, don't drop the nose. Instead, keep the 10-degree angle until the nose falls on its own. This bleeds quite a bit of speed through aerobraking. Once the nose falls, use the wheel brake key (K) to slow to a stop.

You may want to activate the ACMI flight recorder while practicing. You'll be able to see your mistakes, relive your successes, and catch some impressive special effects visible in the external view that it would be suicidal to watch while on final approach.

Think you're good now? Try Mission 11, Flameout Landings. Succeed there and *then* you'll have bragging rights. CGW

Denny Atkin is seriously peeved that FALCON 4.0 shipped chock full o' bugs, yet he's having a blast flying the stable training missions.

DENNY'S RANTS

I'm thinking of writing a self-help book for game industry execs entitled I'm Okay, You Need a Patch. If you're designing games and your products exhibit any of the signs below, you're a candidate.

1) Holiday releases. When buyers have to decide between four WW2 sims, FALCON 4.0, HALF-LIFE, MYTH 2, BROOD WAR, and a half-dozen other great releases, are sales really going to be much higher than a mid-year release? Kudos to EA and Firaxis for not rushing ALPHA CENTAURI, finished in late December, onto those crowded shelves. C'mon, folks, give us something to buy in April.

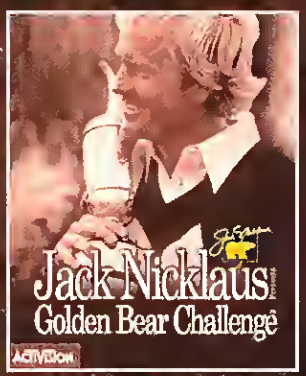
2) Developers supporting only the joystick at Controller ID 1. Hey kids, Windows has supported multiple controllers for a couple of years now. USB gives us the physical capability to attach multiple controllers, so you can, for instance, put flight controls on your joystick port and a couple of gamepads on your USB ports. Yet I've seen only one game (FALCON 4.0) so far that lets you choose between controllers.

3) Sierra Utilities. Designed to simplify patching for less technical users, this utility has numerous glitches, the worst of which is the abillty to wipe our your games directory if you uninstall the unpatched HALF-LIFE after choosing not to place it into a "Sierra" subdirectory. Most annoying is Sierra's brash placement of the icon on the root of the Start menu. Hey Sierra, you're not special, and my Start menu isn't yours to play with. Put the Sierra Utilities under the Programs submenu like everyone else. After you fix them.

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE THE GREATEST GOLFER OF THE CENTURY?

PLAY AND SEE.

Play alongside Jack Nicklaus, or as the Golden Bear himself for the first time ever!



Master your shots on the world's top courses, including Shoal Creek, Sherwood and Whistler North.

Hear famed CBS golf sportscaster Jim Nantz's shot-by-shot commentary.

JACK NICKLAUS PRODUCTIONS

www.activision.com

HYPNOS ENTERTAINMENT

coming soon to SoftwareForPCs.com

ACTIVISION

Go to #190 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Jack Nicklaus and the Golden Bear Symbol are registered trademarks and Golden Bear Challenge is a trademark of Golden Bear International. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. © 1998 Activision, Inc. Published and distributed by Activision, Inc. under license. Developed by Hypnos Entertainment, Inc. Produced in association with Jack Nicklaus Productions, Inc. All rights reserved. All other trademarks and trade names are properties of their respective owners.

Cruise Missiles Are for Wimps.

Welcome to WWII naval surface combat, where the weapons aren't smart — but they're *REALLY BIG.*

Historical scenarios, campaign games, a scenario editor plus multiplayer support for up to 4 players make for hundreds of hours of intense gameplay!

FREE INTERNET GAME PLAY
MPLAYER.COM
www.mplayer.com

FIGHTING STEEL combines the depth of a detailed sim and the tactical challenges of the finest wargame while re-creating the spectacular naval gunnery battles of WWII from 1939-1942. Command ships from the British, German, American and Japanese fleets — everything from a single ship to a Task Force consisting of several divisions — in real-time action! Combat takes place in a true 3-D world. An auto-camera allows you to view the action from many different camera angles — without losing sight of critical events as they unfold. And a powerful, easy-to-use interface lets you concentrate on strategy and tactics, so you won't miss a shot!

TO ORDER: Visit your retailer or call: 1-800-716-8503 with Visa/MasterCard (North America only).

Developed by
Divide by Zero, Inc.

Windows® 95/98 CD-ROM

SSI

www.fightingsteel.com

EVERYONE E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

©1998 Strategic Simulations, Inc. All rights reserved. The SSI logo is a registered trademark and *Fighting Steel* is a trademark of Strategic Simulations, Inc. Windows is a registered trademark or trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S.A. and other countries. All other trademarks and registered trademarks are the property of their respective holders.

TERRY COLEMAN

Emmapeeler

Channeling the Avengers, Batman, and Doctor Who to Jump-start Adventure Gaming

This past weekend, I was having the time of my life (death?) playing Manny in the afterlife of GRIM FANDANGO. And it occurred to me that if today's technology—and a designer like Tim Schaefer—can make an enjoyable game from Mexican Day of the Dead folklore, it's high time that adventure games branch out from fairies, overly-hardboiled detectives, and improbably endowed women being bent over backwards by male cigarette ads. Here, then, are my picks for games to be brought over from other media.

1. The Dark Knight Returns

The definitive noir Batman story, as far away from the camp TV show as can be imagined, and definitely *not* for kids. A middle-aged Batman hasn't donned his cape in decades, Commissioner Gordon is retiring, street gangs rule the streets of Gotham City, and the homicidal Joker is proclaimed a victim of society. Finally, Batman snaps, rips his costume out of mothballs, and declares war on his criminal enemies in a manner to give even Quentin Tarentino pause. If you darkened GRIM FANDANGO's palate just a bit and added a variety of ultraviolent arcade elements, this game could easily make fans forget the recent Batmovie abominations. Frank Miller, whose screenwriting credits include *Robocop 2*, would surely be up to the task of adapting his own graphic novel to the PC screen.

2. Doctor Who

What man could resist being a renegade Timelord, zipping about through time and space, righting wrongs with a variety of beautiful female companions at one's side? This sci-fi game would give an open-minded design team almost total freedom to come up with bizarre villains, although the infamously destructive Daleks and the egomaniacal Cybermen (to whom *Star Trek*'s Borg owe a huge debt) would certainly have to make an appearance. (Note to marketing folks: Given how talky the cult series was, you wouldn't need to plunk down millions for the rights to the latest 3D engine, either.) Larger than life and not to be taken totally seriously—a pretty good starting point for any game—whosoever might have the guts and the capital to do this one right can expect serious Eurocurrency (and even a few U.S. dollars) to come their way. They just need to get on the move while the definitive Doctor, Tom Baker, is still around to do the lead voiceover

3. The Avengers

If, like me, you suffered through the 1998 *Avengers* movie—miscast, sexless and boring—you'll thrill to the chance to play a game based on the droll, witty, and veddy British original TV series. Sure, nostalgia can be a trap, but if you were careful to set this in 1967—and to put superspy Emma Peel in that fabulous orange jumpsuit—you could have a stylish game that evokes the spirit of the original.

After all, Patrick MacNee can still play the consummate English gentleman who rarely musses his Saville Row suits whilst dispatching the foe of the week. Diana Rigg could also probably be persuaded to take time from her stints on Broadway and PBS to once again lend her velvet pipes to the voice of Emma Peel, that multi-talented scientist, martial artist, detective and imcomparably enticing married woman. Trust me: Lara Croft will be working for a temp agency after a polygonal Emma Peel hits. With the number of fighting sequences typical of the TV show, we'd need a good action/adventure engine, like KING'S QUEST. MASK OF ETERNITY. Maybe Roberta Williams or Jane Jensen would be interested in developing a title with a strong female lead?

4. Sandman Mystery Theatre

Wesley Dodds is a wild mix of Sherlock Holmes, Lord Peter Whimsy, and the 1930s version of Batman—except that the Sandman, Dodds' alter-ego, doesn't walk around with his buttocks tensed all the time. He just wears a WWI gas mask and douses his enemies with noxious fumes. All of Wesley's money doesn't help him sleep any better—hence his nocturnal superhero hobby—his perky debutante girlfriend, Dian Belmont, suspects his secret identity, and the official police force considers him an annoying amateur and borderline criminal. It's a wonderful mix, since an adventure game is all about overcoming obstacles. Maybe Guy Davis, who did the marvelous period art for the comic series, would lend his pen? If not, we'll just steal the art team who did the dream sequence for GABRIEL KNIGHT: SINS OF THE FATHERS.

It's far more likely that we'll be subjected to platform scrollers based on *Independence War XIV* than any of the above, but I can dream... CGW

Lately, TC has been acting out his swashbuckling fantasies in Bethesda's excellent REDGUARD.

> Trust me: **Lara Croft** will be working for a **temp agency** after a polygonal **Emma Peel hits.**

msn Gaming ZONE
PLAY IT FREE ON ZONE.COM

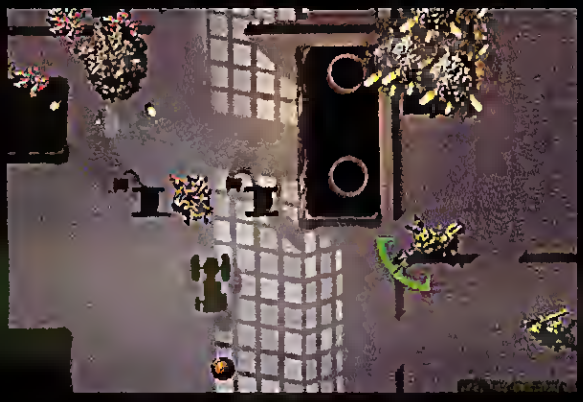
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

© 1998 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. M[illegible] trademar[illegible] Mic[illegible]
© 1997 Atomic Games, Inc. All rights reserved.

Microsoft

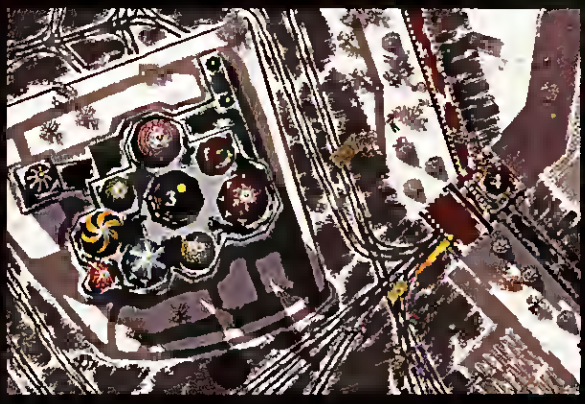
How far are you willing to go to keep your men alive? There are no rule books. No how-to guides. You've got to use your head, improvise, and change your tactics at a moment's notice. Are you up for the challenge?

1941 to 1945. Four grueling years of war. Four dramatically different seasons. From mind-numbingly cold winters to impossible-to-budge muddy springs. Every weather change comes with a new set of problems. You won't make it if you aren't prepared.



Day one. You're a low-ranking commander. But keep your troops from fleeing or getting killed and you'll soon find yourself advancing in rank and commanding more units.

As the front-line commander, all eyes are on you. Ask your soldiers to do something silly and you can expect a mutiny. But with every battle you win, their morale gets better. Bringing a whole new meaning to survival of the fittest.



As the war drags on, the technology gets better. You can choose between rocket artillery, off-map artillery, flamethrowers and 80 different vehicles, to name just a few. Not to mention over 300 squad types and 60 different kinds of soldiers.

Take your troops from the open field tundra to Berlin. Maps are bigger and based on actual aerial photographs with amazingly accurate elevation detail. The maps may be historic, but the outcome of the war is unwritten. Will history repeat itself?

CLOSE COMBAT II

THE RUSSIAN FRONT

www.microsoft.com/games/closecombat

CAPTURE.

COLLECT.

REDEEM.

1 800 468 3775

IT'S THAT SIMPLE.

Purchase any Interplay titles between March 1, 1999 and February 29, 2000, cut out and send in the UPC's, and we'll reward you with free games, accessories, or even your very own dream system!

15th ANNIVERSARY Interplay BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™

For more details, see specially marked Interplay packages, visit us at www.interplay.com/mostwantad or call 1-800-INTERPLAY.

©1999 Interplay Productions. Interplay, the Interplay logo and "By Gamers. For Gamers." are trademarks of Interplay Productions All rights reserved

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD
The #1 PC Game Magazine

PUBLISHER
Lee Uniacke

EDITORIAL MISFITS
Editor-in-Chief Johnny Wilson
Executive Editor Ken Brown
Managing Editor Joe Vallina
Features Editor Denny Atkin (Simulations)
Reviews Editor Terry Coleman (Previews, Wargames)
Technical Editor Dave Salvator (Hardware)
Senior Editor Jeff Green (RPG, Sports, Read Me)
Associate Editor Robert Coffey (Action, Strategy)
Assistant Editor Allen Greenberg (Adventure, Classics)
Assistant Editor Thierry Nguyen (Previews)
CG-ROM Editor Jack Rodrigues
Editorial Assistant Tom Price
Editorial Intern Jesse Hiatt
Contributing Editors Scorpia (Adventure Games), Charles Ardai (Interactive Fiction), Loyd Case (Hardware)
Founder Russell Sipe

DESIGN GODS
Art Director Dan Fitzpatrick
Associate Art Director Steven Wanczyk

PRODUCTION ASSASINS
Production Director Carlos Lugo
Production Manager Martin Walthall

Electronic Prepress Group
Manager Michele Kellogg
Assistant Manager Tamara Gargus
Technician Roger Drake

HOW TO CONTACT THE EDITORS
Address questions and feedback to *CGW* Editorial, 135 Main St., 14th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105
Or you may contact us via:
CGWletters@zd.com
Phone: (415) 357-4900
Editorial Fax: (415) 357-4977
Web site: **www.computergaming.com**

ADVERTISING SALES
Associate Publisher Suzanne Reider (415) 357-4915
East Coast Sales Manager Laure Pitariello (212) 503-4851
East Coast Sales Assistant Jennifer Lopes (212) 503-3926
Southwest Sales Manager Pat Walsh (949) 851-2556
Southwest Sales Assistant Sandy Marciniak (949) 852-5914
Midwest Sales Manager Marci Yamaguchi (415) 357-4944
Silicon Valley/Northwest Sales Manager
Dru Montgomery (415) 357-4925
Marketing Manager Sat Sharma (415) 357-4935
National Account Rep Joann Casey (415) 357-4920
Advertising Coordinator Leslie Ventimiglia (415) 357-4930
Assistant to the Publisher Linda Fan (415) 357-5425
Account Representative Tallie Fishburne (415) 357-5226

HOW TO CONTACT ADVERTISING SALES
Address inquiries to *CGW* Advertising, 135 Main St., 14th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105; or call (415) 357-5398; fax (415) 357-4999

SUITS
Vice President Jon Lane
Business Manager Cathy Bendoff

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES
For subscription service questions, address changes or ordering information, call (303) 665-8930 within the U.S. and Canada. All other countries call (303) 604-7445 or write to Computer Gaming World, P.O. Box 57167, Boulder, CO 80322-7167. The one year (12 issue) subscription rate is $27.94 in the U.S., and $43.94 outside the U.S., the rate for one year (12 issue) subscriptions with the monthly CD-ROM is $42.94 in the U.S., and $58.94 outside the U.S. Checks must be made payable in U.S. currency only to Computer Gaming World.

BACK ISSUES (SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY)
Back issues can be purchased for $8 in the U.S. and $10 outside the U.S. (CD-ROM version not available). Prepayment is necessary. Checks must be made payable in U.S. currency only to Computer Gaming World. Mail your request to Back Issues, ZD, Inc., P.O. Box 53131, Boulder, CO 80322-3131

MAILING LISTS
We periodically make lists of our customers available to makers of goods and services that may interest you. If you do not wish to receive such mailings, please write to us and include a copy of your mailing label.

LETTERS

WRITE US, DAMMIT! CGWLETTERS@ZD.COM

FUNNY OLD FART

Jeff Green's column (Greenspeak) in the February issue is the funniest thing I have ever read in *CGW*. It is about the funniest thing I've seen in a long time. I was in tears laughing. Your picture really set the article off. It's nice when someone can be funny by talking about themselves instead of putting someone else down. I guess I can really relate, because I just celebrated my 33rd last week and I have the same troubles with these games. Tell the editors to double your salary because you deserve it.

Gerald L. Pease

Via the Internet

ALIENS VS PREDATOR

I took one look at the cover of the March issue and quickly opened the magazine. All I can say is, it's about time! I've been waiting for ALIENS VS. PREDATOR II since late 1995! I've been looking forward to new levels and weapons and...what?? AvP II? You don't remember AvP I? NoNoNO, not that sorry arcade fighting game! AVP!!! The WOLFENSTEIN clone! Oh, I guess you didn't own an Atari Jaguar. Well, the rest of you are going to find out what the 100,000 or so of us discovered almost four years ago: REBELLION ROCKS! NO other game came close for tense, heart-stopping excitement. Not DOOM. Not HEXEN. Not QUAKE. Not even... well, RESIDENT EVIL comes close. I would literally climb up the back of my sofa! And it was a WOLFENSTEIN clone in the DOOM era! I *still* keep the Jaguar handy!

Tony T

Via the Internet

P.S. I hope it still has ventilation ducts.

You're weird, dude. But we like you anyway, so we're going to give you the world's first opportunity to play AvP from the Aliens' perspective next month. Check it out on the May issue, on sale April 6.

P II 450 AND ASUS P2B-LS

I depend on *CGW* to help me make my decisions when it's time to upgrade my gaming machine, and I pay attention to the "Killer Rigs" list for hardware choices. Much to my surprise however is your choice of the PII 450mhz CPU and the ASUS P2B-LS mother board. According to the specs on the ASUS motherboard it only supports up to 400MHZ CPUs! Why pair it with a 450MHZ CPU?

And while I'm at it, where do you get the incredible prices? Are these only corporate discount prices? The best price I could find for the ASUS motherboard was $380. How about including the source of the components as well as the item in your "Killer Rig" list?

Chuck Stratton

Via the Internet

Loyd Case responds: In fact, the P2B-LS does support 450MHz. If you look at the ASUS Web site (**www.asus.com.tw/Products/Motherboard/Pentiumpro/P2b-ls/index.html**), you'll notice the individual jumper settings for clock multiplier and bus clock. The P2B-LS supports clock multipliers in excess of 6x, so the 4.5x is no problem. You can buy systems from vendors with the P2B-LS and the 450MHz Pentium II. Heck, I'm looking forward to dropping a 500MHz Katmai in the system, though that may require a BIOS update.

Blood was the gift.
Life eternal the promise.

But every gift comes with a price.

BLOOD OF THE SACRED

GABRIEL KNIGHT

BLOOD OF THE DAMNED

A 3D MYSTERY ADVENTURE COMING 1999 A.D.

SIERRA™ STUDIOS

©1998 Sierra On-Line Inc. All rights reserved. Sierra, Sierra Studios and Gabriel Knight are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sierra On-Line Inc.

www.gabrielknight.com
www.sierrastudios.com

ZIFF-DAVIS INC

Chairman and CEO Eric Hippeau

Chief Financial Officer Timothy O'Brien

Presidents
ZD Publishing Mike Perlis
ZD Market Intelligence Bob Brown
ZD Comdex and Forums Jason Chudnofsky
ZD Brand and Market Services Terri Holbrooke
ZD Internet Productions Dan Rosensweig
ZD Education William Rosenthal
ZD Television Larry W. Wangberg

Senior Vice Presidents Rayna Brown (Human Resources)
Daryl R. Otte (Planning and Development)

Vice Presidents Steve Gladyszewski (Information Services)
J. Malcolm Morris (General Counsel and Secretary)
Mark Moyer (Controller)
Tracy Nadi (Human Resources, Operations)

Treasurer Thomas L. Wright

Corporate Sales Joe Gillespie (Executive Vice President)

ZD Media Network Jeff Bruce (Executive Director)
Scott Murphy (Executive Director)
Rita Burke (Managing Director)

ZD Brand and Market Services
Brooke Correll (Vice President, ZD Brand Marketing)
Michael Perkowski (Vice President, Client Marketing)
Elda Vale (Vice President, Corporate Research)
Herb Stern (Vice President, ZD Brand Management)
Gregory Jarboe (Director, Corporate Relations)

ZD PUBLISHING

President Mike Perlis

Executive Vice Presidents
Don Byrnes
Chris Dobbrow
Jack Dolce
Al DiGuido
Thomas McGrade
Michael J. Miller

Senior Vice President Nancy Newman

Vice Presidents
Bob Bader, John Dodge, Kathleen Goodwin, Roger Herrmann, Jonathan Lane, Eric Lundquist, Jim Manning, Charles Mast, James F. Ramaley, Paul Somerson, Mark Van Name, Sam Whitmore

Executive Director, Licensing Gertrud Borchardt

Director, Benchmark Operations Bill Catchings

Director, ZD Labs Lauren Black

Editorial Director, New Products Bill Machrone

PERMISSIONS

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD (ISSN 0744-6667) is published monthly by Ziff-Davis. Copyright © 1999 Ziff-Davis. All Rights Reserved. Material in this publication may not be reproduced in any form without permission. If you want to quote from an article, write to Chantal Tucker, One Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016-5802, or fax 212-503-5420.

ZD ZIFF-DAVIS a SOFTBANK company

Audit Bureau of Circulations Member

ABC AUDITED

Computer Gaming World is not affiliated with IDG

REPRINTS

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD Reprints

For reprints, please call Ziff-Davis reprints at (800) 825-4237.

As for the prices, we use search engines like www.pricewatch.com or www.bottomdollar.com to find the best price from reputable suppliers. Those prices represent good "target" prices you should strive for by doing a little hunting around on the Internet.

REVIEW PATCH: LORDS OF MAGIC SE

I am the General Manager of Impressions Software, developer of the LORDS OF MAGIC: SPECIAL EDITION. I was deeply disturbed by your review of the LORDS OF MAGIC SPECIAL EDITION entitled "Abra-Ca-Blah-Blah" on page 240 of the February issue. Not only does this review fail to provide any in-depth information about the scope of this product, but it implies that it is ultimately nothing more than an attempt to get our fans to "pay extra" for something we should have given them in the first place.

The SPECIAL EDITION was created to reward our fans. Its large scope, relative to standard expansion products, was to demonstrate that we care very deeply about delivering a quality gaming experience for the money. The Quest Pack contains five hand-crafted quests, each with its own story and characters, engaged in various interlocking adventures and subquests. To script each of the 200 or so encounters contained within, we had to develop our own quest editor. We estimate that these five quests provide somewhere between 50 and 100 hours of additional gameplay, of a sort not provided by the original product, nor part of its original concept. Despite this, your review mentions them only once as, "a few extra scenarios" (LOM isn't even a scenario-based game) and further questions our right to expect users to pay for them. This characterization is just inexcusable.

The inaccuracy of this review leads me to believe that you either were not very familiar with the original game, or you did not take the time to play the SPECIAL EDITION thoroughly, nor read any of our documentation regarding it, or perhaps all of the above. I think it's you're turn to issue a "massive patch" for this review.

Chris Beatrice
General Manager,
Impressions Software

Tim Carter Responds: *Mr. Beatrice is correct that my review of LORDS OF MAGIC SPECIAL EDITION did not give much attention to the additional quests included with LOM-SE. To the extent that this misrepresented the fundamental nature of LOM-SE, I apologize.*

I must correct him on one point, however, as I am familiar with the original version of LOM, having reviewed it for CGW. In any review, especially a short one, the reviewer must choose where to focus his or her analysis. In the case of LORDS OF MAGIC SPECIAL EDITION, I felt that the core game system was the appropriate place to focus my attention, in part because I did not feel that the game was strong enough to warrant paying for hours of additional gameplay. What good is an extra 50 to 100 hours of quests when most gamers won't play long enough to get through the initial game? Of what value is an expansion pack to a product so riddled with programming bugs and key design flaws that it was mostly unplayable?

Thus, I stand by my original review. LOM-SE fixed many flaws in the original LOM. Sure, it added quests, I just don't think they're worth paying for on their own.

Johnny Wilson comments: *I apologize to our readers for a review that failed to meet our standards. CGW expects its reviewers to finish the game, but Tim Carter did not finish the quests in LOM-SE, and could not adequately comment on the additional hours of gameplay. I regret the omission, and I have taken steps to reduce the chances of such an oversight in the future.*

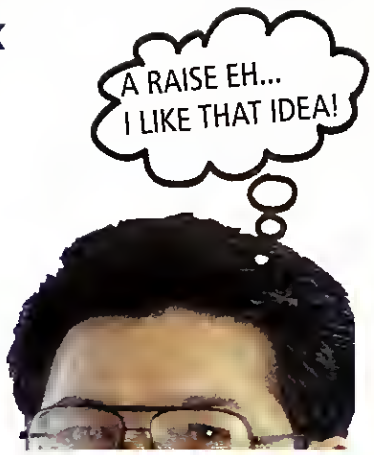
As for the rating, the additional hours of gameplay were taken into account. So, while lamenting the sloppiness of the reviewer's methodology, we stand by the three-star rating. Even with all of the enhancements and new quests, we perceive LOM: SPECIAL EDITION as a mediocre game.

YOU DON'T KNOW JACK

I must say that your CG-ROM Editor, Jack Rodrigues, continues to do the most outstanding work I've seen from any computer game magazine. He is the only editor I've ever read that is able to bring out pure rapture and jubilance in his writing. Give that man a promotion and a raise! (But don't stop him from writing.)

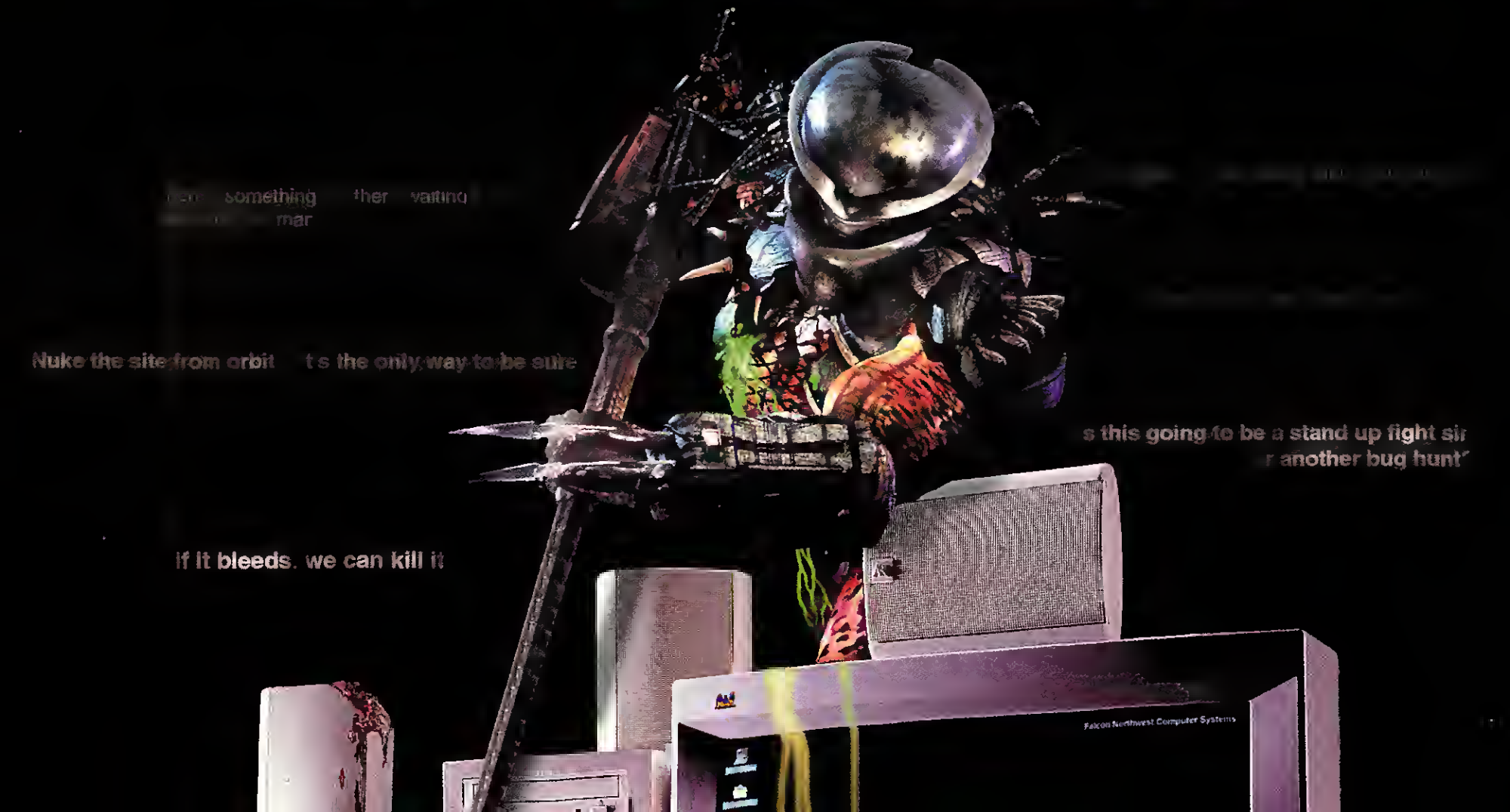
Robert Wilcox
Italy
Via the Internet

We don't often hear terms like "rapture" and "jubilance" in describing Jack, but that's okay. Good thing you live in Italy, though.



ARE YOU PREDATOR OR PREY?

FALCON GAMING PCs
MAKE THE DIFFERENCE.



Now Playing Faster on Falcon Northwest Gaming PCs:

ALIENS VERSUS PREDATOR

A Fox Interactive Production

FOX INTERACTIVE

Go to #257 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

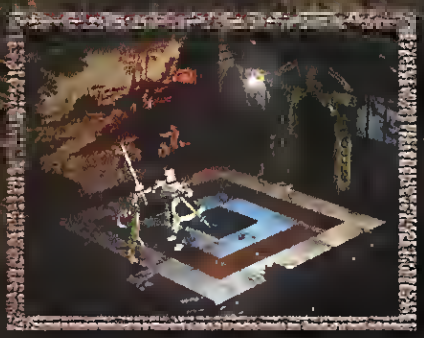
ALIENS TM & © 1992 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation.
PREDATOR TM & © 1990 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation.
ALIENS VS. PREDATOR TM & © 1999 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation.
All Rights Reserved. "Aliens," "Predator," and their respective
trademarks of Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

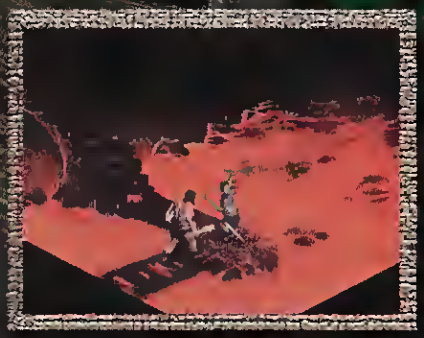
FALCON NORTHWEST
COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Clans

As Legends foretold, evil has returned to the land. A dark tide of death and destruction is now raging over your once-peaceful realm, turning brother against brother, clan against clan. Summon your courage and raise your sword for a fight to the death against a demonic monster who feeds on hatred and despair.

- Battle as one of four unique characters.
- Conquer malicious movies and mythical beasts through hundreds of miles of dangerous lands.
- Cast spells, unravel puzzles, interact with extraordinary characters.
- Clash with up to 4 players on your Internet or LAN.





Coming Soon!

www.strategyfirst.com

Strategy First

computerHouse

RATING PENDING
RP
ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE RATING BOARD

©1999 Strategy First Inc. All rights reserved. Clans is a trademark of Strategy First. All rights reserved.
All other trademarks and copyrights are the properties of their respective owners.

Pick Up Where Civ Let Off

April CD Titles

Get the CG-ROM

CGW has a new, lower price CD-ROM subscription! It's only $29.97 a year for 12 issues with 12 CDs. To subscribe to the CD-ROM version of the magazine, call (303) 665-8930 or send in one of those annoying cards that fall on the floor. If you already subscribe, you have to wait until your current sub expires before receiving the CD version. We're not sure why, except to say that it appears technology hasn't quite permeated mailing houses yet. If you have an address change or complaint about your sub, email cgw@neodata.com. Good luck, good reading, and play on.

PRODUCT/GENRE	EXECUTABLE	DESCRIPTION
ALPHA CENTAURI		
Strategy game	\Alpha\smacdemo.exe	The spiritual sequel to Civ II, where you take over a colony in space for 100 turns.
BASEBALL 2000		
Sports game	\bb2000\isebe2kdb.exe	Play a bit of Homerun Derby to get a feel for the game.
SIMCITY 3000		
City-management strategy game	\Sim3K\SC3000\Setup \English\setup	Sample a year in Maxis' newest city simulation.
SLAVE ZERO		
Third-person action	\SlaveZero\Setup \setup.exe	Exclusive demo lets you play the first mission from the game featured in last issue's cover story.
TEN		
	\ten\setup.exe	Front-end for TEN, where you can play a variety of multiplayer games.
TEST DRIVE 5		
Arcade racing	\TestDrive5\TD5 CGW DEMO.exe	Race through a track in either a '69 or a '99 Corvette.
THE AXE		
Music-making software	\Demos\Axe\install.exe	With three instruments, make your own little tunes and ditties.
THIEF: THE DARK PROJECT		
First-person burglar simulator	\Thief\ThiefD.exe	Rob a governor in this abbreviated version of the first mission.
UNTOUCHABLES		
Fighting game	\untouchable\ untouch.avi	AVI preview of a fighting game.
WARBIRDS 2.5		
Flight sim	\Warbirds25\setup	Front end for I-Magic's well-known online sim.

THEY SAY YOU CAN'T REWRITE HISTORY...

3400 BC: **SUMERIANS USE WHEELED VEHICLES.**

0 AD

271 AD: **CHINESE CREATE FIRST COMPASS.**

1313 AD: **GERMANS INVENT GUNPOWDER.**

1759 AD: VIKINGS DEVELOP A FLEET OF SUPERSONIC JETS ARMED WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS

~~1903 AD: WRIGHT BROTHERS FIRST FLIGHT.~~

THEY NEVER USED OUR GUIDE

ACTIVISION.

CIVILIZATION
CALL TO POWER

TAKE YOUR GAME FURTHER

BRADYGAMES

Civilization: Call to Power © 1999 Activision, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and Call To Power is a trademark of Activision, Inc. CIVILIZATION computer games © 1991-1998 Hasbro Interactive and Microprose, Inc. MICROPROS and CIVILIZATION are U.S. registered trademarks and HASBRO INTERACTIVE, the HASBRO INTERCTIVE logo, and related marks are trademarks of Hasbro or its affiliates. MicroProse is a subsidiary of Hasbro or its affiliates. This product made and sold under license from MicroProse. All rights reserved. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

DRAKAN's Combination of Beautiful Warrior and Powerful Dragon Cast an Irresistible Spell

Beauty & the Beast

Ever since seeing DRAKAN at a Psygnosis press party late last year, I couldn't wait to see what it's like to go flying with Rynn by dragon-back. My wish came true just before press time when I received a playable beta of the game. After playing it for a few days, I'm very impressed.

Rynn's character is beautifully modeled, and she looks like she could kick Lara Croft's ass.

Aerial dogfighting gets up-close and personal in the narrow confines of the grotto.

Using a third-person perspective, the game combines hand-to-hand fighting using all sorts of weapons and spells with intense aerial dragon dogfights. You take on the role of Rynn, a beautiful warrior girl, on a quest to rescue her kidnapped brother from the evil Wartoks. Her companion, a fire-breathing dragon named Arokh, can talk, fly, and blast foes with four different kinds of lethal fire and gas.

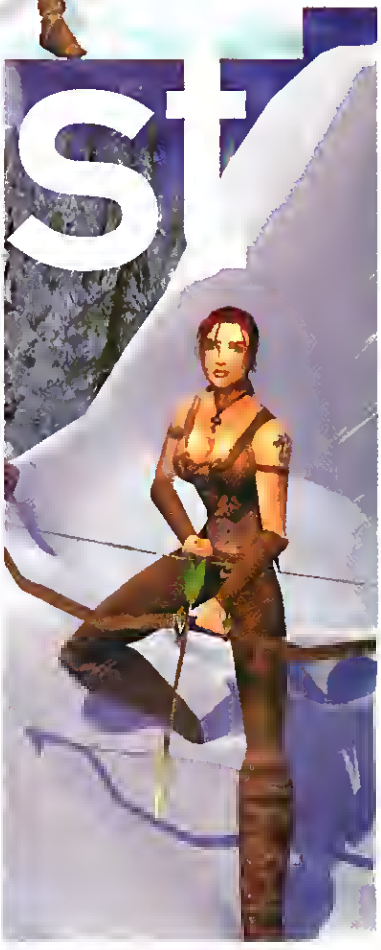
The game takes place in a series of beautiful and stunningly realistic outdoor environments. Each level is extremely large and spectacularly detailed, featuring mountain ranges; canyons; rivers and waterfalls; small villages; and extensive cavern systems. The game strives for total immersion and even the weather is very realistically modeled with excellent looking rain, wind, and snowfall effects. The lighting changes based on the time of day, and the water effects are quite impressive. The developers have taken great care in trying to breath life into this magical world.

You might think DRAKAN bears strong similarities with TOMB RAIDER III, but gameplay is more along the lines of HERETIC II. Both HERETIC II and DRAKAN focus on fighting, whereas TR III is more puzzle-oriented. Most of the game involves intense combat with the kilted Wartoks and other fiendish creatures, however exploration is richly rewarded both in terms of finding treasure and the thrill of stumbling across cool hidden areas. There is an easy-to-use inventory system and plenty of useful items to collect. The transition from controlling Rynn on the ground to Arokh in the air is seamless.

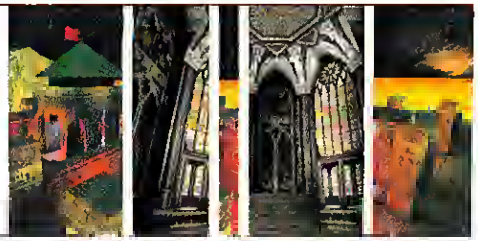
The game's list of impressive technological features includes colored lighting, high-res textures, and realistic skeletal character animation. The creatures' artificial intelligence looks promising. A Wartok might charge Rynn if she is on the ground but then run for cover if under fire. Wartoks investigate strange sounds and call for help if they see the player.

According to Psygnosis, the game is about 80 percent complete and should be released sometime by May, 1999.

KENNETH JOHNSON



UNREAL Developments



GT Interactive Polishing Two Games Using the UNREAL Engine

Delivering what may well have been the snazziest graphics of the past year, the engine powering UNREAL was one of 1998's real technical standouts. Now GT Interactive is preparing to release two new, very dissimilar games using this engine.

UNREAL TOURNAMENT

While UNREAL's developer, EpicMegaGames, has been addressing that game's multiplayer shortcomings via patches, they are really embracing the multiplayer experience with UNREAL TOURNAMENT (UT), currently slated for an April release. While the game will sport blistering online action, UT will encourage gamers to hone their skills in the game's single player ladder tournaments. Gamers will battle increasingly deadly bots in four separate games, each with 8 to 10 levels. Gamers who rise to the top of each ladder will earn the title of UNREAL Grandmaster and be able to use a previously locked robot mesh as their online avatar.

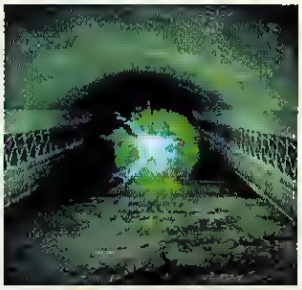
UT features several new weapons including a nuke, the impact hammer melee weapon, and (our favorite) the Redeemer—a missile launcher that lets you steer the warhead through doors and hallways to obliterate your target. New gear includes a Translocator, sort of a handheld teleportation device that lets you easily reach high platforms as well as telefrag your enemies.

While UT will support the standard deathmatch and capture-the-flag options, it's the Domination and Assault games that are most exciting. Domination tasks teams with controlling specific points on a map, accruing points the longer they hold them; the first team to reach a preset number of points wins. In Assault, teams must complete timed mission to destroy or defend targets to progress. Obviously, all of this will be available for play against other humans, not just bots.

THE WHEEL OF TIME

Based on Robert Jordan's popular fantasy series, THE WHEEL OF TIME (WOT) is an unusual first-person shooter/strategy hybrid, which is set about 100 years before the first *Wheel of Time* story. There are no conventional weapons—gamers must use angreal, which lets them cast up to 30 spells, including fireballs, enemy-seeking balls of energy, shields, and a shift plane that teleports you about five feet, perfect for avoiding seeking spells cast by opponents. Angreal are collected as gamers work to retrieve mystic seals held by their enemies.

What should elevate WOT above the shooter mob is its unusual strategic game. Seals will be housed in citadels, each held by a player. You'll have to outfit your citadel with pits, spear traps, thick walls, portcullises, and vicious monsters to protect your seals while your away stealing seals yourself. Additionally, higher level sentries can be purchased and given orders to guard specific areas or to round up monsters from all over when intruders appear. WOT's multiplayer game, supporting up to four players, customize fortresses according to preset spending limits, should be extremely interesting. WOT is currently set to hit shelves in May.

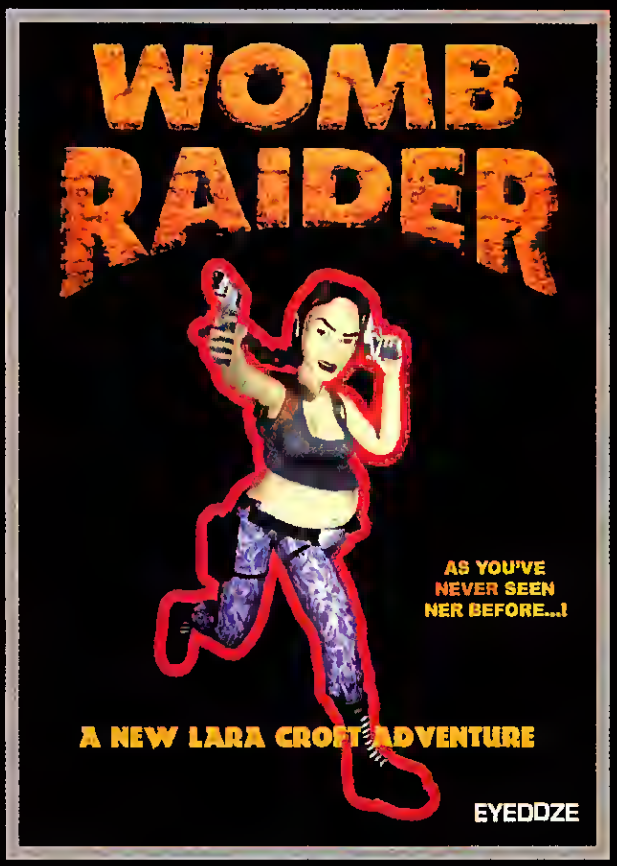


Spells in the game really show off WHEEL OF TIME's great lighting effects. In one, a green Seeker spell hunts its target down a long tunnel while a blast of lightning takes out some trollocs in the other.

MiG Alley Takes Off

After the disappointment of Virgin/Eagle Interactive's mediocre SABRE ACE, flight sim fans anxious for a Korean War game will be pleased to know that Empire's MiG ALLEY is finally set for takeoff in the first half of this year. From the makers of FLYING CORPS, this sim promises a dynamic campaign, dogfights over the Yalu river featuring over 50 planes, ground troops who will react to your strafing runs, and six flyable aircraft. Look for a full-blown hands-on preview in next month's *CGW*.

Skilled. Dangerous. Pregnant.



Lara's back... and she's pregnant! Now she must find out who is responsible.

Sure, Lara Croft has a hot body, but with all this adventuring she hasn't had time for extra-curricular activities. So imagine her surprise when she starts waking up with nausea, fatigue, and a strange craving for lobster ice cream. Now Lara must track down and identify the mysterious Womb Raider. She'll kill whoever did this to her — or at least make sure that they pay child support.

Three levels of difficulty (Trimesters 1-3) • Activate the Swollen Ankle Walk for an added challenge • Powerful new weapons, including the Used Diaper and the Childbirth Pain Gun (Target feels like they're passing a watermelon)

©1999 Chris Condon • www.dumbentia.com

WOMB RAIDER

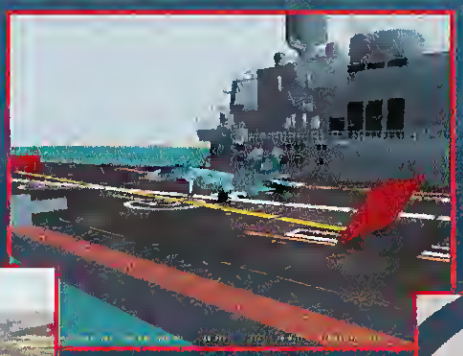
This parody is the brainchild of Chris Condon, a Systems Engineer at a network integration company. Condon has more than 30 parodies on his site, www.dumbentia.com, including spoofs of Microsoft, Apple, Linux, Kenneth Starr, and Monica Lewinsky. For a good laugh, check it out, and be sure to see his "seven deadly motivational posters," offering positive reinforcement for those with slothful, wrathful, gluttonous, greedy, and lustful dispositions.

If you play QUAKE II online, you may also encounter Condon's remains in his guise as "Fuzzyman."

Prepare for a rare Russian RUSH!

FLANKER™ 2.0 straps you into a brand new carrier-based Su-33 for

Campaign mission module includes resource management, realistic enemy engagement and save now/play later mission save system.



Mission editor lets you create your own realistic theater of operation.

Features detailed 3D ships, aircraft and ground vehicles.

Engage in multiplayer furballs with up to 16 players via a LAN – or go head-to-head on the internet.

www.flanker2.com

©1998 Strategic Simulations, Inc. All rights reserved. The SSI logo is a registered trademark and Flanker and the Digital Combat Series logo are trademarks of Strategic Simulations, Inc. Windows is a registered trademark or trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. All other trademarks and registered trademarks are the property of their respective holders.

state-of-the-art air combat — Russian style!

WINDOWS® 95/98
CD-ROM

FLANKER™ 2.0 features stunning graphics and streamlined playability – without compromising the technical excellence of its famous predecessor! Using previously classified Russian satellite imagery and a new 3D graphics engine, this state-of-the-art combat sim provides photo-realistic terrain. Improved flight dynamics, a new 3D sound system, and accurate damage modeling create a true combat experience. Novice users will be delighted by the intuitive menu system. From the interactive training sessions to the ultra-realistic flight model, this premier combat flight sim is truly a rare Russian RUSH!

TO ORDER: visit your retailer or call:
1-800-716-8503
with Visa/MC
(North America only)

SSI

DIGITAL COMBAT SERIES™

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

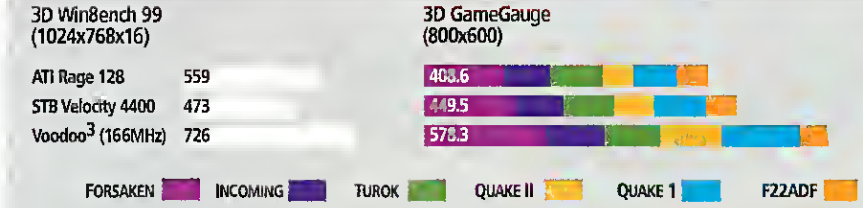
Go to #212 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

First Test!

VOODOO3

New 3Dfx Chips Are Faster Than The Current Leaders

TEST RESULTS



Tested on a Pentium-II 400MHz system with 128MB of memory, the 440BX chipset, and EIDE storage components.

3Dfx is preparing to raise the bar again. The 3D performance champion, following its acquisition of board-maker STB, is preparing to unleash Voodoo3 in four different offerings. We put the Voodoo3 3000 and 3500 versions to the test, and the results were mighty impressive. Voodoo3 outperformed both nVidia's RIVA TNT and ATI's Rage 128, the two current performance leaders.

Voodoo3 will come in four flavors, broken down by speed grade. For motherboard-down configurations, there'll be a 125MHz version, followed by two "mainstream" parts, the Voodoo3 2000 and 3000, whose speed grades will be 143 and 166MHz, respectively. Finally, the flagship part will be the Voodoo3 3500, which will be clocked at 183MHz. On the 3500, 3Dfx may include additional control panels to allow tweakers to try and squeeze every last bit of performance out of the chip.

We tested the Voodoo3 3000 (166MHz) against the two current champions, RIVA TNT and Rage 128, and the Voodoo3 beat both of them. Image quality looked very solid as well. And since Voodoo3's drivers were beta, its performance may see further improvement before cards start shipping.

For those gamers pining for a 3D-only Voodoo3 card, there may be good news in the offing. According to one source at 3Dfx, a 3D-only board using Voodoo3's 3D core may be a future product. Stay tuned to *CGW*'s 3D IronWorks (in the Hardware section) for more details on Voodoo3 products.

DAVE SALVATOR

NEWSFLASH

Origin Quashes ULTIMA ONLINE Suit

The lawsuit against EA and Origin over ULTIMA ONLINE has been withdrawn. The six gamers known as Ken Hinther et al. (represented by attorney George Schultz) dropped their case against EA in early January. As part of the settlement, EA agreed to donate $15,000 to the San Jose Tech Museum, but both parties have to pay for their own legal fees.

The legal dispute began in March, 1998, when Schultz filed suit against EA and Origin for breach of contract, negligence, misrepresentation, and breach of warranty. He charged that EA and Origin should pay damages to UO users for releasing a game plagued by alleged technical problems, such as lag and server crashes, and deceptive packaging, such as a failure to mention monthly fees and adequate system requirements.

Schultz told *GameSpot* news that he thought the gaming industry was better off as a result of his case. "I never saw the subject of bugs in games treated more seriously," he said. "Maybe next time it won't take a lawsuit to hear what [gamers] have to say about a game."

Origin released a statement saying, "We take extreme exception to Mr. Schultz's judgment that his actions have made the gaming industry better. He failed to certify this as a class action in part because his plaintiffs were not representative of the more than 100,000 paying ULTIMA ONLINE players."

New Festival For Indie Developers

The Gathering of Developers and Miller Freeman are teaming up to host what they hope will be this industry's version of the Sundance Film Festival. The two will co-present the first annual GDC Independent Games Festival at Miller Freeman's Game Developers Conference March 16–18 in San Jose, CA. The festival will recognize console, PC, Mac and online games equally, according to organizers. A $10,000 Grand Prize for the best independent game of the year will go to the winner. Awards will also be presented for Technical Excellence, Art, Audio, Game Design and Audience Choice.

Miller Freeman says the Independent Games Festival is designed to promote interactive entertainment as an artform and provide a forum for independent developers to show their work.

Microsoft Buys FASA

Microsoft acquired FASA Interactive Technologies from its parent company, Virtual World Entertainment Group, in early January. This gives Microsoft the "exclusive and perpetual electronic rights" to FASA's popular BattleTech property. Neither company released financial terms of the deal.

FASA Interactive is currently developing MECHWARRIOR 3 for MicroProse and Hasbro Interactive. Microsoft Games manager Ed Fries indicated that FASA would finish the title for the two companies. However, future BattleTech titles will be published by Microsoft, such as MECHWARRIOR 4 (said to be in development now).

This Odd's for You.

Save the Mudokons and save your game anywhere!

"...combines stunning graphics and engrossing gameplay." (★ ★ ★ ★ out of four)
- USA TODAY

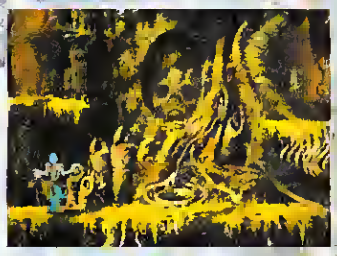
"An awesome successor to an outstanding original."
- GAMES ADDICT

"Top Ten, Hot 100 Games for the Holidays."
- COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

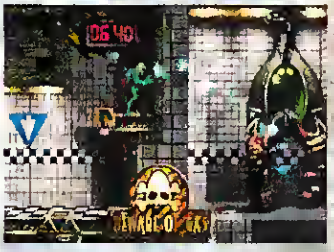
"Witty, fun and full of action... a great game to usher in the new year."
- LA TIMES

Abe gets all emotional! More panic! More talking! More pleading!

"...brilliant scripting and...hilarious... gameplay distinguish this title as something special."
- FORBES ONLINE



Tons of cool new power-ups! Invisibility! Healing powers! And more!



Flesh-eating Fleeches! Undead Mudombies! Bone-grinding Greeters!

In odd we trust

Available at your local retail store. Order direct at www.gtstore.com or call 1-800-610-GTIS

PC CD ROM

A.L.I.V.E.
Aware Lifeforms In Virtual Entertainment

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

NEED A HINT?
1-900-CALL-2GT
(225-5248)
($.99 per minute. $1.99 for fax back maps). Must be 18 years or older or have parents permission to call. Touch tone phones only.

ODDWORLD INHABITANTS™
www.oddworld.com

GT Interactive Software
www.gtgames.com

Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus™ © 1998 Oddworld Inhabitants, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Created by Oddworld. Published and Distributed by GT Interactive Software Corp. GT is a trademark and the GT Logo is a registered trademark of GT Interactive Software Corp. Oddworld Inhabitants Logo is a registered trademark of Oddworld Inhabitants, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies.

NEWS FLESH

Eye on Ion

Ion Storm's QAIKATANA has been delayed until at least January, 2000, while developers address the program AI's lack of Y2K compliance.... In other Ion news, the company proudly

announced it had completed a massive bundling deal for over 800,000 copies of DOMINION. "We're excited to be able to bundle OOMINION in every box of Cocoa Frosted Flakes," said Kellogg's CEO Antonio Tiger. "We foresee a marked increase in sales once mothers realize what a great job OOMINION CDs do of keeping cereal bowls from leaving rings on the table." Ion's John Romero said, "The people now here at Ion are very positive. Morale has never been higher."

Fire in the Hole!

We've unearthed more details on SID MEIER'S LATRINE TYCOON, which focuses on the unsung heroes of war: latrine management battalions. The game will feature resource management in the form of shovels, lime, air fresheners, toilet paper, and, in later scenarios, portable chemical toilets. Of course the turn-based game will feature a state-of-the art 3D game engine with real-time volumetric colored lighting, volumetric fog, four-channel positional audio, and force feedback support certain to put gamers knee-deep in the latrine action. Sid lifted the lid on a few scenarios for us: One mission has you scrambling to deal with hundreds of infantrymen who've eaten too much overripe fruit while another (our favorite) is a frightening Civil War scenario spotlighting the tragic misapplication of poison oak.

Sim Pilot Gets Girlfriend

Dedicated flight sim pilot Tom "Baby Ooc" Revvord announced recently he has gotten a girlfriend. "It was horrible," said newsgroup regular Lee Kim. "He didn't show up at the FALCON 3.0 LAN meet, and we needed his rig, so we went to his place. And there he was, in his replica F-16 cockpit, strangely intertwined with...a *woman*." Revvord's virtual squadron members at the 888th fighter group are still reeling from the shock. "Of course we're worried. For God's sake, man, he's a FLANKER 2.0 beta tester! He has responsibilities!"

Total Recall

Following up on its laudable recall of FOOTBALL '99, Sierra FXHomeAttractions has recalled all games shipped in 1997. Purchasers will receive a coupon good for a free game, and a complimentary copy of OUTPOST.

ILLUSTRATION: DESIATO http://spew.hulka.com/

RAILROAD
TYCOON II™
COMPUTER GAMING WORLD
PREMIER FINALIST 1999
"PC GAME OF THE YEAR"
-Alta Vista's Wild Wild Web
"★★★★"
-USA Today
"★★★★★"
-PC Gaming World
"★★★★★"
-PC Gamecenter
"One of the most exciting sequels of the year!"
-CNN
"The game every strategy fan has wanted for years! ★★★★½"
-Computer Games Strategy Plus
Developed by
PopTop Software
www.poptop.com
Railroad Tycoon II, the Railroad Tycoon II logo and the PopTop logo are trademarks of PopTop Software, Inc. Gathering of Developers and God Games are trademarks of Gathering of Developers, Inc. © 1998 Gathering of Developers, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
A STRATEGY GAME THAT RUNS ON A TOTALLY DIFFERENT KIND OF ENGINE.
Go to #124 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Introducing the first PC racing sim you don't need a physics degree to drive.

NASCAR revolution

Pick your car. One of 17 sonctioned, treod-shreddin' trocks. And the fastest line. Then crank over the conversation-killin' virtuol V-8 and hit the bonks with 43 of NASCAR's big dogs.

Download the demo now ond drive the new revolution. ***www.NASCARrevolution.com***

It's a lap or be lapped world.

If it's in the game, it's in the game.

EA SPORTS

NASCAR PC

EVERYONE E

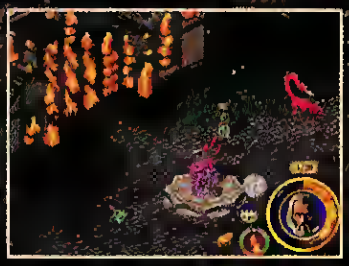
Software © 1999 Electronic Arts 209 Redwood Shores Parkway Redwood City, CA 94065 EA SPORTS the EA SPORTS logo and "If it's in the game, it's in the game" are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts in the U.S. and/or other countries. NASCAR is a registered trademark of National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing, Inc. "Dale Earnhardt" name and likeness, and likeness of the #3 Richard Childress Racing car used under license from Dale Earnhardt, Inc. © 1999 license for driver helmet car and uniform granted by Dale Earnhardt, Inc. "Valvoline" trademark "Roush Racing" and "Mark Martin" name and/or likeness by authority of Roush Racing, Livonia MI. "Terry Labonte" name and likeness and Kellogg's marks under license granted by Kellogg Company and Hendrick Motorsports. TM © 1999 Kellogg Company. HOT WHEELS is a trademark owned by and used under license (with permission) from Mattel Inc. © 1999 Mattel Inc. SIP® Trademark used under license. Talladega Superspeedway and all associated logos are the property of International Speedway Corporation and used under license. All other car, team and driver images, track names, trademarks and other intellectual property are used under license from their respective owners. 3Dfx © 1999 3Dfx Interactive Inc. The 3Dfx Interactive logo is a trademark of 3Dfx Interactive, Inc. All rights reserved.

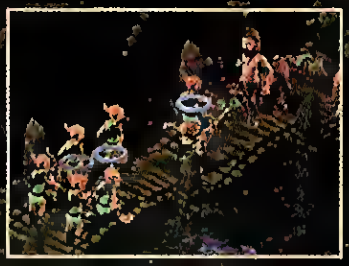
From Mythos Games, the creators of the legendary X-com series, comes another addictive real time strategy game that will take you beyond human limits...

MAGIC & MAYHEM

You are all-powerful.

Release your magic against opposing sorcerers and monsters. Dispatch fireballs against your foes, invoke the apocalypse against their beasts, and infect your opponent's forces with disease. Avoid traps, solve mysteries, gather artifacts. Get ready for the quest of a lifetime...





- Sommon more than 20 mighty creatures
- Battle through 36 regions and three ercane realms
- Create deadly combinations with over 60 spells
- Fast adaptive Artificial Inteiligance
- No two games ever the same
- Addictive multi-player mode
- Bewitching sound track

summon your powers

BETHESDA SOFTWORKS™ • 1370 Piccard Drive, Suite 120, Rockville, MD 20850 • Fax: 301 926-8010 • www.bethsoft.com

Magic & Mayhem Copyright ©1998 Virgin Interactive Entertainment (Europe) Limited and Mythos Games Limited. All Rights Reserved.
Distributed under license from Virgin Interactive Entertainment (Europe) Limited.

A-10 Warthog Janes/EA	Q2 99
Age of Empires II Ensemble/Microsoft	Q3 99
Aliens vs. Predator Fox	Q1 99
Anachronox Eidos	Q3 99
Army Men II 3DO	Q1 99
Babylon 5 Space Combat Sierra F/X	Q3 99
Beneath Activision	Q3 99
Braveheart Eidos	Q2 99
Civilization: Call to Power Activision	Q1 99
Civilization II: Test of Time MicroProse	Q1 99
Conquest Microsoft	Q3 99
Darkatana Ion Storm/Eidos	Q2 99
Diablo II Blizzard	Q3 99
Drakan Psygnosis	Q2 99
Dungeon Keeper 2 Bullfrog/EA	Q1 99
Expert Pool Psygnosis	Q1 99
Field & Stream Trophy Bass 3D Sierra	Q2 99
Final Countdown Impact	Q1 99
Flanker 2.0 SSI	Q2 99
Fleet Command Jane's/EA	Q2 99
FLY! GOD	Q2 99
Gabriel Knight 3 Sierra Studios	Q3 99
Giants Interplay	Q2 99
Gunship III MicroProse	Q3 99
Heavy Gear II Activision	Q1 99
Heavy Metal F.A.K.K.2 GOD	Q4 99
Heroes of M&M III 3DO	Q1 99
Homeworld Sierra Studios	Q2 99
Imperialism II SSI	Q2 99
Indiana Jones/Infernal Machine LucasArts	Q2 99
Interstate '82 Activision	Q2 99
Jack Nicklaus Golf Activision	Q1 99
Jeff Gordon XS Racing ASC Games	Q1 99
Kingpin Interplay	Q3 99
Lands of Lore 3 Westwood/EA	Q1 99
Lego Racers Lego Games	Q2 99
Loose Cannon Microsoft	Q3 99
Machines Acclaim	Q2 99
Magic & Mayhem Bethesda	Q2 99
Max Payne GOD	Q3 99
Metal Fatigue Psygnosis	Q2 99
Midtown Madness Microsoft	Q2 99
Might & Magic VII 3DO	Q2 99
MechWarrior III MicroProse	Q2 99
Messiah Shiny/Interplay	Q2 99
Midtown Madness Microsoft	Q2 99
MIG Alley Empire	Q2 99
Might & Magic VII 3DO	Q2 99
NASCAR Racing III Sierra Sports	Q2 99
NASCAR Revolution EA Sports	Q1 99
Nocturne GOD	Q4 99
North vs. South Interactive Magic	Q1 99
Omikron Eidos	Q3 99
Outcast Infogrames	Q3 99
PGA Championship Golf 99 Sierra	Q1 99
Panzer Elite Psygnosis	Q1 99
Planescape: Torment Interplay	Q2 99
Point of Attack HPS Simulations	Q2 99
Quake III Arena id Software "When it's ready"	
Redline Accolade	Q1 99
Requiem 3DO	Q1 99
Revenant Eidos	Q1 99
Road to Moscow Interactive Magic	Q1 99
Roller Coaster Tycoon MicroProse	Q2 99
Septerra Core Monolith	Q3 99
Seven Kingdoms II Interactive Magic	Q2 99
Shadow Company Interactive Magic	Q2 99
Shadowman Acclaim	Q1 99
Shadowpact Blue Byte	Q3 99
Shadowrun Assassin FASA	Q2 99
Shogun: Total War EA	Q2 99
Slave Zero Accolade	Q2 99
Soldier of Fortune Activision	Q3 99
Star Lancer Microsoft	Q3 99
Star Fleet Command Interplay	Q2 99
Star Trek: Birth of Federation MicroProse	Q2 99
Star Trek: Klingon Academy MicroProse	Q3 99
Star Trek: New Worlds Interplay	Q3 99
Star Trek: Starfleet Command Interplay	Q3 99
Starship Troopers MicroProse	Q2 99
StarSiege Sierra	Q1 99
Swords & Sorcery Westwood	Q3 99
System Shock 2 EA	Q2 99
Tanktics Interplay	Q2 99
Team Fortress II Valve/Sierra	Q3 99
Total Annihilation: Kingdoms Cavedog	Q2 99
Trophy Bass 3D Sierra Sports	Q2 99
Ultima Ascension Origin/EA	Q2 99
Vampire: The Masquerade Activision	Q4 99
WarCraft II Platinum Blizzard	Q2 99
Warhammer 40k: Rites of War SSI	Q3 99
Warzone 2100 Eidos	Q1 99
Werewolf ASC Games	Q4 99
Wings of Destiny Psygnosis	Q2 99
X-COM Alliance MicroProse	Q2 99

Fumble! Sierra Sports Recalls FOOTBALL PRO 99 Money Refunded to Angry Consumers

Today's lesson, class: How *not* to relaunch your flagship football game.

In one of the most embarrassing blunders in recent gaming history, Sierra Sports, following a mountain of complaints and bad publicity, issued a recall in January of FOOTBALL PRO 99, due to an insurmountable number of bugs in the supposedly "finished" game. The game was pulled from store shelves, and Sierra began offering a full refund to those who purchased the game on or before January 20, as well as a coupon for a free Sierra game valued at $29.99 or less.

For a game that, in a former life, won *CGW*'s Sports Game of the Year award three times in a row (1993–95) and is an inductee in the *CGW* Hall of Fame, it's been a long, hard fall. FRONT PAGE SPORTS: FOOTBALL, in its prime, was widely acknowledged as the deepest, most realistic football game ever. But the game has been flailing for at least two seasons now, with outdated graphics and a convoluted interface, among other problems. So Sierra mercy-killed the entire FRONT PAGE line, rechristened it Sierra Sports, and promised an all-new, state-of-the-art football game for this year.

After numerous delays, Sierra finally released the game at the close of 1998—and the result was an unmitigated disaster. "What can I say? We dropped the ball," said Sean Gleason, Sierra Sports' marketing director. "We built this product from the ground up over two years, and we let the impending end of the NFL season, and the desire to get it out over the holidays cloud our judgment. We made a mistake."

Gleason said that he estimated that the recall would cost Sierra over $1 million, and that's in addition to all the previous investments in the game in terms of development and marketing—and that's also in addition to the $29.95 coupons they'll be doling out to frustrated consumers.

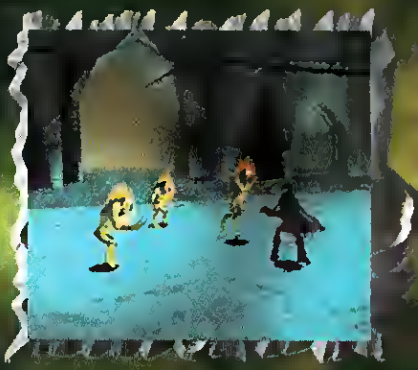
In the meantime, the company is going to try to fix the game for a re-release this summer as FOOTBALL PRO 2000. The plan is not to add any "new" features, but just to get the ones that were supposed to work in the '99 version working. Those gamers who bought FOOTBALL PRO 99 and don't want to entirely bail on the product can sign up to be on the "FOOTBALL PRO Home Team" at **www.sierrasports.com**. Members will receive a $20 rebate towards FOOTBALL PRO 2000, a t-shirt, periodic beta patches, and access to a dedicated Web site where development issues can be discussed.

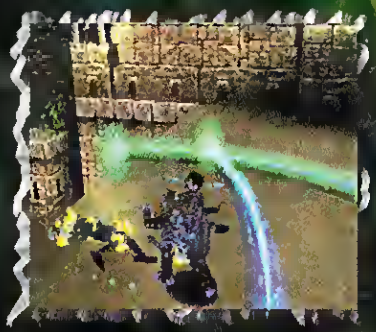
Sierra's release of FOOTBALL PRO 99 typifies everything that is wrong with the attitude of game publishers these days, but the recall is a good step towards reparation. Let's hope that they've learned their lesson, and don't take to the playing field again until they have a real game on their hands. They're not likely to get the ball back a third time. JEFF GREEN

TOP 10 BEST SELLING GAMES OF 1998 SOURCE: PC DATA

RANK	TITLE PUBLISHER	UNITS SOLD	TOTAL DOLLARS
1	StarCraft *Havas Interactive*	746,964	$31,156,027
2	Deer Hunter *GT Interactive*	638,278	$11,648,214
3	Myst *Learning Co.*	560,734	$9,969,973
4	Microsoft Flight Simulator *Microsoft*	509,048	$22,570,812
5	Deer Hunter II 3D *GT Interactive*	470,764	$8,662,287
6	Titanic: Adventure out of Time *Havas Interactive*	436,198	$10,268,352
7	Lego Island *Learning Co.*	404,856	$10,230,067
8	Diablo *Havas Interactive*	373,483	$10,446,761
9	Age of Empires *Microsoft*	367,144	$13,490,909
10	Riven *Learning Co.*	363,374	$14,158,340

BEING BETRAYED BY YOUR CREATOR DOESN'T JUST MAKE FOR BAD BLOOD...





- As Raziel, stalk Nosgoth feeding on the souls of your enemies
- Engage your creator, Kain, in an epic struggle for dominance
- Dark gothic story

PlayStation

TEEN T

PC CD ROM

Go to #272 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Just getting through
CORE
Eidos Interactive, Tomb Raider Lara Croft and her likeness are trademarks of Eidos, Plc. © 1998 Eidos. 3Dfx and the 3Dfx logo are registered trademarks of 3Dfx Interactive Inc.

the metal detector will be an adventure in itself.

Plaugh thraugh five cantinents with extreme prejudice. And a grenade launcher.

Blaze India ond hammer inta Londan, Antarctica, Area 51 or the Sauth Pacific.

Enjay internatianal diplomotic immunity with a set of 9mm's as yaur passpart.

Annihilate yaur way thraugh 15 levels af high-res mercilessness.

TOMB RAIDER III
ADVENTURES OF LARA CROFT

PC CD

EIDOS INTERACTIVE

Go to #290 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

OVER 2000 WAYS TO SHOW YOUR ENEMIES HOW MUCH YOU CARE.

Why limit yourself to a dozen, hell even a hundred, different weapon choices when you can have thousands?

It's time to remove the shackles of 2D, top down strategy games. Because in Warzone 2100, you have complete control over unit designs. As a result, it'll be your wits and ability to create an invincible battle arsenal that will save your hide from extinction.

REVOLUTIONARY UNIT DESIGN – 400 technologies allow you to design and build more than 2000 battle units. Turret, body and propulsion design options allow you to create anything from cyborgs to flamethrower tanks to V-TOL aircraft.

SUPERIOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE – recycle the experience of field units into bigger, better and even more fierce war machines. And as a Commander gains experience, the greater number of units he can control and the more accurate his laser designation becomes.

FULL 3D BATTLEFIELDS – lightning fast, fully functional 3D game engine with rotatable and zoomable cameras for fast and furious gaming action. Strategically placed radar units warn you of hidden enemy units and allow you to lob mortar shells over mountain obstructions.

IT'S NOW TIME TO TAKE YOUR FATE INTO YOUR OWN HANDS. SO GET INTO OUR VAST 3D WORLD.

DESIGN, DEPLOY AND DESTROY.

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

EIDOSGAMES.COM FREE INTERNET PLAY

DOWNLOAD THE SINGLE & MULTI-PLAYER DEMO AT:

www.eidosinteractive.com

Warzone 2100™ Pumpkin Studios 1998 © and Published by Eidos Interactive 1998 All Rights Reserved

Go to #152 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Your mother always said

In Stores NOW!

A new era in gaming

FBI MOST WANTED

Become a mob leader today! Download the Gangsters demo at www.eidosinteractive.com

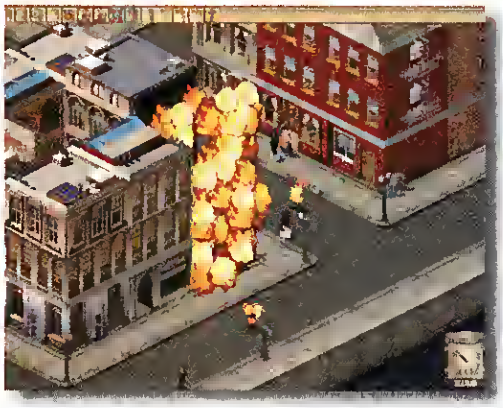
Hoose

EIDOS GAMES FREE INTERNET PLAY

EIDOS INTERACTIVE

you'd be famous someday.

has arrived. Yours.



"Gangsters is great. We're itching to get our hands on it!"
— *PC Gamer*

"There has never been a game like this."
— *The Adrenaline Vault*

"Gangsters is a novel spin on a tried-and-true gaming formula."
— *Gamecenter.com*

Gangsters
ORGANIZED CRIME™
A mobster sim.

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Gangsters: Organized Crime © 1998 Hothouse Creations Ltd. Published by Eidos Interactive Ltd. Eidos Interactive is a trademark of EIDOS plc. © 1998 EIDOS. All rights reserved.

THIEF EMERGES FROM THE SHADOWS

5 stars
"Immersive environments, impressive weapons, and excellent level design." – Gamecenter

"The graphics are beautiful, but the gameplay is even more inspired." – Newsweek Online

"Quite possibly the world's most novel first-person shooter. I haven't had this much fun in long, long time." – PC Games

4.5 stars
"One of the freshest experiences in gaming." – Computer Gaming World

9.1 rating
"It's emphasis on stealth, strategy, and ingenuity, coupled with its strong narrative structure and excellent mission design, adds up to a game that's stylish, serious, rewarding, and unique." – Gamespot

Thief captures top ratings

LOOKING GLASS STUDIOS
www.lglass.com

www.3dfx.com

MATURE M AGES 17+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

TO STEAL RAVE CRITICAL REVIEWS!

"Thief blazes a new trail." – Computer Games Strategy Plus

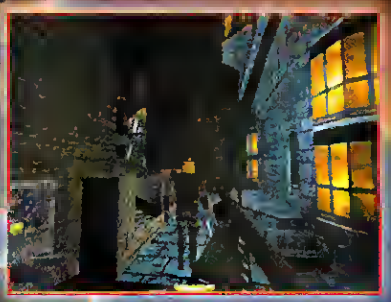
"Thief may very well define a new standard for interaction and immersion." – PC Gamer

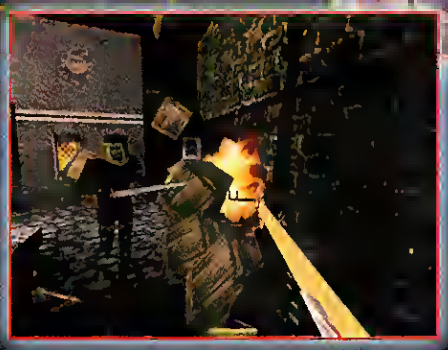
"The atmosphere and gameplay make this one stand alone." – Computer Gaming World

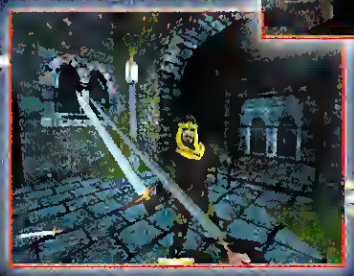
12 Huge Missions with multiple environments.

Advanced Enemies can see, hear, speak and sound alarms.

Stealthy Gameplay brings a new dimension to first person action.







Your Arsenal Includes: blackjack, sword, fire arrows, water arrows, rope, arrows and more!

THIEF™

THE DARK PROJECT

Download the demo at: eidosinteractive.com

EIDOS INTERACTIVE

© Interactive Entertainment Software, LLC dba Looking Glass Studios 1998. All Rights Reserved. Eidos Interactive is a trademark of Eidos, INC. Thief: The Dark Project is a trademark of Interactive Entertainment Software, LLC dba Looking Glass Studios. System Shock, Ultima, and Underworld are trademarks of Electronic Arts, Inc. and/or it's wholly owned subsidiaries. The 3Dfx Interactive logo is a trademark of 3Dfx Interactive, Inc.

www.eidosinteractive.com

Go to #273 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

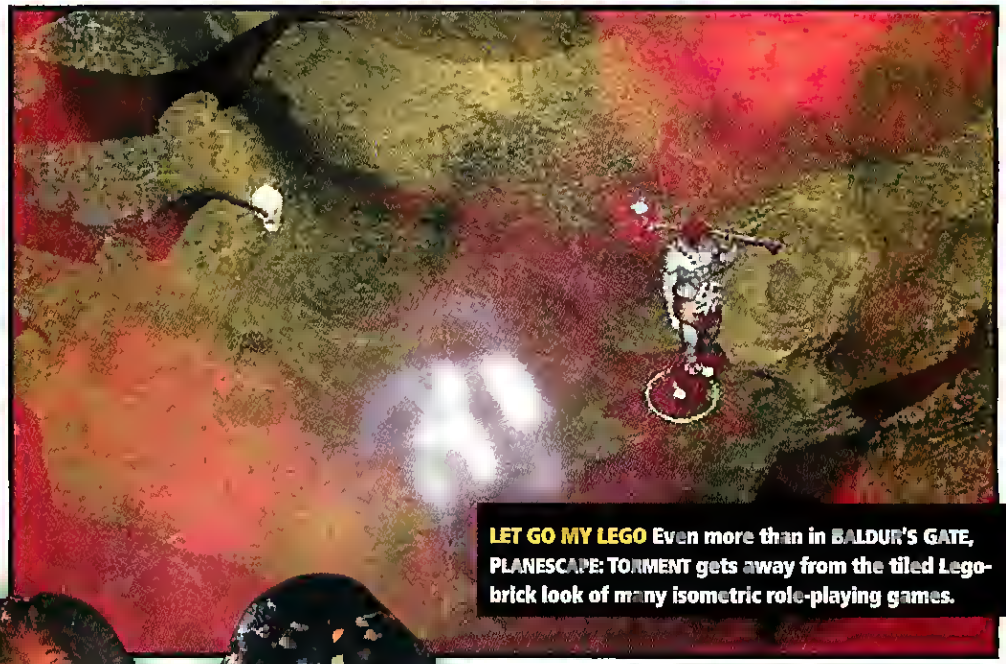
Planescape: Torment

AD&D *As Only the Makers of FALLOUT and BALDUR'S GATE Can Do It*

by Johnny L. Wilson

If the characters in PLANESCAPE: TORMENT seem a little disturbing, it's because they are. Characters who dismember themselves and their enemies in order to improve their armor or obtain new weapons aren't exactly run-of-the-mill, even in role-playing games. If the landscape seems a little more colorful than the characters, that's because it is. The characters, though immortal, tend to bear the grayish tinges of their many deaths, while the 16-bit color landscape pushes the Bioware Infinity engine (used in BALDUR'S GATE) to new limits.

As in BALDUR'S GATE, the engine features global lighting so that the cycles of dawn to dusk matter, but it also features special lighting effects for the 20-plus magical spells, spells that will mesmerize the gamer almost as much as their victims in the gameworld. Yet, the biggest change in aesthetic is that the engine now accommodates huge animated structures and sprites such as you never saw in BALDUR'S GATE.



LET GO MY LEGO Even more than in BALDUR'S GATE, PLANESCAPE: TORMENT gets away from the tiled Lego-brick look of many isometric role-playing games.

If you thought that characterization and alignment made BALDUR'S GATE interesting, wait until you see what the folks at Interplay's Black Isle Studios have done with PLANESCAPE: TORMENT. Remember those nice touches like internecine rivalry between alignments in your party and characters who responded to situations based on their Charisma attribute? Remember the comic relief when chaotic characters would their shout battle cries in medieval trash talk? PLANESCAPE: TORMENT one-ups these award-winning advances.

Planescape: Torment
GENRE: Role-Playing
RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Black Isle Studios
PUBLISHER: Interplay Productions

No Token Tolkien

In PLANESCAPE: TORMENT, you get a

party of up to five characters. These characters are not simply rehashes of the typical AD&D worlds. One such character is a talking—perhaps we should say insulting—skull. One might suggest that this talking skull is the equivalent of having the host of the YOU DON'T KNOW JACK game show as your constant companion. Sure, the skull is occasionally useful, but he's definitely funny in an acerbic way. If you don't feel like a berk (the *Planescape* equivalent to "Wilson" in William Gibson's classic *Neuromancer*) whenever you do something wrong, he'll make you feel like the supreme addle-cove (another *Planescape* term for idiot).

Further, PLANESCAPE transforms dwarves into centaur-like creatures called Bariaurs. They will be welcome additions to your party as both fierce fighters and congenial sojourners—as long as you don't serve meat or befriend any giants. Elf characters on the traditional *AD&D* Prime Material Plane are now Githzerai. Githzerai will go berserk when encountering mind flayers or Githyanki, their ancient, leathery-skinned, fanged enemies. Tieflings are the paranoid, loner obverse of the Prime Material Plane's Halflings. Instead of being sociable, these clever thieves (at least, they are best suited to be great thieves) believe that life is out to get them. They make great point persons, however, due to their bonuses on saving rolls. As in BALDUR'S GATE, the design team has been careful to make sure that ROLE-playing is part of the consideration whenever you enter into party management. Why, you might even find that someone in your party is a backstabbing traitor. Stranger things have happened.

Most importantly, the difference in the way PLANESCAPE: TORMENT handles characterization is that you are constantly generating your character on the fly. In life after life and death after death, your amnesiac character is continuously defining his identity, his attributes, and his belief system. The game revolves around this discovery process and you'll curse every death because it will take away portions of your memory and force you to reinvent yourself. Like one of Michael Moorcock's eternal warriors, you'll find that wielding extreme power and venturing where mortals fear to tread is a mixed blessing and curse. Once you build your character's reputation, the gameworld will react to it whether you like it or not. In other words, PLANESCAPE: TORMENT doesn't suffer from lack of ambition. It embodies (and, at times, disembodies) ambition.

I Don't Believe It

In spite of the brilliant use of characterization to motivate and stimulate, the true uniqueness of PLANESCAPE: TORMENT is the fact that everything takes place on different planes within the multiverse. Most of the *AD&D* universe deals with the Prime Material Plane in intricate detail. *Planescape* defines the multiverse as an intricate series of rings. Sigil, the city on the edge of forever (may Harlan Ellison pardon my theft of his title as a handy descriptor), is a ring, the Outlands are rings; the Outer Planes form a ring; and the Elemental Planes make up a ring. The Great Road allows one to traverse all of the planes within the Outlands as though one were gently caressing the jewels on an expensive pinky ring. This structure guarantees that *Planescape* adventures (of which, we hope, PLANESCAPE: TORMENT is merely the first) range farther and consist of more variety than those adventures on the Prime Material Plane.

Most significant, however, *Planescape* is made up of a wild variety of factions who serve, in original *Planescape* (the people and paper game) designer Zeb Cook's words, as "philosophers

HEAD-LINER Your disembodied companion—like many of the richly scripted nonplayer characters in the game—combines acerbic wit with a low threshold on his B.S. detector.

ONE SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL Not only are the player characters in PLANESCAPE: TORMENT larger than the ones in BALDUR'S GATE, but so are some of the monsters to be encountered.

THE WORLD YOU LEFT BEHIND WANTS TO DESTROY YOU.

THE ONE BEFORE YOU WILL DEFINITELY TRY.

DIPLOMACY.

ECONOMICS.

WAR.

THE ART OF IMPERIALISM

An unknown land unfurls before you. To become one of Europe's Great Powers, you'll have to parlay this discovery into conquest. Then exploit the New World's exotic resources to swing the balance of power back home.

Develop what you can, trade for the rest. Deploy spies to help stay ahead of the technology curve. Build a formidable military. And don't forget: the object is to unite Europe under one flag -

YOURS!

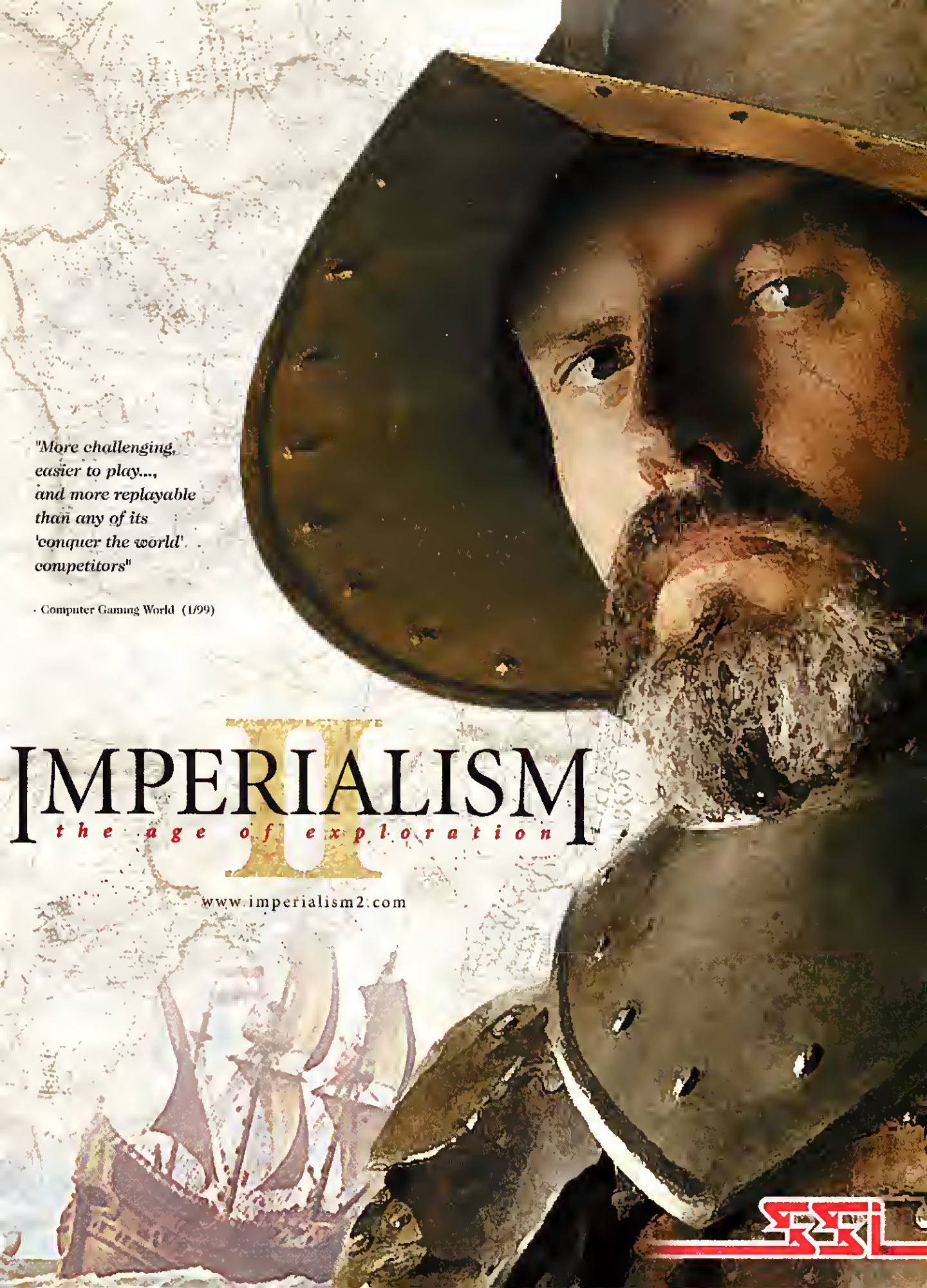
* A hidden new world, different in each game, to explore and conquer
* Over 40 military and civilian units and 100 technologies from 300 years of history (1500s - 1800s)
* Advanced AI considers nation-specific personalities, strategies and diplomatic agendas
* New tactical battle engine gives greater player control during conflicts
* Intuitive interface and gameplay tutorial for first-time players
* Multiplayer support for up to 6 players

FREE Internet play

WINDOWS 95/98 AND MACINTOSH COMPATIBLE

© 1999 The [illegible] and SM are [illegible] Computer Properties, Inc. Windows [illegible] Corporation in the [illegible] and/or other countries. Macintosh [illegible] in the U.S. and [illegible]

Go to #218 @ www.computergaming[illegible] link


"More challenging, easier to play..., and more replayable than any of its 'conquer the world' competitors"
- Computer Gaming World (1/99)
IMPERIALISM II
the age of exploration™
www.imperialism2.com

with clubs." These factions all operate under specific belief systems and will expect your character to find his place within them, as well.

The Athar believe that all of the powers or gods are cosmic Elmer Gantrys or Wizards of Oz. Looking behind the curtain proves that no one is there, or at least no one that you expected. The Believers of the Source are naive extrapolations of the biblical precept that "All things work together for good." They see all existence as one big preliminary examination; beings move from test to test in order to be tempered like steel. The Bleak Cabal sounds almost onomatopoeic when you consider that they represent nihilism in the extreme. The Doomguard serve as the angels of entropy within the *Planescape* universe. This faction isn't actively destructive. They serve as a passive sonar, waiting alertly for do-gooders who might get in the way of the natural entropic designs of the multiverse. The Dustmen sound like a clan based on T.S. Eliot's poem "The Hollow Men." They believe that "life's a joke," hence serving as *Planescape*'s version of the existentialist movement, in the manner of a Jean-Paul Sartre, a Eugene Ionesco, or a Samuel Beckett.

Want to join a faction that believes in the ultimate manifest destiny? Join The Fated. Feel more comfortable with legalists that make the Pharisees of Judaism in the first century seem like laissez-faire moral relativists? You want The Fraternity of Order. Want to emulate the anomie and anarchy of the multiverse? Enlist in the libertarian ranks of The Free League. Want to actively create anarchy by overthrowing the corrupt (by definition, all) powers that be? Join The Revolutionary League.

If you don't want to submit to the harmony of the multiverse, The Harmonium (pardon me if this faction resonates a little too closely to a militant version of the Christian Right) will force you to do so. The Mercykillers, on the other hand, are not for the squeamish. Avid proponents of the Death Penalty, this faction believes that Justice cannot triumph without a swift and merciless prosecution of offenders. The Signers are the epitome of eclecticism and moral relativity; The Society of Sensation are the Epicures of *Planescape*; and The Transcendent Order finds meaning in Action. As you would expect, The Xaositects believe that the multiverse is chaos and that there is no meaning whatsoever to it. The Outsiders are often called "The Clueless" because they have no ties, no belief system.

SPELLBOUND In PLANESCAPE: TORMENT, the Black Isle Studios design team has accomplished even better spell effects with the BALDUR'S GATE lighting engine.

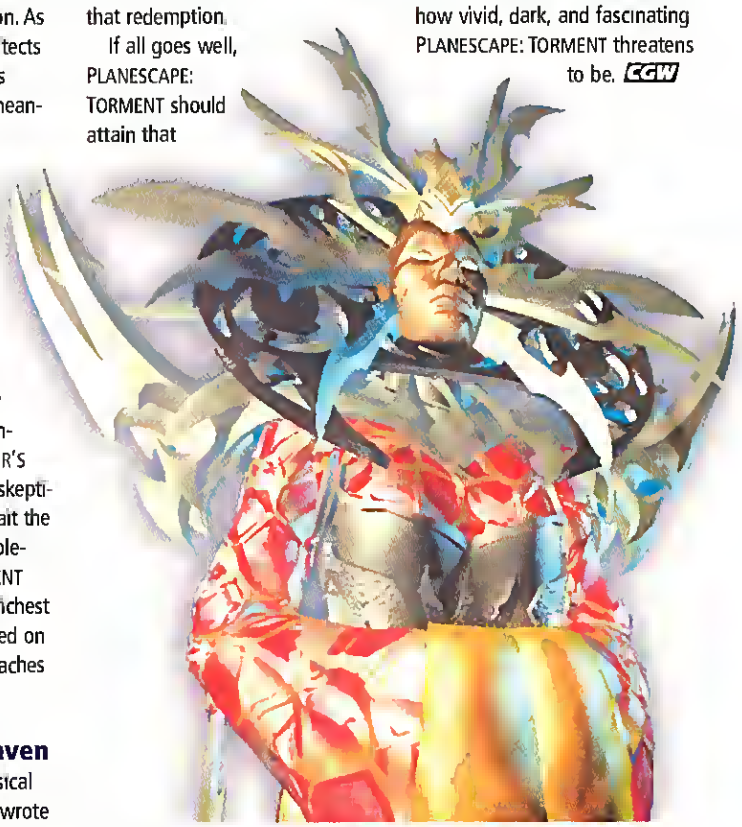
In order for PLANESCAPE: TORMENT to reach its full potential, the game engine will have to balance factions as carefully as BALDUR'S GATE does alignment. Before we saw BALDUR'S GATE, we would have been skeptical, but we now eagerly await the next advance in computer role-playing. PLANESCAPE: TORMENT has the potential to be the richest role-playing game ever placed on the computer. We hope it reaches that potential.

All We Know of Heaven

America's great metaphysical poet, Emily Dickinson, once wrote that "Parting is all we know of heaven/And all we need of hell." In the case of PLANESCAPE: TORMENT, those lines might be changed to "Dying is all we know of heaven," since this afterlife, this seeming limitless existence, offers both the heavenly redemption of the protagonist's self-discovery and the hell of trying to achieve that redemption.

If all goes well, PLANESCAPE: TORMENT should attain that most rare confluence in computer games: intellectual stimulation, visceral satisfaction, and aesthetic inspiration.

But if the game disappoints, we just might have to capture the design team with a sticky, barbed Canoleth's tongue and dismember their coding hands to use on a competitor's game. That's how vivid, dark, and fascinating PLANESCAPE: TORMENT threatens to be. CGW



SUMMER 1999

THQ™
www.thq.com

Sinistar © 1982 Midway Games Inc. Sinistar and Midway are registered trademarks of Midway Games Inc. and used under license by THQ Inc. All rights reserved. GameFX and THQ Inc. are trademarks of THQ Inc. Software in this game © 1999 THQ Inc. All rights reserved.

Go to #289 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Designed for Microsoft Windows 95

HAIL CAESAR, YOUR

PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN!

★★★★½

"Hail Caesar! Friends, Romans, Countrymen-Caesar III is a Resounding Success!"

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD EDITORS' CHOICE

-Computer Gaming World

"Caesar III may be Impressions' all-time masterpiece... stunning graphics, addictive gameplay, a decidedly 'epic' quality throughout."

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

-PC Gamer

★★★★½

"This is quite simply one of the best city planning games ever made, and it's up there with the best strategy games as a whole, too... You'll not find a better game of this type this year, or maybe any other year for that matter."

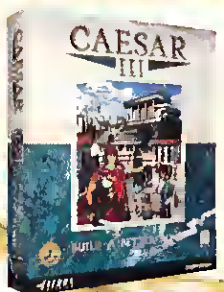
-Adrenaline Vault

★★★★

"Caesar III puts together several different moving pieces into an attractive, challenging, and addictive package."

-Computer Games Strategy Plus

IN STORES NOW!



Check out the Assignment Editor or download the game demo! www.sierrastudios.com or www.caesar3.com

CAESAR III™

BUILD A BETTER ROME

SIERRA STUDIOS™

Impressions™

EVERYONE E

© 1998 Sierra On-Line, Inc. ® and/or ™ designate trademarks of, or licensed to, Sierra On-Line, Inc., Bellevue, WA 98007. All Rights Reserved.

Magic and Mayhem

A Great Blend of RPG and Tactical Strategy Brings Sorcery to Life

by Jesse Hiatt

You are a young wizard, fresh from the Academy, on your way to your uncle's laboratory to begin your apprenticeship. When you arrive, your uncle is nowhere to be found, and by the looks of the lab, he must have left in a hurry. As you inspect the premises for clues to your uncle's disappearance, you find a map that details the route that he must have taken. You feel compelled to take the journey yourself in hopes that you can find him. You board his flying balloon and head off to parts unknown. The flying contraption soon finds its way into a vortex that sucks you in and deposits you upon a dark and mysterious world. The landing destroys your only way off the planet, leaving you with just one choice: to journey forth and seek out your destiny. Thus begins the epic experience of MAGIC AND MAYHEM.

OK, so we've heard similar setups before. Still, playing this game really *does* make you feel like a full-fledged wizard. It feels as if every possible aspect was tuned to achieve the best continuity and immersion possible. A lot of your time is spent developing your character, selecting spells, and referring to your invaluable compendium of information, the *Grimoir* (see sidebar). In many games, all of this activity would break the flow, but here you feel like a wizard checking his dog-eared notes. The distribution of experience points and selection of spells are not at all superfluous, but a critical part of getting ready to enter a new level.

The Mayhem Part

Once you are properly prepared, it's on to the next area, where the exploring begins. When combat is necessary, you must summon forces to duke it out in the familiar real-time strategy fashion. What sets MAGIC AND MAYHEM apart from the typical Clone & Conquer is not only the excellent adventure/RPG elements, but also the depth of strategy in both the combat and non-combat portions of the game. For example, the typical RTS strategy of "build huge hordes as fast as you can" is thwarted by restricting the number of creatures your wizard can summon. This ensures that you can achieve victory only by using the appropriate forces at the appropriate time.

You will find that the various creature attributes really do affect the behavior of the creatures you control. A unicorn, for example, is intelligent and powerful, but shy—exactly what you would expect from such a familiar mythic creature. The unicorn's hooves and single horn are its only weapons,

DANCING SKELETONS The skeleton/elf one-two punch is most powerful in the early game.

COOKING BROWNIES This horde of pebble-throwing brownies is getting toasted by a mighty meteor shower spell.

Magic & Mayhem

GENRE: Strategy
RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Mythos
PUBLISHER: Bethesda Softworks

Portmanteau

The ability to cast spells comes from magical artifacts. These are arrayed on the right portion of the Portmanteau. On the left are the talismans, which activate a spell for use when combined with an artifact. There are three types of magic: Chaos, Neutral, and Law (Red, Green, and Blue respectively). Each talisman can be used for only one type of magic. You can use experience points to add talismans to any of the three catagories. There are summon spells that give you units to control, like trolls or skeletons; elemental spells, like the mighty meteor shower; and other forms of sorcery, like raising the dead or turning enemies to stone. Difficult decisions have to be made in the Portmanteau, and you'll need the Grimoir to make sure that they are informed decisions. This aspect of the gameplay is highly reminiscent of building a deck for the card game *Magic the Gathering*.

and these can only be used up close. It will actively defend itself, and will attack when ordered, too, but it's likely to back off if the going gets tough.

Skeletons, on the other hand, are anything but shy. Then again, they aren't that smart, either. Skeletons won't back out of a fight, but you might find them standing around staring at the wall. Brownies, trolls, elves, phoenixes, and centaurs are just a few of the other creatures at your disposal for battling evil wizards.

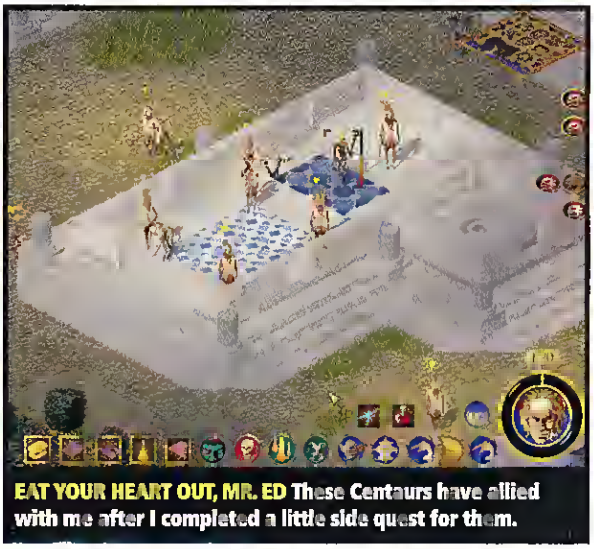
The Life of a WizNerd

Just as important as your tactical strategies on the battlefield are the choices you make using your *Portmanteau* (see sidebar)—your box for selecting and organizing spells. Though you can only prepare a limited number of spells before you explore a level, there are seemingly endless combinations possible. Moreover, the computer updates the AI after every battle, learning and adapting from your actions. This ensures replayability, even when you're stuck on a tough level.

There are a lot of great spells from which to choose, but the most critical are the summoning spells. All of the creatures that you can summon have widely different attributes (the details of which are laid out in the *Grimoir*). And all spells have to be considered for their mana cost, their effectiveness against the units you can expect to encounter, and their usefulness in the terrain in which you are about to embark.

In addition to the gripping gameplay, the art direction is also top-notch in MAGIC AND MAYHEM. The music by Simon Emerson and the Afro Celt Sound System is noteworthy, setting the mood for this game perfectly. Visually, the game is a shining example of the top-down isometric style (a la STARCRAFT) complete with charming claymation characters.

I'll admit it—I've always been a fan of the Mythos folks (along with the rest of *CGW*'s editors), and it's obvious from the care they've put into this game that they haven't lost their touch.



EAT YOUR HEART OUT, MR. ED These Centaurs have allied with me after I completed a little side quest for them.

Every time I thought I'd seen everything MAGIC AND MAYHEM had to offer, another aspect of the design would bring me back for more. The European version is already a big hit overseas, and barring any major snafus, this should be Mythos' biggest hit on this side of the big pond since the original X-COM. *CGW*

Jesse Hiatt has been perfecting his zombie dance of joy for multiplayer HALF-LIFE, in between sessions of the old wargame favorite, Empires at Arms.

Grimoir

This book is an invaluable tool that will often come in handy while playing MAGIC AND MAYHEM. It is well written and complete. It does not cover computer issues (like key commands), but that's explained in the manual. By only including information that your character needs to know, the book helps maintain the immersive qualities of the experience. The *Grimoir* has the feel of an old wizard's tome instead of a complicated online manual.

As you might imagine a wizard's book to be, this one is packed with information. You will learn how to summon dozens of different creatures throughout the game. Each of the creatures has 12 attributes, and you will find this data and a short story about each one. All your spells are described in detail as well, with mana costs and other pertinent info. You will also find herein tales of all the lands to which you have traveled.

Heaven and Hell Collide...
This Spring

You're an angel.

Your name is "Malachi."

That's ancient Hebrew for "bad ass mother."

"Wonderfully Twisted."
- Computer Games Strategy Plus

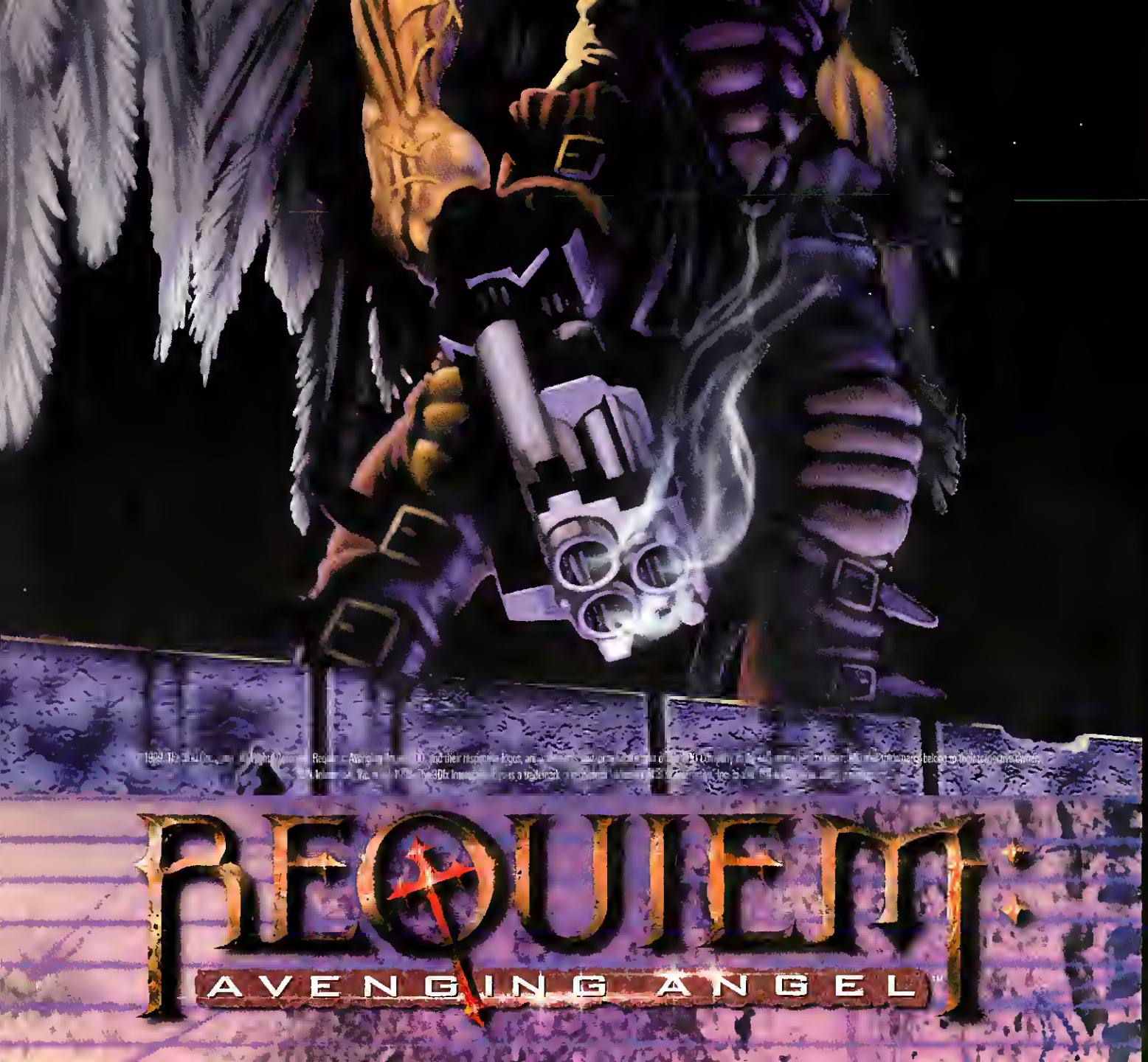
"The manna from heaven you've been waiting for...Requiem: Avenging Angel has the look of a winner."
- Computer Gaming World

Environmental Audio™ by CREATIVE®

MATURE M

FREE INTERNET GAME PLAY MPLAYER.COM

COMPETE ON HEAT



Requiem: Avenging Angel™ immerses you in the ultimate battle between good and evil, with 3D first-person action so intense it transforms "fire and brimstone" into "fire and reload". Grab your high-powered weapons and blast through netherworlds and futuristic cities. Encounter bizarre characters from all over creation. Turn enemies to salt, boil their blood, then unleash a flesh-eating plague. Get *Requiem: Avenging Angel*. Because you're a messenger of God. With a high-caliber message.

3DO™

www.requiempc.com

Man of War II

Strategy First Has the Enemy in Sight

by Johnny L. Wilson

Whether you're more inspired by the real-life exploits of Nelson, Jones, Jervis, Howe and Blueys or the fictional conquests of Aubrey, Hornblower, Bolitho, Drinkwater and Ramage, MAN OF WAR II should be a dream come true. Too often, the thrilling days of fighting sail have been obscured by turn-based rules minutiae, the capacity for unrealistic micro management or the less-satisfying arcade aspects of accelerated-time action. The original MAN OF WAR changed that with a near-simulation aspect to the sea battles. Of course, the near-simulation quality is a two-edged sword when you're dealing with relatively slow vessels and limited weapon range.

Career Broadsides

Yet, like many other games based on the age of fighting sail, MAN OF WAR was merely a collection of historical battles that did not allow for the more glorious aspect of career advancement. Many officers went to war in that age to earn income by taking prizes; to clear a tarnished family or personal name by winning glory in battle; or to satisfy their social-climbing ambition by moving up to flag rank.

The new career mode in MAN OF WAR II is relatively simple, but effective. When you create a character, you provide a name and type in your own character synopsis in the top paragraph of the character screen. Your text does not affect the game, but the text in the second paragraph reflects the innate qualities of your character that are represented in the game as well as evaluating your in-game accomplishments. By successfully completing scenarios, your character receives favorable mentions in this analog to the Naval Gazette and you have the chance to move up in rank. Interestingly enough, opponents will be able to access both your view of your character and the Admiralty's view of your character prior to engaging in a multiplayer match.

Man of War II

GENRE: Wargame
RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Strategy First
PUBLISHER: Strategy First

PORT BROADSIDE Smoke billows after a broadside has been fired at this Spanish warship. Note that the Spanish vessel cannot bring her broadside to bear as the British warship manages to cross her "T."

MATTER OF CHARACTER The top description is your own creation. The bottom description explains the way the program, as the Admiralty, treats your character.

All Aboard, It's a Party

Another aspect missing from most age of sail games to hit the PC has been the capacity to board. Boarding actions and cutting out expeditions were a necessary part of the era and, except for some of the earlier efforts on the Apple II, have been largely ignored in games appearing on the PC. Although not implemented in the version we played, MAN OF WAR II will feature a camera angle that pans to an exterior view of the two ships involved in boarding. From that angle, the player can control the boarding crew and continue to fire guns from his own ship. The basic commands for controlling the crew (attempt to disengage, stand ground, or press attack) are relatively limited but they beat the options provided in most games about the age of sail.

The rest of MAN OF WAR II is essentially like the original. You get to set the tactical doctrine for your ship and the other ships. You also use the mouse interface to change the crew allocation (particularly as your crew begins to attrit) to prioritizing the guns, sails, rigging, damage control, or preparing for boarding. You still navigate by observing wind direction from the symbol on the chart, and then adjusting your heading via the compass wheel at the center of the 3D interface. Finally, except for the new boarding option, combat is almost exactly like that in MAN OF WAR. You wait until you have the optimal broadside and command your units to fire low at the hull (in the traditional British fashion) or high (in the traditional French fashion). Then, you hope they fire effectively.

MAN OF WAR II is potentially an ideal game for those who enjoy historical battles, but don't want the frenetic clicking of an arcade or accelerated-time game. Though graphically, MAN OF WAR II needs to be careened in order to remove some of the barnacles, it offers enough of historical flavor to satisfy the would-be post-captain as well as the bonus of attempting to craft your own fictitious officer's career to resemble those of an Aubrey, Bolitho, Drinkwater, Hornblower, or Ramage. CGW

Johnny Wilson relaxes from the work of sinking British frigates with an occasional game of SID MEIER'S ALPHA CENTAURI.

TAKE THE HILL. THE EARTH TREMBLING. BLACK WITH BLOOD. HEAVY FOOTSTEPS DISSOLVE INTO A STEADY RHYTHM OF THUNDEROUS BLASTS. MINDS AND LEGS NUMB. GET TO THE HILL. FIERY ARROWS RAINING FROM ABOVE, BLACK WAKES WEAVING A SUFFOCATING BLANKET OF FEAR. MY MEN CHOKING THEIR FINAL BREATHS. JUST MAKE IT TO THE HILL. SCREAMS FROM BEHIND? ARE WE FLANKED? SHADOWS ADVANCING LIKE A DEATH SHROUD. THE HILL. GET TO THE HILL.
6 December
The Beachhead at Tyr
In Myth II: Soulblighter, panic is your greatest enemy. It's up to you to remain calm and focused during the frenzy of battle. You devise the strategies. You make the crucial decisions. And everything comes into play. With Myth II: Soulblighter's real world, 3D environment, ground positions become critical. Archers shoot farther from hills and bluffs. Dwarven grenades roll down hill. Trees block arrows. You either use the terrain to your advantage or suffer the consequences. And with Myth II: Soulblighter's rotating battlefield camera, you can watch the combat unfold from every angle. Everything that made Myth: The Fallen Lords 1997's Game of the Year is here. With better game play, graphics and a whole new storyline with new units and new levels. Plus an editor that lets you make your own maps, modify units and even change the force of gravity. And of course, there's hungie.net, the world's best free* site for multi-player gaming. Fully redesigned and ready to host worldwide carnage. The question is are you ready for Myth II: Soulblighter?
To get Myth II: Soulblighter head to your nearest reseller, call 1-800-295-0060, or visit us online at www.bungie.com.
BUNGIE
*Access to bungie.net is FREE. Player is responsible for all applicable Internet fees.
Myth II: Soulblighter, Myth, The Fallen Lords, and bungie.net are trademarks of Bungie Software Products Corporation. © 1998 Bungie Software Products Corporation. All rights reserved.
MYTH II
SOULBLIGHTER
AVAILABLE NOW
Go to #110 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

LIGHTNING ST

PRAISE
for
Seven Kingdoms

- "If you missed *Seven Kingdoms* last year, you missed the best strategy game in a long time."
  – PC Gamer
  (Review Score: 90%, Recipient: Editor's Choice Award)

- "Like Chan's *Capitalism*, *Seven Kingdoms* is deep, complex, and challenging. ★★★★"
  – Computer Gaming World

- "The detail in *Seven Kingdoms* makes *Age of Empires* look like checkers."
  – GamePower

- "★★★★"
  – Computer Games Strategy Plus

CREATE

CREATE civilizations out of thin air. Choose from 12 nationalities, each with its own unique culture. Construct amazingly detailed buildings, including new military camps, espionage colleges, and special training centers. Each time you play will be a fresh experience, thanks to the new Random Campaign Generator.

GOVERN

Trevor Chan is the creator of advanced strategy games like *Capitalism*, *Seven Kingdoms*, and *Seven Kingdoms Ancient Adversaries*. Although only 25, Chan operates his own game design studio, overseeing all aspects of production at Hong Kong-based Enlight Software (www.enlight.com).

INTERACTIVE MAGIC

ENLIGHT SOFTWARE

Seven Kingdoms II and The Fryhtan Wars are trademarks and Interactive Magic is a registered trademark of Interactive Magic, Inc. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners. ©1999 Interactive Magic, Inc. All rights reserved.

www.SevenKingdomsII.com

RIKES TWICE!

ADVANCE PRAISE
for
Seven Kingdoms II

- "Building upon the success of Interactive Magic's empire-building game *Seven Kingdoms*, Trevor Chan has sought out perfection..."
  – **Ultimate PC**

- "If you didn't buy *Seven Kingdoms* when it first came out, don't make the same mistake twice."
  – **PC Games**

- "*Seven Kingdoms II* is shaping up to be everything its predecessor was and more."
  – **Imagine Games Network**

GOVERN your society your way. Micro-manage your resources, establish trade routes and set up diplomatic relationships. Research new technologies and military methods in the Towers of Science. Prepare bold plans of attack, and watch your back with spies trained at your Espionage College. The streamlined interface makes it easy to run your empire.

SLAY

SLAY monsters, hire them, or become them. 7 horrifying Fryhtans: Unleash their savagery on others, or find yourself as the target of their wrath. New Fryhtan structures include Incubators (for producing weapons) and centers for transmitting magic power. Plus: thrilling new Heroes, introducing their own special magic into the game.

SEVEN KINGDOMS II™

THE FRYHTAN WARS™

DESIGNED BY TREVOR CHAN

THE EMPIRE-BUILDER WITH MORE.

Go to #175 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

STRATEGIZE. COLONIZE. DOMINATE. ERADICATE.

THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO RULE THIS GALAXY.

FEDERATION
A well-balanced universal power.

KLINGON
An aggressive military makes up for their lack in tact.

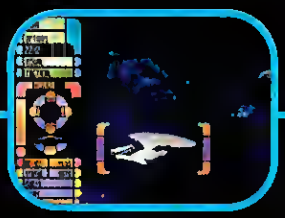
ROMULAN
The enigma of the universe, they are smooth and deadly.

FERENGI
Masters of economics, but watch out. They're tricky!

CARDASSIAN
Their ruthlessness, efficiency and stealth make for a lethal combination.

Building an empire takes time. You need to be diplomatic, technologically advanced, and stealthy. And sometimes, war is the only solution. You choose from one of the five major alliances. You'll get all their strengths. All their weaknesses. And every decision matters.

Allocate technology resources



Engage in 3-D tactical combat

Control covert operations

Oversee empire growth and progress

BIRTH OF THE FEDERATION™

From the company that brought you Civilization® II and Masters of Orion II™

STAR TREK® THE NEXT GENERATION

EVERYONE E

HASBRO Interactive

MICROPROSE®
www.microprose.com

Star Trek, The Next Generation ™ & ©1999 Paramount Pictures. All Rights Reserved. Used under license. Star Trek and related marks are trademarks of Paramount Pictures. ©1999 Hasbro Interactive, Inc. All Rights Reserved. MicroProse, Hasbro Interactive, and the Hasbro Interactive logo are trademarks of Hasbro or its affiliates. All other trademarks are the property of their respective holders.

Midtown Madness

Room to Roam on the Mean Streets of Chicago

by Jesse Hiatt

If you think that the driving genre could use a shot in the arm—or more accurately, a visceral pileup on the side of the road—then MIDTOWN MADNESS is likely to have you breaking your trusty PC driving wheel out of mothballs. With 10 vehicles to choose from, including a city bus and the new Beetle, you are let loose on the mean streets of Chicago.

SPARKS WILL FLY If you don't like the way I drive, get off the sidewalk!

Virtual Sprawl

What really sets this title apart is that, instead of giving you a typical driving-game track with regional landmarks thrown in (à la SAN FRANCISCO RUSH), here you get treated to a virtual city to roam, with block after block of fantastic-looking metropolitan sprawl with realistic traffic patterns. If you crave competition, the variety of racing modes let you set up various routes with periodic checkpoints through the city. If you tire of this, you can always stray from the main track, and sometimes find yourself a shortcut. My favorite, though, is *Roam* mode, which feels just like driving in a real dense urban environment. Don't want to wait at that red light? Gun your engine, take to the sidewalk (sending pedestrians running for cover), and speed through the intersection—causing the milk truck coming the other way to slam into a mailbox as you speed off, leaving a five-car pileup in your wake.

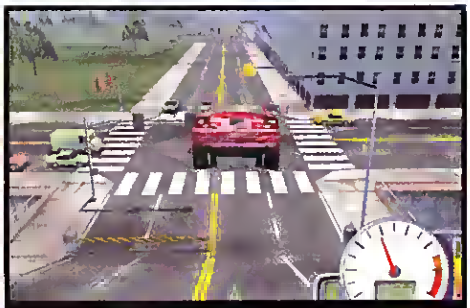
This is definitely the best cure for road rage to come to the PC in years, perhaps ever. If you so desire, you can obey the traffic laws and the game will play like a city driving simulator. But if you've spent as much time driving in the city as I have, you'll revel in the chance to finally drive like a complete maniac. The city bus is a good choice for causing mayhem, as it can plow through a crowded intersection and keep on truckin'. As a driving environment, MIDTOWN MADNESS is truly unprecedented in its size and scope. Natives of Chicago will not just recognize certain landmarks, but are treated to a fairly accurate model (although somewhat condensed) of their hometown.

I Can See for Miles and Miles

One of the most notable features of MIDTOWN MADNESS is its amazing depth of field. You can see really far down the street, with no artificial fogging or any polygonal pieces of terrain suddenly popping up on the edge of the screen. The designers have reduced overdraw by using a tool that eliminates the unused (unseen) portions of the city. The geometry has four levels of detail, thus reducing the polygon count and leaving room for all of the pedestrians, mailboxes, streetlights and parking meters that add so much realism to the city.

Unfortunately, it would seem that the developers still need to bring the car physics and AI up to the level of their great game environment. In the build I was playing, I didn't win races because I was driving faster, but because the competition got stuck driving into corners. Initially, we had a concern that cars don't seem to accurately register what speed they were going. For example, a crash at ten miles per hour sent my Mustang into the air, and when I took it up to 140, it didn't feel much faster than highway speed. But when we raced in "widescreen mode" it was easy to feel the adrenaline rush of acceleration you'd expect.

So, if the car physics, AI, and damage modeling can rise up to the level of the gameworld, MIDTOWN MADNESS will be a most spectacular driving game. At the very least, it will break new ground by freeing the player from the track. If Angel Studios is able to pull everything together, no doubt everyone who's not from Chicago will be begging for an expansion pack of their own city, so that they can run the same red-light that they had to wait at on their way home from work. What a nice problem that would be for the design team to have! CGW



NO STOPPING FOR PEDS We test the aerodynamics of our Mustang off a drawbridge, with no perceptible compromise in quality.

BEETLE AT BAT This is one runner it'd be hard to throw out at home.

Jesse Hiatt took time off from his busy racing schedule in GRAND PRIX LEGENDS to preview this game.

Midtown Madness

GENRE: Driving
RELEASE DATE: Q2 '98
DEVELOPER: Angel Studios
PUBLISHER: Microsoft

PROP THAT CAMERA OVER MY SHOULDER If you like that close, tactical view of MYTH, then you'll want to use this view.

THROUGH A SOLDIER'S EYES Don't like the path the AI chooses for your units? Then take control of the unit yourself.

Machines

Acclaim Plans to Spice up the 3D Real-time Arena With This Game

by Thierry Nguyen

Thank MYTH for inspiring other real-time strategy games to go 3D. Though, most of the next 3D games either use a medieval setting, or a far-flung future with starships. MACHINES is one of those rare traditional real-time games that bring a few 3D twists into the genre.

Freedom Fighter

As the title suggests, you'll mostly be in control of robotic machines. There are no living units around here; you build robots that make factories, which then make even more robots. The campaign system reminds me of TIE FIGHTER, where you select which planets you want to perform missions on, and if a mission seems too hard on one planet, you can jump to another to carry out a minicampaign and come back to the original planet later.

Machines

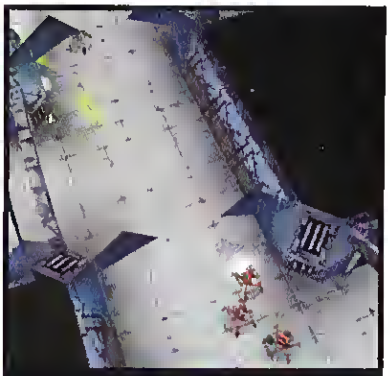
GENRE: Strategy
RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Charybdis
PUBLISHER: Acclaim

Like many other real-time games, this one focuses on establishing a base, building up your forces, and then wreaking havoc on the enemy. But the campaign does offer a few twists to that standard style of gameplay: In a few missions you have to steal technology from the other side; in another, a Blizzard-style installation mission, you have to direct a team to carry out an assault against a space station.

Doom With a View

The biggest twist to the gameplay is the 3D feel. You can play this game from not one, but *three* perspectives. The first is the normal, slightly slanted overhead, that is, it's the overhead view of COMMAND & CONQUER or TOTAL ANNIHILATION, but slanted slightly in order to take advantage of all three dimensions. Then, there is the slightly odd over-the-shoulder view, where you're on ground level along with your units. This viewpoint is more for the MYTH player, in that you can pan around the battlefield and get a closer look at your units in action; this view seems most useful for tactical battles but not for base construction.

Then, there's the ever-present first-person-perspective. With this addition, MACHINES becomes something like a BATTLEZONE, where the game combined action and strategy. Though, this isn't the focus of MACHINES, and the addition of the first-person perspective seems more for fine-tuning your attacks rather than a serious method of playing the game. For example, if you're in an installation mission, and you want to sneak around, it's better to use first-person mode to direct the machine itself rather than let the AI pathfind its way around.



DEATH FROM ABOVE And as always, there's the traditional RTS overhead viewpoint for the purists.

Besides the perspective changes, there are also a few tweaks to basic gameplay to distinguish itself. For example, you don't just find resource nodes out in the open; you need to make a Geo Locator that will scan the terrain and deposit beacons indicating good mineral deposits for you to build your mines on top of. So the first few minutes of base construction is creating Geo Locators and having them scour the terrain, rather than making a beeline to the piles of crystal and gas laying next to your base.

Another interesting change is the research tree. You have to build two labs (civilian and military) and then staff each lab. Technicians supply research points, which are the resources used by the various labs, and there are varying levels of technicians. For example, you need a Level 2 technician in order to build Level 2 machinery. And the new techs are balanced; it's not just a matter of "build a Level 2 reaper and be done with it," each tech upgrade has upsides and downsides. Hence, the strategy isn't simply who can build the highest-level units but, rather, who can use a mix of units at varying tech levels.

Overall, MACHINES looks like it adds a few twists to the standard real-time genre. Its 3D doesn't go as far out as, say, CONQUEST or HOMEWORLD, but for a more traditional real-time game, it's a nice addition. How well real-time gamers will take to its usage of multiple perspectives remains to be seen. CGW

Strategically speaking, Thierry Nguyen likes to live out his dream of crushing the UN via SID MEIER'S ALPHA CENTAURI.

"TRIBES IS A LANDMARK GAME... IT DELIVERS WITH A VENGEANCE... THE BEST MULTIPLAYER GAME YOU CAN PLAY."

– REVIEWERS CHOICE AWARD, AVAULT.COM

"IF YOU DIG TONS OF STRATEGY MIXED WITH THE FIRST PERSON GENRE, HERE'S YOUR DITCH."

– GAMELINKS.NET

GOT TRIBES?

"THE MARK AGAINST WHICH TEAM FORTRESS II AND QUAKE III ARENA WILL HAVE TO COMPETE."

– GAMEPOST.COM

Dynamix
A SIERRA COMPANY

GET SOME NOW AT STORES EVERYWHERE.
GET THE OPENGL PATCH AT WWW.TRIBESPLAYERS.COM

© 1999 Sierra On-Line, Inc. All rights reserved. Starsiege is a trademark of Sierra On-Line, Inc.
Go to #178 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Septerra Core

Monolith's Recent Acquisition Looks to Be a Console RPG Done Right

by Thierry Nguyen

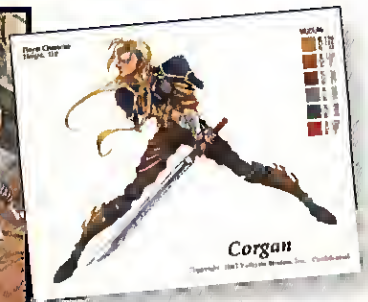
Creating a role-playing game nowadays seems a lot like acting out a soap opera. Look at the development cycle for either RETURN TO KRONDOR or FALLOUT 2, for example: While the games were being developed, there were many behind-the-scenes antics, such as important people coming and going, and even the rise and fall of entire companies. SEPTERRA CORE joins those ranks, as its development is even more storied. At one point everyone on staff was working on the game for free, before they split for a short period. Monolith saw an opportunity and took it, acquiring the game. Now the development team is back in gear.

Not So Final a Fantasy

Of course, one wonders why someone would go to the trouble of picking up a title with a shaky history. Well, look at FINAL FANTASY VII. As technically flawed as that title was, it opened the PC door for the console model of role-playing games—games in which story, rather than freedom of movement, was the focus of the game. RETURN TO KRONDOR followed this story-driven model, and SEPTERRA CORE hopes also to mine this emerging RPG motherlode.

The game is set on a planet that consists of seven continents orbiting a computer core. Every 100 years, the continents line up in such a fashion that the computer core can be accessed and controlled. As Maya, a resident of the garbage-fill continent, you notice some ships descending from the continent above. The plot begins with Maya deciding to warn someone about the approaching ships.

A HIVE OF SCUM AND... The environments range from this alien- and robot-filled bar to weird airships and ornate palaces.



IT'S MY PARTY One of these characters killed the other one's family. It wouldn't be a good idea to pair these two together in your active party.

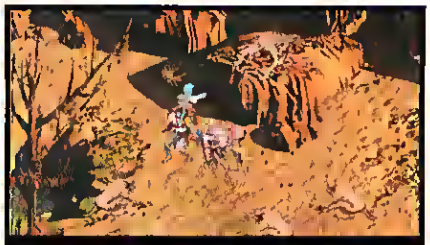
The use of the seven floating continents allows for a large variety of environments in which to travel. The lower you descend, the harsher the environment becomes, and the less sophisticated the technology. The game isn't restricted to the typical fantasy or sci-fi environs, and looks to do a nice job of mixing typical settings in order to create new ones. The graphics are very pleasing to the eye, both in backdrops and in effects such as shadows, rain, and very well done snow.

A Party Player

The gameplay is like other console RPGs: You manipulate a party of characters across various landscapes and have them talk to NPCs and/or engage in combat in order to move the story forward. Most of it will be played from a third-person isometric perspective, à la FALLOUT or BALDUR'S GATE. However, some areas of the game will use a more panoramic side-view.

Party management will be similar to that in BALDUR'S GATE and typical console games. You control three party-members at a time, Maya and two others (from a pool of eight). Each party member has detailed motivations and goals, and, as in BALDUR'S GATE, some party members simply don't like each other—and will act on it.

Combat will be like the odd, phased-turn/real-time combination found in console RPGs. Unlike in FINAL FANTASY VII, you *will* see the enemies before battle, instead of having them randomly attack you out of nowhere. The magic system is based on items called "Fate Cards," whereby you equip and combine different cards for different effects. One interesting change for the magic system is the common mana pool; no one has his or her own mana rating. Instead, everyone draws energy from the common pool whenever spells are cast or so forth.



WOLFIN' IT DOWN Gamers who were annoyed at the "out-of-the-blue" encounters in FINAL FANTASY VII will be relieved that SEPTERRA CORE shows you the enemies before combat starts.

So far, it looks as if SEPTERRA CORE is getting the RPG elements right. It has a unique gameworld, which separates it from most tired fantasy fare, the graphics look just right, and it has an interesting combat and magic system. Of course, it's possible that the design approach may put off old-school RPG gamers. But those who enjoyed FINAL FANTASY VII or RETURN TO KRONDOR, should look out for SEPTERRA CORE. CGW

Thierry Nguyen is currently navigating the Nashkel mines in BALDUR'S GATE. He also likes to shout "Butt-kickin' for goodness!" at his monitor, much to the annoyance of his coworkers.

Septerra Core

GENRE: Role-Playing
RELEASE DATE: Q3 '99
DEVELOPER: Valkyrie Studios
PUBLISHER: Monolith Productions

"UNPARALLELED REALISM AND ACTION."

– 3DGAMERS.COM

"OH MY GOD... WHAT I SAW WAS BREATHTAKING."

– THE VOODOO REVIEW

BUCKLE UP!

"CLEARLY THE FRONTRUNNER IN THE COMING INDUSTRY-WIDE MECH WAR..."

– OGR.COM

Dynamix
A SIERRA COMPANY

AVAILABLE IN COOL STORES EVERYWHERE.
GET THE BIG PICTURE AT STARSIEGEPLAYERS.COM

© 1999 Sierra On-Line, Inc. All rights reserved. Starsiege is a trademark of Sierra On-Line, Inc.

Go to #174 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Soldier of Fortune

Raven Goes Realistic? And Where Are the Fairies?

How do you follow up a really well done third-person fantasy shooter like HERETIC II? Raven looks to answer that question with SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, the company's new shooter based on the QUAKE II engine. One thing's for certain: This game is decidedly different from the standard fantasy fare that Raven has produced.

Soldier of Fortune

GENRE: Action (with Sim elements)
RELEASE DATE: Q3 '99
DEVELOPER: Raven Software
PUBLISHER: Activision

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE has you playing a mercenary who is part of a worldwide merc network (shades of JAGGED ALLIANCE). Various missions with comparable salaries are offered, and they can be reviewed before committing yourself to them. Once you accept a particular mission, and depending on whether it's a solo or team mission, you can recruit some other mercenaries and purchase equipment for your team. Then you can create a rudimentary plan (lay out waypoints and so forth) for carrying out the mission, and, finally, just jump in and play.

In a mission, the rest of your mercs will execute the plan you mapped out earlier, and you can assume direct control of one merc at a time; so you can jump from merc to merc and see to tasks such as planting explosives or personally assassinating a target.

Raven is going for realism, both in the look of the game and in the damage model. The enemies are going to be motion-captured, and there will be about 20 individual parts on the body that can receive and reflect specific damage results. Of course, it remains to be seen whether certain U.S. senators will approve of such imagery as a soldier getting his face blown off in spectacular fashion. Finally, the game will have a toggle set for either realism or gameplay, so fans of both QUAKE and DELTA FORCE can enjoy the game. The game is slated for release "sometime before Christmas" this year, and we'll have a more detailed look at the title as it develops.
—Thierry Nguyen

Swords and Sorcery

Bradley's Old-fashioned RPG Is Back on Track

Ambition in a role-playing game is always welcome, but it tends to push back release dates. We last looked at SWORDS AND SORCERY in our "Fantasy Face/Off" in CGW #171, and a lot has happened since then, both business-wise and designwise.

Even though Virgin/Westwood was acquired by EA late last summer, SWORDS AND SORCERY wasn't axed, it was just pushed back to the summer of 1999. So we decided to check up on the design team's progress . .

Swords and Sorcery

GENRE: RPG
RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Heunstic Park
PUBLISHER: Westwood Studios

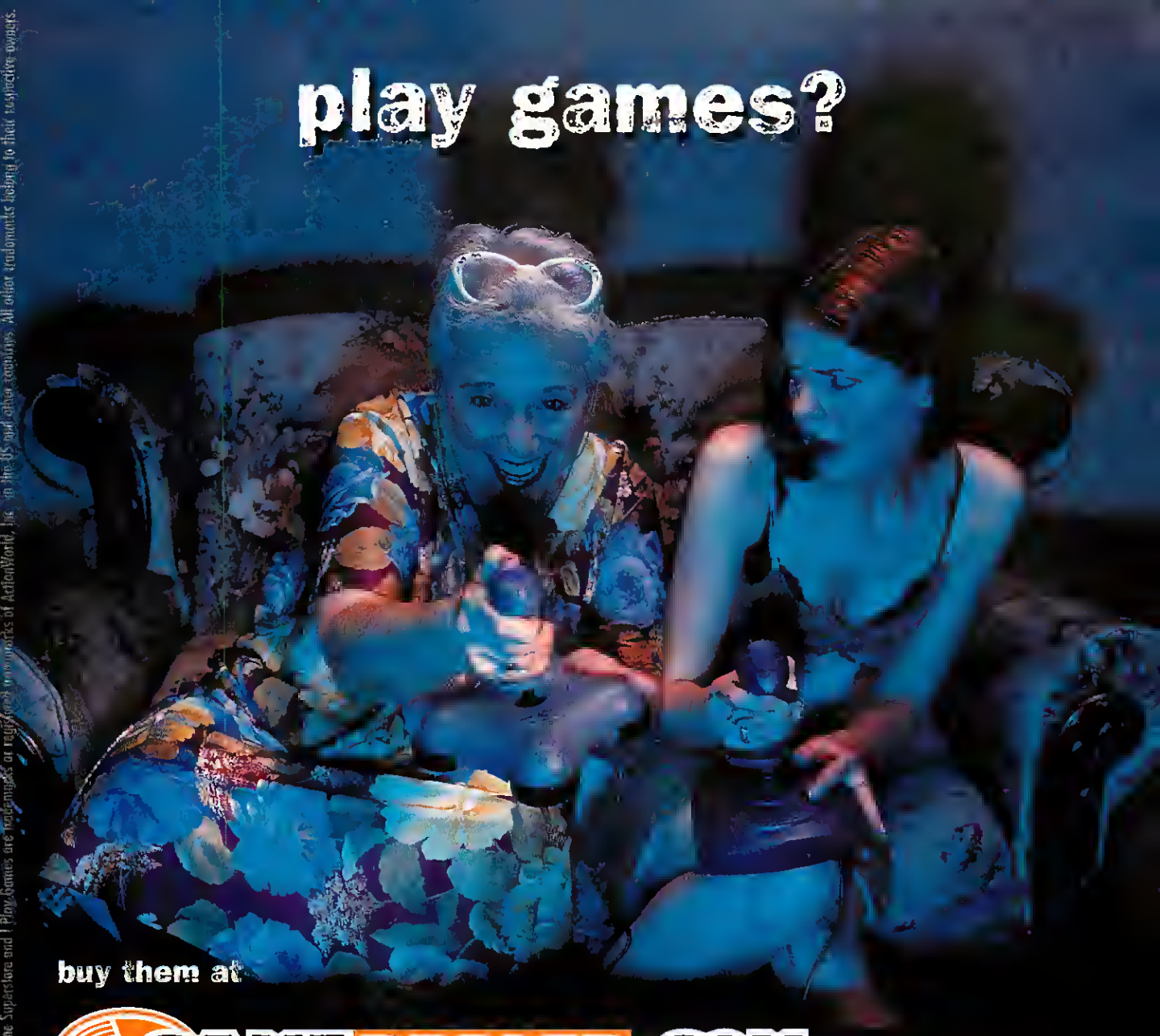
During the past six months, the core elements of the game were developed and are now in place. The artwork for the characters, the enemies, and the environments has been finalized, and all the voice-acting has been recorded. So, the core game is essentially done Heuristic Park is currently tweaking and balancing the game, confident that it will make its summer release.

Producer John Hight did point out one major change that designer D.W. Bradley has made the overhaul of the interface. Before, you controlled all six characters at once, and while that was visually impressive, it really hampered gameplay. Heuristic Park retuned the interface so that you now issue orders first, and your characters then appear and execute their commands one at a time.

To be honest, we were getting a bit worried about SWORDS AND SORCERY (especially with all of these company acquisitions and whatnot), but we're relieved to see the project get closer and closer to its final release date, and to see old-fashioned sensibilities mesh with newfangled technology—at least for now. If this game can fulfill its promise—especially in multiplayer mode—we're looking at another happy year for role-playing enthusiasts.
—Thierry Nguyen

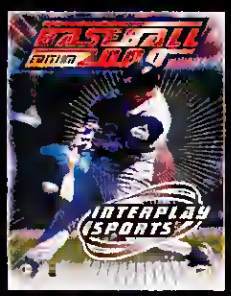
© 1998 ActionWorld, Inc. All rights reserved! The GameDealer.com logo, The Internet's Game Superstore and I Play Games are trademarks of ActionWorld, Inc. in the US and other countries. All other trademarks belong to their respective owners.

play games?



buy them at

GAMEDEALER.COM
THE INTERNET'S GAME SUPERSTORE



BASEBALL 2000 SE

HEAVY GEAR II

FLY HUNTER

3DEEP

WWW.GAMEDEALER.COM

GREAT PRICES ON THESE TITLES & MORE

1-800-610-2614 Fax 1-212-387-8021 International 1-212-358-9100

251 Park Ave South New York NY 10010

*$4.00 rate US Priority Mail US orders only. Additional shipping methods are available.

Lots of Information
Prompt Delivery
$4.00 Shipping*

UGO NETWORK
VIP CODE: CGW7

Go to #210 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Kingpin

Recruiting and Dialogue in a QUAKE-engine Game?

If there's an action development team known for "theme" games, it's Xatrix. REDNECK RAMPAGE, for example, was essentially the redneck version of DUKE NUKEM. So it seems only appropriate that Xatrix' latest, KINGPIN, would offer a different personality than the QUAKE II engine on which it's based—in this case, the team is moving away from rednecks and onto serious gang turf.

But there's much more to this game than just a change of characters and scenery. Xatrix is aiming to implement features such as the recruiting gang members off the street, the buying and selling of items, and a working dialogue system. The focus of the game is sure to elicit controversy, since you are playing a gang leader and are trying to consolidate power in a rough part of town. Xatrix is also adding things like specific body damage, vehicular control, and team-based AI.

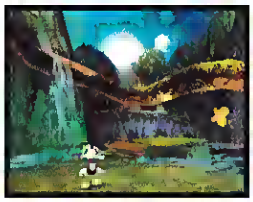
KINGPIN

GENRE: Action
RELEASE DATE: Q3 '99
DEVELOPER: Xatrix Interactive
PUBLISHER: Interplay

As we went to press, Xatrix was finalizing the first out of seven episodes. As soon as we get a hands-on piece of the action, our *consigliere* will be in touch. Until then, don't make any travel plans. —*Thierry Nguyen*

Rayman 2

Platform Sensibility in a 3D Environment



According to articles in the media about gaming violence, like the one that appeared recently in *Reader's Digest*, it's well-nigh impossible to find games that the whole family can play. Fortunately, Ubi Soft knows how to fill a niche in a hurry. The original RAYMAN was a solid side-scroller that seemed a bit *too* console-oriented for PC gamers. RAYMAN 2, however, takes the traditional platform style of its predecessor, but places all the action into a 3D world. And an extensive world it is, with a planned 48 levels stretched across 17 different environments. By going to 3D, the Rayman character's range of moves will increase to take advantage of both horizontal and vertical movement. While we'd never admit it on *60 Minutes*, even jaded game reviewers might have trouble taking this promising little charmer off their hard drives. —*Thierry Nguyen*

RAYMAN 2

GENRE: Action
RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Ubi Soft
PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft

Inertia

Spelunking Speedsters Spar in Space

Before you rip great handfuls of hair from your head and cry out "Oh, God, no, not another car combat game!" know this—INERTIA (a working title) is one of the most original entrants into the overworked killer vehicle genre that we've seen in some time. Eschewing the typical postapocalyptic roadways of some hideous future Earth, INERTIA throws the gamer into deep space as a mercenary hired to mine technology for one of five competing corporations. Of course, you'll have to fend off rival mercenaries as well as mechanical beasts all the while negotiating the dangerous tunnels, moving platforms, and more.

An impressive physics-based engine drives the action, leading to vehicles that recoil when firing weapons, handle differently in response to weapon weight and placement, and can be buffeted by moving water. Gravity will be modeled as well, so players will have to deal with the odd gravitational storm as well as arenas with variable gravity conditions in different portions of the arena.

Over 35 fancifully designed vehicles are fully customizable, with gamers allowed to purchase and adjust armor, engines, weaponry, and every imaginable facet of their vehicle. Money to buy these upgrades is earned by successfully completing the 25+ missions as well as arena duels where players compete for generous cash prizes. You can expect a more in-depth look in a future issue of *CGW* as soon as we get our twitchy little hands on some working code. —*Robert Coffey*

INERTIA

GENRE: Vehicular Shooter
RELEASE DATE: Q3 '99
DEVELOPER: Pseudo Interactive
PUBLISHER: Microsoft

Are You A Level Lord?

Well, *Computer Gaming World* and *GameSpot* are giving you the chance to prove it!

We'll accept the first 200 homemade Half-Life multiplayer levels*, try 'em out, and pick five winners to go on the *CGW* CG-ROM and *GameSpot*'s Download page.

Check out the *GameSpot* Contest page (www.gamespot.com/promos/) for details on how to enter!

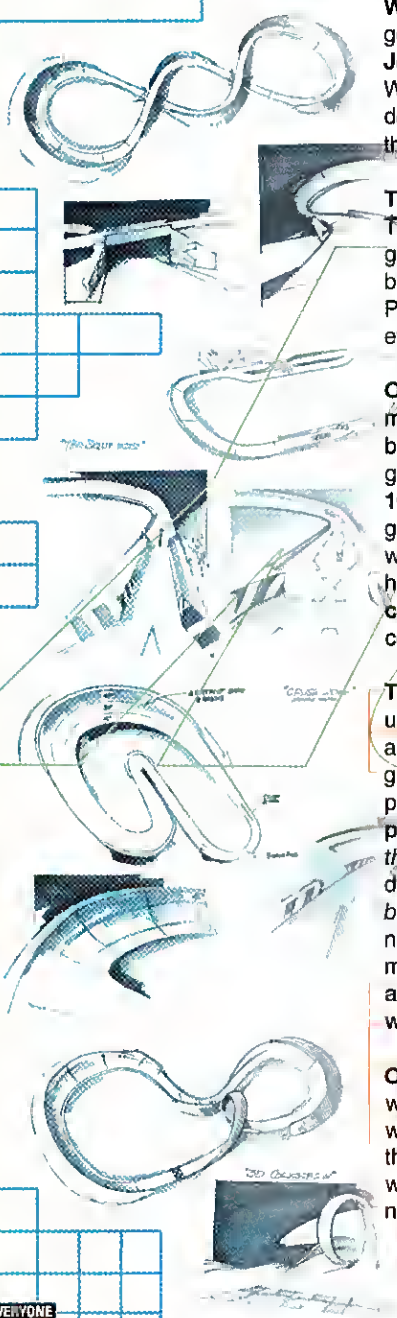
*Non-professional level designers, please!

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD
The #1 PC Game Magazine

GAMESPOT

What makes JEFF GORDON XS RACING great?

Let's be honest - building a great racing game that rises above the competition is not an easy task.



We knew we had jumped into a cluttered category where mediocrity was the norm, but **Jeff Gordon XS Racing** had to be the **best.** We needed a game that appealed to both the demanding racing game fanatic, as well as the gamer just looking to have fun.

That's when **Real Sports** was brought in. They demonstrated an amazing set of programming **tools, experience** and **desire** to build the game we wanted. **Robin Antonick,** President of **Real Sports** and father of six, even **races** cars on the weekends.

One of the biggest challenges we faced was to make a game that was **accessible** to **everybody.** To do so, we set out to make a game that would run smoothly on a **P166** with **16 MB RAM** without requiring the use of a 3D graphics accelerator. Of course, we also wanted to make it **scream** on a **P450** with huge amounts of RAM and **dual Voodoo 2 cards,** as well as a variety of other graphics cards.

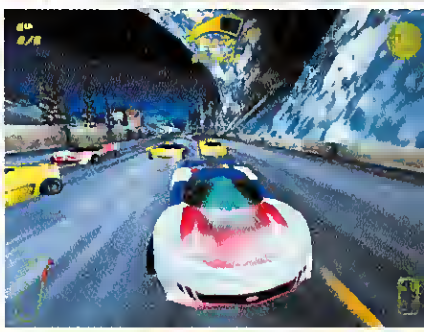
The game offers menu options that allow the user to adjust the level of detail on the tracks and cars. This was the first step in making the game compatible with as many machines as possible. Items such as **environmental mapping** (*a technique that allows for lighting and the environment to reflect off of the car*), clip distance (*the distance at which the horizon begins to draw in*), and polygons per car, all needed to be adjustable as well, on a per machine basis. **The frame rate is exceptional on a wide selection of machines either with the use of a 3D card or without.**

Other potential areas of conflict occured when trying to make the game compatible with 3D graphics accelerator cards. We made the decision early on to support **Direct 3D,** which will **allow us to run on all 3D cards,** not only **3Dfx** (*in glide mode*) like many accelerated games. However, different 3 card chipsets may support graphics in varyin ways. For example, to give the effect that car is actually racing on the ground, end n hovering over the track, we implemented transparent shadow effect under the car give it the perspective of being close to th ground. Well, we quickly discovered that c some 3D cards, transparent shadows we not supported the same across the 3 boards. **The result:** some shadows looke like shadows, and some shadows looked lik magic carpets under the cars - not quite th look we were going for. But in the end, o experiments with 3D cards will ensure a much overall compatiblity as possible.

The real test **of developing a racing game** **speed.** We can tell you that you're going **30 MPH,** but does it really look and feel th way? **The truth is:** in videogames, lik movies, **speciel effects play a major role adding to the experience.** The special effe in racing games is frame rate. For a you know, the track may be moving at **30 MPH** and your car is standing still. But does matter as long as the player feels like they're **zipping** along at top speeds? However it's done, no matter what it takes to move a polygonal car with polygonal tires around a polygonal track in a rectangle monitor on top of your desk, **we've been able to transform frame rate into an incredible sensation of speed.**

So, as we head into the final months before release, we've turned our development challenges into some **awesome game features:**

- **10 Extreme tracks** that include everything from **jumps** and **high-banked turns corkscrew loops** and **300 MPH speeds.**



EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Windows® 95
PC CD-ROM

PlayStation®

DEVELOPED BY
Real Sports™

ASC Games® is a registered trademark of American Softworks Corporation. © 1998 American Softworks Corporation. Jeff Gordon® XS Racing™ is a trademark of ASC Games®. © 1998 JG Motorsports Inc. Developed by Real Sports. ® PepsiCo, Inc. 1998. FRITOS ® is a registered trademark used by Frito-Lay, Inc. © 1995 PEG Limited Partnership and PEG 97 Limited Partnership. PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Windows® 95 is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corp. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All rights reserved.

•**Serious competition.** Doesn't it seem like every racing game out there lets you **smash** your opponents into the wall and they don't mind? Well, we didn't want that. If the term artificial intelligence wasn't so overused, then you can say ours is really awesome. But instead, let's just say watch out for the car that you just sent flying into the wall at **230 MPH -it will remember you.**

•**Intense graphics** that, to put it bluntly, rock!!! The tracks are set in **richly detailed, brightly colored environments** that are soaked with some pretty **impressive lighting effects.** But of course, if you're good at this game, the environments will look like colorful blurs.

Does all of this make **Jeff Gordon® XS Racing™** the best racing game on the PC? Well, we'll give you the same answer that **Jeff Gordon** gives when he's asked if he's the best **NASCAR** driver around ---

"The competition is fierce out there and one day you can be the best and the next day you're a spec in somebody's rear view mirror. But, if the fans just can't get enough of the action, then we must be doing something right."

"Making a good game was not the plan. Jeff Gordon® XS Racing™ had to be the best."

RACE WITHOUT LIMITS.

RACING™

www.ascgames.com
www.jeffgordonxsracing.com
Go to #116 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

ASC GAMES™

Win A Trip To E3!

Courtesy of EIDOS Interactive and Ziff-Davis

Enter NOW for your chance to win a trip to E3!
Check out the latest greatest upcoming titles of this fall.
Meet the Booth Babes and Hottest Game Developers.
Party with EIDOS Interactive!

Sneak Preview Fall's Hottest Games

- Daikatana
- Fighting Force 2
- Omikron
- Anachronox
- Commandos 2

Meet John Romero and Lara Croft
Plus Much More!!!

EIDOS INTERACTIVE

Exclusive Coverage by:

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD
ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY
Official US PlayStation Magazine
EXPERT GAMER
GAMESPOT
VIDEOGAMES.COM

Grand Prize: (1 winner)

- Trip to E3! Includes airfare to Los Angles, 2 night's hotel accommodations, Day Pass to E3, ticket to the EIDOS E3 party, ground transportation, and food vouchers.

2nd Prize: (3 winners)

- EIDOS Game Pack (3 EIDOS games for PC or PlayStation).
- Lara Croft collectable watch.

3rd Prize: (5 winners)

- A copy of Tomb Raider III for PC or PlayStation.

Entry is easy. Send a postcard with your name, and address to
Eidos/ZD E3 Getaway Sweepstakes
651 Brannan Street 4th Fl. San Francisco, CA 94107
Or online at www.gamespot.com/promos/e3trip

Sweepstakes Rules:
1. No Purchase Necessary: You must be 18 years or older to enter this Sweepstakes. This Sweepstakes may appear in several creative presentations and you may enter in any of the following ways: (A) log on to http://www.gamespot.com/promos/E3trip or (B) mail a postcard containing your name, age, address and phone number to "Win A Trip to E3", Eidos Interactive, 651 Brannan Street, San Francisco, CA 94107. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household without regard to the number of creative presentations in which the Sweepstakes may appear. All postal entries must be handwritten. Mechanically reproduced postal entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by April 26, 1999. All entries become exclusive property of Eidos and will not be acknowledged or returned. Sponsors assume no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due, misdirected email or postal mail entries or for phone, electrical, network, computer, hardware or software programming malfunctions, failures or difficulties. 2. Prizes: 1 Grand Prize: 1 Grand Prize winner will receive a trip for one person to the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in Los Angles from the nearest gateway city including air transportation, ground transportation to/from the hotel, hotel accommodations for 2 nights as selected by Sponsor, vouchers for two meals per day, and a pass to E3 and the Eidos party. Travel is currently expected to be May 12-14, but is subject to change. If winner is unable to travel during the dates scheduled, winner will forfeit the Grand Prize and an alternate winner may be selected. Grand prize has an approximate retail value of $4140. 3 Second Prize: 3 Second Prize winners will receive an Eidos Game Pack for the PC or PlayStation and a Lara Croft Collectable watch. PC and PlayStation Packs include three copies of Eidos interactive games. Second Prize has an approximate value of $175. 5 Third Prizes: 5 Third Prize winners will receive a PlayStation or PC copy of Tomb Raider III. Third prize has an approximate value of $50. Winners will be determined by a random drawing from all valid entries by Sponsor whose decisions are final. Drawing to be held on or about April 27, 1999. All prizes will be awarded. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Sponsor should the featured prize(s) become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Sweepstakes open to residents of the United States 18 years of age and older. Void in Hawaii, Alaska and Rhode Island. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification and an alternate winner will be selected. Winner must provide proof of age and shall sign and return an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 2 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade, or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of Eidos Interactive, ZD Inc., and their respective affiliates are not eligible. Neither ZD Inc., Eidos Interactive nor their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions, or related companies are responsible for any damages, taxes, or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. Winners accepting prizes agree that all prizes are awarded on the condition that ZD Inc., Eidos Interactive and their agents, representatives, and employees will have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses, or damages of any kind resulting from acceptance, possession, or use of the prizes. 5. Winners List. For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "E3 Getaway Sweepstakes Winners List" Eidos Interactive, 651 Brannan Street, San Francisco, CA 94107. Requests for winners lists must be received by May 15, 1999. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply. 7. Sponsors: This Sweepstakes is sponsored by Eidos Interactive and ZD Inc. (1999 ZD Inc. All rights reserved.

Computer Gaming World's

1999 PREMIER AWARDS

CGW Presents the Best Games of 1998

Each year, the editors of *Computer Gaming World* check their rocket launchers and crossbows at the door and file somberly into our august conference room. This star chamber, our assemblage of jaded critics, busily debates the merits and potential demerits of the year's best games in each gaming genre, as well as the best game-related hardware, in order to determine the winners of the *CGW* Premier Awards.

Finalists are gleaned from those games that have scored highest with our readers in the Top 100, appeared the most times in "Playing Lately?" polls, sold well in the marketplace, been well received by our regular contributors, and caused our editors' girlfriends and spouses to become jealous of a computer game.

Next, the editors play as many of the finalists as possible. Primary consideration in determining the winners is based on the editorial panel's evaluation of a given game's advancement of the gaming experience, performance within game genre or hardware component standards; and quality of innovation, play balance, and aesthetic presentation. *CGW* bestows the Game of the Year award to that gaming experience which transcends genre boundaries and advances the entire state of the gaming art beyond other game considerations. And now, the winners....

CHIPS & BITS INC.
POB 234 DEPT 11128
ROCHESTER, VT 05767
INT'L 802-767-3033 FAX 802-767-3382

Open 24 Hours 7 Days a Week

Order Online

www.cdmag.com/chips.htm
or call 1-800-699-4263
Source Code 11128

Buy CGW's 1999 "Premier Award- Game of the Year"

And the winners are:

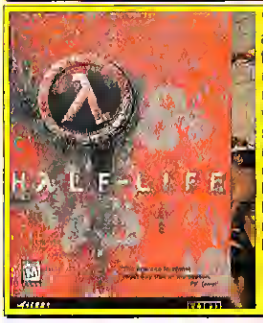
ACTION

'BATTLEZONE' Combines realistic first-person shooter action with full real-time strategic control in the midst of full-blown 3D warfare being fought in the 'Cold War' of outer space. Command & create over 30 units such as anti-grav tanks, walkers, guntowers, barracks & recyclers while fighting from inside your own vehicle in single or multi-player skirmishes.

$22.99 Activision (Action) PC CD

- Heretic 2 $39.99
- Rainbow Six $29.99
- Thief $29.99
- Unreal $29.99

'HALF LIFE' GAME OF THE YEAR!



'HALF LIFE' The military is just as interested in silencing you as they are in eradicating the alien menace. You must make a last ditch attempt to reach the alien world, foil their monstrous schemes, and figure out how to make peace with your own murderous kind. It will take a fast trigger finger and a taster mind to survive, as not every monster is your enemy and not everything is as it seems.

$34.99 Sierra (Action) PC CD

- Half Life Hint Book $16.99
- Half Life Team Fortress Add On $24.99

ROLEPLAYING

'BALDUR'S GATE' is set in th Forgotten Realms campaign world It features a transparent interfac and gameplay that uses a real-tim modification of the Advance Dungeon & Dragons rules system Over 60 monsters to fight, yo control a party of six, each wit unique abilities and personas CDs are filled with pre-rendere backgrounds, compelling music and gameplay!

$39.99 Interpla (Roleplaying PC C

- Fallout 2 $29.99
- Final Fantasy VII $32.99
- Might & Magic VI $29.99
- Return to Krondor $34.99

SIMULATION

'1943 EUROPEAN AIR WAR' Pilot 20 WWII fighters from Great Britain, Germany & the U.S. Defend England from German bombers escort B-17s to the Third Reich, or dogfight over France. Missions include up to 256 planes in the air simultaneously, Fighter Sweep, Bomb Target, Escort Flight, Intercept & Interdiction. Multi-player via dogfights & co-op missions via modem & network.

$34.99 Microprose (Simulation) PC CD

- Combat Flight Simulator $48.99
- F-22 Total Air War $38.99
- Falcon 4.0 $49.99
- WWII Fighters $44.99

ADVENTURE- IT'S A TIE!

$29.99 Dreamforge/ASC (Adventure) PC CD

$39.99 LucasArts (Adventure) PC CD

- Blackstone Chronicles $39.99
- King's Quest VIII $34.99
- Redguard $49.99
- Quest For Glory V $34.99

SPACE SIMULATION

'INDEPENDENCE WAR' In the mid dle of an interstellar skirmish, tak command of a 150 meter lon Dreadnought class Corvette, que the rebellion and restore orde Realistic flight model allows yo 360 degrees of freedom in full 3D Features numerous space ag weapons such as seek & destro rockets and particle beam cannon

$39.99 Into Grame (Simulation PC C

- Descent: Freespace $29.99
- X-Com Interceptor $19.99
- Rogue Squadron $46.99
- Battlecruiser 3000 ver 2 $17.99

STRATEGY

'STARCRAFT' As the military leader for your species, you must gather your resources to gain either freedom or galactic domination. Play 30 different missions in space on planets within installations. Control any of 3 species, each with unique attributes and abilities. Multiplayer games for up to 8 players over IPX networks and Battle.net. Scenario and map editor allows you to create your own campaigns.

$36.99 Blizzard (Strategy) PC CD

- Populous: The Beginning $45.99
- Railroad Tycoon II $44.99
- Warhammer 40,000 $44.99
- Gangsters $29.99

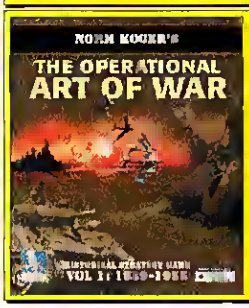
HARDWARE

'DIAMOND MONSTER MX300 PCI' Creates a realistic & immersive 3D sound environment. It truly rocks with full acceleration of A3D 2.0, Direct Sound3D, Direct Sound games, cinema-quality DVD & even MP-3. Features studio-quality 320 voice DLS wavetable synthesizer. Supports up to 4 speakers. Powered by Aureal Vortex-2 PCI audio accelerator.

$69.99 Diamond (Hardware) PC

- Mouseman+ Mouse $39.99
- Sdwndr ForceFeedback Wheel $169.99
- Xterminator Gamepad $43.99
- YST M28 Speakers $79.99

WAR



'THE OPERATIONAL ART O WAR' This volume covers all mod ern warfare from 1939 to 195 including the war with German and Japan, the Korean War, an hypothetical battles. Game scalin from company to corps level an 2.5 miles per hex to 25 miles pe hex. Twelve major scenarios wit stunning 16-bit graphics.

$29.99 Talonsof (War PC C

- Alde De-Camp 2 $44.99
- Great Battles of Julius Caesar $29.99
- West Front $34.99
- Peoples General $29.99

SPORTS

'FIFA ROAD TO WORLD CUP '98' Conquer fierce defenders and defeat entire nations on your quest to quality for World Cup 98. The long road to France starts in initial qualifiers, with 172 teams from six international zones vying for one of 30 positions in the final rounds. It's the largest sporting event of the century and it's up to you to qualify.

$19.99 Electronic Arts (Sports) PC CD

- Links LS 99 $39.99
- Madden 99 $39.99
- NHL 99 $42.99
- FIFA Soccer 99 $36.99

ADD-ONS

'STARCRAFT BROOD WAR' is an expansion set to Starcraft, continuing the saga of galactic warfare as the Zerg, Protoss and Terrans struggle for their continued survival. Three all-new campaigns continue the epic Starcraft storyline. Features new weapons of war, new worlds to explore, and 100 new multiplayer maps.

$24.99 Blizzard (Strategy) PC CD

- Age of Empires: Rise of Rome $29.99
- Diablo: Hellfire $19.99
- Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Eagle Watch $19.99
- Quake II: Ground Zero $24.99

DRIVING

'NEED FOR SPEED 3' New car include the Aston Martin DB7 Ferrari 550 Maranello, and th Lamborghini Diablo SV. Suppor up to two players with a Modem Serial connection or up to eig players with a LAN connectio Features improved graphic weather effects, and Hot Pursu mode where you scorch the street on either side of the law.

$42.99 Electronic Art (Simulation PC C

- F1 Racing Simulation $29.99
- Grand Prix Legends $29.99
- Motocross Madness $44.99
- Moto Racer 2 $39.99

Visa, MC & Discover accepted. Checks held 4 weeks. Money Orders under $200 same as cash. COD $8. Price, release availability, shipping times & offer not guaranteed & are subject to change at any time. Hardware may require added S&H. Within 10 days defectives repaired or replaced at our discretion. After 10 days the manufacturer's warrantee applies. All sales final. S&H calculated on a per order, per shipment, and per item basis. The 'per order' charge is charged once per order placed; the 'per item' charge is charged once for each item ordered and the 'per shipment' charge is charged once for each shipment we make to you. For each US order $10.00 will be allocated to a 12 issue subscription to Computer Games Strategy Plus.

	Standard U.S. Mail 7-10 Days	Priority U.S. Mail 2-3 Days	Express 2 Day	Express 1 Day	Mail To Canada 4-7 Days	Mail To The World 7-14 Days
Per Order	$1.00	$2.00	$2.00	$2.00	$2.00	$2.00
Per Shipment	$1.25	$1.80	$5.00	$13.00	$2.00	$2.00
Per Item	$0.75	$1.00	$1.00	$2.00	$2.00	$4.00

CGW4591

Go to #068 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

©1999 CHIPS & BITS

★★★★★ Game of the Year ★★★★★

HALF-LIFE

For the foreseeable future, every shooter released will have to face one tough question: "How does it compare to HALF-LIFE?" Transcending and revolutionizing the first-person shooter, HALF-LIFE ranks without question as a landmark game, a milestone that in time will prove significant in the nascent history of gaming.

In retrospect, what HALF-LIFE accomplished seems so obvious it's a wonder no one did it before. It started with the story. Realizing the true potential of the first-person perspective, Valve made sure that every plot element happened *to* you. No distancing, third-person cut-scenes to shove the plot forward, in HALF-LIFE the characters around you spoke directly to you—and you could interact with them, getting them to help you, heal you, or join you. Beautifully paced, the developing story gripped you, engaged you emotionally, and kept you playing just so you could find out what would happen next.

HALF-LIFE's handling of boss monsters was simply a stroke of genius. Discarding the traditional model of tossing one huge, never-before-seen *über*-beast at you every few levels, this game introduced most of its bosses early, right at the beginning of a sequence of levels. Forced to deal with the tentacled creature, Gonarch, or Gargantua, gamers grew truly to hate them. That kind of emotional investment elevated the killing of those bastards so much that destroying the damned "Surface Tension" Apache helicopter was gaming's best, most rewarding moment of the year.

HALF-LIFE ranks without question as a landmark game, a milestone that in time will prove significant in the nascent history of gaming.

Brilliant level design enhanced the experience immensely. Rooms were rarely packed with enemies; instead, monsters were strategically placed and could appear anywhere at any time, creating a pervasive sense of unease. Remarkably, the real-world settings only heightened that feeling of dread as the otherworldly invaders turned it on its head. After being steeped in reality for the majority of the game, the alien dimension of the final levels proved even more disorienting.

If *CGW* gave a Monster of the Year Award, it wouldn't go to

HALF-LIFE's houndeyes, alien slaves, or headcrabs—it would go to the Marines. Incredibly brutal and wickedly smart, the top-notch AI of these grunts was so well designed and challenging that if the game had no other enemies it still would have rocked.

Shimmering graphics, great puzzles, haunting 3D sound, and a multiplayer game that rivals QUAKE DeathMatching round out a very complete package. Rarely has there been a game as thrilling and enthralling as HALF-LIFE. Rarely has a game been more deserving of being named Game of the Year.

EVIL, WICKED,
MEAN AND NASTY.

A-10 WARTHOG

From The Award Winning Creator Of Longbow, Longbow2 and F-15.

Jane's A-10 Warthog tekes you into the brutal world of frontline air combat! It's like piloting a flying tank! The A-10 encases your cockpit in a 4" thick titanium bathtub that acts like a bullet-proof helmet for your butt. So don't worry about getting hit... worry about turning enemy tanks into scrap metal! After all, you're armed with the most devastating ground attack weapon ever built: the Avenger Cannon. With a recoil that shakes the entire plane, this 30 mm, 7 barrel cannon turns titanium armour into tin foil. The A-10 is so devastating, Desert Storm pilots saw enemy commanders evacuate their tanks and run at the sight of it! Jane's A-10 Warthog is the meanest, nestiest flight sim we've ever made! Prepare to get down and dirty!

Jane's
COMBAT SIMULATIONS

We Build Sims By The Book™
www.janes.ea.com

We Build Sims By The Book and Electronic Arts are registered trademarks of Electronic Arts in the U.S. and/or other countries. Jane's is a registered trademark of Jane's Information Group LTD. Jane's Combat Simulations is an Electronic Arts brand. The 3D [illegible] is a trademark of 3Dfx Interactive, Inc.

THE BEST OF THE YEAR

★★★★★ Best Action ★★★★★

BATTLEZONE

While our Game of the Year, HALF-LIFE, most redefined the action niche, all our finalists brought something new to table. RAINBOW SIX deftly mixed strategic planning with nail-biting action as it brought the world of counterterrorist operations to life. HERETIC II proved that the QUAKE II engine could work in a third-person game *and* that a spell-casting, shirtless elf could actually kick ass. Next to the revolutionary HALF-LIFE, THIEF: THE DARK PROJECT most shook up the shooter genre, replacing traditional run-'n'-gun gameplay with a brain-busting, tense, first-person game that emphasized stealth and thinking over reflexes.

By excelling in every aspect of design gameplay, BATTLEZONE handily earned Action Game of the Year.

But it was Activision's action/strategy hybrid BATTLEZONE that really broke new ground. Taking place in an alternate past during which the Cold War was fought on distant planets, BATTLEZONE put gamers inside a missile-spitting hovertank and then let them harvest resources, build defenses, and (best of all) create hordes of other tanks to help battle those godless Commies. The graphics were drop-dead gorgeous, the multiplayer game was a blast, and the game sported a beautifully designed interface that made commanding your forces an intuitive breeze.

By excelling in every aspect of design gameplay, BATTLEZONE handily earned Action Game of the Year recognition.

Runner-up: **Thief: The Dark Project**, Eidos Interactive. Other Action Finalists: **Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six**, Red Storm Entertainment; **Heretic II**, Activision

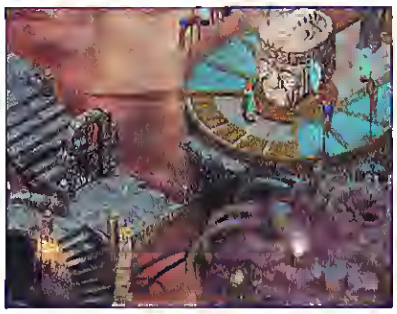
★★★★★ Tie: Best Adventure ★★★★★

SANITARIUM

Adventure games continued their remarkable renaissance in 1998 with a number of stellar releases. Two in particular stood out in our minds, and we liked them both so much that we ultimately did not have the heart to pick one over the other. So this year's Adventure Game of the Year is a tie.

SANITARIUM, from tiny DreamForge Intertainment, came from out of nowhere to provide the creepiest, most compelling, and best-told story of the year, bar none. Starting from an utter cliché of a plot line—you wake up and you don't know who or where you are—SANITARIUM builds in intensity until you simply cannot stop playing.

Filled with moments that are both terrifying and moving, SANITARIUM gets under your skin like few games ever have.



GRIM FANDANGO

For the second year in a row, following THE CURSE OF MONKEY ISLAND, LucasArts has struck gold in the adventure game genre. GRIM FANDANGO, however, is more than just another adventure game. It's a ground-breaking, utterly original masterpiece, combining first-rate storytelling, unforgettable 3D graphics, and the biting humor for which LucasArts adventures are so well known. In an industry overloaded with brain-dead copycat games, GRIM FANDANGO positively bursts with creative energy, melding Mexican Day of the Dead folklore with '50s film noir. Manny Calavera may be just another dead guy, but in LucasArts' able hands, the story of *this* dead guy was one of the gaming highlights of this or any other year.

Other Adventure Finalists: **Redguard**, Bethesda; **King's Quest VIII: Mask of Eternity**, Sierra Studios; **Blackstone Chronicles**, Legend/Red Orb

★ Best RPG ★

BALDUR'S GATE

The *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* license could well have been named "Most Abused License of All Time" prior to this year. There really hasn't been an *AD&D*-licensed product that added to the gaming experience since the old SSI "gold box" games. Then along came BALDUR'S GATE. Interplay promised us that its developer, Bioware, would be faithful to the spirit of *AD&D* while providing an up-to-date, technologically advanced engine. We were, to say the least, skeptical.

We've never seen character alignment and character attributes handled as well as they are in BALDUR'S GATE.

We are skeptical no more. From character creation through character interaction and on to party management and combat, BALDUR'S GATE is an exceptional product. We've never seen character alignment and character attributes handled as well as they are in BG. Put characters of opposite alignments in the same party and you're asking for internecine warfare. Put a character with high charisma in the lead and you're likely to get optimal discounts from the local merchants and more information than you'd expect from nonplayer characters. Bioware must be commended for the detailed character sketches behind each character.

The runner-up, New World Computing's MIGHT AND MAGIC VI, was a gigantic, addictive hack-'n'-slash—and not much in the depth department. Still, for 80 hours or so, it was a definite hoot to play.

Runner-up: Might and Magic VI, New World Computing. Other Role-Playing Finalists: **Fallout 2,** Black Isle/Interplay; **Return to Krondor,** Sierra Studios; **Final Fantasy VII,** SquareSoft/Eidos Interactive

THE BEST OF THE YEAR

★★★★★ Best Simulation ★★★★★

EUROPEAN AIR WAR

Despite its troubled development history and competition from flashier sims, MicroProse's EUROPEAN AIR WAR walks away with the Premier Award for best simulation game. This World War II simulation captured the feeling of being in a living, unpredictable combat environment better than any other sim released this past year. The dynamic campaign's ability to pull us in and make us feel as if we really were defending English shores during the Battle of Britain, and to manage huge formations of aircraft in dazzling aerial ballets, kept us coming back to this sim more than any other. When you dived through a formation of smoking B-17s while chasing an Me-109, about all that was missing were G-forces and a picture of Betty Grable taped to the instrument panel.

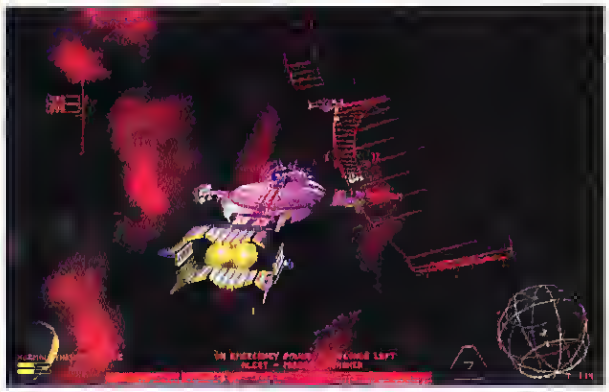
> About all that was missing were G-forces and a picture of Betty Grable taped to the instrument panel.

Jane's WWII FIGHTERS was a very, very close runner-up. Unmatched aircraft graphics, amazing special effects, top-notch AI, and accurate flight modeling really pulled you into the combat experience. Multiplayer on Jane's Combat.net is a blast, with both dogfights and full missions available. However, the scripted feel of many of the Jane's missions gave EUROPEAN AIR WAR the edge.

Special mention goes to FALCON 4.0, a sim with unprecedented detail, which would have been a shoo-in had it not shipped loaded with bugs.

Runner-up: WWII Fighters, Jane's Combat Simulations. Other Finalists: Combat Flight Simulator, Microsoft; F-15, Jane's; F22 Total Air War, DID; Falcon 4.0, MicroProse

★★★★★ Best Space Sim ★★★★★



INDEPENDENCE WAR

In a genre in which Hollywood-style glitz is all too often the focus, it took physics to make a standout title. Past space sims have played out more like WWII dogfights, with attempts at realism often sacrificed for gameplay. (Physics aren't totally new to space sims, but while Virgin's SHUTTLE was impressive, the realism didn't exactly make for fast-paced action.) Now UK-based developer Particle Systems has proved that you *can* have realistic space physics and great gameplay.

> INDEPENDENCE WAR proves that you can have realistic space physics and great gameplay.

It's not just the physics that make Infogrames' INDEPENDENCE WAR the best space sim this year; there's also great mission design behind it. Rather than the "fly to a waypoint and kill everything there" missions found in other games, INDEPENDENCE WAR gives you tasks such as neutralizing an antimatter bomb or using a remote-controlled freighter to destroy a space station. While the intership battles do sometimes become turn-and-shoot fights, there's often an element of naval warfare to them as well. And the software graphics engine—the best we've ever seen—was bolstered by superb 3Dfx enhancement in the U.S release.

DESCENT: FREESPACE also proved to be an excellent game, featuring some of the best wingman AI to hit the genre, but it was too derivative of previous space sims. The more original INDEPENDENCE WAR, in light of its innovative design and great gameplay, clearly led the field and earned the award.

Runner-up: Descent: Freespace, Interplay

★ Best Strategy ★

STARCRAFT

Apparently God takes great pride in creating irony. How else to explain that in one of the weakest years for strategy gaming in recent memory, the best real-time strategy game in memory—recent or otherwise—is released?

You had to look hard amongst the herd of limp WARCRAFT and C&C clones to find many strategy games of worth in 1998. POPULOUS: THE BEGINNING reinvented the

A paragon of design and balance, STARCRAFT is the touchstone of its genre.

God game genre (a genre that the POPULOUS series created years ago) with wit, a stunning 3D engine, and a truly unique multiplayer game. CHAOS GATE was perhaps the best iteration of the WarHammer universe to date, although some weak AI hampered its turn-based squad-level combat, while RAILROAD TYCOON II proved to be a brilliant update of a gaming classic.

But Blizzard's STARCRAFT stood head and shoulders above them all. This game had everything and executed it ingeniously. Three truly unique races with three truly unique unit sets, creating a gameworld of seemingly endless strategic depth. A compelling story artfully told through cut-scenes, mission briefings, and the missions themselves. And multiplayer action (free on Blizzard's battle.net) that was insidiously addicting and simply unparalleled. A paragon of design and balance, STARCRAFT is the touchstone of its genre, the definitive game against which all real-time games will be measured for years to come.

Runner-up: **Populous: The Beginning**, Bullfrog.
Other Strategy Finalists: **Railroad Tycoon II**, Gathering of Developers; **WarHammer 40,000: Chaos Gate**, SSI

INTERACTIVE MAGIC
www.shadowcompany.com

★★★★★ Best Sports ★★★★★

FIFA

For North Americans, soccer fails to maintain the excitement level of a Michael Jordan jump shot at the buzzer or a Joe Montana–engineered touchdown drive in the last minute of the Super Bowl. So it is a tribute to the superb design of EA Sports' FIFA that it held us enraptured in World Cup campaigns for months after other sports had faded from our hard drives. We had passionate debates—and gamepad face-offs—over whether France could once again beat Brazil (they couldn't), why the English were so slow (it's the food), and whether the current USA team might stand a chance against Germany (are you kidding?).

> FIFA wasn't just one game, it was a trilogy of the best games covering any sport—ever.

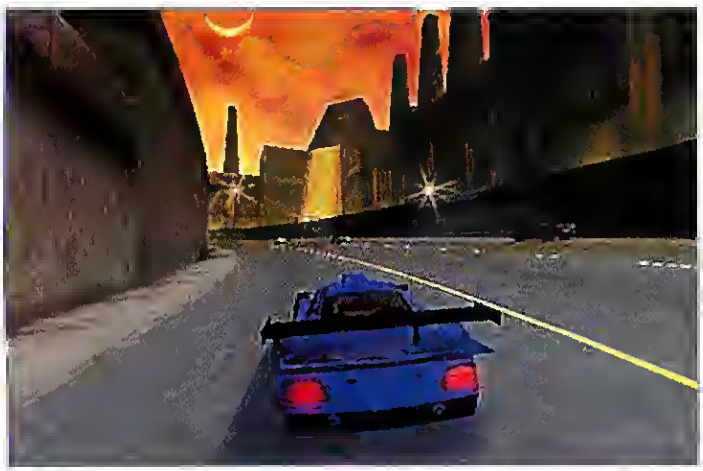
Best of all, FIFA wasn't just one game, it was a trilogy of the best games covering any sport—ever. FIFA: ROAD TO THE WORLD CUP, WORLD CUP 98, and FIFA 99 all had wonderful 3D graphic support, engrossing solo campaigns, excellent multiplay, and the toughest AI this side of Deep Blue. How appropriate in a World Cup year that EA Sports finally did not one, but *three* games that were superior not only to their excellent console counterparts but also to the other worthy PC contenders in a great year for computer sports games. *Goooooaaalllllllll!* indeed.

Runner-up: **NHL Hockey 99**, EA Sports
Other Sports Game Finalists: **Madden 99**, EA Sports; **Front Office Football**, Solecismic Software; **Links LS 99**, Access Software

★★★★★ Best Driving ★★★★★

NEED FOR SPEED III: HOT PURSUIT

Let's make this clear: NEED FOR SPEED III: HOT PURSUIT wasn't the most realistic driving game of the year. We know this. We know that taking a turn at 120 miles an hour and crashing into a wall would probably kill you in real life. But you know what? We don't care. No driving game released in 1998 came close to matching the sheer visceral thrills of Electronic Arts' utterly addicting arcade driving game, in both its single- and multiplayer forms. The game's Hot Pursuit mode, in which you can either play a cop or be pursued by one, was one of our favorite brain-dead guilty pleasures of the year. It didn't hurt that NFSIII featured gorgeous 3D graphics and the best implementation of force-feedback to date. No racing game in 1998 was more *fun* to play. And sometimes, you know, that's what it's all about.



At the exact opposite end of the spectrum, ironically, we have our runner-up: Sierra Sports' GRAND PRIX LEGENDS. Arguably the most ambitious and realistic driving simulation to date—modeling the thrills and difficulties of Grand Prix racing circa 1967—it is also perhaps the toughest to play. It's an awesome game for those who can handle it.

In a less competitive year, Ubi Soft's excellent F1 RACING SIMULATION would have won hands down. The sequel, just released, may fare better in '99.

Runner-up: **Grand Prix Legends**, Sierra Sports
Other Driving Finalists: **Motocross Madness**, Microsoft; **F1 Racing Simulation**, UbiSoft; **Moto Racer 2**, Electronic Arts

★ Best War ★

THE OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR

Every time we think we might have TalonSoft figured out, the company surprises us again. After all, almost anything that follows the award-winning

BATTLEGROUND series risks failing to meet high expectations. Now that THE OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR has brought us back again and again for endless campaigning, why we ever worried…we'll never know. Combining the best elements of a turn-based format with a number of clever subsystems, the game re-creates 20th-century warfare like no other. What boardgame, for instance, could ever calculate more than 90 different modifiers for each combat, much less keep the pace fairly lively? What other computer game comes

THE OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR shows that there is still plenty of life left in serious wargames.

close to offering such a demanding—and ruthlessly unforgiving—silicon opponent, plus the ability to wage war versus a human armchair general?

Not even STEEL PANTHERS so vividly puts you in the mind-set of a modern-era operational-level commander. Not only do you deal with logistics, battlefield morale, and a variety of mission types in ART OF WAR, you must also develop your instincts, rather than your ability to gain a three-to-one odds attack. With its innovative combination of time, movement, and combat action, THE OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR shows that there is still plenty of life left in serious wargames.

Julius Caesar gets his due in the last of Interactive Magic's GREAT BATTLES series. With improved graphics, aggressive AI, a solid campaign, and an excellent scenario editor, it's the best ancients game in more than a decade for the PC.

Runner-up: Great Battles of Julius Caesar, Interactive Magic
Other Wargame Finalists: Aide de Camp 2, HPS Simulations; West Front, TalonSoft

THE BEST OF THE YEAR

★★★★★ Best Classic ★★★★★

YOU DON'T KNOW JACK: THE RIDE

Even though we've found something to enjoy in nearly every edition of this ribald trivia game series, Berkeley Systems' latest JACK struck us as something special. The jokes kept their saucy edge, but with less of the mean-spirited humor that had crept into recent games in the series. New and improved games within the game—such as *Dis or Dat*—added enough freshness to the mix that even jaded old gamers couldn't suppress a smirk. Sure, the salacious play-by-play occasionally goes a bit too much over the top, but it's hard to fault a game that so revels in its own irreverence. YOU DON'T KNOW JACK: THE RIDE ranks easily as the best since the first of the series found its way into the *CGW* Hall of Fame. And for that we salute the folks at Berkeley Systems and Jellyvision, game designers who really do know JACK, at least where our funny bones are concerned.

Our runner-up, JEWELS II, does not always live up to its subtitle: THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE. But it's a great design that lets you change the difficulty of each of the puzzles—or their multiple variations—on the fly. If it isn't quite up to the level of JACK: THE RIDE, JEWELS II is still well worth the time for anyone who enjoys challenging puzzles wrapped up in a simple, enjoyable package.

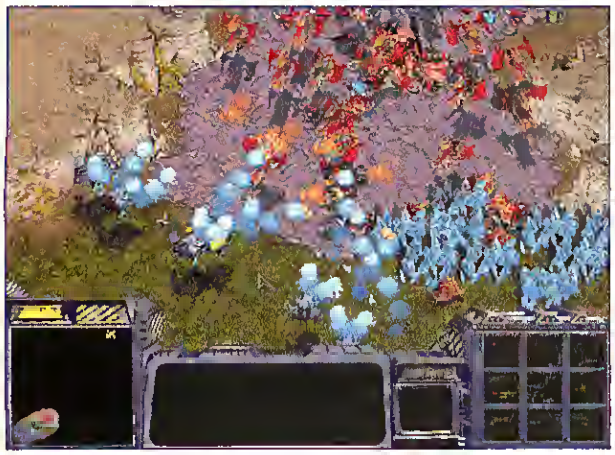
> It's hard to fault a game that so revels in its own irreverence.

Runner-up: **Jewels II**, Hoffman and Associates
Other Classics/Puzzle Finalists: **Mega Solitaire**, Palladium Interactive; **Smart Games Challenge 3**, Smart Games/Hasbro

★★★★★ Best Add-on ★★★★★

STARCRAFT: BROOD WAR

How do you follow up the best strategy game of the year? You make an expansion disc that fine-tunes the game balance while it also serves up a darker and superior plot. That is exactly what Blizzard did with STARCRAFT: BROOD WAR.



No other add-on released in 1998 so significantly perfected and enhanced the original game as much as BROOD WAR did.

Some gamers might scoff at BROOD WAR adding "only" six all-new units, but those six units are an example of quality versus quantity, and they do much to tweak the game balance. The Zerg now have a defensive measure, the Terrans have medical support, the Protoss have powerful new spells, and all three races gain better air-to-air support. Also, BROOD WAR adds three new tile sets (with their own unique critters) and a host of new multiplayer maps.

Finally, BROOD WAR surpasses the original STARCRAFT in terms of story, a feature that wasn't lacking in the first place. This time, the 26-mission campaign presents a plot that is much darker in tone, complete with heroes you love and hate from STARCRAFT and a few fresh faces. BROOD WAR makes the best strategy game yet even better.

> BROOD WAR surpasses the original in terms of story, a feature that wasn't lacking in the first place.

Other Add-On Finalists: **Age of Empires: The Rise of Rome**, Microsoft; **Diablo: Hellfire**, Sierra On-Line; **Total Annihilation: The Core Contingency**, Cavedog

★★★★★ Best Hardware ★★★★★

AUREAL VORTEX 2 & DIAMOND MX300

The past year proved to be a very good one for PC gaming hardware. 3D graphics got prettier and faster. Force-feedback finally arrived on the scene in full, um, force. Memory and CPUs got cheap. And PC audio grew a third dimension.

For this year's Hardware Product of the Year, we thought seriously about nVidia's venerable RIVA TNT, the first 2D/3D chipset to outgun a single Voodoo². But we've given awards to 3D graphics chipsets for the past several years; we decided it was time for a change.

So this year, the award goes to Aureal Semiconductor's Vortex 2 audio chipset and Diamond Multimedia's MonsterSound MX300. Aureal first brought convincing 3D audio to the PC market and helped move audio to the PCI bus two years ago with its Vortex chipset and its A3D API to make 3D audio programming easier for developers. The Vortex 2 chipset adds more rendering horsepower, as well as rendering features like occlusion and reflection. Games like JEDI KNIGHT and, more recently, HALF-LIFE and THIEF: THE DARK PROJECT have shown what a difference good 3D audio can make in a game. Diamond Multimedia has been an Aureal champion, and Diamond's marketing muscle helped make Aureal a household name for PC gamers.

This year's runner-up is Microsoft's SideWinder Force-Feedback Wheel. It was the best force-feedback wheel released in 1998 and, along with titles like EA's NEED FOR SPEED III, helped force-feedback find a home in PC gaming.

Games like JEDI KNIGHT and, more recently, HALF-LIFE and THIEF: THE DARK PROJECT have shown what a difference good 3D audio can make in a game.

Runner-up: SideWinder Force-Feedback Wheel, Microsoft

★ Special Award: Hardware Development ★

NVIDIA

The nVidia story can be summed up in a single word: redemption. This graphics chip-maker entered the PC industry on a sour note four years ago with its ill-fated NV-1 multimedia processor, which aspired to be a Ginsu, cutting through all kinds of media, but wound up as table scraps. Undaunted by the setback, nVidia, then a privately funded company, knew it had one more shot at success in this brutally competitive market. So nVidia aimed squarely to accelerate Direct3D, and later OpenGL, and decided to forgo a proprietary API. The company scored. And it scored big with the RIVA 128, proving that a card that accelerated only standard APIs well could thrive. More recently, nVidia unleashed the RIVA TNT, the first 2D/3D board to challenge the supremacy of the mighty Voodoo². With its latest, the TNT2, nVidia will remain a tough competitor throughout this year.

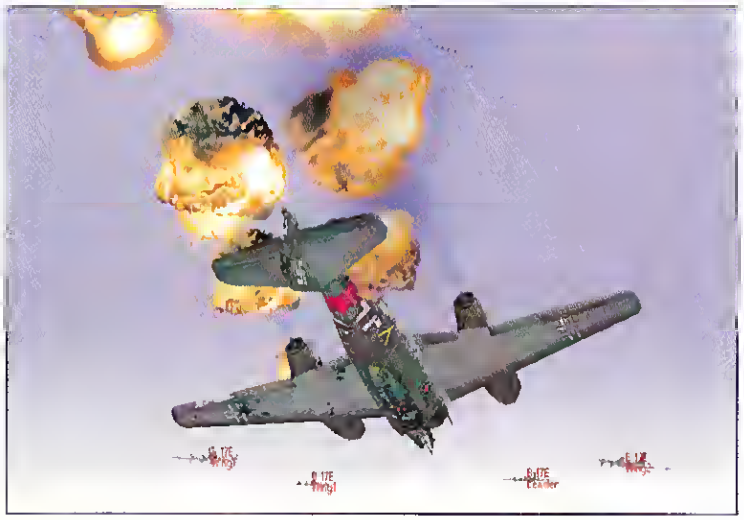
THE BEST OF THE YEAR

★★ Special Award: Musical Score ★★

WWII FIGHTERS

Don Veca and the sound team at Jane's Combat Simulations deserve special recognition for creating a flight sim in which you *don't* want to immediately disable the music in flight. In fact, you may end up spending time exploring the sim's virtual museum just to listen to the superb recordings of big band music.

Once you're in the air, the orchestral soundtrack follows your actions like a movie soundtrack. Break from the pack and head off into the sunset doing aerobatics and you'll get inspirational, uplifting melodies. Hit a patch of flak that starts to send your buddies dropping to the ground in flames, and the score will respond with a dark, foreboding passage. Head home after a successful mission and you'll hear patriotic tunes that will make you proud that you've played your part in the world's last "good" war.



★★ Special Award: Quick-Fix Gaming ★★

BIG RACE U.S.A.

Some things are best enjoyed in small doses—fine brandies, a child's unconditional love, the commemorative boxed set of Wilson Phillips recordings featuring their ground-breaking work with Tom Waits. Just a brief taste of these things is enough. In the past year, the best, quickest way to slap a smile on your face was Empire's BIG RACE U.S.A.

Absolutely ideal for those 10-minute spurts of the workday when your boss wasn't looking, BIG RACE U.S.A. provided a delicious, retro gaming experience second to none while it set a new standard in PC pinball. With incredible physics, a host of tweakable options, and gameplay that was a perfect blend of reward and challenge, BIG RACE U.S.A. also proved so incredibly addictive it might as well have shipped with a set of cranial meat hooks.

★★★★ Coaster of the Year ★★★★

TRESPASSER

TRESPASSER earns its spot under a big, sloppy mug of General Foods International Coffee.

If this truly is "the evolution of first-person 3D gaming," then get ready to start carbon-dating the genre, because TRESPASSER was extinct upon arrival. Promising to deliver both action and adventure elements, this game utterly failed to provide either, degenerating into a crate-stacking simulation that barely worked, due to a monumentally cumbersome interface and a physics-based engine that slapped down the slightest hint of fun. Idiotic voiceovers, pogo-ing stegosauruses, maddening collision detection, movement that redefined "crawling frame-rate," dinosaurs that periodically freeze in their tracks, guns that absolutely refuse to pass through doorways—there isn't space enough in most phone books to list every gaffe in this game. For foisting this sorry programming exercise on an unsuspecting public, certain to be lured in by its killer license, TRESPASSER earns its spot under a big, sloppy mug of General Foods International Coffee

★★★★ Coaster Runners-Up ★★★★

ACTION>
EXTREME PAINTBRAWL

Single-handedly redefining "crap" conceptually, EXTREME

PAINTBRAWL looked ugly, played ugly, had hideous AI, and couldn't get a network game up and running.

ADVENTURE>
BEYOND TIME

BEYOND TIME wanted to be MYST really, really bad—and got it about half right. It's really, really bad.

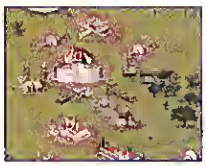
SPORTS>
FOX SPORTS SOCCER '99

Just what the world needed: an unrealistic, impossible-to-

control, buggy, ugly soccer game. This game wasn't even as good as FOX SPORTS GOLF.

STRATEGY/WAR
DOMINION

Ion Storm's initial release sailed like a lead balloon, complete with overhyped and ineffectual AI, 1995-era graphics, and



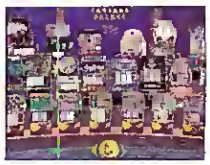
a back-story so bad that it had us wondering why we even briefly stopped playing STARCRAFT for this.

SIM/SPACE SIM>
iPANZER '44

This wasn't so much a simulation of a WWII tank as it was of a WWII simulation tanking. Buggy, unattractive, and sporting impressively obtuse AI.

CLASSICS/PUZZLE>
CAESAR'S PALACE SLOTS

Interplay has some decent gambling sims to its credit, but this is one of the worst ideas we've ever seen for a computer game. What's next—Lotto of the 50 States?



"So I throw this 2 o'clock hitter[1] a

over my leather man's pancake.[4]

morning journal[6] off at the handle

Hook[8] decides he's going with

deuce[10] - even though I'd collared[11]

Guess[13] don't give him any black,[14]

and we lose

Don't pull a Merkle[16] Hit our website:
www.highhaat.com

(1) a player that hits well in batting practice, but poorly during games. (2) a pitch with nothing on it. (3) an extremely weak hit. (4) a hit eluding the best infielder's tiny glove. (5) a pushover hitter. (6) a bat made with poor wood. (7) a reference to the sultry pop singer's signature 60's song "Is That All There Is?", i.e., is that all there is to the pitch? (see nudist). (8) a manager with a tendency to pull a pitcher at the first sign of trouble. (9) the most physically unattractive player on any ball club. (10) a first-year player with a good curveball. (11) kept him from reaching base safely. (12) a player who rarely makes solid contact. (13) the umpire. (14) corners of home plate. (15) a base-on-balls or a walk. (16) a bone head play.

© 1999 The 3DO Company. All Rights Reserved High Heat Baseball, 3DO, and their respective logos, are registered trademarks and/or service marks of The 3DO Company in the U.S. and other countries. All oth

nudist[2] and he fists a cripple[3] right

Damn! I'd snapped that cousin's[5]

with a Peggy Lee![7] Well Captain

the ugly head[9] rook' with the

the banjo[12] on deck! Of course, Mr.

so the rook' issues the Annie Oakley[15]

the ballgame."

(Sure you can talk the talk, but can you walk the walk?)

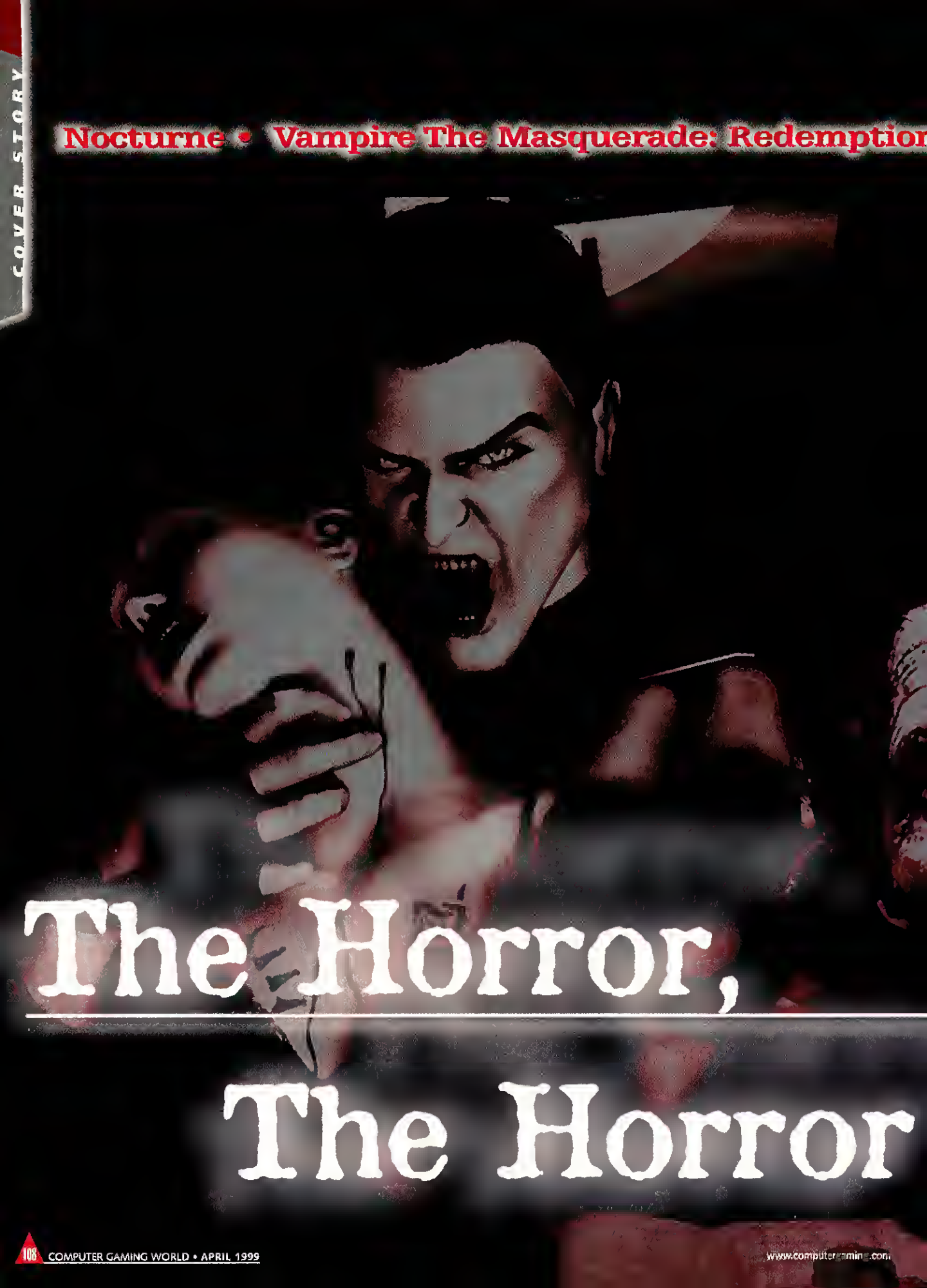
HIGH HEAT Baseball™ 2000

"If you love baseball...this is the only game in town." - *GamerzEdge*

3DO™

trademarks belong to their respective owners © MLBPA Official Licensee - Major League Baseball Players Association. PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

Nocturne • Vampire The Masquerade: Redemption



The Horror, The Horror

www.computergamin...com

Werewolf: The Apocalypse—Heart of the Gaia

It begins in childhood. Monsters under the bed, dragons, "bad guys," Brussels sprouts. We like to be scared. Why? We don't know. *CGW* is not a pop psychology magazine. We do know, however, that (for whatever reason) horror continues to be one of the most popular genres of entertainment—as the millions of fans of the *Scream* movies, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Stephen King and Anne Rice books, and other creepy-crawly pastimes will testify.

Horror is invading computer games in a big way in 1999—and, no, we're not talking about a BATTLECRUISER 3000 A.D. sequel. *CGW* skulked out into the night to get the lowdown on three horror titles from three red-hot developers: VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE: REDEMPTION, from Nihilistic Software; WEREWOLF: THE APOCALYPSE—HEART OF THE GAIA, from Dreamforge Intertainment; and NOCTURNE, from Terminal Reality.

Do not say we didn't warn you. Children and the faint of heart may want to skip ahead to the hardware reviews. This might be the most frightening feature we've ever written. So grab your pitchforks and torches, friends, and turn the page, if you dare. Bwah-hah-hah-hah-hah-hah!!!

(Okay, was that scary?)

photo: Robert Houser

Vampire The Masquerade: Redemption

From the Creators of JEDI KNIGHT Comes a Bleeding-edge RPG

by Jeff Green

In a humble, nondescript, darkly lit office in Marin, California, a small group of game designers are creating a horde of undead, blood-sucking ghouls. Do not be alarmed. Do not alert the authorities. When they emerge from their dark domain, work completed, they will have something for you that will make you very, very happy.

Nihilistic Software, a startup company formed by a group of veteran designers from LucasArts and Rogue Entertainment (among other companies), are cooking up a deliciously frightening action/RPG that, when not dazzling you with its graphic and technological beauty, is going to scare the pants off you, rattle your emotions, and keep you coming back for more.

The game is called VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE—REDEMPTION, and it's based on the popular pen-and-paper RPG from White Wolf Publishing. Using the rich backdrop of White Wolf's universe (see "Doggy Style" sidebar page 125), Nihilistic is fashioning an epic RPG, spanning 800 years and two continents, to tell the tale of a doomed, spiritually empty man who becomes a vampire and then learns, as a vampire, what it means to be redeemed. Sound heavy? It is. But don't plan on being bored—not by a long shot. Those fangs in your mouth are not going to be used for opening cans.

SINGLE WHITE VAMPIRE SEEKS SOULMATE
Meet the fetching young Serena, a member of the Cappadocian clan of vampires in 12th century Prague. Lucky for you, she's on your side.

Genre: RPG
Publisher: Activision
Developer: Nihilistic Software
Release Date: Q4 '99

www.nihilistic.com

First Blood

As portrayed in White Wolf's universe (which has encompassed more than 50 game books), vampires are indeed the immortal undead who live off the blood of humans—but it's much more complicated than that. In the role-playing game, *you* play the role of a vampire, and it's up to you to decide how to accept your fate, how to live for eternity—and to question whether there is a need for notions of "good" and "evil," even amongst monsters.

As Ray Gresko, REDEMPTION's project leader (and Nihilistic's CEO), put it: "White Wolf brought to the vampire universe something more mature, developed, and hard-core. These aren't mindless monsters; they're beings trying to hang on to their humanity, or who are desperately losing control of themselves to the beast—it's a constant struggle."

Along with the internal torment, there's also a constant external struggle. Without getting into it too deeply (that would require an entire issue of *CGW*), vampires trace their origin back to the original vampire, Caine, who, in ages past, spawned 13 "grandchilder" vampires. These 13 became known as the Antediluvians, from which descended the 13 clans of vampires in existence today. You might think that all vampires might get along, since they have that blood-sucking thing in common, but, according to White Wolf, you'd be wrong. Actually, the clans have been involved in a bitter, vicious "Jyhad" for centuries, warring amongst themselves, forming political alliances, and espousing various ethical codes in a struggle for supremacy.

It's serious stuff, and a far cry from the "I vant to suck your blud" kitchiness of old vampire movies. As fans of the RPG themselves, Nihilistic is hoping to capture White Wolf's epic, adult tone in its computer game.

"What we're trying to do," said Gresko, "is let the players feel what it's like to go through the traumatic experience of the Embrace [the experience of being bitten and reborn as a vampire] and losing your life as you know it—and now find yourself in this world of intrigue, where you're just a pawn in a giant power struggle."

Or, as he put it a bit later: "This ain't your daddy's Dracula."

Up to My Neck in You

REDEMPTION's story (which hard-core fans will be thrilled to know was developed with White Wolf's direct input and was co-written by longtime *Vampire* writer Daniel Greenberg) begins in 12th Century Prague. You play the role of Christof Romauld, a holy knight employed by the Church, a vampire killer who, in the game's beginning, is "embraced" by a vampire, thus becoming the very thing he despises most. As he grapples with his spiritual anguish, he also finds himself caught up in an immense struggle between warring vampire clans. This forms the core concern of the game: Can Christof transcend his despair to help the forces of the "good" vampires, or will he just succumb to the beast within? And how *does* one be good, when you're forced to live off the blood of humans?

The game's levels are divided into four "hubs" and two acts. The first act is set in the Dark Ages and includes the Prague scenes, followed by a shift to Vienna. Nihilistic's designers and artists poured over reference books and history books to capture the look and feel of those cities, as well as to reference the religious and political events and attitudes of the era. Concept art of the architecture, done by the legendary Peter Chan (who worked on DAY OF THE TENTACLE, JEDI KNIGHT, GRIM FANDANGO—and, most recently, the *Star Wars: Episode I* film) revealed what Nihilistic is after here: historically faithful settings, but ones with a dark, macabre, almost organically alive quality. Buoyed by a dark, orchestral score, the game's first half will have a distinctly gothic feel.

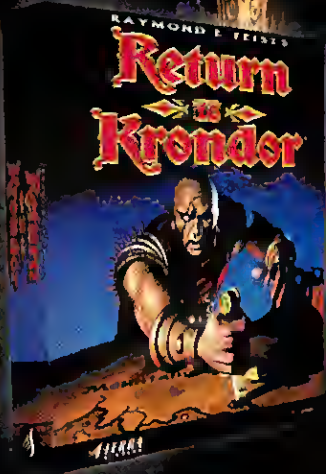
Halfway through the game, however, Christof—and the player—are in for a seriously rude awakening. Christof falls into a vampiric torpor for about 800 years, and wakes up in modern-day London. This is the locale of the game's third hub, followed by the climax in New York City. Now, in addition to all your other problems—still raging on in the immortal world of the vampires—you have to learn how this new world works, and how you fit into it. In this modern world, you have to deal with punk-rock vampires and Mafiosi-style gangster

★★★★ "A stunning return to

94% "without a doubt the best interactive story of the year"
-GameOver

94% "sets a new standard for PC role-playing games"
-Antagonist Games Network

★★★★ "a well written story of intrique and dark magic"
-GameCenter



In Stores Now!

TEEN T AGES 13+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PyroTechnix

SIERRA STUDIOS

© 1999 Sierra On-line, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Sierra, Sierra Studios and Return to Krondor are trademarks of Sierra On-line, Inc. PyroTechnix is a registered trademark of PyroTechnix, Inc.

www.sierrastudios.com

form for the Krondor series"
-OGR
COMPUTER GAMING WORLD
PREMIER FINALIST
1999
RAYMOND E. FEIST'S
Return to Krondor™
The Official Sequel to the Best Selling RPG.
Go to #192 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

vampires. Now, Medieval Boy, you need to learn how a firearm works.

If You Want Blood (You've Got It)

Although the storyline is complex and mature, Nihilistic is going to great pains to make sure that REDEMPTION is fun to play and great to look at. The programming team, all veterans of LucasArts' JEDI KNIGHT, have built a brand new graphics engine from the ground up. The team told me that they very briefly considered the notion of licensing an existing engine, but quickly realized it would be much simpler to build their own. Based on what we've seen so far, and the speed in which they created it, it looks like it was absolutely the right call.

The game is being built for 3D acceleration, and will be optimized for Direct3D, OpenGL, and Glide. As seems to be the trend these days, the game will mostly be played from a third-person perspective, but players will be able to hit the Alt key to look around in 1st person at any time. The engine features all the current FPS buzzwords we like to see—16-bit textures, specular lighting, volumetric fog—but it is *how* these technologies are being applied by the design team that gives this game such a unique look. The soft-skinned skeletal models (which you can see well in the screenshot of the Nosferatu vampires) provides a nice example of what Nihilistic is striving for: amazing, creepy detail. Each of the game's hubs will have not only a different architectural look and tone for both indoor and outdoor settings, but will also have different atmospheric effects. The Vienna hub, for example, takes place in the winter, so you might find that snow slows you down or affects your fighting abilities.

Because Nihilistic got the basic engine up and running so fast, the team can now spend the bulk of their development time perfecting the RPG system and gameplay. The goal here was to "have the best of both worlds," as Gresko put it—a robust, party-based RPG system that would also provide the same kind of bone-simple, visceral excitement of a game like DIABLO.

PARTY OF FOUR As the game progresses, you'll eventually gather a party of companions. You're the sullen guy second from the right. The others are, from left, Wilhelm Streicher, your mentor and friend; Erik McDonough, a Celtic, animal-like vampire of the Gangrel clan; and Serena, your garden-variety, pale goth-chick vampire.

YO, TEXTURE-MAP THIS VAMPIRE'S stunning architectural design is based on tons of historical research by the Nihilistic design team.

Back in Black

At the early stage in which I saw the game, it looks like they're on their way. You start the game alone, but as you progress, you'll eventually have a party of four characters. Control will remain a single-player paradigm, but you'll be able to switch amongst members with a mouse click. In combat, which is all real-time, you'll be able to issue group commands (such as follow me, search-and-destroy, stay put) and let the party members' AI work autonomously. To ease your way into party control, you'll pick up members one at a time, to keep the learning curve a gradual one.

The game's interface is going to be completely mouse-driven and context-sensitive. As in DIABLO, clicking on a door is simply going to open or close it—you won't have to memorize a separate "open door" hot-key. The same will go for manipulating inventory items, weaponry, and in-game puzzle elements.

Character management is largely faithful to the White Wolf model, with about 10 physical and mental attributes to tweak. Your stats are going to respond to how you role-play the game. For example, are you a heartless murderer, killing off your innocent human victims after sucking their blood, or do you just feed off your victims and let them live? Progression through the levels will also yield the standard RPG booty of increasingly powerful weaponry, armor, and magic spells (called "disciplines" in *Vampire*), such as the ability to summon beasts, turn into mist, or cast healing abilities.

Multiplayer capabilities still seemed a bit sketchy for now, but the basic idea seems to be to offer players a variety of different modes, such as human vs. vampires, clan vs. clan, or cooperative play, in which four players could go through the story together. (This has not been finalized, however.)

Finally, Nihilistic is planning to ship the game with both a level editor and user-accessible scripting language. This means that users will be able to fully customize the game.

THAT'S *GOTTA* HURT!

The grisly experiments performed on humans by the Cappadocian clan makes its way from concept art to 3D-rendered graphics.

WHAT'S MY MOTIVATION? Nihilistic is taking great pains to perfect the game's RPG system, with a robust set of stats, disciplines (magic), weaponry, and armor.

C.O.D. (Care of the Devil)

Steeped in storytelling, with deep role-playing elements, yet loaded with eye candy and visceral action, REDEMPTION is taking shape as one of the best chances for success for one of the elusive holy grails of gaming: the mature, emotionally involving action game. Nihilistic certainly has the right stuff to pull it off, and the game in progress so far shows lots of promise. If it doesn't suck when released this November, then it'll be us doing the sucking—blood-sucking that is. We can hardly wait. CGW

Jeff Green has never sucked anyone's blood, but if forced to do so, would like it to be from Carmen Electra's veins. He only admits to watching Buffy the Vampire Slayer *once, for research.*

BITE FIRST, ASK QUESTIONS LATER The hideous vampires of the Nosferatu clan are reviled even amongst other vampires. That's what they get for not being beautiful.

Nihilists R Us

Although they haven't publicly challenged anyone to "be their bitch" yet, the game designers at Nihilistic Software would actually have a strong case for themselves if they ever wanted to do so. Here's the line-up of of the top team members and just some of their past accomplishments, in which they played leading roles. You be the judge.

At Nihilistic	*Previously worked on...*
Ray Gresko (project leader)	DARK FORCES, JEDI KNIGHT
Robert Huebner (lead programmer)	DESCENT, JEDI KNIGHT, STARCRAFT
Steve Tietze (lead level designer)	QUAKE II MISSION PACK: GROUND ZERO DUKE NUKEM 3D, QUAKE MISSION PACK: DISSOLUTION OF ETERNITY

HEED THE WORDS OF THE CONVERTED.

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

"...the action is fast, responsive, and Corvus can run circles around Eidos' top-heavy mascot."
PC Gamer

"★★★★½"
CGW

"The action is pure-bred and it rocks."
Adrenaline Vault

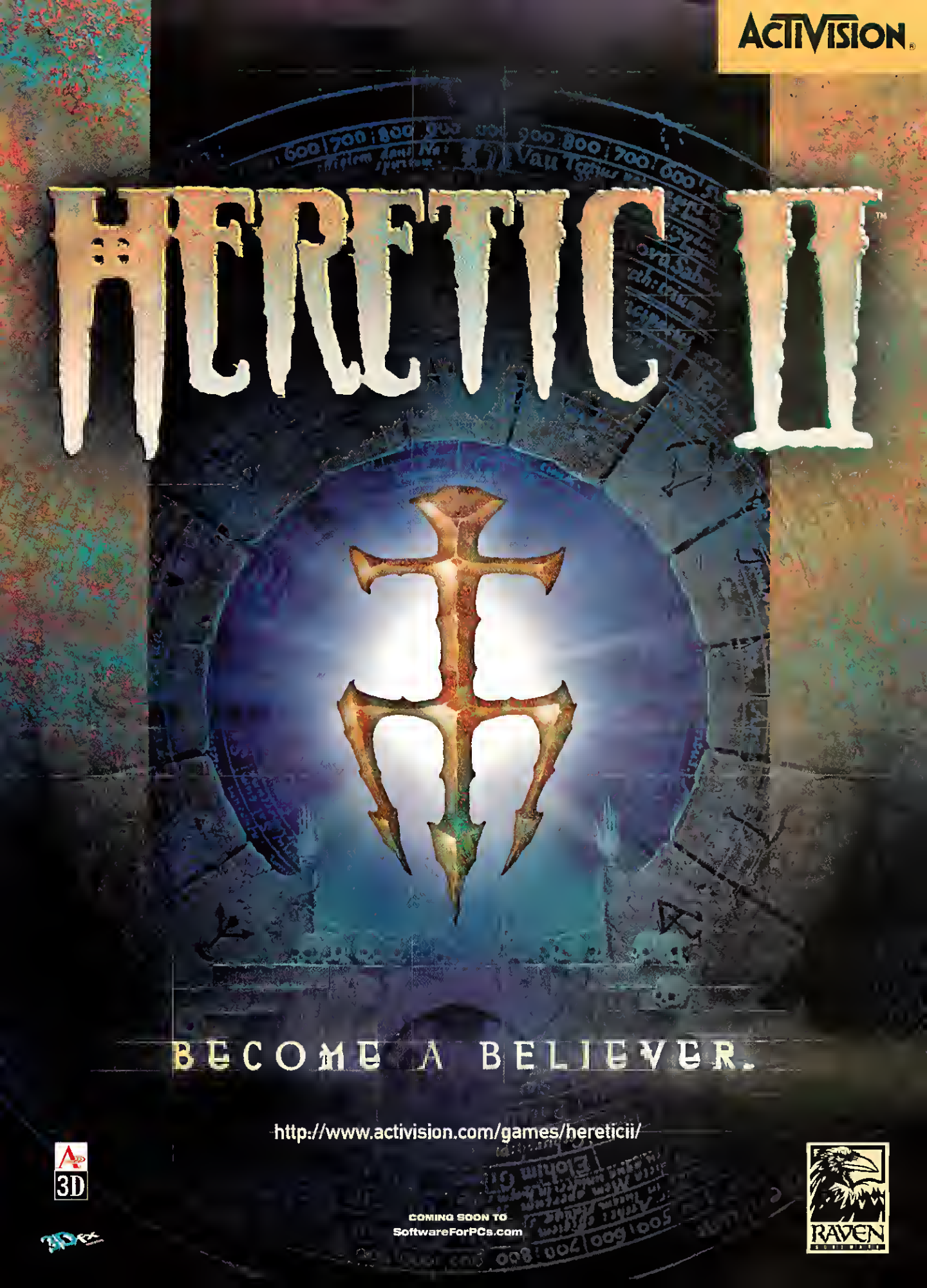
"This latest installment in the Heretic/Hexen series is as addictive as it is attractive."
C/Net's Gamecenter

"...he [Corvus] could run circles around Lara Croft any day..."
Gamespot

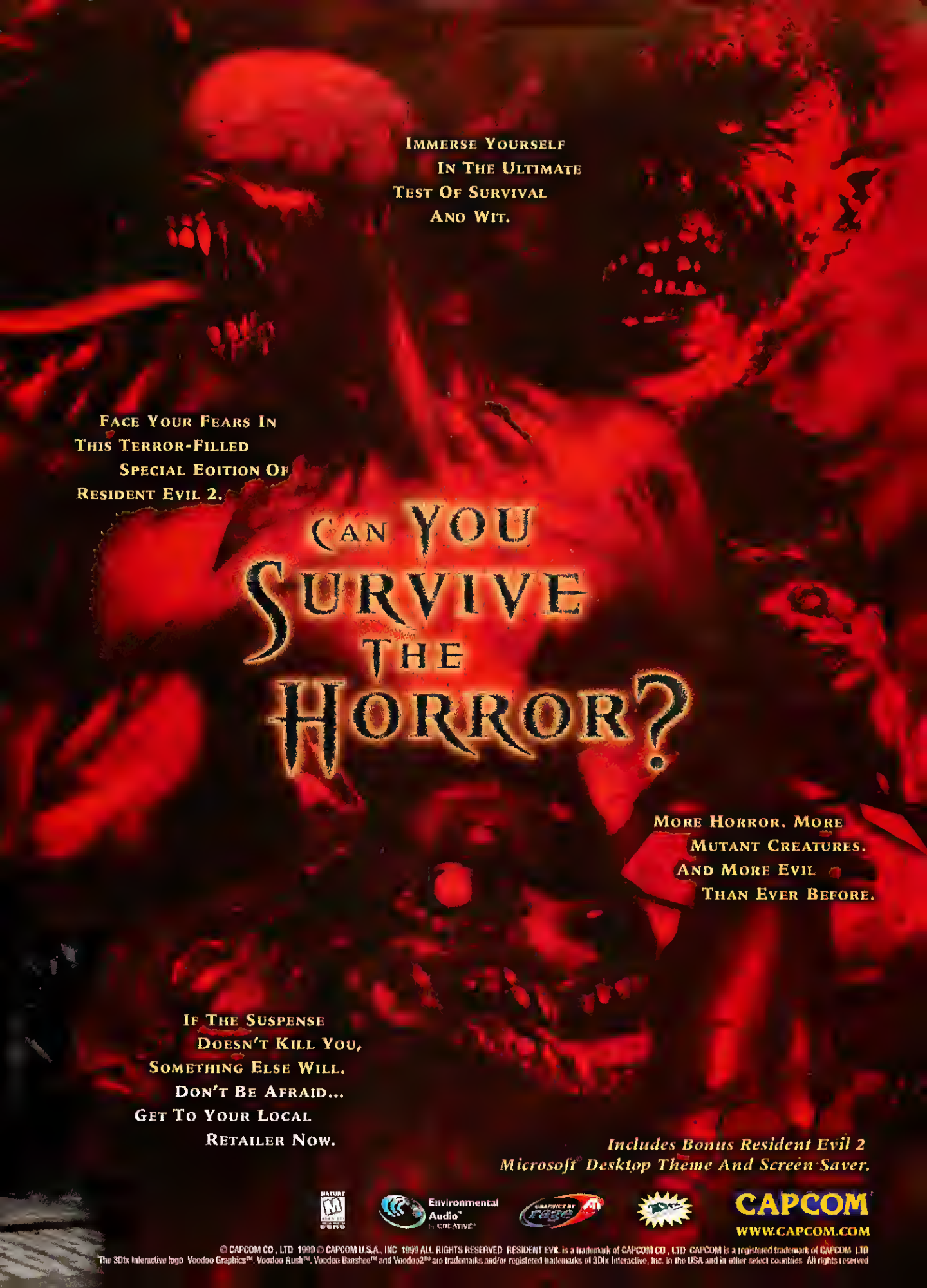
"Heretic II is simply the most FUN I've ever had playing deathmatch."
Gamers Alliance

"Raven has created a masterpiece."
CGW – UK

Heretic II™ © 1998 Raven Software Corporation. Heretic™ is a registered trademark and Heretic II™ is a trademark of Raven Software Corporation. Developed by Raven Software Corporation. Published and distributed by Activision, Inc. Activision™ is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. This product contains software technology licensed from Id Software, Inc. ("Id Technology"). Id Technology © 1997 Id Software, Inc. Quake™ is a registered trademark and Quake II™ is a trademark of Id Software, Inc. All Rights Reserved. All other trademarks and trade names are properties of their respective owners.
Go to #236 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink


ACTIVISION
HERETIC II
BECOME A BELIEVER.
http://www.activision.com/games/hereticii/
3D
COMING SOON TO
SoftwareForPCs.com
RAVEN

RESIDENT EVIL™
Platinum 2
"The Gameplay Had Us Glued To Our Monitors"
– PC Gamer
"The Graphics Will Blow You Away"
– Gamespot



© CAPCOM CO., LTD. 1999 © CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 1999 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. RESIDENT EVIL is a trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. CAPCOM is a registered trademark of CAPCOM LTD.
The 3Dfx Interactive logo, Voodoo Graphics™, Voodoo Rush™, Voodoo Banshee™ and Voodoo2™ are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of 3Dfx Interactive, Inc. in the USA and in other select countries. All rights reserved.

Werewolf: The Apocalypse—Heart of the Gaia

DreamForge's Follow-up to SANITARIUM Is Another Fever-pitched Nightmare

DON'T BE SCARED It's you, in Crinos form. This badass is 9-feet tall and not afraid to use those claws. He also regenerates health points.

ME, MYSELF, AND I In WEREWOLF, you'll constantly morph between three forms—a teenage boy, a wolf, and a 9-foot tall wolfman.

by Jeff Green

Maybe it's something in the water. Maybe it's those long months stuck out in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by snow. Or maybe, at root, they're just a bunch of weirdos. Whatever the cause, the fact is that the folks at DreamForge Intertainment in Greensburg, Pennsylvania are tapping into some weird crevices of their minds to create some of the most memorably twisted computer games around right now.

DreamForge's previous game was the brilliant, nightmarish SANITARIUM, which just tied with LucasArts' GRIM FANDANGO for *CGW*'s Best Adventure Game of the Year award elsewhere in this issue. Now the team is hard at work on its next game, WEREWOLF: THE APOCALYPSE—HEART OF THE GAIA. And after braving the freezing weather and spending some time with the team, I'm here to report that the fevered minds at DreamForge have another disturbing experience on their hands. Be very afraid.

Night of the Long Knives

Like VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE, WEREWOLF is based on the pen-and-paper role-playing game of the same name from White Wolf Publishing (see "Doggie Style" sidebar, page 125), and takes place in White Wolf's goth/punk horror universe known as the World Of Darkness—a world not unlike our own, except for the minor detail that the Apocalypse is at hand and monsters roam the earth. The horror is not just "out there," though —it's internal and personal, as *you* play a werewolf.

As envisioned by White Wolf, werewolves are complicated, often tragic creatures—not simply the snarling, hairy beasts of cheesy old horror movies. The RPG's mythology is actually so detailed and complex that it can't possibly be done justice here, but here is the cheat-sheet overview: the Garou, as the werewolves are called, are seen as ages-old protectors of the Earth, or Gaia, fighting against the creeping corruption of the world by the Wyrm, the physical and symbolic manifestation of evil. Once rulers over the earth and mankind (which is why they are hated and feared by humans), the Garou have dispersed and grown few in number over the centuries, while the Wyrm continues its evil march towards the Apocalypse. Stopping the Wyrm, and coming to grips with one's identity as a supernatural beast, is what WEREWOLF is all about.

Genre: Action/RPG
Publisher: ASC Games
Developer: DreamForge Intertainment
Release Date: Q4 '99

www.ascgames.com

In HEART OF THE GAIA, DreamForge plunges us into this nightmare world with its own particular tale of violent, psychological terror. It is the story of Ryan McCullough, a teenage boy who learns, as the game opens, that he is a werewolf. Over the course of five episodes—set in London, Greece, the U.S., Mexico, and the "Umbra" (spirit world)—Ryan learns of his heritage, of his new powers as a werewolf, and of his key role in the war against the Wyrm.

Dog Eat Dog

In SANITARIUM, DreamForge crafted what was essentially an "old school" game, both gameplay- and graphics-wise. In WEREWOLF, they make a quantum leap towards the cutting edge. The team has licensed the UNREAL engine, and is using it to create a take-no-prisoners action-RPG that, even in the early stage in which I viewed it, is brimming with creativity. While some levels maintain a relative sense of "normalcy," like the U.S. episode set at the headquarters of the Wyrm-infested Pentex Inc., by the time you get to the Umbra, all sense of reality has vanished, and you're exploring a world of pure, horrific imagination.

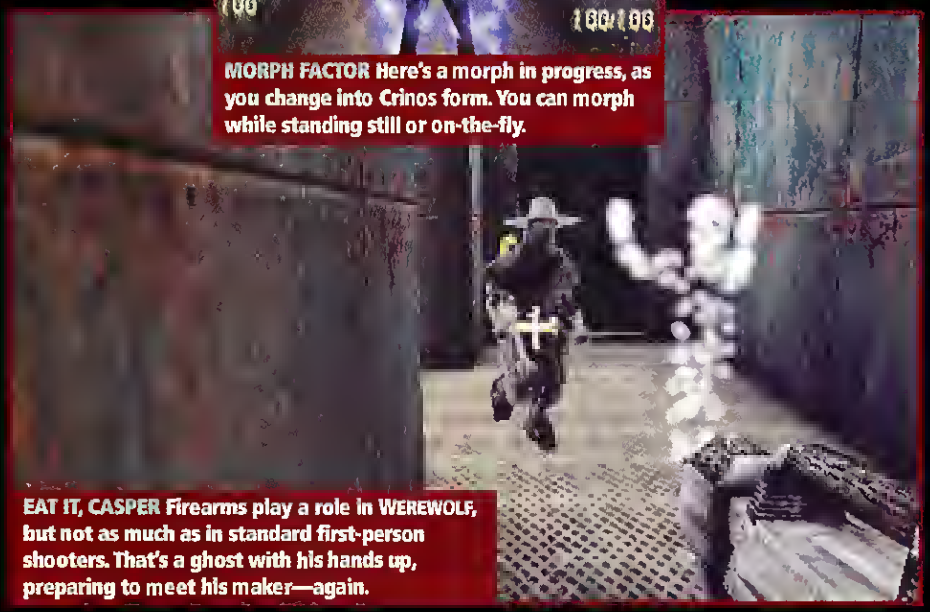
WEREWOLF maintains UNREAL's graphic sophistication, but adds an off-kilter sense of unease throughout the 20 levels that is distinctly DreamForge's—"Oz meets David Lynch," as Paul Warne, one of the game's level designers, aptly described it. Gone is UNREAL's gee-whiz prettiness, replaced instead with a darker, more surreal look steeped in dread and fear.

Just as Valve made the QUAKE engine its own for HALF-LIFE, DreamForge is reshaping the UNREAL engine to suit its own twisted purposes. First, you will be able to switch dynamically between first- and third-person perspectives—and you will need to use both as you make your way through the game's varied action and puzzle-oriented sequences. In third-person perspective, DreamForge is implementing a translucent camera effect for your character so that your view will never be blocked.

The coolest bit of technology I saw, however, was the game's morphing effect. As a werewolf, you'll be able to morph on-the-fly between three different forms: Homid (human), Crinos (a 9-foot-tall half man/half wolf) and Lupus (wolf). The animated effect is awesome to behold in both first- and third-person perspectives, and the way the game feels and looks (the interface changes to reflect your current form) is far more varied than in the standard action shooter.

The levels have been designed to emphasize different Garou skills. Certain places and puzzles require you to assume specific forms, and each form has its own set of advantages and disadvantages. For example, as a Crinos, you are a badass superbeast with pumped-up physical

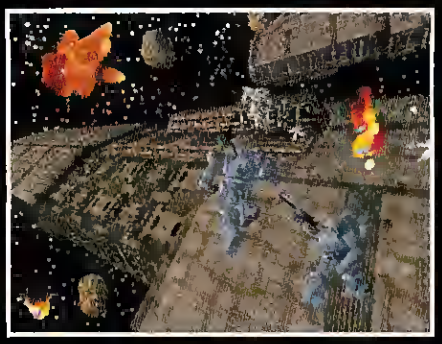
MORPH FACTOR Here's a morph in progress, as you change into Crinos form. You can morph while standing still or on-the-fly.



EAT IT, CASPER Firearms play a role in WEREWOLF, but not as much as in standard first-person shooters. That's a ghost with his hands up, preparing to meet his maker—again.

DEEPER SPECIAL OPS STEALTH-SQUAD COMBAT IN 40 INDOOR/OUTDOOR MISSIONS.

HARSHER BATTLES IN HOSTILE SCI-FI CONDITIONS – FROM OUTER SPACE TO SWAMP ZONES.



FASTER COMBAT ACTION WITH ACTIVISION'S ALL-NEW DARK SIDE ENGINE.

HEAVY PRAISE

"THE GIANT ROBOT CRAZE IS ABOUT TO STRIKE AGAIN . . . ACTIVISION HAS LISTENED AND DELIVERED."

—*PC GAMER*

"ACTIVISION'S HEAVY GEAR 2 PROMISES TO SURPASS THEIR PREVIOUS HIT, MECHWARRIOR 2. . .THIS GAME LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO BE ONE OF *THE* GAMES TO HAVE FOR 1999."

—*SHOCKED.NET*

"IF THE DEMO JUST HINTS AT WHAT THE FINAL PRODUCT WILL BE LIKE, HEAVY GEAR 2 WILL STOMP THE COMPETITION WITH ITS SUPER-CHARGED GAMEPLAY AND CUTTING-EDGE GRAPHICS."

—*ADRENALINE VAULT*

"HEAVY GEAR II LOOKS TO BE THE NEXT BIG LEAP FORWARD IN THE MECHANIZED-COMBAT GENRE."

—*PC GAMES*

"HEAVY GEAR II . . .(IS) PUSHING THE TECHNICAL STATE OF THE ART."

—*COMPUTER GAMING WORLD*

"ALL ACTION AND SIM FANS SHOULD RUN OUT AND GET THIS SOON-TO-BE GEM. DON'T TAKE MY WORD FOR IT, GO AND DOWNLOAD THE DEMO AND SEE IT FOR YOURSELF."

—*3D GAMING WORLD*

© 1998, 1999 Dream Pod 9, Inc. and Target Games AB. Based on the HEAVY GEAR® universe created and owned by Dream Pod 9, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. © 1998, 1999 Activision, Inc. All rights reserved. All other trademarks and trade names are property of their respective owners.

ACTIVISION®

"(HEAVY GEAR II'S) GRAPHICS ENGINE. . . SOLICITS COMMENTS THAT START WITH THE PHRASE, 'OH MY GOD!' "
—*ADRENALINE VAULT*

HEAVY GEAR II

REBUILT FROM THE BATTLEGROUND UP.

Go to #140 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

WWW.ACTIVISION.COM

OFFICIAL HEAVY GEAR UNIVERSE

SoftwareForPCs.com

3D

DREAM POD 9

TARGET GAMES

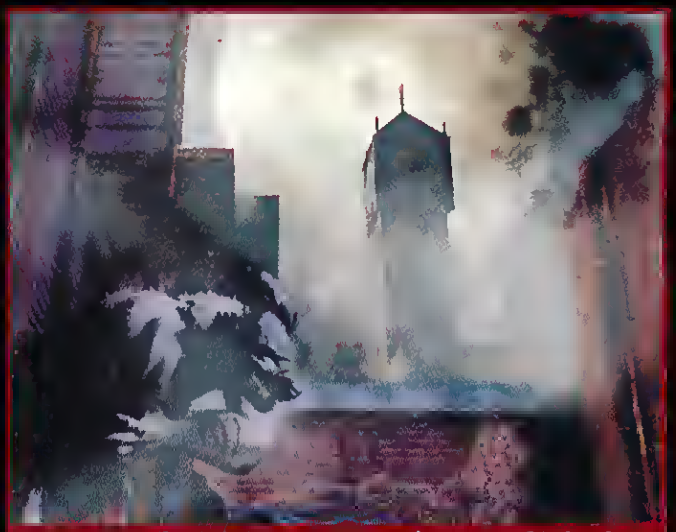
skills and the ability to regenerate health—but you can't carry a firearm. As a wolf, you can travel at incredible speeds (wonderfully depicted in the game engine), and you have a heightened sense of smell (which is realized by "trails" you can follow).

Night Prowler

Such skills are reflected and played upon in the level design. In some areas, you must camouflage yourself by remaining in human form. One of the levels (set in Greece) is essentially a hunt, in which you must swiftly track down an enemy through a labyrinthine underground cavern; here, wolf form is emphasized.

Weapons play a crucial role, of course, though again, it's much different from a standard shooter. With only the human form able to carry a gun, melee combat is emphasized instead, both with your own claws and with deadly weapons like the klaive. The Garou are also blessed with "gifts," which are magical abilities learned from the spirit world. As you progress through levels, you will be able to visit a gift hall in the Umbra and choose among a series of increasingly more powerful gifts to add to your arsenal. You'll also pick up talens along the way, which are magical items giving you one-time, limited-use ability, such as high-powered scent tracking.

The game's multiplayer levels play off all the same concepts. You are not marines running around with guns, but supernatural creatures, and the goal is to simulate that experience. Weapons will be fewer, and knowing when and where to morph will be key to your strategy. Scent-tracking, for example, will be perfect for hunting people down, and may serve as the perfect solution, at long last, to the problem of campers, who will be sitting ducks for werewolves.



LIVE FROM LONDON—THE DAMNED Over the course of 20 levels, WEREWOLF will take you through London (shown here), Greece, the United States, Mexico, and a surreal spirit world.

One of the multiplayer levels, by the way, perfectly demonstrated DreamForge's channeled dementia. Designed by the single-player game's writer, Chris Pasetto, the level was a warped, Escher-like maze, where every wall is set at a 45-degree angle from one another—essentially turning any surface into a floor, wall, or ceiling. The feeling is almost like being in DESCENT, but with your feet stuck to the ground.

Givin' the Dog a Bone

Thanks to White Wolf's epic back story, and DreamForge's own gifted storytelling skills, WEREWOLF is going to be much, much more than just a horror-based shooter. It's as deep and plot-driven as an adventure game, with numerous cut-scenes between (and sometimes in the middle of) each level.

White Wolf's universe is so prohibitively huge and complex that one computer game couldn't possibly reference it all, but DreamForge is taking pains to cover most of the major bases, and include references to touchstone events and characters to please the hard-core fans of the pen-and-paper RPG.

Members of some of the 13 Garou tribes play crucial roles, including the ferocious Red Talons; the dark, warrior-like Shadow Lords; and the noble Wendigo. Though it won't mean

IN MY ROOM Ryen McCullough is just your average American teen with your everege American room. Except for thet whole turning into a 9-foot werewolf thing.

DID I MENTION THAT YOU'RE UGLY? Another of the game's monsters—the Freak Feet.

much to the uninitiated, at first, longtime WEREWOLF fans will be thrilled to learn that Ryan is the last living carrier of the gene of the legendary, lost tribe of the White Howlers—crucial figures in one of the RPG's milestone events.

In brief, White Howlers were a group of noble werewolves who, in ages past, descended into a Wyrm pit for battle and lost big time, emerging transformed into the Black Spiral Dancers, mutated servants of the Wyrm and now the Garou's most dangerous enemies. As the game climaxes, Ryan will eventually find himself in the Black Spiral Labyrinth itself, the place of initiation for Black Spiral Dancers, where, *Star Wars*-style, Ryan is tempted to join the dark side, and must grapple with the evil within.

Evil Walks

DreamForge is infusing the game with the kind of mature, emotional resonance that made SANITARIUM so memorable, and that also powers White Wolf's RPGs. The script excerpts that I read revealed a story filled with family tragedy and psychological terror, as your progression through the game leads you to an ever-more terrifying vision of your past, your future, and your role in stopping the Apocalypse. As in SANITARIUM, DreamForge is pulling no punches here. WEREWOLF is going to be a very scary, adult game.

Which is why I was happy to escape DreamForge's frozen confines relatively unscathed, and head back to the sunny, relatively sane *CGW* offices. Like Jack Nicholson in *The Shining*, something terrifying is being whipped up in the snowbound brains at DreamForge. Let's just be glad it's only a computer game. CGW

DOGGY STYLE

White Wolf may not be a household name amongst computer gamers, but in the pen-and-paper gaming world, they are giants, with a large, loyal following second only to Wizards of the Coast/TSR's *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* franchise.

White Wolf's universe—begun in 1991 with their first (and still most popular) game, *Vampire: The Masquerade*—is the World Of Darkness, an alternate reality where supernatural creatures roam (and essentially rule) the Earth. All of their World of Darkness games—which also include *Werewolf*, *Mage*, *Wraith*, and *Changeling*—are infused with a hip goth-punk sensibility, an amalgam of diverse influences like classic horror, Anne Rice, punk rock, and more.

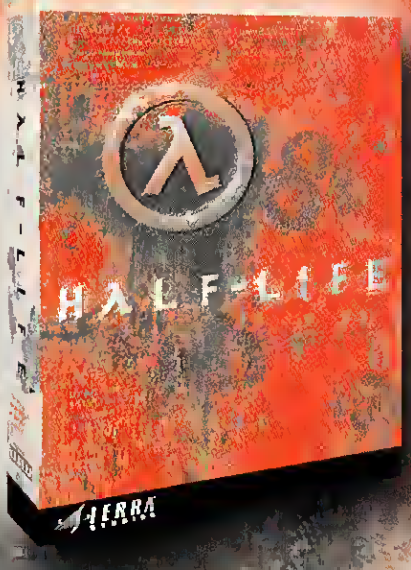
As Chris McDonough, one of the company's founders, explained: "Our founding idea for the company was storytelling. It's possible to play our games and not have any combat or killing the entire session. Our focus is on politics, emotions, and more mature concepts like sex." As such, the games are designed to appeal to an older crowd than the *AD&D* games.

Vampire: The Masquerade, has sold over a million copies since its release (followed in popularity by *Werewolf*), and the small staff of around 35 employees cranks out about 60 new game books a year, supplementing and expanding the World of Darkness. Last year's big *Vampire* project, for example, was called *Kindred of the East*—expanding the overall storyline into Asia.

White Wolf has flirted with mainstream recognition for quite a while (the short-lived TV series *The Kindred* was based on *Vampire: The Masquerade*), and the two computer games now in development are likely to accelerate the process. They're also currently ot work with Hyperbole Studios (THE X-FILES GAME) on a computer game version of *Mage: The Ascension*—though as of this writing it still has no publisher.

Gamers interested in White Wolf should check out the company's Web site (www.whitewolf.com), where pen-and-paper players run chat sessions, and can download character creation sheets and sample game information. —*Jeff Green*

"GAME OF



HALF

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD EDITORS' CHOICE

UNIFIED GAMERS ONLINE E3 1998 BEST OF SHOW WWW.UGO.NET

Best Game, PC
Best Action Game

SIERRA STUDIOS
www.sierrastudios.com

VALVE

MATURE
M
AGES 17+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

THE YEAR"

Over 12 Game of the Year Awards, including:

- PC Gamer
- PC Games
- CNET Gamecenter
- PC Accelerator

DOWNLOAD THE DEMO

Experience the Game of the Year for Yourself!

- L I F E

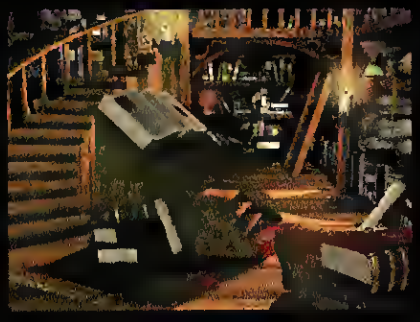
TEAM FORTRESS CLASSIC FOR HALF-LIFE.

FREE AT:

www.gameoftheyear.com

© 1998 Sierra On-Line, Inc. ® and/or ™ designate trademarks of, or licensed to Sierra On-Line, Inc., Bellevue, WA 98007. All rights reserved. © 1997 Valve L.L.C. All rights reserved. Valve and the Valve logo are trademarks of Valve L.L.C.

"Real Role Triumphant



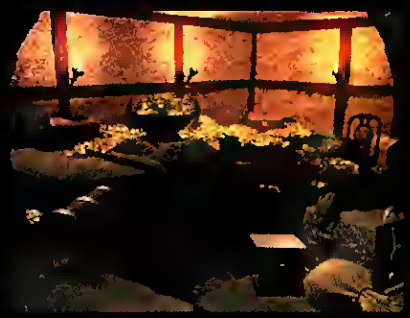
Presenting the epic sequel to the top selling RPG of 1998. Might and Magic® VII features a new, enhanced 3D accelerated graphics engine, a new storyline with new adventures and quests, plus an innovative new-user "training ground."

Might and Magic VI Nominated for Computer Gaming World's "RPG of the Year."

PREMIER FINALIST 1999

playing's Return.

-Computer Games Strategy Plus



Immerse yourself in the most addictive, most accessible RPG in the world. And discover what the critics are so excited about.

NEW WORLD COMPUTING®

3DO™

RP

PC CD-ROM

Environmental Audio™ by CREATIVE®

1.800.336.3506
www.mightandmagic.com

© 1999 The 3DO Company. All Rights Reserved Might and Magic, For Blood and Honor, New World Computing, 3DO, and their respective logos, are trademarks and/or service marks of The 3DO Company in the U.S. and other countries. All other trademarks belong to their respective owners. New World Computing is a division of The 3DO Company.

3Dfx Interactive, Inc. is © 1998. The 3Dfx Interactive logo is a registered trademark of 3Dfx Interactive, Inc. in the USA and other countries. All Rights Reserved.

Might and Magic VII
FOR BLOOD AND HONOR™

Nocturne

Take on the Children of the Night in This Grisly Shooter

CEMETARY POLKA The Stranger deals with a pack of blood-dripping zombies in a chilly graveyard. Notice how some of the undead are wielding the blown-off limbs of their cohorts.

by Robert Coffey

When we first saw NOCTURNE, we thought, for one brief moment, it was just another third-person action/adventure game. That was before the zombie hordes. That was before the main character literally shot the head off one of the undead, the severed noggin hitting the ground like a piñata filled with chili. That was before the ghouls overwhelmed the hero, clubbing him with their own severed limbs before feasting on his guts. And *that* was right about the time we knew we couldn't wait to play NOCTURNE.

Sin City

Terminal Reality deserves kudos for *not* setting their game in the standard post-apocalyptic universe. Instead, NOCTURNE posits an alternative past, one where a paranormally aware Theodore Roosevelt, in an effort to counteract growing supernatural threats, created a special investigation bureau unofficially dubbed the SpookHouse. The game actually takes place some 40–50 years later, circa 1940, when the SpookHouse, staffed with mysterious agents and turncoat monsters, is operating in a new, worldwide jurisdiction under the watchful eye of the United Nations.

Gamers will play as one of two characters: either the Shadow-like Stranger or female scientific genius Doc Holliday, though only the Stranger was available in the exclusive build I got to play. With his dark features, flowing trenchcoat, and a fedora pulled low to his eyes, the Stranger is a figure straight out of the pulp fiction that is part of the inspiration for NOCTURNE.

There will be other SpookHouse agents available to players, just in the role of NPCs. Each of the NPCs has special expertise that the gamer will need to use in order to solve puzzles, kill monsters, and generally progress in the game. NPCs run the gamut, including a beautiful young Italian gunslinger named Gabriella; a former heavyweight boxer who's added extra punch to his fists courtesy of some wicked blades; a Cajun voodoo master who fires magic projectiles and can ethereally pass through obstacles; and a Romanian vampire hunter whose half-vampire heritage makes her particularly effective—if not especially fun to be around.

Genre: Action
Publisher: Gathering of Developers
Developer: Terminal Reality
Release Date: Q4 '99

www.godgames.com

Hell Ain't a Bad Place to Be

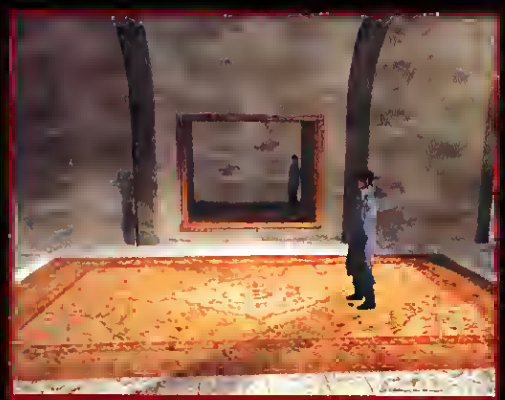
The SpookHouse adversaries come directly from the world of classic horror. Snarling werewolves, misshapen vampires, vampire brides, mindless zombies, and entrail-munching ghouls are just some of the hideous creatures you'll bloodily

dispatch. Absolutely grisly, these are not the campy, winking renditions of monsters we've seen in other games. For examples, the zombies look like something straight out of *Night of the Living Dead*, each shambling corpse in a different state of gooey putrescence. Slow and stupid, zombies attack in enormous packs, happy to just rip into you with their arms or to bludgeon you with the severed arm or head of a fallen comrade.

NOCTURNE's emphasis on the ghastly is perhaps no more evident than when you die at the hands of ghouls. No pleasant "Game Over" screen here—you're treated to the sight of the ghouls falling upon your body and feasting, making delightfully wet slurping sounds.

Ideally, you'll be watching yourself kill the undead, not vice versa. Taking place from a third-person perspective, you'll stride through dank castles and desolate graveyards in your quest to rid the world of unnatural menaces. I found combat to be extremely gratifying, even though only a couple of weapons were included in the early build I played. Still, a well-placed shot could blow the head off a ghoul while unloading lead into their midsection could rip those horrors right in half. My favorite weapon was the crossbow, especially when I used the burning bolts. Doomed ghouls, crossbow bolts stuck in their neck and belly, fire spreading across their limbs, desperately tried to stop the onslaught before falling at my feet—that's true, killing satisfaction.

In NOCTURNE, generally the best way is the goriest way. A typical situation might involve a monster guarding a key you need atop a platform with a giant swinging blade. You could waste some of your precious ammo trying to kill the beast, or you could just lure him into the blade so he's hacked to bits. Bribing him with dinner and a movie just isn't an option.



THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS Things aren't always what they seem in NOCTURNE. Here an apparent mirror reflection turns out to be a shape-shifting horror mimicking our hero.

Get It Hot

Graphically, NOCTURNE is simply dazzling. The rendering engine uses a skeletal animation system for smooth, lifelike character movement, thus heightening the gamer's suspension of disbelief. The use of dynamic physics further means that characters look and move like real humans—no more TOMB RAIDER-esque 10-foot backflips from a dead standstill. An advanced real-time dithering technique lets the engine operate in High Color, outputting one billion colors instead of the 24 million of True Color. Volumetric fogging will allow characters to hide in fog banks rolling off a pier while volumetric lighting effects help create an appropriately creepy

Light and Shadow

One of the most impressive aspects of the NOCTURNE rendering engine is its handling of light. Everything is lit with volumetric lighting, casting real shadows on the characters and environments in the game. By its very nature, volumetric lighting is interactive, not canned, mapped, or pre-scripted, and occurs in real time. You can really see this in the way NOCTURNE deals with light reflection and shadows. In the first screenshot, Gabriella stands in a dark room before a mirror. What little you see in the mirror is shrouded in darkness. In the second shot, light from Gabriella's flashlight bounces back to illuminate her. In the last shot, Gabriella moves the light to her left, falling into darkness herself while the reflected light reveals a doorway previously hidden in darkness. In the bottom two screenshots, notice how the shape of the shadows from the hookstand, the Stranger and even the dead ghoul on the ground has subtly shifted in response to the repositioning of the Stranger's lantern.

atmosphere (see "Light and Shadow" sidebar).

Indicative of NOCTURNE's staggering attention to detail is the way the long, flowing coats of the characters are handled. Where other companies would be content to bang out a nice little coat animation, Terminal Reality has gone to the trouble of folding a cloth modeling program into the game, allowing cloth objects to move independently in the game. This means coats flutter as they trail a moving character, whip above their head as they fall in a pit, or hug their calves as they step backward. Heavy curtains are similarly modeled, falling and swaying believably when characters step through them into hidden vestibules. This is a game engine that positively screams "licensing opportunity."

But you better start saving now if you expect to play NOCTURNE when it's released this Halloween. Even when the code is optimized it's going to require a Pentium II class machine with a truckload of RAM—especially in software mode. Should gamers have the necessary hardware, NOCTURNE seems well-positioned to be causing some hellacious nightmares later this year. CGW

Robert Coffey is not a cannibalistic ghoul, but he plays one on TV. He also plays HALF-LIFE deathmatches on a regular basis.

SWING TIME Now that the big, swinging blade is showering the room with undead body parts, the Stranger will have a better chance to retrieve the key on the platform.

Yamaha Speakers Sound Better, Even On Paper.

With exclusive Yamaha Active Servo Technology (YST) and spruce cone architecture, the Yamaha YST-MS28 Speaker System floods your senses with vivid, spectacular sound that invigorates games and music.

The subwoofer and satellite speakers use superior Yamaha YST technology to produce deep, rumbling bass that no other speakers can match. It brings the menacing approach of a T-Rex to life with frightening conviction.

At the heart of the compact, adjustable satellite speakers, spruce cones deliver brilliant highs capable of belting out screaming guitar solos.

In fact, Yamaha speakers are the music industry reference standard; they're used in nearly every recording studio in the world.

In addition to the excellent sound, the YST-MS28 gives you two stereo inputs, a headphone output jack, magnetic shielding, convenient controls and total compatibility with all computers and game systems.

Your ultimate computer system is incomplete without Yamaha speakers. And you can own the YST-MS28 for under $80, or choose any of Yamaha's other award-winning speakers and subwoofers. Because as good as they sound on paper, hearing them is an absolute blast!

YAMAHA

THE WAY YOUR COMPUTER SHOULD SOUND.

For a brochure, call (800)823-6414 ext. 513 or visit www.yamaha.com ©1998 Yamaha Corporation of America, Consumer Products Division, P.O. Box 6600, Buena Park, CA 90622-6600

SOUNDCARDS • MULTIMEDIA SPEAKERS • CD-REWRITABLE RECORDERS • HEADPHONES

BEST BUY · COMPUSA THE COMPUTER SUPERSTORE · ComputAbility · Fry's Electronics · MICRO CENTER · Office DEPOT · TigerDirect

Go to #291 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

IT'S TIME YOU

- Revolutionary new battlefield physics – Deformable terrain, energy weapon effects, dynamic colored lighting and flying shrapnel – intensifies the realism and excitement.
- New "veterancy" feature enables units to become smarter, faster and stronger as they become battle hardened with combat experience.
- Experience the future of global war with new, high-energy weapons and defenses – Jump Jet Infantry, Laser Fences, Disruptors, Hover Tanks, Tunneling APCs, The Firestorm Defense, Mechanized Battle Units and many more.
- Built-in waypoint system and special drop ship missions let you decide which units to bring into battle.
- More tactics of sabotage and guerilla warfare – execute covert night missions, set forest fires and destroy bridges – with unique opportunities in three different environments.
- Internet play is easier than ever with a streamlined connection and an integrated interface – plus new support for worldwide rankings, ladder systems and Battle Clans™.

Command & Conquer is a registered trademark of, and Command & Conquer Tiberian Sun, and Westwood Studios are trademarks of, Westwood Studios, Inc. © 1998 Westwood Studios, Inc. All rights reserved

THE STUNNING SEQUEL TO THE

SAW THE FUTURE

COMMAND & CONQUER®
TIBERIAN SUN

COMING SOON

Westwood™ STUDIOS

www.westwood.com

Go to #252 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

ORIGINAL COMMAND & CONQUER

Gratuitous Violence is 200 Times Faster With a D-Link Network Than With Online Games.

To get the Maximum performance out of a multi-user game, get off the Internet and get on a D-Link 10/100Mb Fast Ethernet Network. Up to 200 times faster than the Internet, and 10 times faster than other legacy networks. Easy to set up and install, a D-Link 10/100 Network In A Box comes with everything you need to build a Windows 95/98 Network.

D-Link®

www.dlink.com

Prices and Specifications are subject to change without notice. D-Link is a registered trademark and DFE-905 is a trademark of D-Link Systems, Inc. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners. ©Copyright 1999 D-Link Systems Inc. All rights reserved.

Go to #265 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Pentium III—A Must Have?

Pretty Impressive Test Results, but Game Support Needed

by Dave Salvator

As you read this, Pentium III (Katmai) chips are just beginning to ship. While it has a CPU core that's identical to the Pentium II, the Pentium III has a new feature, called Katmai New Instructions, that's being heavily touted as a must-have for gamers. And from our initial test results, it's likely there will be a Pentium III is in your future.

Katmai New Instructions (KNI), which has been rechristened SSIMD—yet another brilliant marketing moniker from the folks who brought you "Celeron"—is designed to greatly accelerate matrix math operations, which are key to speeding up transform and lighting operations in a 3D pipeline. Transforms involve calculating polygon movements from frame to frame; geometric lighting involves rendering light sources and the objects they illuminate, rather than using light maps that require multitexturing.

First Test Results

We got our hands on a 500MHz Pentium III on an Intel SE440 motherboard, which uses Intel's 440BX chipset. We put 128MB of 100MHz SDRAM into this guy and took it for a spin. There are two ways to take advantage of SSIMD (SSIMD): either through Direct3D's T/L engine or by writing custom assembly code. SSIMD support will be included in DirectX 6.1, which should be available as you read this.

To measure how using SSIMD via Direct3D might enhance game performance, we used 3D WinBench's Transform and Transform & Lighting tests, which test the CPU portion of Direct3D's pipeline. While there wasn't much performance gain in the Transform test, SSIMD showed a whopping 71 percent gain over traditional floating-point code in the Transform & Lighting test.

So, in a 3D game using Direct3D's T/L engine, SSIMD, like AMD's 3DNow!, can make lighting go much faster, although it doesn't seem to do much for transforms.

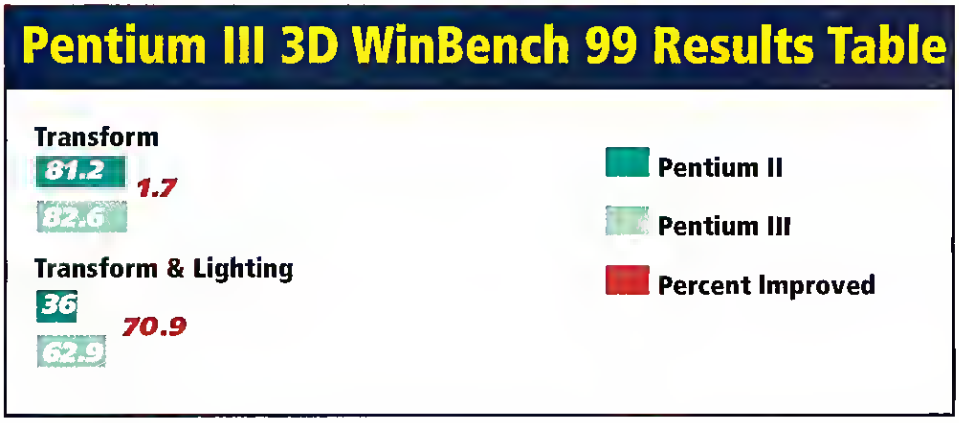
We also looked at several SSIMD demos, including an upcoming title from Rage called DISPATCHED, which looked good and ran smoothly. At press time, the list of announced SSIMD titles included BATTLEZONE 2 and HEAVY GEAR 2 by Activision, as well as Microsoft's FLIGHT SIM 2000. Some shipping titles, like DID's WARGASM and EA's MADDEN '99 will be patched to take advantage of the new technology.

Until a game is written to take advantage of SSIMD, it won't really go much faster than it does on current Pentium IIs. But given the impressive gains to be had by using SSIMD (and Intel's dominant market share), developers are likely to use SSIMD in titles for the '99 holiday season.

Intel's only real competition this year will come from AMD's new K7 processor, which is due sometime in the latter half of the year. K7 will use AMD's 3D Now! technology, which also can accelerate transforms and lighting.

Stay tuned for the 3DNow!/KNI shootout here in *CGW* later this year. —*Dave Salvator*

Pentium III 3D WinBench 99 Results Table



3D IronWorks—TNT, Part Deux

As you read this, nVidia has begun shipping its TNT2 graphics accelerator. The biggest news about this part is that it shifts nVidia to 0.25-micron process technology, which shrinks the chip's size and allows it to run faster while putting out less heat. Thanks to this new production process, TNT will clock in at 125MHz, the original design goal of the RIVA TNT. Given that the TNT architecture works on two pixels per clock, this new clock speed will yield a peak fill rate of 250Mpixels/sec, which will keep nVidia very competitive with ATI's new Rage 128-based cards. Sources inside nVidia suggest that even faster clock rates may be possible. Other highlights include support for a maximum of 32MB of onboard memory, digital flat-panel display support, and AGP 4x support (maximum data rate of 1GB/sec moving data from system memory to the 3D accelerator). —*Loyd Case & Dave Salvator*

‡The advertised monthly payment excludes taxes, shipping and handling and is based on a fixed Annual Percentage Rate (APR) of 13.99% with repayment in 48 months. Your minimum monthly payment may differ depending on your rate, loan amount, applicable taxes, shipping and handling charges. Your APR is a fixed rate and will be as low as 13.99%, 15.99%, 17.99% or 20.99%. These rates are in effect as of October 1998 and are subject to change. Final approval and rate are subject to verification of your income and credit status. This is a revolving line of credit. Your minimum monthly payment and repayment period will be re-calculated at the time of a later advance. The Micron Loan Program is a financial service provided by Household Bank, f.s.b., a federal savings bank and Equal Housing Lender.

©1998 Micron Electronics, Inc. All rights reserved. Micron Electronics is not responsible for omissions or errors in typography or photography. All purchases are subject to availability. Prices and specifications may be changed without notice; prices do not include shipping and handling and any applicable taxes. 30-day money back guarantee does not include return freight and original shipping/handling charges, applies only to Micron brand products and begins from date of shipment. All sales are controlled by Micron Electronics' current terms and conditions of sale. On-site service is provided at sole discretion of Micron Electronics, Inc. A diagnostic determination by service must be made by a Micron service technician prior to the provision of on-site service. The Intel Inside Logo and Pentium are registered trademarks and Pentium II Xeon, Celeron and MMX are trademarks of Intel Corporation. Microsoft, Windows, Windows NT and the Windows logo are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. Product names of Micron products are trademarks or registered trademarks of Micron Electronics, Inc. Other product names used in this publication are for identification purposes only and may be trademarks of their respective companies. Note: advertised configurations may differ from award-winning configurations. §One year subscription to PC Computing magazine with purchase of new Micron desktop and portable systems. *All hard drive sizes calculated with 1GB equal to 1 billion bytes. **For all Micron PCs configured with 56Kbps modems: Capable of receiving downloads at up to 56Kbps and sending at up to 31.2Kbps. Due to FCC regulations on power output, maximum speeds are limited to 33.6Kbps. Actual speeds may vary. †Millennia 450 MAX reviewed, PCW, mid-November 98. ††Intel Made on quality, or the 6-month same-as-cash program. If purchase advance and related charges are not paid in full within 180 days from the purchase date, finance charges will be assessed from purchase date. The APR varies and is as of 11/25/98 with a minimum finance charge of $1.00. ^You will receive a coupon for a free upgrade to Microsoft Office 2000 when you purchase a Micron Millennia or TransPort TriSK² equipped with Microsoft Office 97. You should receive this coupon no later than Feb. 28, 1999. The coupon must be redeemed by Aug. 30, 1999. We will send you a copy of Microsoft Office 2000 upon its release which is currently scheduled for October 1999. If system is returned, there will be no upgrade. ^^For all Micron Millennia desktop systems. The CD-ROM drive will be removed upon the purchase of the DVD-ROM drive upgrade.

HARDCORE SYSTEMS FOR HARDCORE GAMERS

Model Name	New! Millennia C400	Millennia 450	Millennia MAX 400	Millennia MAX 450
Processor	Intel® Celeron™ processor 400MHz	Intel Pentium® II processor 450MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 400MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 450MHz
Cache	128KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache
RAM	64MB SDRAM	64MB 100MHz SDRAM	128MB 100MHz SDRAM	128MB 100MHz SDRAM
Hard Drive	8.4GB Ultra ATA hard drive*	13GB Ultra ATA hard drive*	13GB Ultra ATA hard drive*	13GB Ultra ATA hard drive*
Monitor	17" Micron 700Vx monitor (15.9" display)	17" Micron 700Vx monitor (15.9" display)	17" Micron 700Vx monitor (15.9" display)	17" Micron 700Vx monitor (15.9" display)
DVD/CD-ROM	40X max speed CD-ROM drive	40X max speed CD ROM drive	6X DVD-ROM drive	6X DVD-ROM drive
Modem	3Com USRobotics V.90 WinModem**	3Com USRobotics V.90 WinModem**	3Com USRobotics V.90 WinModem**	3Com USRobotics V.90 WinModem**
Graphics	nVidia Riva 128 8MB SGRAM 3D 2X AGP graphics	nVidia Riva 128 8MB SGRAM 3D 2X AGP graphics	16MB Diamond Viper 550 TnT 2X AGP graphics	16MB Diamond Viper 550 tnt 2X AGP graphics
Sound System	PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound	PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound	PCI 128-voice Wavetable sound	PCI 128-voice Wavetable sound
Speakers	Advent AV009 speakers	Advent AV009 speakers	Advent AV009 speakers	Advent AV009 speakers
Warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power* limited warranty	5-year/3 year Micron Power limited warranty	5-year/3 year Micron Power limited warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty
Training	1 year free† training @ Micron U online	1 year free† training @ Micron U online	1-year free† training @ Micron U online	1-year free† training @ Micron U online
Software Included	Microsoft® Windows® 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Free* Office 2000 upgrade Norton AntiVirus	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Free* Office 2000 upgrade Norton AntiVirus	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Free* Office 2000 upgrade Norton AntiVirus	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Free* Office 2000 upgrade Norton AntiVirus
Also Includes.	New MicroTower™ case 104-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse® 3.5" floppy drive	New MicroTower case 104-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse 3.5" floppy drive	New MicroTower case 104-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse 3.5" floppy drive	Micron MiniTower case 104-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse 3.5" floppy drive
Factory Direct Price	$1,299 $34/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†	$1,699 $45/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†	$1,799 $48/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†	$1,999 $54/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†
Order Code.	50080	50070	40061	40060
Upgrade to!	Upgrade to 4.8X DVD-ROM drive*** 17" Micron Trinitron (16" display) monitor 13GB Ultra ATA hard drive*	Upgrade to 4.8X DVD-ROM drive*** 128MB SDRAM Advent subwoofer	Upgrade to! 16.8GB Ultra ATA hard drive* 17" Micron Trinitron (16" display) monitor Monsoon MM100 3 piece flat panel speaker system	Upgrade to 16.8GB Ultra ATA hard drive* 17" Micron Trinitron (16" display) monitor Monsoon MM100 3 piece flat panel speaker system
Factory Direct Price	$1,605 $43/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†	$1,971 $53/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†	$2,196 $59/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†	$2,396 $64/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†
Order Code.	50035	50005	40043	40042

The Critics Rave

New!
PC COMPUTING EDITORS' CHOICE
Millennia C400 Feb '98

PC WORLD
Millennia 400 MAX
#1 Power Desktop
#1 Gaming System
Dec '98

PC WORLD
Millennia 450 MAX
Best Buy
Nov '98

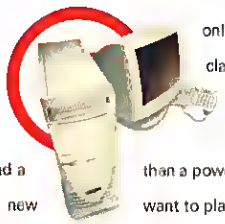
PC WORLD
Millennia 400 DV9
Sept '98
Oct '98

PC WORLD
Millennia 350
Sept '98
Oct '98

NSTL Year 2000 Certified

FREE Microsoft Office 2000 UPGRADE*

Breakthrough Prices on Powerful Millennia Desktops.



If you live for gaming, you owe it to yourself to play on the very best – the Micron™ Millennia.† Everything about these speedsters is designed to maximize power, minimize cost, and give you the competitive edge. The Millennia offers Intel's latest Pentium II processor, NSTL Y2K certification, and a one-year subscription to Micron University, an incredible new online training tool offering over one hundred free† online classes, seminars and self-paced tutorials. Plus, you'll receive Micron's free* upgrade to Microsoft Office 2000. When you choose Micron, you're getting more than a powerful system – you're joining the gaming elite. So, if you want to play hard, play on a Micron.

New Rules. MICRON ELECTRONICS™ New Tools.™

ORDER ONLINE WWW.MICRONPC.COM/CGW
OR CALL 1-888-669-0969

3D Babble On

Making Sense of 3D Testing Verbiage

Back in 1946, W.K. Lessing (using the pseudonym Dolton Edwards) wrote a small masterpiece called *Meihem in Ce Klasrum*. This short story first appeared in the September 1946 *Analog* magazine and has been anthologized several times. Written in a satirical, "modest proposal" style, it laid out a series of steps that would take the English language to a fully phonetic spelling system. Since there are multiple ways to spell similar pronunciations, the resulting choices outlined in the text made for a hilarious send-up of modern language.

I often think of that story when I write product reviews. The jargon we're forced to use in this business can make for some pretty dense reading. So I thought I'd take a deep breath before 1999 hits (it's December 31 as I write this) and talk a bit about some of the 3D jargon that we use when writing reviews. I promise I won't define *bilinear filtering* yet again. But since we spend a lot of time discussing graphics cards, some of you may be wondering exactly what a few of the terms mean. For the more technically savvy reader, consider this something of a refresher.

Webster Can't Help You Now

When I think of the jargon we've come to rely on in writing reviews of 3D accelerators, three terms in particular come to mind: *v-sync*, *refresh rate* and *frame buffer*. Three other terms related to these are *back buffers*, *front buffers*, and *page flipping*. Of the initial three, *v-sync* is probably the most difficult to understand, but to do so you need first to understand the other terms.

All current-generation graphics cards have onboard video memory, ranging from 2MB to 32MB (more for some very high-end cards). The majority of those cards have a single, unified memory architecture when handling 3D graphics, meaning that both the polygon data and the texture maps (bit-maps) share the card's memory. Voodoo and Voodoo^2 are unique in the world of low-cost accelerators because they feature a separate chunk of memory just for storing texture maps.

LOYD CASE

The *frame buffer* is simply that area of video memory that's holding the data currently displayed by the graphics card. But wait, there's more. In your normal, 2D Windows display, the frame buffer changes any time the onscreen image changes. But that process is far too slow for 2D and 3D animation to run at the requisite 30 frames per second or more. Because of their higher graphics needs, games use a technique called *page flipping* to speed things up.

If you've ever seen an animation flip-book, you already know what page flipping is. A flip-book is a small book with a series of drawings of an object or creature designed to produce animation. Let's say, for example, that you've got a series of pictures of a tiger with its body and legs in slightly different positions on successive pages. Flip through the pages, and you create the illusion that the tiger is running.

Now consider your computer as a flip-book, with one "page" being the amount of video data needed to create one screen's worth of graphics. At any given time, the *front buffer* is that portion of memory holding the page that's currently being displayed. Simultaneously, a separate portion of video memory—the *back buffer*—is invisibly creating the next image to be displayed. Once the back buffer has a fully rendered image—the next page of game animation—it's "flipped" to the front. In reality, what happens is that a few bits change values and the memory that was once invisible is suddenly visible, and you see the next image. Meanwhile, the area of video memory that had been the front buffer now becomes the back buffer, and the accelerator begins to write graphics data for the next page to that chunk of memory. Using a front buffer and a single back buffer is a process called *double buffering*.

> "The **jargon** we're **forced** to use in this business can make for some **dense** reading."

Don't Get (Re)Fresh

Now let's talk about refresh rate, which is the rate at which your monitor's three electron guns (red, blue, and green) paint the screen. Inside your monitor these guns send a beam of electrons to strike the phosphors on the screen itself. When struck by the electron beam, the phosphors light up and you see a pixel. The beam scans the screen one line at a time. The time it takes for the beam to paint all the way across the screen and all the way down to the bottom is the refresh rate. On a 640x480 display, a 75Hz refresh rate means that it takes 1/75 of a second for the electron beam to scan 480 lines down the screen, with each line made up of 640 pixels. This movement of the electron beam across and down the screen is called the *vertical retrace*.

Now, finally, we get to *v-sync*. In order to get the best image quality, you ideally want each frame of animation to start at the beginning of the electron guns' beam cycle. If the graphics card is fast enough, it can create the back-buffer image just as the electron guns finish "painting" the front-buffer image on your screen. The back buffer then gets flipped—becoming the front buffer—just as the electron guns start their refresh cycle.

In reality, performance can vary. If the back buffer isn't quite finished, the game will wait until it *is* finished—and the image you see for the next refresh cycle doesn't change. Then, when the electron guns start at the top corner again, the now-completed back buffer is flipped and becomes the visible image. This waiting for the electron gun to reach the starting point is called *flip on v-sync*, or *v-sync* for short. The flip is waiting for the vertical retrace to start at the beginning—in other words, the page flipping is synchronized to the vertical retrace—and that's

where the term v-sync comes from.

This creates a problem when measuring the performance of a graphics card. If a card barely misses the vertical retrace and has to wait another cycle on a regular basis, that means the graphics card is sitting there doing nothing. But when you measure performance, you want to measure the component actually doing *something*. In fact, you get odd harmonics of the refresh rate as your frame rate. For example, if the refresh rate is 60Hz, and you see that the game is reporting 30 frames per second—half the refresh rate—that's an immediate cue that the card is sitting idle much of the time.

The trick for testing is to turn off v-sync, meaning that the back buffer is flipped to the front buffer as soon as it's filled with data, even if the electron guns haven't reached the end of the refresh cycle. This means that the image on your screen may not be fully painted when the next frame is flipped. The electron beam doesn't start over—it just paints the next pixel, which is from a new buffer. In the extreme, this can cause some really grotesque image quality problems, called *tearing*, but it is useful for measuring performance, because the card never sits idle. That, simply put, is why we turn off v-sync when doing 3D graphics card game testing. Turning off v-sync during gameplay is *not* a good idea, however, because of tearing.

A good compromise is *triple buffering*. Triple buffering means using a second back buffer—three buffers in all. It uses more memory, but now the game will run at full speed, up to the refresh rate. If you crank up the resolution, triple buffering becomes a good performance measure if the card can't match its frame rate to the refresh rate.

Tech Tips

On the Clock

If you have an Intel Socket 7 motherboard with the 430VX chipset that uses SDRAM (they first shipped about two years ago), and you're looking to add memory to your system, you're going to need a slightly different type of SDRAM. When this new memory first started appearing in systems, the industry hadn't settled on a standard, but Intel went ahead and implemented what's called two-clock SDRAM on these early motherboards. Well, as Murphy's Law would have it, the industry went the other way and standardized on four-clock SDRAM, which is what you now find at your local computer store. The two memory types are, of course, incompatible. So, you may want to order this memory from an outfit that specializes in memory, such as Crucial Technology (www.crucial.com) or Kingston (www.kingston.com).

My Brain Hurts

By now, I hope, you've now got a better handle on some of the jargon you keep seeing in our 3D graphics card reviews and roundups. If it still has you scratching your head, don't feel too bad—this is complex stuff by any measure. 3D graphics involves so many parts of your system that it's important to understand where the potential bottlenecks are and how to properly gauge performance. It may take a while to grasp, but at least you'll experience a little less, ah, mei-hem, the next time you read one of our hardware reviews. CGW

COMING NEXT MONTH

Everything You Need to Know to Build Your Home Network and Soup Up Your Internet Connection

Next month, check out your complete guide to getting a gaming local-area network (LAN) going at home. And, as if that's not enough, we'll also be telling you which high-speed connectivity is best for gamers. Here's just a sampling of what we'll be looking at:

Wireless LAN
Phone-Line LAN
USB LAN
100 Base-T Ethernet
USB-to-Ethernet
Cable Modems
XDSL
ISDN
56K Modems

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD
The #1 PC Game Magazine

Your Hardware Experts

© 1998 InterAct Accessories, Inc. A RECOTDN COMPANY. All rights reserved. Advent and Powered Partners are trademarks of InterAct Accessories, Inc. © 1998 Electronic Arts. Need For Speed, Electronic Arts and the Electronic Arts logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts in the U.S. and/or other countries. All rights reserved. Chevrolet, Corvette, Emblems and Vehicle Model Body Designs are General Motors Trademarks used under license to Electronic Arts Inc. Automobili Lamborghini, Diablo SV, Countach 25th and all associated logos are trademarks of Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. Dolby and the double-D symbol are trademarks of Dolby Laboratories.

NEED FOR SPEED™ PLAYS BETTER

ON POWERED PARTNERS!

It's time to get serious about sound. And that means getting your sweaty palms on an Advent Powered Partners sound system. With 70 watts and 5-channels of Dolby® Virtual Surround Sound, it's the best way to squeeze every gallon of neck-snapping, high-octane action on the gaming road of life. Powered Partners from Advent. Test-drive them today.

SPACE-SAVING, DOWN-FIRING SUBWOOFER MOUNTS ON THE WALL OR UNDER YOUR DESK!

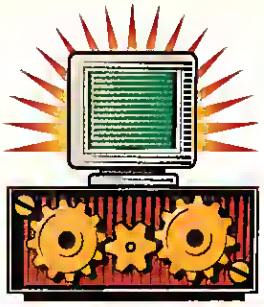
ADVENT

Powered Partners®

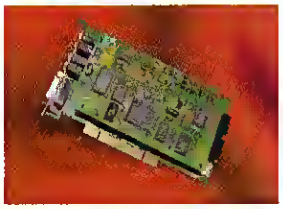
Available through MICRON ELECTRONICS BEST BUY COMPUSA THE COMPUTER SUPERSTORE and other retailers.

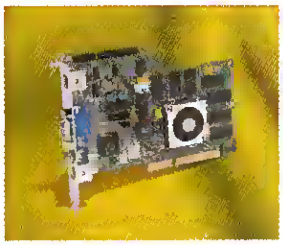
KILLER RIGS

YOUR TWO RECIPES FOR THE ULTIMATE GAMING MACHINE



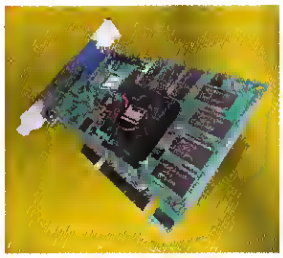
NO HOLDS BARRED





COMPONENT	PRODUCT	PRICE	THE SKINNY
Motherboard	ASUS P2B-LS	$360	And it's cheaper than a standalone Ultra2 SCSI card.
CPU	Pentium II/450	$575	It's the top of the heap, for now.
Memory	256MB of CAS/2 Corsair PC100 SDRAM	$520	Just think, a quarter-gigabyte.
Disk Controller	Built-in Ultra2 SCSI	$0	80MB/sec. Oh, yes!
Primary Graphics	Canopus Spectra 2500	$199	The reverse pass through works, not to mention great 3D and 2D.
Secondary Graphics	Quantum3D Obsidian X24	$499	The ultimate, single slot Voodoo^2 card.
Floppy Drive	Teac	$20	You still have to have one.
Hard Drive	Seagate Cheetah 18	$1,150	It's big, it's fast, it's loud...two out of three ain't bad.
Backup	Iomega Jaz 2	$350	2GB of backup.
Hard-Drive Cooler	APS Technologies	$40	Cooler heads prevail.
CD-ROM	Plextor UltraPlexX 40	$155	Can't find the Pioneer SCSI DVD anymore.
Monitor	Viewsonic PB17	$1,550	Can you say bandwidth... and USB, too.
Primary Audio	Diamond Monster Sound MX300	$99	For four-speaker DirectSound, A3D, and EAX.
Speakers	LFT-11	$500	Beautiful imaging, clean sound.
Rear channel Speakers	Jamo CS-5	$500	Ultimate rear-channel powered speakers.
Modem	3Com ImpactIQ	$200	Faster than 56k... Now if I could only get DSL.
Networking	Built in Intel 10/100 ethernet chip	$0	For fragging my buddies.
Case	In-Win Q500 full tower ATX	$100	New improved model.
Power Supply	Turbocool 300	$119	More power, Scotty!
Keyboard	Logitech Newtouch	$45	In with the Newtouch, out with the Natural!
Mouse/Pointing Device	Logitech Cordless Wheel Mouse	$59	Off the leash.
Action Game Controller	Microsoft SideWinder Freestyle	$65	Tilt!
Flight Joystick	ThrustMaster F22 Pro	$129	It just feels right.
Throttle	ThrustMaster TQS	$115	More control than anyone needs.
Rudder Pedals	ThrustMaster Elite RCS	$79	Nearly perfect foot placement.
Driving Controls	ECCI CDS 4000	$1,129	For the serious sim driver.
		TOTAL:	**$8,557**

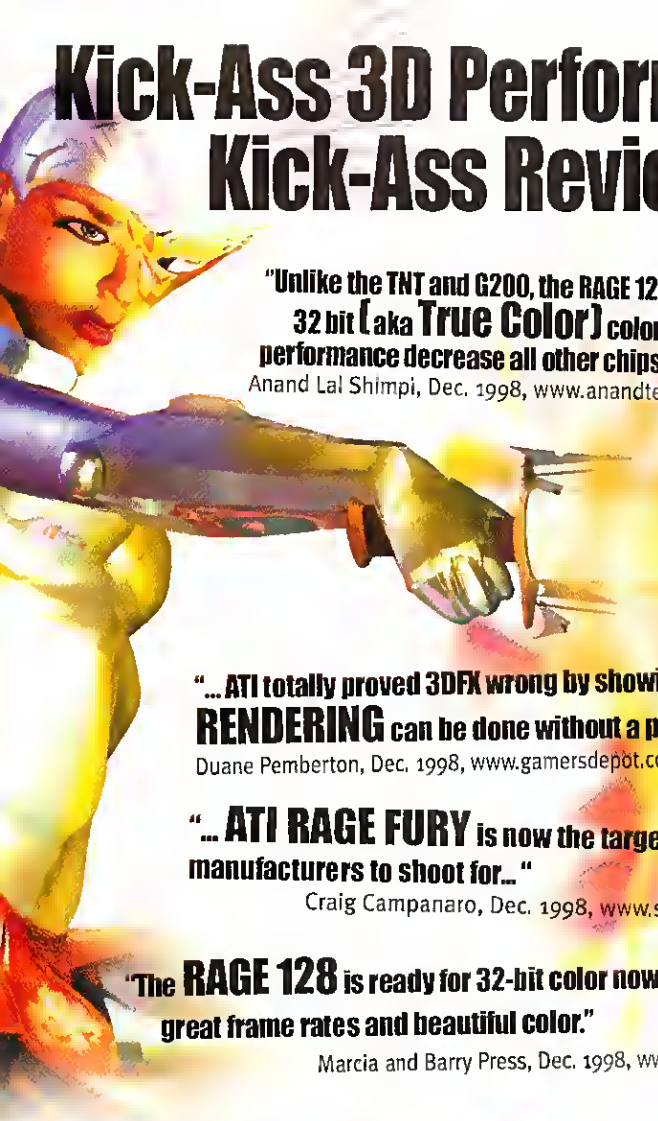
LEAN & MEAN



COMPONENT	PRODUCT	PRICE	THE SKINNY
Motherboard	Abit BH6	$120	Five PCI slots, Softmenu, 440BX—ready for Katmai.
CPU	Pentium II/400 + fan	$325	Not far from the 450.
Memory	64MB Corsair PC100 SDRAM	$122	The only thing better would be 128MB.
Disk Controller	Built in UDMA/33	$0	
Primary Graphics	Hercules Dynamite TNT	$150	Stability, speed, and cooling.
Secondary Graphics	Guillemot Maxigamer2	$99	Voodoo^2 for those Glide games.
Floppy Drive	Teac	$20	Still gotta have it.
Hard Drive	Seagate Medalist Pro 6530	$160	Fast and now more affordable.
CD-ROM / DVD	Pioneer DRU-704	$69	36x and cheap to boot.
Monitor	Optiquest V75	$379	Amazingly sharp for under $400.
Primary Audio	Diamond Monster Sound MX300	$99	A3D and clean audio for under a C-note.
Secondary Audio	N/A	$0	
Speakers	Yamaha YST M28	$60	The best speakers for under $100. Period.
Modem	Diamond SupraExpress external	$110	Solid performance, good price.
Networking	N/A	$0	
Case	Elan Vital T10-AB	$90	*The* case for upgraders.
Power Supply	Built-in, 235W	$0	
Keyboard	Logitech Newtouch	$45	In with the new, out with the Natural.
Mouse/Pointing Device	Logitech PS/2 Wheel Mouse	$18	More frames per second???
Joystick	CH Gamestick 3D	$50	Still the best balanced flightstick around.
		TOTAL:	**$1,916**

All recommendations based on actual evaluations of available products. Prices listed are average low quotes on Web price search engines such as ***www.pricewatch.com****, or* ***www.computershopper.com****. List compiled by Dave Salvator and Loyd Case.*

Kick-Ass 3D Performance = Kick-Ass Reviews



"Unlike the TNT and G200, the RAGE 128 can render at 32 bit (aka True Color) color depths without the 20-50% performance decrease all other chipsets come with."
Anand Lal Shimpi, Dec. 1998, www.anandtech.com

"... ATI totally proved 3DFX wrong by showing 32 BIT RENDERING can be done without a performance hit..."
Duane Pemberton, Dec. 1998, www.gamersdepot.com

"... ATI RAGE FURY is now the target for other manufacturers to shoot for..."
Craig Campanaro, Dec. 1998, www.sharkyextreme.com

"The RAGE 128 is ready for 32-bit color now, delivering great frame rates and beautiful color."
Marcia and Barry Press, Dec. 1998, www.avault.com

GRAPHICS BY ATi rage 128

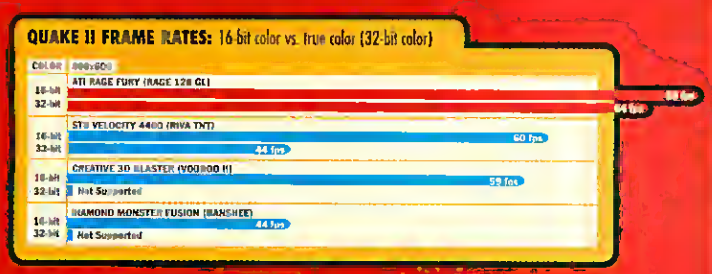
RAGE FURY

- True 128-bit graphics engine
- Designed for fast 16-bit and 32-bit color rendering
- 32MB of memory
- TV-output for big screen gaming
- Hardware DVD

For High Resolution, True Color 3D Gaming Action

- Also available: XPERT 128, the 16 MB 3D Graphics and DVD Accelerator

See more 3D details like reflections and water depth



No Compromise Frame Rates with 32-bit Color

The New Breed of Speed.

www.atitech.com/ad/cgw

© Copyright 1999. ATI Technologies Inc. ATI, RAGE 128, XPERT 128 and RAGE FURY are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of ATI Technologies Inc. All other products and/or company names are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of their respective companies. Product may not be exactly as shown.

*Quake II Frame Rates (All tests run using Quake II v3.19) All tests were done on a Pentium II-450MHz system with 64MB RAM, Windows 98, DirectX 6.0, ATI RAGE FURY, STB Velocity 4400, Creative 3D Blaster Voodoo II and Diamond Monster Fusion were tested using drivers 4.11.6031, 4.1001.2104-01.037, 4.1001.0094 (2.16), 4.1001.0206 respectively

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

PLAY to win.

SUBSCRIBE to save.

$19.97 ONE YEAR/12 ISSUES

$34.97 TWO YEARS 24 ISSUES

Here's the move ..... that'll blow 'em away:

CALL [800] 827-4450

But What About Katmai?

As this year wears on, Intel's newest CPU, Katmai, will become the CPU of choice for gamers. At press time, Intel was just announcing that Katmai's official product name would be Pentium III. And while this moniker won't send tremors through the industry, at least it isn't something silly like Celeron. Anyway, we thought seriously about putting a Katmai

processor into the Power Rig this month, but because pricing information wasn't available—and because next-generation Intel processors tend to be very pricey early in their life cycle—we opted to stick with Pentium II for now. But Pentium IIIs will be shipping about the time you're reading this, and you should take a good look at them to decide if the price difference is worth the investment. The reasons to get Pentium III are pretty compelling. With its Katmai New Instructions (KNI), Pentium IIIs will be able to make the front end of 3D graphics pipelines move along a good deal faster (upwards of 70 percent faster) than their predecessor, provided the game you're playing is Katmai-aware. A bit less compelling, but worth considering, is that Pentium III's top clock rate will debut at 500MHz. The Pentium III should drop into current 440BX motherboards, though you'll need a BIOS update.

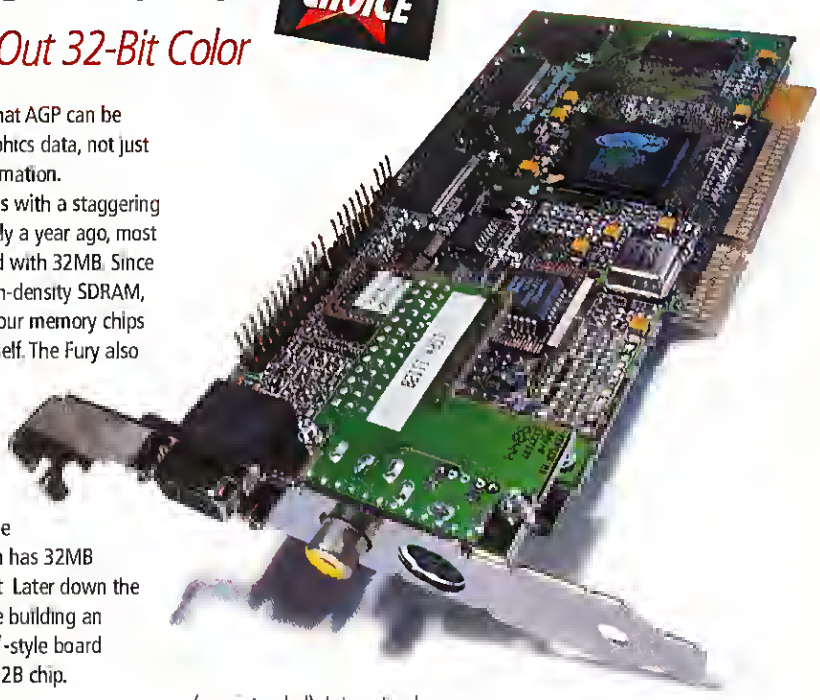
If Pentium III's initial price tag feels too steep for your blood, you might consider the much less expensive 400MHz Celeron-A, and wait until Pentium IIIs make their way down the price curve. Given that Katmai-aware titles won't be out in any great number until the latter part of this year, Katmai's main benefit to gamers won't be greatly evident until then. —*Dave Salvator*

ATI's True Colors

Rage Fury Is Ready to Churn Out 32-Bit Color

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD EDITORS' CHOICE

by Loyd Case



While testing the ATI Rage Fury, I had to run it through our benchmarking suite quite a few times to make sure what I really saw was real. I also pumped more games through it than usual, including some 2D games. While the drivers still need some fixes, my verdict on this card is *wow!*

ATI bases the Rage Fury on its latest 3D accelerator, the Rage 128, which is the second 2D/3D accelerator to combine two rendering pipelines on a single chip (the first being the RIVA TNT). In addition to the twin pipelines, Rage 128 also has two on-chip caches, one for texture data and one for pixel data. Like the TNT, the Rage 128 has an 8-bit stencil buffer, but unlike the TNT, it has a full 32-bit Z-buffer. ATI has also used its interest in video (as in the television style) and has implemented algorithms that should accelerate the software decompression of MPEG 2 video, which is the compression scheme used by DVD video. One interesting feature is the use of bidirectional direct memory execution, meaning that AGP can be used for all graphics data, not just 3D texture information.

The Fury ships with a staggering 32MB RAM. Only a year ago, most *systems* shipped with 32MB. Since ATI is using high-density SDRAM, there are only four memory chips on the board itself. The Fury also has TV-out. ATI will be shipping an Xpert 128, with 16MB of RAM and a Rage Magnum, which has 32MB but lacks TV out. Later down the road, ATI will be building an "All-in-Wonder"-style board with the Rage 128 chip.

And They're Off...

Synthetic benchmarks came back quite impressive. The Rage 128 easily outpaced the competition in WinBench 99 and 3D WinBench 99. Running 3D WinBench 99 at 32-bit color yielded a score of 458—only a few points behind the RIVA TNT 16-bit scores.

The picture isn't completely rosy, however. In many ways, the Rage Fury is better positioned for future games than today's titles. It is, in fact, slower in 3D game performance at 16-bit color than the RIVA TNT or even the Savage3D, though it does outpace 3Dfx's Banshee chip. When bumped up to 32-bit color, the picture changes (pun intended). Interestingly, QUAKE II ran *faster* in 32-bit color than in 16-bit color at 800x600. INCOMING's performance dropped off only a few frames per second. OpenGL performance in 16-bit color seems to be the weakest link for the Rage 128. The good news is that an OpenGL driver will ship with the card.

Running tests in MOTORHEAD—which allows you to set a wide variety of parameters, including setting up for 32-bit rendering and using true-color textures (instead of 16-bit textures)—proved interesting. When running in 16-bit mode (with all other rendering features cranked up), the Rage Fury edged ahead of the TNT. Running in full 32-bit glory, the card still pumped out nearly 25fps at 1280x1024.

I also checked out FALCON 4.0, EUROPEAN AIR WAR and BALDUR'S GATE, a 2D game capable of 32-bit effects. Those titles, at least, seemed pretty solid. However, there were still a few glitches with the driver, like the MOTORHEAD AutoPlay menu crashing upon exiting the game. Overall, though, the drivers seemed fairly well behaved.

The bottom line is that the Rage Fury is a solid performer with today's titles and is well positioned for tomorrow's true-color games. And at $199 for a whopping 32MB RAM, it's a great deal, too. CGW

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★½

APPEAL: Gamers looking for a great, all-around graphics accelerator.

PROS: Terrific 32-bit performance; lots of RAM; great price.

CONS: Slower than TNT in 16-bit game 3D.

REQUIREMENTS: System with AGP slot, Windows 98.

Price: $199 (MSRP)
Manufacturer: ATI Technologies
Toronto, Canada

www.atitech.com

PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS

WinBench 99 Business Graphics WinMark (1024x768x32)

3D WinBench 99 (1024x768x16)

3D GameGauge at 800x600

How We Tested: Both cards were tested on CGW's reference system, a Pentium II 400MHz system with a 440BX chipset and 128MB RAM.

No Strings Attached

by Denny Atkin

You want to set up a home gaming network, but your PCs are in different rooms, and you don't think your landlord would take kindly to your drilling through the walls to run Ethernet cabling down to the kids' room. Diamond has the solution with Home Free, a wireless network.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆

APPEAL: Two-computer households where wiring is impractical.

PROS: Easily installed; transparent Internet sharing; great for laptops

CONS: Sensitive to location; signal may cause speaker buzz

REQUIREMENTS: Windows 95/98, available expansion slot

Price: $199 (two desktop computers), $229 (desktop and notebook)
Manufacturer: Diamond Multimedia
San Jose, CA (360) 604-1400

www.diamondmm.com

Home Free uses 2.4GHz spread-spectrum radio transmissions to network computers almost anywhere within a 150-foot range of each other. It's available in two versions: the Desktop Pac, with one ISA and one PCI network card; and the Combo Pac, with one ISA and one laptop PC Card. Single cards can also be purchased. Installation is a breeze, requiring no knowledge of networking. Network transmissions are encrypted, so you don't have to worry about a Home Free-using neighbor snooping your files.

Home Free transmission is rated at 1Mbit/sec, one-tenth the speed of a typical wired Ethernet setup but three times faster than typical electric-socket or phone-line networks. Speed varies depending on the location of the computers and potential interference sources. In one location, a 2MB file copied in 33 seconds between a Home Free-equipped desktop and a laptop (about 500 Kbit/sec). A third machine, blocked from view of the first by a metal desk, took a whopping 2 minutes 50 seconds to copy the same file. Compare this to less than 4 seconds to copy the file over a 10-BaseT Ethernet network.

You won't want to install large games, but Home Free is plenty fast for most gaming and Web browsing. The most important factor in gaming is ping time, and at 10–14 milliseconds, Home Free provided very smooth play in HALF-LIFE and EUROPEAN AIR WAR. The included Internet sharing software works wonderfully with a cable modem, and it's not bad on a 56-Kbps phone connection as long as nobody starts an FTP session.

Downsides? You'll need to make sure that all your machines are placed where they get a clear signal. That's not as big a deal when one PC is a laptop, and moving to the other side of the couch may clear things up. A bigger concern is that, while Home Free didn't interfere with cordless phones, its signal was strong enough to cause a quiet background static on my PC's speakers when they were turned up to high volume. (Home Free did disrupt the signal on a Wavecom wireless video transmitter in my house.)

If your home setup is conducive to a wired network, use that. But if cables aren't an option, Home Free provides good performance, and the wireless setup is especially well suited to laptop use. CGW

photo: Michael Falconer

Plextor's Good Vibes

by Loyd Case

One of the problems with high-speed CD-ROM drives has been vibration. Some CDs, particularly those with elaborate silk-screened labels, tend to wobble a bit. At high speeds (20x and above), the vibration can become severe enough to be annoying and cause misreads.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆

APPEAL: Moves data really fast. Quiet for a high speed drive

PROS: Fast transfer rate; vibration-free

CONS: Access time isn't among the best; pricey in today's market

REQUIREMENTS: PC with SCSI host adapter

Price: $155 (street)
Manufacturer: Plextor
Santa Clara, CA (800) 475-3986

www.plextor.com

Various manufacturers have tried to solve this problem, usually by detecting the vibration condition and slowing the drive down. Plextor, the specialist in high-performance CD-ROM drives, has a better solution. Using a twin, sliding ball-bearing approach, the mechanism in the UltraPleX 40Max actually balances unbalanced CDs as they rotate. Think of it as dynamically adjustable tire weights that keep a tire balanced.

Plextor also makes the 40Max available in either Wide or Ultra-Wide SCSI formats. The Ultra-Wide drive is really nice if you have ultra-wide SCSI drives, because you can minimize your cable connections. At first blush, performance isn't as good as some IDE CD-ROM drives. The drive generates a CD WinBench 99 score of 1330, whereas the Pioneer 704S cranks out a score of 1450. But digging deeper, we discover the transfer rate of the Plextor is much higher. This showed in a full installation of BALDUR'S GATE, which takes 2.4GB of disk space and cranks through five CDs. The Plextor finished the install a full CD ahead of the IDE drive. The lower CD WinBench score was probably due to the weighting that CD WinBench gives to access time. The Plextor's average access time is 93ms, a bit slower than many current IDE drives.

The utilities are the best part of this drive. Plextor Manager installs in your system tray and allows you to set the spin-down time, change the speed of the CD, and perform digital audio extraction over the SCSI bus. There's also a Windows 9X driver installed that lets you manipulate Redbook (CD) audio data as if they were standard .WAV files—pretty cool stuff.

The bottom line is that if you already have SCSI, then the 40Max is *the* drive to have. But if your system is IDE-based, you might consider some of the new 5x DVD drives that are coming out. CGW

photo: Michael Falconer

DEMONSTRATION #2:

1. Tear out your old sound card.
2. Smash into pieces.
3. Toss over your shoulder.

The sound those pieces make when they hit the ground all *around* you is the power of A3D from Aureal, the only audio that works the way your ears do.

That's why leading sound card vendors, such as Diamond, TerraTec, Turtle Beach, and Xitel, are using Vortex audio technology from Aureal, the only 3D audio accelerator that supports industry leading A3D positional audio technology.

You can also find A3D positional audio on computer models from the industry's leading PC manufacturers.

Audio based on Aureal technology is awesome. But don't take our word for it. Believe Your Ears. Check out A3D at your local retailer.

BELIEVE YOUR EARS™

Visit us at www.A3D.com

©1999 Aureal Semiconductor Inc. A3D and Aureal are trademarks of Aureal Semiconductor Inc. Other trademarks are properties of their respective owners.

Go to #161 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Show of Force

by Dave Salvator

I know what you're thinking: "Another force-feedback wheel?! Sheesh! Enough already!" But this new wheel from AVB is a little different. No, really. For starters, it uses USB to connect to your PC, a first among force-feedback wheels. And unlike most other force-feedback wheels, it has a two-position shifter for gear changing.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★☆☆

APPEAL: Casual drivers looking for some force-feedback in their lives

PROS: Solid basic design; straightforward installation; good performance.

CONS: Forces feel somewhat weak; no bundled editor; wall-wart power supply.

REQUIREMENTS: DOS 5.0 for sound card–only support, Pentium 166 or better with USB and Windows 98

Price: $149
Manufacturer: AVB
Santa Fe Springs, CA (562) 903-7002
www.avbtech.com

The FBW-1 greatly resembles Guillemot's Race Leader wheel, and it appears that both wheels are based on a reference design by Immersion, the company whose I-Force API first brought force-feedback to PC gaming. The two wheels have the same configuration and identical pedals and wall-wart power supply. But unlike Guillemot's offering, the FBW-1 feels solid and renders forces much more realistically. The wheel itself looks a bit like a flight yoke, although you won't get very far driving a plane with this thing.

I went for a spin through NEED FOR SPEED III, one of the best force-feedback driving titles to date, and the FBW-1 rendered most forces well, and the wheel felt good. The same can't be said about the unit's pedals, which are weakly sprung and don't allow for fast switching, something that's critical for braking. But getting back to the wheel, most forces felt pretty good, although the wheel didn't render skids when my car began to slide. Its shifter worked well enough, though I found myself using the two thumb buttons for upshift/downshift. These buttons are well positioned for shifting, but sometimes wouldn't completely depress, making me miss a shift.

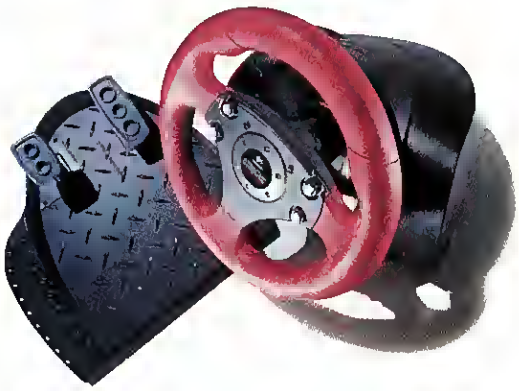
Overall, the FBW-1 is an adequate performer, but there are better wheels to be had—such as Logitech's new Formula Force (which only costs $30 more than the FBW-1). With better pedals and a few button refinements, the FBW-1 would become a more serious contender. Until then, look before you leap. CGW

photo: Michael Falconer

REVIEW • LOGITECH WINGMAN FORMULA FORCE

Drive by Wire

by Loyd Case



With its bright red rubber grip, you can't mistake this wheel. Logitech's new Formula Force is another in the seemingly endless series of force-feedback steering wheels we've seen over the past few months.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★½☆

APPEAL: Gamers in the market for a smooth-performing wheel

PROS: Very smooth control, good precision, too

CONS: Pedal motions seem coarse; setup software is arcane

REQUIREMENTS: USB port (Windows 98) or free serial port (Windows 95/98)

Price: $179.95 (MSRP)
Manufacturer: Logitech
Fremont, CA (800) 231-7717
www.logitech.com

Unlike the Microsoft SideWinder wheel, which uses gears in its mechanism and can feel a bit "notchy" as a result, the Formula Force uses wires and pulleys for its internal drive, making for a somewhat smoother feel than the SideWinder.

Setup is pretty easy, though the clamping mechanism requires you to screw down a pair of clamps every time you mount the wheel. The wheel connects either via USB or a normal serial port; we used USB in our testing. Installing the drivers was straightforward, but the Logitech launcher software default setup was for... QUAKE II. Yep, just what we all want to do is "drive" the QUAKE guy around. Maybe the monsters will get out of our way when we honk the horn.

After resetting the wheel to a "blank" configuration (most Windows driving games allow you to customize the control setup anyway), we booted up NEED FOR SPEED III and SPEEDBUSTERS. At first, the forces seemed a bit weaker than with the Microsoft wheel. A trip to the game controller control panel allowed us to tweak the forces up to 150 percent(!). At those maximums, the effects came through strongly, but weren't overbearing. The rubber grip of the wheel proved quite comfortable, but the plastic foot pedals had very little resistance and were hard to use with any precision.

The wheel itself seemed fairly precise, so the car went generally where we wanted. Like all other force-feedback wheels shipped, it will not work with most DOS games.

All in all, if you want a force-feedback wheel that's comfortable, well-mannered, and easy to set up, you can't go wrong with the Formula Force. CGW

photo: Michael Falconer

ATTENTION ALL INTERNET USERS:

Start talkin'

Talk n' Play is the best way to speak with up to four people over the internet. Combine that with 25 Internet games from World Opponent Network and a sweet headset and you've got internet gaming, baby!

So now you can connect with your family and friends and challenge them to a game of Poker, Golf or Red Baron, even if they live thousands of miles away!

Start Playing!

25 INTERNET GAMES • 4 PERSON INTERNET PHONE • HEADSET / MICROPHONE

www.talknplay.com

THRUSTMASTER is a registered trademark of ThrustMaster, Inc. Talk n Play is a trademark of ThrustMaster, Inc. WeCanTalk.com is a trademark of ThrustMaster, Inc. All other trademarks and registered trademarks are the properties of their respective owners.

FROM THE DESK OF SARGE

Dear Mrs. Johnson,

The melted remains I sent in my last letter were not those of your son. Our condolences. Your son, Joe, is attached above in this little baggie.

Please return the previously sent melted Private at your earliest convenience.

Deepest regrets,

Sarge

Sarge

P.S. Although there will never be another Joe, you'll be glad to know we're already molding others in his likeness.

Joe's Unit

PC CD-ROM

The Kitchen Campaigns

Toy soldier warfare moves to the kitchen, bedroom, front yard, and garage.

Intuitive Interface

New point-and-click mouse interface is easy for beginners and familiar to gamers.

Free* Multi-player Competition

New worlds, weapons, and interface make this top 10 multi-player game even better.

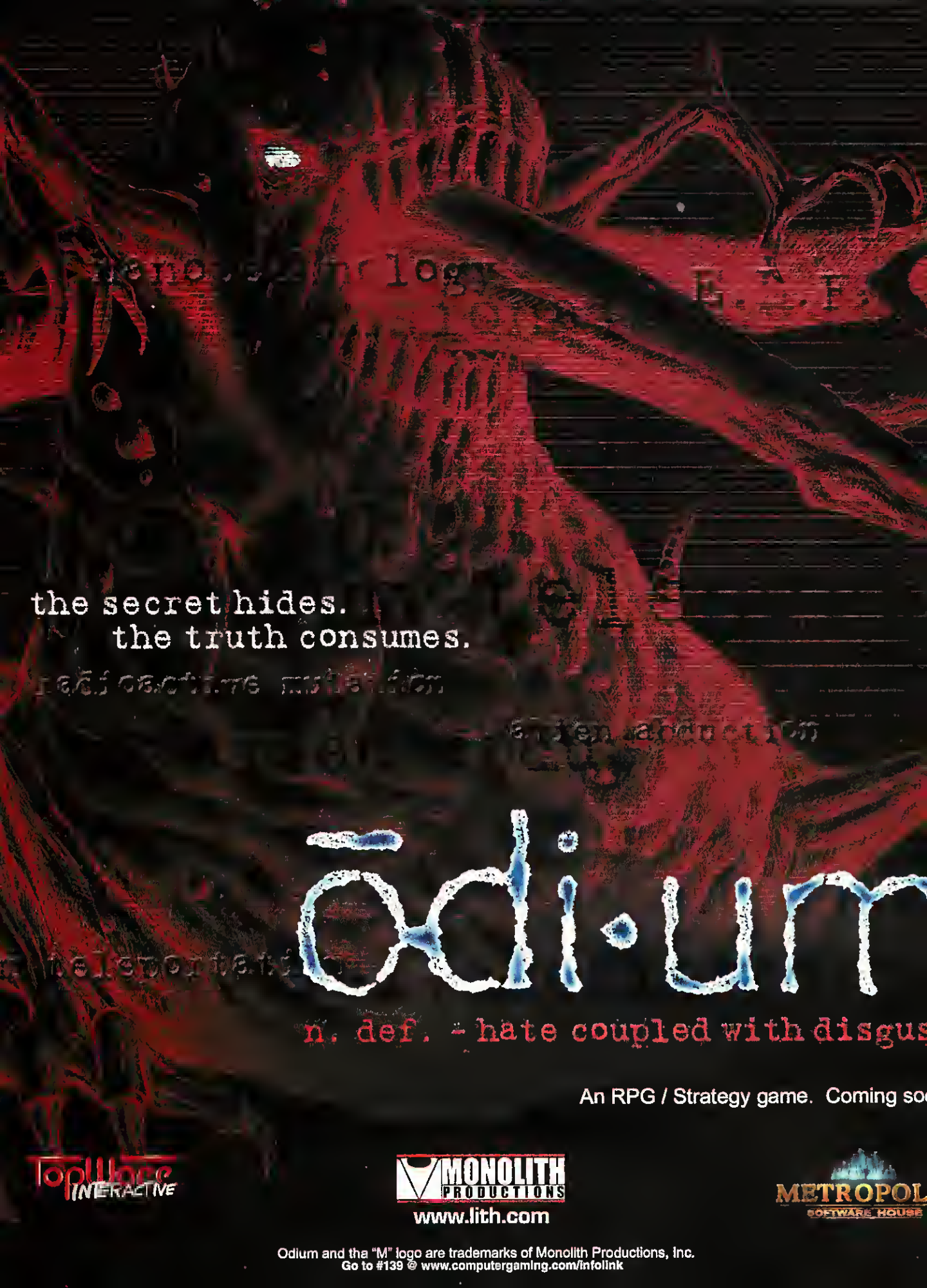
Crazy New Weapons

Magnifying glasses and spray cans complement your traditional arsenal.

3DO™

www.armymen.com

© 1999 The 3DO Company All Rights Reserved Army Men, Real Combat, Plastic Men, 3DO, and their respective logos, are trademarks or registered trademarks of The 3DO Company in the U.S. and other countries. All other trademarks belong to their respective owners. Internet HEAT.net or Mplayer.com requires Internet access. *Player is solely responsible for all applicable internet-related fees and charges.



Odium and the "M" logo are trademarks of Monolith Productions, Inc.
Go to #139 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

REVIEWS

CHECK OUT THIS MEGADOSE OF REVIEWS!

Coasters of the Month

Extreme Paintbrawl

There's no violence, hence no game.

Street Fighter 2

Action game that lacks a punch.

Iron John Hawk

Robert Bly would be embarrassed.

Newman/Haas Racing

This one skids quickly to a halt.

Test Drive Off-Road 2

You can't go off-road—Huh?

This Month CGW Editors' Choice Games Are Indicated in Yellow

Game	Rating	Page
Abe's Exoddus	★★★½★	162
After Dark	★★★★★	217
Baldur's Gate	★★★½★	190
Brunswick Bowling	★★★½★	206
Carmageddon 2	★★★★★	170
Carnivores	★★★½★	174
Extreme Paintbrawl	★★★★★	176
Falcon 4.0	★★★½★	184
Fatal Abyss	★★★½★	177
Fireteam	★★★½★	173
Gangsters	★★½★★	214
Global Domination	★★½★★	183
Glover	★★★★★	177
Godzilla Online	★★★★★	177
HeadRush	★★★½★	217
Iron John Hawk	★★★★★	176
King's Quest: Mask of Eternity	★★★½★	192
Luftwaffe Commander	★★★★★	188
MegaMan 4	★★★★★	174
Moto Racer 2	★★½★★	203
Myth II	★★★½★	*210*
NASCAR Pinball	★★½★★	174
Newman/Haas Racing	★★★★★	205
Powerslide	★★½★★	207
Profitania Deluxe	★★★★★	213
Quest for Glory V	★★½★★	196
Rainbow 6: Eaglewatch	★★½★½	*164*
Return to Krondor	★★½★★	194
Rogue Squadron	★★½★★	168
Settlers III	★★½★★	216
Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri	★★★★½	*208*
StarCraft: Brood War	★★★★½	*212*
StarCraft: Retribution	★★½★★	213
Starsiege Tribes	★★★½★	181
Street Fighter Alpha 2	★★★★★	176
Test Drive 5	★½★★★	204
Test Drive Off-Road	★★★★★	205
Uprising 2: Lead and Destroy	★★½★★	175
You Don't Know Jack: The Ride	★★★½★	217
Zorndorf	★★½★★	213

The Game Genres

Action Games that emphasize fast game play over story or strategy

Adventure Games that require you to solve puzzles to move through a story line

Classics/Puzzle Old standbys such as *Chess* and MONOPOLY. Puzzle games emphasize problem-solving

Role-Playing These stress character development through attributes. The game world tends to be large, the plot less linear

Simulations Highly realistic games from a first-person perspective

Sports/Racing A genre encompassing action sports games, such as NBA LIVE, strategic sports games, such as FPS FOOTBALL, and driving games

Strategy These games emphasize resource and risk-management. Includes conflict-based sci fi and fantasy games as well as construction programs like SIMCITY

Wargames A subset of strategy games, these re-create historical conflicts from a command perspective. They may be tactical, operational, or strategic.

How Do We Rate? We review only finished products—no betas, no patches.

★★★★★ **Outstanding** The rare game that gets it all right. A must-play experience.

★★★★½ **Very Good** Worthy of your time and money, but there are drawbacks.

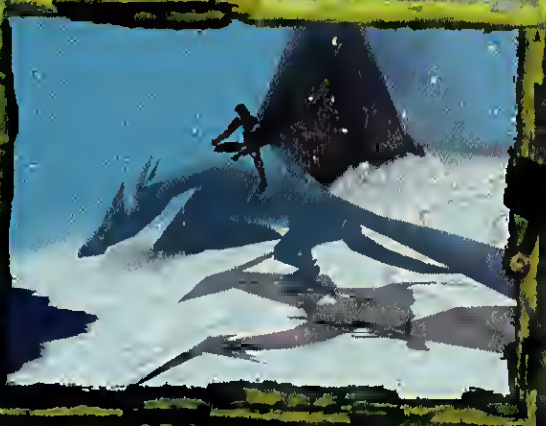
★★★½★ **Average** Either an ambitious design with major flaws, or simply vanilla.

★★½★★ **Weak** Seriously lacking in play value, poorly conceived, or just another clone.

★½★★★ **Abysmal** The rare game that gets it all wrong. Pathetic. Coaster material.

discover the Power and Magic

Revolutionary 3d action engine gives you complete freedom of movement.



Interact with dozens of unique characters who will guide you in your quest.

experience all seven worlds through either a 1st – or 3rd – person point of view.

TEEN
T
AGES 13+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

SIERRA STUDIOS

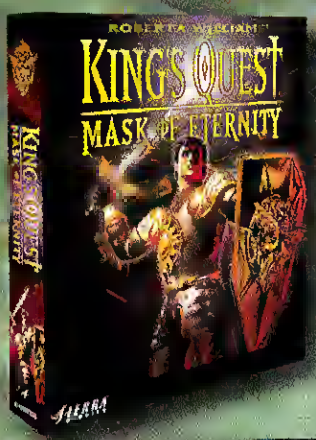
©1999 Sierra On-Line, Inc. All rights reserved. Sierra, Sierra Studios, King's Quest, and Mask of Eternity are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sierra On-Line, Inc.
Go to #86 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

In Stores Now!

Of King's Quest in 3d

KING'S QUEST®

MASK OF ETERNITY™



Master storyteller Roberta Williams brings her best-selling King's Quest series into the next millennium with a revolutionary blend of 3d technology, gameplay and storytelling. You alone have been chosen by fate to make an epic journey through seven amazing lands to recover the shattered pieces of the Mask of Eternity and restore light to a darkening world. Succeed, and honor and glory will be yours. Fail, and the forces of evil will reign supreme...for eternity.

Download The Demo Today.

www.sierrastudios.com

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD
PREMIER
FINALIST
1999
The Sequel
To The Best-Selling
Adventure Series
is here.

CGW Reviews Index *These Are the Games We Have Reviewed in the Past Three Months*

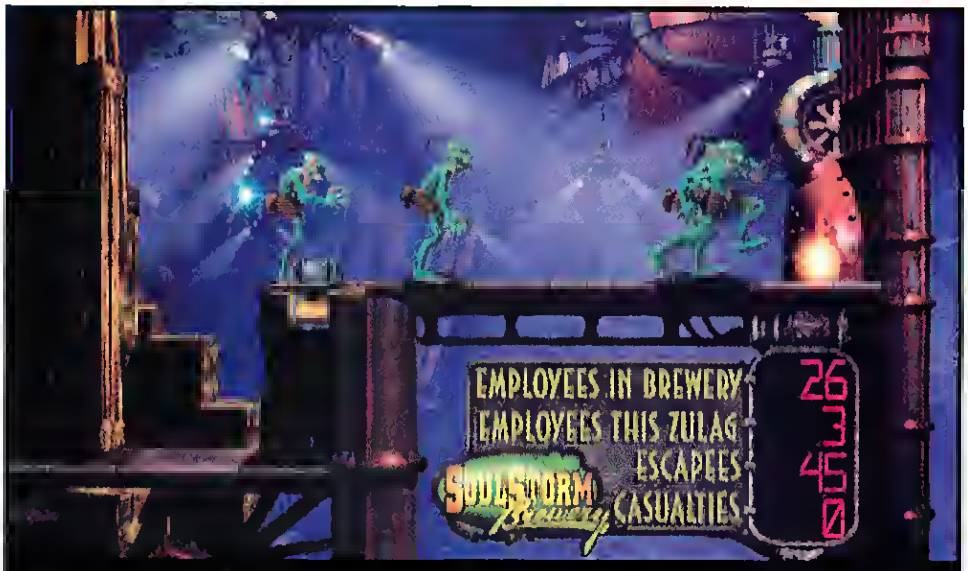
Game/Publisher	Month	CGW Rating
ACTION		
Asteroids Activision	March	2.5
Barrage Activision	March	1.5
Big Race USA Empire Interactive	March	3.5
Blood II GT Interactive	March	2.5
Centipede 3D Hasbro	March	3
Dark Vengeance GT Interactive	March	3
Delta Force Novalogic	February	3.5
Dethkarz Melbourne House	March	3.5
Fighter Pilot Electronic Arts	February	2.5
Fly Hunter Nanotainment	February	1.5
Future Cop: L.A.P.D. Electronic Arts	March	3
Half-Life Sierra	February	4.5
H.E.D.Z. Hasbro	March	1.5
Heretic II Activision	March	3
Klingon Honor Guard MicroProse	January	3
Limb from Limb Interplay	March	2.5
Microsoft Pinball Arcade Microsoft	March	2
Montezuma's Return WizardWorks	March	2
O.D.T. Psygnosis	March	2.5
Plane Crazy SegaSoft	February	2
Quake II: Ground Zero Activision	January	3.5
Return Fire 2 Ripcord Games	January	3
Shogo Monolith Productions	January	3.5
Sin Activision	February	2.5
Space Bunnies Must Die Ripcord	February	1.5
Spec Ops: Ranger Team Bravo Ripcord	March	2
Thief Eidos Interactive	March	4
Tomb Raider III Eidos Interactive	March	3.5
Trespasser: Jurassic Park Electronic Arts	January	1
Vigilance SegaSoft	February	1.5
ADVENTURE		
Blackstone Chronicles Legend/Red Orb	February	3
Fallout II Interplay	February	4
Grim Fandango LucasArts	February	3.5
Hexplore Infogrames Entertainment	January	1
Morpheus Piranha Interactive	January	2.5
Rage of Mages Monolith Productions	January	1.5
Redguard Bethesda Softworks	March	3
Redjack THQ	March	2
CLASSICS/PUZZLES		
Caesar's Palace Slots Interplay	February	1
Clue: Murder at Boddy Mansion Hasbro	February	1.5
Creatures 2 Mindscape	January	2
The Game of Life Hasbro	February	2
Hoyle Board Games Sierra	February	1.5
Jeopardy Hasbro	February	2
Lode Runner 2 GT Interactive	February	2.5
Outburst Hasbro	February	2.5
The Robot Club Southpeak	March	2
Sentinel Returns Psygnosis	February	3
Slingo Hasbro	March	1
Smart Games Challenge 3 Hasbro	March	3
Star Wars Droidworks LucasArts	February	3
Wheel of Fortune Hasbro	March	2
SIMS		
Combat Flight Simulator Microsoft	January	3
Cyberstrike 2 989 Studios/Simutronics	March	2
Descent Free : Silent Threat Interplay	February	2
European Air War MicroProse	February	3
F-16 Multirole Fighter Novalogic	January	2
Hardwar Interplay	February	2.5
MiG-29 Fulcrum Novalogic	January	2.5
Pro Pilot Dynamix	January	2.5
Red Baron 3D Dynamix	February	3
WC: Prophecy Gold EA/Origin	February	3.5
WWII Fighters Jane's Combat Simulations	March	4
SPORTS/DRIVING		
Burnout Bethesda	February	3.5
Deer Hunter II WizardWorks	March	2.5
FIFA 99 EA Sports	March	4
Front Office Football Solecismic Software	January	2.5
Grand Prix Legends Sierra Sports	January	3.5
Links LS 1999 Access Software	March	4.5
Madden '99 EA Sports	January	3
NBA Live 99 EA Sports	February	4
NFL Blitz Midway	March	2.5
NHL 99 EA Sports	February	4.5
NCAA Football 99 EA Sports	January	2.5
Need for Speed III EA Sports	January	4.5
TNN Outdoors Pro Hunter ASC Games	March	1
VR Baseball 2000 Interplay	February	2
STRATEGY/WARGAMES		
Airborne Empire Interactive	February	2
Age of Empires: Rise of Rome Microsoft	January	3.5
Axis & Allies Hasbro Interactive	January	3
Caesar III Sierra	January	4
Dominant Species Red Storm	March	2
Enemy Infestation Ripcord	February	3.5
Entrepeneur: Corp. Exp. Stardock Systems	January	3
KKND 2 GT Affiliates	February	3.5
Knights & Merchants Interactive Magic	January	2
Lords of Magic Special Ed. Sierra	February	3.5
Populous: The Beginning Bullfrog	March	3
Railroad Tycoon II Gathering of Developers	March	4
Ruthless com Red Storm	March	3
War Among the Mohawk Empire Interactive	January	0.5
Warhammer 40,000: Chaos Gate SSI	March	3
West Front TalonSoft	March	3.5

Abe's Crusade

Oddworld Inhabitants Cook Up Another Mudokon Treat

by Elliott Chin

Two years after he burst onto the scene with his reluctant hero act, Mudokon slave-turned-liberator, Abe, has returned in his second adventure: ABE'S EXODDUS. In the first game, ABE'S ODDYSEE, Abe shut down Rupture Farms, a factory run by the evil and profit-hungry Glukkons, which not only used his fellow Mudokons as slaves but also used their body parts to make Glukkon food products. In ABE'S EXODDUS, Abe is called on to shut down yet another evil Glukkon factory. This time, it's Soulstorm Brewery, which is stealing the bones from an ancient Mudokon burial ground to make Soulstorm brew. Abe's mission in EXODDUS is similar to his task in ODDYSEE: Bring down the Glukkon factory and free the Mudokons slaves inside, except this time Abe also needs to keep the bones buried and put the disturbed souls to rest.



26 TO GO Abe's overriding goal is to save as many Mudokons as he can by sending them on their way through magic portals. Counters sprinkled throughout the game indicate your progress.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆

APPEAL: Fans of side-scrolling platformers; ABE'S ODDYSEE fans.

PROS: Good sound; nice backgrounds and cut-scenes; innovative speech puzzles and ability to possess enemies.

CONS: Gameplay sometimes gets a bit repetitive; characters look muddy; save feature has a bug.

DIFFICULTY: Advanced.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, Windows 95/98, 16MB RAM, 32MB hard-drive space, 2MB video card, 4x CD-ROM drive.

3D SUPPORT: None.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: None.

Price: $49.99
Publisher: GT Interactive
New York, NY
(800) 610-4847

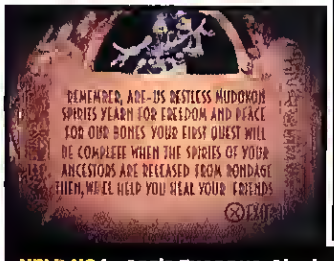
www.oddworld.com

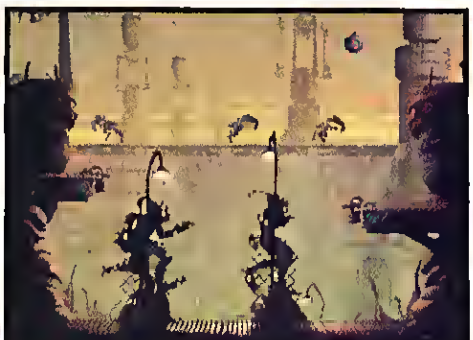
A Refresher Course

Fans who are looking for all-new, technically superior sequel will be disappointed. While EXODDUS is a bigger and improved version of ODDYSEE, the gameplay is essentially the same.

For those new to the series, Abe faces a lot of danger, but never in the most direct way. Although screen after screen is littered with traps, bombs, and hostile creatures, Abe usually dodges, sneaks, and runs his way past these obstacles. Abe just doesn't have the muscle to directly confront his oppressors. Instead, he accomplishes his goals through trickery and evasion, and by possessing his enemies' bodies. The gameplay consists of many twitch puzzles that will demand timing, patience, and reflexes. The first level of the game starts off very slowly, almost tutorial-style, but once you jump to the jungles of Necrum, the difficulty ramps up quickly. The pacing is fairly steady, and the game gets only marginally harder at the later levels. The later levels are characterized by more speech and possession puzzles that will challenge you to think of ways to manipulate the possessed.

In EXODDUS, Abe retains and expands on his ability to talk to and possess various creatures. The speech feature in EXODDUS, GameSpeak, is an improved version of that in ODDYSEE. GameSpeak allows Abe to talk to his fellow Mudokons. Using his voice of persuasion, Abe can convince his friends to drop their current task and follow him to magical escape portals. Some of the game's most





BE VEWY, VEWY QUIET Abe isn't a very strong fellow, so he has to resort to hiding in the shadows in order to sneak past the vigilant Slig guards.

HELP US In ABE'S EXODDUS, Abe has been called on to stop the Glukkons of Soulstorm Brewery from digging up old Mudokon bones and using them to make brew.

challenging puzzles involve figuring out how to maneuver batches of blind Mudokons through an array of dangerous traps and monsters to safety, especially since Abe has no means of directly engaging hostile creatures. One new ability Abe has acquired is the fart. Yes, he can now expel and detonate his flatulence with deadly results.

In addition to speaking to his Mudokon compatriots, Abe can possess nearly all the game's major creatures, from lowly Slig grunts to enemy Glukkon rulers. Once Abe possesses an enemy, he can speak through his puppets to trick other enemy creatures, unlock doors, and activate equipment. This ability is built into numerous puzzles and is definitely not just a gimmick.

Abe again faces off against Slig guards and their Glukkon masters. Other enemies he meets along the way are the doglike Slogs and Sloggies; the ravenous and sluglike Fleeches; the robotic Greeters; vicious Scrabs; and the small but deadly Paramites. In addition to the healthy Mudokons from the previous game, EXODDUS also features depressed, angry, sick, and blind Mudokons. These guys need special treatment, whether it's a kind embrace or a slap in the face, before they can be persuaded to jump through a portal.

Odd Occurrences

The biggest shortcoming in ABE'S ODDYSEE was its limited save feature. The designers, Oddworld Inhabitants, have remedied this in EXODDUS by completely revising the save feature so you can save anywhere in the game. There is also a quick-save function that reloads the game at the last quick-save position after you die. However, I did find a problem with the new save function. Although you can save anytime you want, past a certain point, the load screen will stop displaying your most recent saved games. The game either should have alerted you when you ran out of display space or otherwise simply displayed all saved games properly.

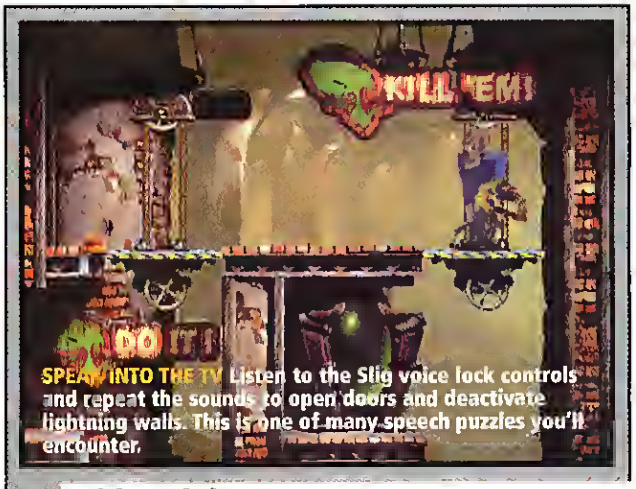
EXODDUS doesn't really suffer from any other problems, except for some extremely difficult levels and the inherent shortcoming of platform games: repetitive gameplay. EXODDUS alleviates this problem to a sizeable degree with the speech and possession puzzles, but many times you'll still have to resort to the "die and reload" technique of gameplay.

Sound in EXODDUS is top-notch, with dynamic music that changes depending on the action. If you get caught sneaking past a guard, the music suddenly picks up. The sound effects are also terrific and the voices for the speaking enemies have real personality.

Abe's graphics are good and bad. The few cut-scenes are gorgeous and the prerendered 2D backgrounds are beautiful and full of style. However, the characters themselves are muddy and sometimes blocky. The characters' graphics just aren't of the same quality as their animations, which are very lifelike and fluid. Considering that it has been more than a year since ABE'S ODDYSEE, Abe and his supporting cast should look better in this game. Unfortunately, the engine appears to be the same one used in ODDYSEE, with little improvement.

In most respects, ABE'S EXODDUS is a good game. However, it's more a continuation of ABE'S ODDYSEE than it is a full-fledged sequel. It has some innovative gameplay and a very stylized look, but nothing that fans of the original won't have already seen. I really enjoyed the personality of the game's various creatures, especially the Glukkons, as well as the game's overall art style. However, many times during the game, I saw EXODDUS for what it really is: a smart platformer, with all the pluses and minuses that genre implies. Those who appreciate twitch puzzles and the repetitive "die-reload" gameplay inherent in platformers will find an enjoyable game. Others lured by the promise of a live world and truly interactive characters had best wait for the next Oddworld adventure. CGW

As previews editor at GameSpot *(**www.gamespot.com**) Elliott Chin knows a lot about working in an Oddworld.*



SPEAK INTO THE TV Listen to the Slig voice lock controls and repeat the sounds to open doors and deactivate lightning walls. This is one of many speech puzzles you'll encounter.

Able Advice

- Sligs follow orders, so when disarming Slig voice locks, just copy the voice of the machine. If it laughs, you laugh. Follow it correctly, and the door, lighting bolt, or other obstacle will be lifted.
- If you're using a Glukkon voice lock though, remember that Glukkons don't "follow" anything. If they say "do it," chances are good, whatever the task or obstacle, it will get done.
- Disarming bombs is tough, so use not only the visual cue of the blinking light, but also the audio cue of the beep the bomb makes. Each beep coincides with the green light, and it's much easier to disarm the bomb by listening for the audio cue and tapping the bomb in tune with the beep, rather than trying to synchronize the blinking and your tap.
- The floating metal orbs prevent Abe from chanting. Chant too often and the orbs will hurl lightning bolts at you that will eventually kill you. However, they can be destroyed with exploding farts and the bombs of flying shgs.
- In many levels, you'll have to be able to go into a roll immediately, so practice running and hitting the roll button (X on the keyboard, or button 2 on the gamepad). Remember that with the run and roll (unlike the normal roll, in which you start from a standing position), once you clear the tunnel or low ceiling you are rolling through, you pop back up into running position.

JUNGLE BOOGIE Abe's newest adventure takes him to several new locales, including the jungles of Necrum and the vaults where the bones of buried Mudokons lie.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD EDITORS' CHOICE

Mission Accomplished

EAGLE WATCH Discovers Gold at RAINBOW's End

by Raphael Liberatore

If nothing else, the EAGLE WATCH expansion pack finally squashes the infestation of bugs in RAINBOW SIX (R6). That alone should make it attractive to R6 fans, but the disc also includes new missions, more weapons, more operatives, more multiplayer features, and an observation mode. Everything about the mission pack has vastly improved the original, AI included, making R6 the standout title it deserves to be.

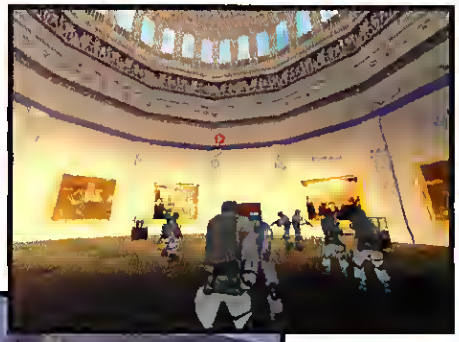
World Tour

EAGLE WATCH adds two more kill houses to an already fantastic array of training environments. Stopping by the tutorial before "zero hour" is a great way to shake off the rust, hone your skills, or test some of the newer weapons and operatives. Playing the large city map, I quickly discovered how rusty I had gotten by my constant clicking on the retry button. These new kill houses pose more of a challenge than previous R6 training exercises.

The mission pack adds three new weapons to an already good arsenal. There's the potent HKG36K (5.56mm), the highly accurate HKG3A3 (7.62mm), and the overbearing Desert Eagle .50 caliber pistol. In assessing the entire R6 arsenal, only the Desert Eagle and HKG3A3 pack the wallop to pierce body armor in one shot—very important in missions where you can't get a clean shot to the head. The HKG3A3 makes a good long range weapon for sniping.

Four new operatives are added to the pool, drawn from U.S. Army Special Forces and Delta Force, French Service 7, British SAS, and the German GSG-9.

Five new missions take place in five real-world locations. The first operation begins with an intense hostage rescue crisis inside a secret Russian space docking station. You and your team will also visit Big Ben and the House of Parliament in London, China's Forbidden City, the Taj Mahal, and the U.S. Capitol building. Nicely rendered, all five locations feel as if you are actually there. Some locations have moving parts (Big Ben) and shattering glass windows. My biggest disappointment, however, came from completing the new single-player missions in two nights. These were some of the best R6 missions to date and I was begging for more.



INSIDE, OUTSIDE Missions taking place in real-world locales like the U.S. Capitol (top) and a Russian space shuttle provide plenty of planning opportunities.

The Latest and Greatest

RAINBOW SIX MISSION PACK: EAGLE WATCH updates your old version of RAINBOW SIX to the latest version, 1.04. Aside from improved stability, the AI has seen the most revision. Now terrorists and commandos perform like real combatants, with tangos shooting first and asking questions later, and operatives killing terrorists before getting killed themselves. This improved AI really adds to the overall gaming experience. Red Storm also added an observer mode for those tacticians more interested in planning than shooting.

The best feature of EAGLE WATCH is the enhanced multiplayer value. Several new games have been added to an already good cast of multiplayer games, and they're easier to set up than before. There's Assassin, where you waste the opponent's general; several Scatter games where your team members begin the game at different insertion points; Save the Base, in which teams try to diffuse bombs; plus many more—all in team play, co-op, and single-play modes.

Don't worry about getting killed too quickly though, you can still watch the game through other player's alter egos. With added weapons, more multiplayer games, and improved stability, EAGLE WATCH is arguably one of the better multiplayer shooters available.

EAGLE WATCH is a must-have for any R6 fan. Moreover, its additions evolve RAINBOW SIX into a real benchmark game. CGW

Raphael Liberatore is a former U.S. Army Special Forces soldier who is currently playing MYTH II nonstop online.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★½

APPEAL: RAINBOW SIX fans; military buffs

PROS: New weapons/operatives; better performance; great maps

CONS: Can't reset mouse speed, only five new missions; clipping problems.

DIFFICULTY: Advanced

REQUIREMENTS: Windows 95/98, Pentium 166, 16MB RAM, 100MB hard-drive space, 4x CD-ROM, 16-bit SVGA video, sound card, 28.8 modem for TCP/IP play

3D SUPPORT: Direct3D, nVidia, RIVA, 3Dfx.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN, Internet (2-32 players, up to 64 in Voyeur Mode).

Price $29.95

Publisher Red Storm Entertainment

Morrisville, NC

(919) 460-1776

www.redstorm.com

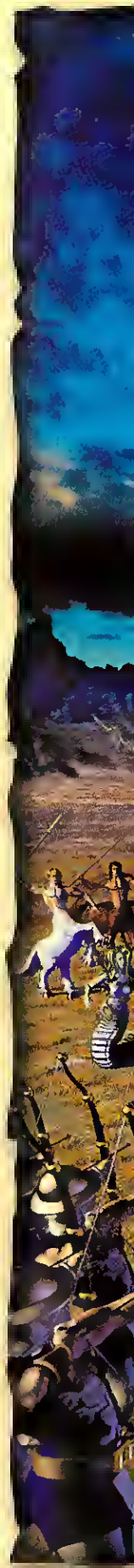
HOMER'S ODYSSEY Each new operative provides good counter-terrorist capabilities, like this former Spec Ops soldier.

CONQUER AN EMPIRE FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME

EPIC BATTLES OF STRATEGY AND HONOR

Returning to her besieged homeland, Katherine, Queen of Enroth, must rally Erathia's armies in a fight for survival. In a savage series of battles for control of Erathia, you command the land's greatest heroes and fiercest creatures in Queen Katherine's struggle to restore her family's reign, and rid the land of enemies.

- Over 20 campaign scenarios told from 3 different perspectives, plus dozens of custom stand alone, and multiplayer maps.
- Enhanced multiplayer capabilities allow you to plan and implement detailed combat and exploration strategies.
- Detailed character development with 16 new Heroes, and hundreds of spells, skills and artifacts.
- More than 100 unique combat units all 3D-rendered in High color detail.



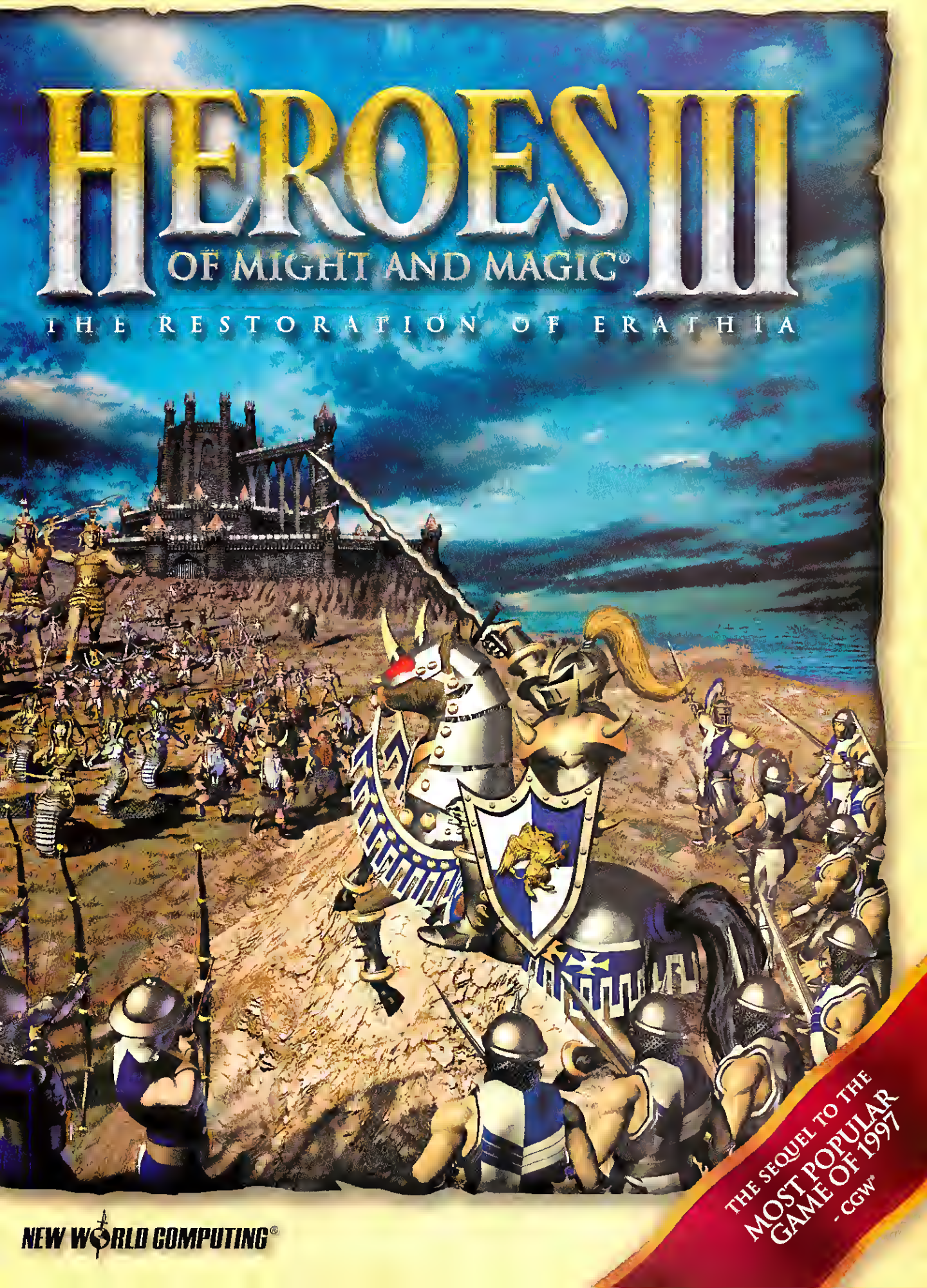
www.heroes3.com

©1998 The 3DO Company. All rights reserved. New World Computing, Heroes of Might and Magic, 3DO, and their respective logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of The 3DO Company in the U.S. and/or other countries. All other trademarks and/or trade names belong to their respective owners. New World Computing is a division of The 3DO Company.

*September Issue of Computer Gaming World, Top 100 Chart

Go to #093 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

3DO™


HEROES III
OF MIGHT AND MAGIC®
THE RESTORATION OF ERATHIA
THE SEQUEL TO THE MOST POPULAR GAME OF 1997 - CGW
NEW WORLD COMPUTING®

Your Roots Are Showing

LucasArts' Arcade Shooter Hampered by N64 Legacy

by Thierry Nguyen

Remember the first time you saw the destruction of the Death Star? LucasArts' ROGUE SQUADRON tries to capture that experience and the sheer thrill of flying an X-Wing and shooting up enemy TIEs. It does a decent job, but it's held back by limitations stemming from its console roots.

HOODED FALCON While it's cool to fly the *Millennium Falcon* (if you did well enough on earlier missions), ships and structures seem to appear out of thin air on a clear day, due to the short fogging distance.

Red-Five Reporting In

Make no mistake, ROGUE SQUADRON is an action-arcade game. Even though you're flying some famous Rebel craft, this is exactly like SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE, not X-WING or TIE FIGHTER. The premise is that you're Luke Skywalker, and the Death Star has just been destroyed. Since it's a few years before the next movie, you form Rogue Squadron (with all the cool pilots in the Rebellion) and go off on various adventures, which take up 16 game levels.

SHADOWS vets will immediately recognize ROGUE SQUADRON's primarily third-person action (there is a first-person view, but it's not very effective). You're slung behind your ship of choice, flying around and constantly firing at enemy fighters. The objective-based missions ask you to do things like escort a rescue ship or destroy specific shield generators. Throughout the game, you'll gain medals, power-ups, and access to new technology and ships. You earn medals based on your performance, and you'll need to earn a gold medal on each mission to unlock secret craft or levels. This adds replay value, as you may need to use a newer ship to redo the old mission and get the commendation.

The game requires a 3D card, and it shows. The textures for the individual ships are the most detailed in any *Star Wars* game, showing off details such as the rivets along your wings, or the light effects from your engines. Environmental details are also very cool: Dust clouds kick up when you skim a planet's surface and your blasters create ripples when fired into water.

I Am...Your Father

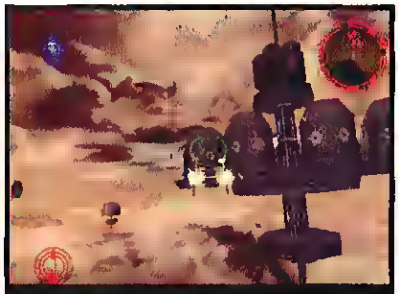
ROGUE SQUADRON is a fun little game, but its problems stem from its N64 heritage. The N64 is less powerful than a good PC, and its fogging distance is short. The PC version of ROGUE SQUADRON seems to have increased the distance, but it's still too short for me. Structures sometimes appear out of thin air. Also, the character sprites are not very detailed.

Contrary to the usual LucasArts standards, the sounds also aren't very inspiring. Instead of the fully juiced laser blasts, we get tinny little bleeps that seem to be another N64 leftover. Even with high-fidelity, voice-overs sound as if they're coming through a phone.

Finally, some gamers may be annoyed with "lives." I don't mind not saving; I expect that in an arcade shooter. But to make the player have to start a level after crashing three times? I got a bit annoyed when I was stuck at one point, and I kept having to replay much of the level when my lives ran out.

All in all, ROGUE SQUADRON is an enjoyable action-arcade game. Just be aware it is very much a child of the N64. CGW

Thierry "Scooter" Nguyen wasn't born when Star Wars *premiered, but that doesn't mean he can't be a fan. While avoiding pointless "*Star Wars *vs.* Star Trek *" debates, he plays* KING'S QUEST: MASK OF ETERNITY *and* HALF-LIFE *(still).*



HEY, YOU, GET OFFA MY CLOUD! ROGUE SQUADRON has a nice variety of environments to fly in, from the Cloud City-style skies of Taloraan to the sandy dunes of Tatooine.

TIE ME UP, TIE ME DOWN All of that AT-AT lashing action from SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE and *The Empire Strikes Back* is alive and well in ROGUE SQUADRON.

MAKING THE KESSEL RUN Not only are the environments well done, but the ships are also much more detailed than in previous games.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★½☆

APPEAL: Fans of SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE, action-arcade gamers who like *Star Wars*.

PROS: Great detail on ship and environment graphics; good incentive for replay; easy to get into.

CONS: Fogging distance too short; low-quality sound; console-saving system.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

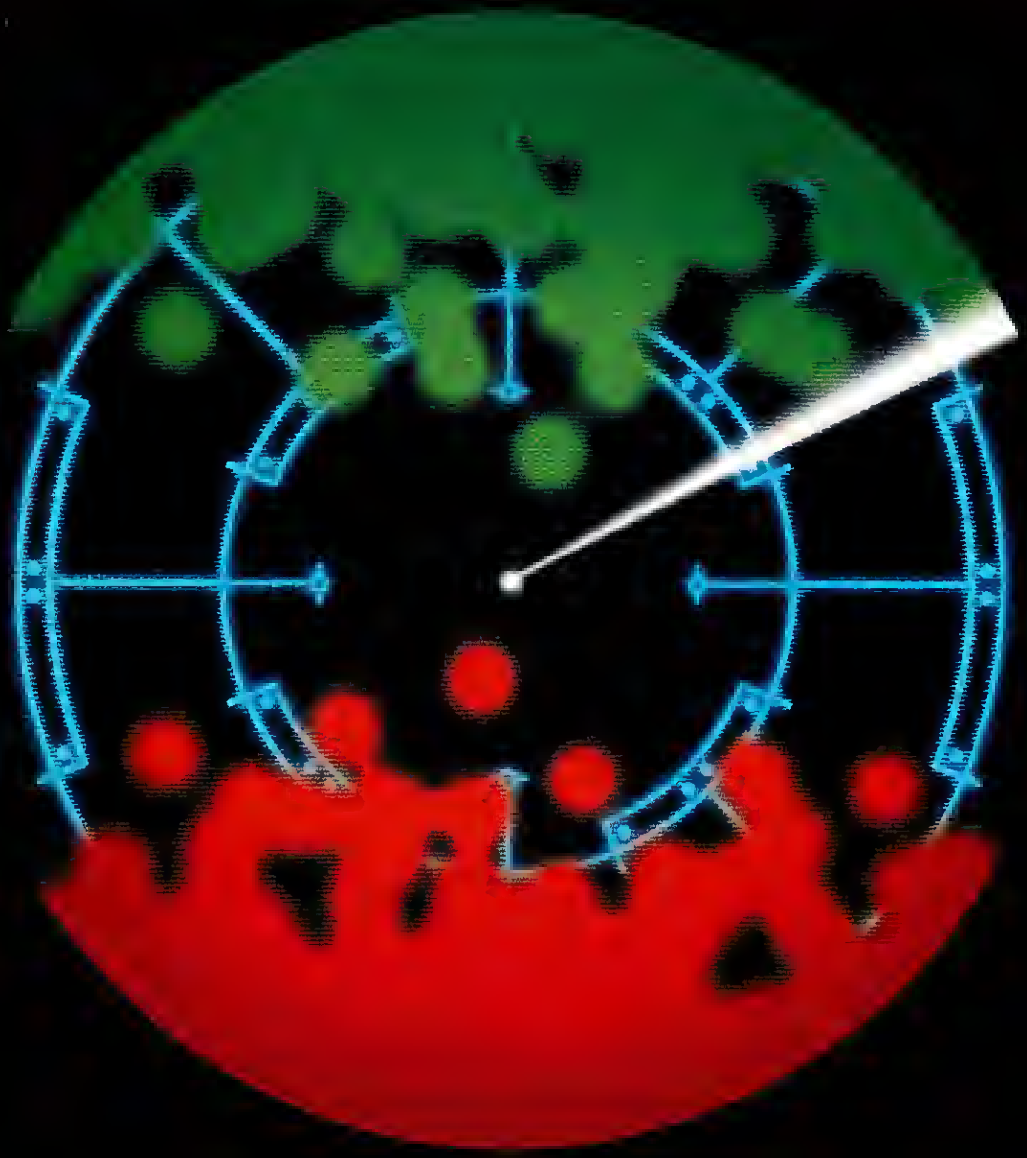
REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, Windows 95, 32MB RAM, 60MB hard-drive space, 4x CD-ROM drive, DirectX6-compatible sound and video cards, 3D-accelerator card.

3D SUPPORT: Direct3D, 3Dfx Glide.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: None.

Price: $49.95
Publisher: LucasArts
San Rafael, CA
(888) 532-4263

www.lucasarts.com



ALIENS VERSUS PREDATOR

LOCK AND LOAD THIS SPRING.

Windows® CD-ROM

www.foxinteractive.com

ALIENS™ & © 1992 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. PREDATOR™ & © 1993 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. ALIENS VS. PREDATOR™ & © 1998 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. All Rights Reserved. "Aliens," "Predator," and "Fox" are registered trademarks of Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

Go to #187 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Maim Street, USA

Fill Your Tank With Fountains of Guts in CARMAGEDDON 2

by Ken Brown

Here's the perfect game with which to unleash your inner sadist. The sequel to the blood-soaked racer with the heavy metal soundtrack offers even more mayhem to the mile. If you don't care for crude, violent, and socially unacceptable games, steer clear. But if you want to switch off reality and become a homicidal maniac for a while, get in.

CARMAGEDDON 2 is entirely in 3D. Not only are the cars convincingly detailed, but now the pedestrians are as well. The 2D sprites of the first game have been replaced with 3D figures of a variety of different targets: people, dogs, sheep, even wildlife. As you'd expect, they can be mutilated in a multitude of ways: dismemberment, pinwheeled through the air, decapitated, or simply turned to mush. If you back over them (not that I would do such a horrible thing), fountains of blood spurt from their broken bodies, accompanied by appropriately disgusting squirting noises.

FIERY FINISH Why race when it's so much more satisfying to smash everything that moves?

To justify this deviant behavior, you earn points for nailing your victims, the more spectacularly the better. Extra points are awarded for pile-driving pedestrians at high speed, hitting two or three at once, and killing with gusto and verve.

You'll need all the points you can get, because you can repair your car anytime, but it's not free. You can also upgrade your vehicle's armor, power, and offensive capability, which you'll find necessary for advancement. The game's linear mission structure requires that you complete a timed mission after each group of races to win. You can win the races by following the course and having the fastest speed or by taking out the other five lunatics racing against you. The default Eagle 3 makes a good battering ram, but those bonus points come in handy for buying more exotic vehicles.

Not all the bonus points require a human sacrifice. The game provides ample power-ups throughout every level. In addition to offering extra points, power-ups can change the look or properties of the pedestrians, or they can affect your car in wildly unpredictable ways. The pedestrians suddenly start dancing or turn into freaks, or your car might start zapping them with bolts of electricity. Other power-ups give you jumping ability or send your car careening over the landscape in "pinball" mode, bouncing off the hills to the accompaniment of pinball sounds.

Rough Running

CARMAGEDDON 2 may be only a one-joke game, but it isn't bad. It's entertaining and it delivers as promised. But there were a few annoying problems, particularly with the controls, that detracted from the game. A gamepad doesn't offer fine enough control, and it was murder on my D-pad thumb. In addition, my car spun out much too frequently—even at slower speeds—from slight steering input.

Another problem I had was with the automatic panning. After you crash or spin out, the viewing perspective changes to focus on the car, not forward view. It takes a few seconds for the view to then change back toward the front. I got used to it after a while, but the delay is an awkward annoyance.

Finally, the game's linear mission structure means it's easy for someone to get stuck during one of the game's timed missions. The game isn't all that hard, but when someone gets stuck it lessens the chance they'll continue to play. There are better games to spend time solving.

All in all, CARMAGEDDON 2 has the horsepower and the looks to deliver a nice joyride. But control issues and repetitiveness mean that your ride will likely be a short one. CGW

Ken Brown is the executive editor of CGW. He is incapable of playing any driving game without trying to run over pedestrians.

Hit & Run

In the game of CARMAGEDDON 2, there are drivers and there are victims.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★☆☆

APPEAL: Psychopaths, action racing fans, FPS killers looking for a different fix

PROS: Smashing good fun; Iron Maiden soundtrack, good graphics, unabashed gore

CONS: Annoying registration screens, screwy control, slow automatic panning, repetitive sound effects and gameplay

DIFFICULTY: Easy

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 200, Windows 95/98, 16MB RAM, 200MB hard-drive space, 4x CD-ROM drive, DirectX6-compatible sound card

3D SUPPORT: 3Dfx Voodoo²

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: IPX LAN only (2–8 players), 1 CD per player.

Price $49.95
Publisher: Interplay
Irvine, CA
(800) INTERPLAY

www.interplay.com

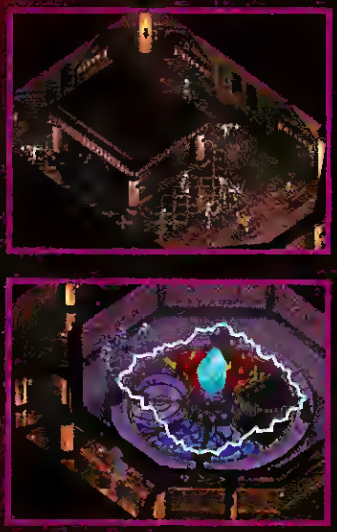
The most anticipated RPG of the year.

In the FORGOTTEN REALMS ®, we've lived through foul pestilence, vicious battles, exorbitant taxes, and even the occasional dragon. But when HE showed up, things really started getting ugly.

Prepare to be immersed into a world of intrigue and mystery on a perilous quest to rescue a storied land from impending war. Even your own soul is at stake as you and a party of adventurers become entangled in a dangerous riddle of betrayed alliances, dark prophecies and murder.

Will you become the unlikely hero of the story, or merely another of its unfortunate casualties? Before you answer, the big guy here might have something to say about it.

- Explore an immense, intricate game world - from cloud-covered mountains & rain drenched plains to dark catacombs & abandoned temples - all meticulously rendered in lush, 16-bit SVGA graphics.
- Invoke more than 100 spells - Freeze enemies with an icy blast from a Cone of Cold, or incinerate them with a searing stream of magical flame.
- Push your leadership skills to the limit as you guide a party of up to six characters, each with a personality that affects gameplay.
- Don't let your stubborn fighter pummel the arrogant thief - you may need their teamwork in your next battle.
- Create your character from six AD&D® races and 26 different classes and subclasses. You control every attribute, down to skin and hair color, weapons, and armor - all accurately depicted on-screen.



FORGOTTEN REALMS

Baldur's Gate

Tales of the Sword Coast

COMING SOON

Black Isle Studios

Official Licensed Product

BioWare Corp

Interplay

BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™

www.interplay.com

Windows 95/98 Compatible

Teen

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

©1998 BioWare Corp. All rights reserved. BALDUR'S GATE, FORGOTTEN REALMS, the FORGOTTEN REALMS logo, ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, AD&D, the AD&D logo and the TSR logo are trademarks of TSR, Inc., a subsidiary of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., and are used by Interplay under license. Interplay, the Interplay logo, "By Gamers. For Gamers.", Black Isle Studios and the Black Isle Studios logo are trademarks of Interplay Productions. All rights reserved. The BioWare logo is the trademark of BioWare Corp. All rights reserved. Exclusively licensed and distributed by Interplay Productions. All other copyrights and trademarks are the property of their respective owners

Go to #163 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Burnt out on the standard RPG?

Fire up this innovative fusion of action, strategy, and role-playing!

NIVAL entertainment

www.lith.com

Coming Soon

MONOLITH PRODUCTIONS

Go to #144 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Rage of Meges 2: Necromancer and the "M" logo are tredemarks of Monolith Productions, Inc.

Company Man

FIRETEAM's Voice Technology Brings Team Play to the Online World

by Lance A. Larka

All the multiplayer cooperative games I've played have had one failing—a lack of communication. I've always found that getting your brilliant strategy across (or even a call for help) to your friends was a hassle and took too long—until I played FIRETEAM.

FIRETEAM is an online-only game that can be played with 2–12 players comprising up to three teams that compete in four different types of games. Visually, gameplay is a combination of CRUSADER and DIABLO with a hint of *The Running Man* thrown in for atmosphere. "So what?" you say. "What makes *this* action game so great?"

You Said It!

One word: speech. Not some synthesized robo-voice, but honest-to-God real human speech. The game comes with a custom-built, hands-free, stereo headset/microphone that plugs directly into your sound card and allows you to talk to, and hear back from, your teammates during the game. No more fumbling with text boxes, no more dying under enfilade fire while trying to type your plight to your teammates, no struggling to cancel a half-typed message after being surprised by a foe. No more excuses for failing to use teamwork either. The radio headset may be an unabashed gimmick, but it actually aids and improves gameplay.

You play as one of three different types of soldiers. The lightly armored Scout is fast, bristles with sensors, and carries a machine pistol that fairly chews enemies apart at point-blank range. The Commando carries decent body armor, a standard sensor suite, and a sniper rifle that does extra damage when you take the time to aim properly. The Heavy Gunner is slow, massively armored, almost blind, but carries an area-effect blast cannon that reaches out and touches everyone in front of it, friend and foe alike.

There are four 10-minute mission styles to play, each with its own appeal and following. Deathmatch mode is pretty similar to what you're used to, but it has an interesting twist during the last few minutes of the match—you get a limited number of lives based on how many kills you achieved in the first phase. Gunball is a football/soccer combo; Flags is a capture the flag game where kills don't get you any points; and Basetag is an exercise in the control of territory where your must protect your base while tagging the other team's base. The game features a great number of maps that include twisting warrens, gleaming galleries, and clear corridors. No matter what your tastes, you'll find a map to your liking.

Game setup is painless using FIRETEAM's lobby system. Through a series of simple windows you choose your game type, map, and number of teams and players. I was impressed by the online support. There was always at least one technical-support player per lobby on-hand to answer questions and give hints to new players.

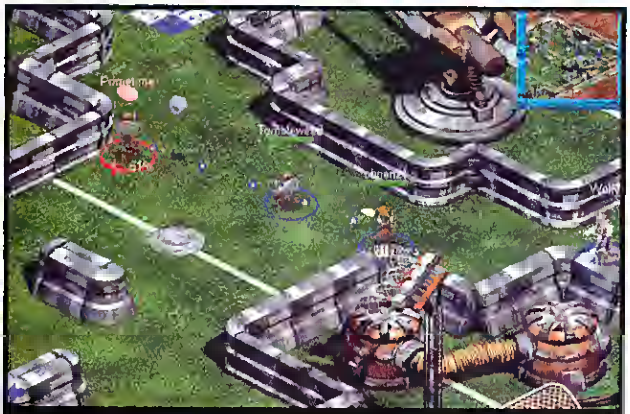
Welcome to the Club

FIRETEAM has generated an extensive online community, complete with individualized gamer-formed companies, each with a name, icon, and group statistics. Company Web pages are provided free by Multitude, and stats (both team and individual) are immediately updated and easily accessible.

Like any online game, a lot of enjoyment hinges on the people you play with. My chief complaint about FIRETEAM is the lack of available movement options. You can only jog, turn, kneel, and sidestep. I was aching to do a forward dive into the endzone or execute a quick roll from behind cover more times than I can count. But this isn't going to keep me from playing.

FIRETEAM isn't the greatest or most exciting thing I've put on my hard drive of late, but it's undeniably a good time. CGW

Tumbleweed (a.k.a. Lance A. Larka) is trying to keep up with his Company's stats, and do the Undead proud.



FULL CONTACT SPORT With a trio of gun-blasting blue team members on his tail, odds are this red guy is about to fumble in Gunball.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆

APPEAL: Team players who want to play in a good, stable online environment.

PROS: Real-time voice communication; interesting games; a wealth of maps; great online support.

CONS: Not enough movement options, nothing new in game types.

DIFFICULTY: Easy

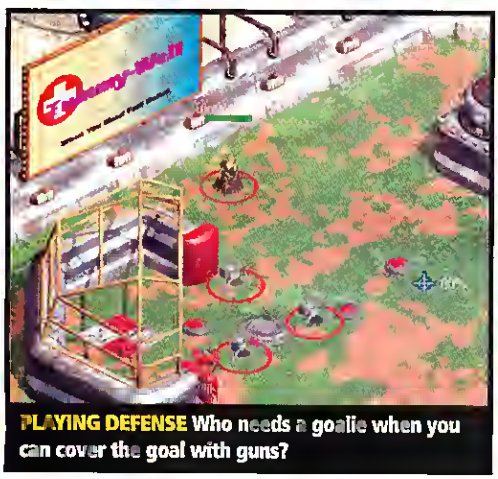
REQUIREMENTS: Windows 95/98, Pentium 166, 32MB RAM, 254MB hard-drive space, 28.8 modem, Internet connection

3D SUPPORT: None

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Internet only (2-12 players).

Price: $59.95
Publisher: Multitude
Burlingame, CA
(888) 689-TEAM

www.fireteam.com



PLAYING DEFENSE Who needs a goalie when you can cover the goal with guns?

Shooting Gallery

Fire Away at Dinos, Targets, and Pixelated Bosses in These Action Titles.

Carnivores

★★★★½

Publisher: Wizard Works
Price: $19.99
www.wizworks.com

Even if you don't "get" hunting games, you'll get CARNIVORES. City boys like me don't see the appeal in taking out squirrels with shotguns or doe-eyed mammals with high-powered rifles. But who wouldn't get a thrill out of stalking velociraptors with a crossbow or trying to tranquilize a rampaging T-Rex?

CARNIVORES is not only a hunting game for nonhunters, but it's also a pretty convincing menagerie of everybody's favorite terrible lizards. The meat-eaters are fast, brutal, and aggressive, while the veggie-eating dinosaurs are cautious and timid. Furthermore, they live in beautiful and convincing environments. The prevailing wind blows clouds across the sun and dapples the landscape in light and shadow. Animals rustle through the leaves and Pterodactyls wheel overhead in slow lazy circles.

The actual gameplay can get a bit tedious if you're not into hunting sims. Although CARNIVORES is not equipment intensive, there are a few toys to make the game easier. This is clearly a game about stalking rather than action; patience is the order of the day. But it ramps up nicely as you bag trophies to unlock new maps and prey. And certainly gamers will appreciate the irony that this modest member of GT's line of budget games is ultimately far better than a certain other big-budget dinosaur game which need not be named (let's just say it rhymes with "mess-passer").—*Tom Chick*

3D Ultra NASCAR Pinball

★★★

Publisher: Sierra On-Line
Price: $29.95
www.nascarpinball.com

It's not conventional pinball and it certainly isn't stock-car racing. Nevertheless, steeped with enough stock-car images and animations to almost convince you that you're controlling a race with your flippers, 3D ULTRA NASCAR PINBALL corners the market on cute and should make light but enjoyable fare for pinball-loving racers with very little time on their hands—a niche market to be sure.

Starting on "The Garage" table, set amidst mechanic's tools and all the trappings of a NASCAR setup facility, you attempt to hit targets that improve your car's performance for the upcoming race. You'll then graduate to the logo-filled "Speedway," in which ramps are named after the four turns on a standard NASCAR oval and a pseudo-race does indeed take place around the table's perimeter as you play. Hit in one or two visits to "The Pit," where nailing lighted targets will equip you with a new set of tires faster than you can say "Jeff Gordon is a candy-ass northerner," and you're done.

Along the way, crew chiefs advise ("Head to the pit,"), announcers commentate ("There's a big wreck on the infield,"), and items such as flags, tires, and oil drums sporadically flit about the table waiting to be crushed. There's not a lot of depth here to be sure and the game was never intended as a convincing representation of an analog ball and table, but as a short-term novelty, it's reasonable entertainment.—*Gordon Goble*

Megaman X4

★★

Publisher: Capcom
Price: $34.95
www.capcom.com

The newest installment of the legendary console series, MEGAMAN X4 follows the same basic formula as the older MEGAMAN titles with a few exceptions. It's still your standard platformer, but the MEGAMAN formula is spiced up a bit with some vehicles and some indispensable rocket boots. The most significant change is the ability play as either the little blue dude himself, or his robot pal Zero.

We still have the nonlinear, selectable stages, each with its own unique boss and weapon to acquire (Zero acquires new moves).

As the game goes on, this adds a bit more complexity, although you still end up simply tapping the fire button as fast you can for a good 30 minutes to beat the big bosses.

MEGAMAN is huge in Japan, so there's plenty of weird Japanese flavor. Bosses with names like Split Mushroom, Magma Dragoon, and Frost Walrus (I swear I saw them open for Soundgarden once); weird anime cut-scenes; and badly translated text might turn some people off, but they provide the goofy atmosphere needed to appreciate this game.

The extremely dated graphics are quaint, but what's the point of releasing a game now with graphics circa 1989?

The appeal of this game is really limited to hard-core platformer freaks and MEGAMAN fans and most of them probably bought the console version when it came out over a year ago. Core computer gamers aren't going to find this game worth their time.—*Tom Price*

Mech Mine DNA

This Cult Favorite Follow-up Is a Feast for the Senses

by Scott A. May

The history of 3DO is that of a company buoyed by innovation but nearly sunk by misfires and marketing blunders. Though the tendency is to focus on mistakes, 3DO has had its moments of brilliance, such as 1997's UPRISING, one of the first games to combine real-time strategy with intense first-person action. Though the title generated plenty of critical hyperbole, it was ignored by much of the gaming public. Hey, it happens all the time.

But take heart, faithful followers, because redemption is at hand, in the guise of UPRISING 2: LEAD AND DESTROY, an excellent follow-up to the original UPRISING. Produced by 3DO's in-house development team, Cyclone Studios, UPRISING 2 features a greatly enhanced graphics engine, more balanced gameplay,

MAKE 'EM GLOW A New Alliance bomber unleashes an attack on a Trich stronghold. Notice the stunning sky effects.

challenging enemy AI, and a built-in level editor. If you missed the original, here's your second chance for glory; if you loved it the first time, the sequel will blow you away.

Trich or Treat

In UPRISING, players fought their misguided brethren in a revolt against Imperium oppression and eventually earned their freedom. In UPRISING 2, you must gather your New Alliance forces to ward off an attacking race of aliens known as the Trich. These ravenous lizard-like creatures are driven by only two goals: conquer all opposing species and harvest their DNA. As if that's not enough, you must also contend with Comeerans, a splinter group still loyal to the Imperium, as well as the Androkulans, a slave race employed by the Trichs. Okay, so it's not the most unique premise in the gaming kingdom, but it's superbly fleshed out, thanks to Cyclone's improved story structure and engrossing campaign development.

A KINDER GENTLER WAR Battles in UPRISING 2 are fast, fierce, and unrelenting, but they're easier to survive than in the first game.

Rookies would be wise to first enter the multipart training missions, designed to familiarize them with movement and combat controls, unit deployment and commands, battlefield power-ups, and friendly and enemy units. Returning players can jump right into the tightly structured campaign games, or test their mettle in one of dozens of individual scenarios, each rated by difficulty. Unlike in the original, campaigns here unfold in linear fashion, accompanied by an above-average branching storyline and hidden missions. The game also features a broad range of competitive or cooperative multiplayer options, including low-lag Internet play on MPlayer and HEAT.net.

Gameplay involves commanding a variety of land and air forces to drive the Trich from your home turf and far beyond—all the way back to the devils' homeland, if you make it that far. You do your commanding from a Wraith hovertank, researching power-ups, weapons, and vehicle upgrades as you progress. Like any level-based game, the going gets extremely tough in the later stages, though this game is nowhere near as difficult as the original. Partial credit goes to UPRISING 2's straightforward controls, revamped HUD, and recon satellite interface. This zoomable overhead map is invaluable for plotting strategic moves and troop deployment, as well as for unit identification.

GUN FIGHTER In this scenario, your Wraith hovertank prepares to engage a massive Trich laser turret. You'll need to act fast or be vaporized.

Looks That Kill

Cyclone spared nothing in the graphic redesign of UPRISING 2. The cinematic cut-scenes are amazing, as are the photorealistic sky effects. Weapon effects are killer, such as the new Energy Disruptor and Death Shroud. Much time was also spent remodeling the game's abundance of high-tech gear, including the Trich's dark, menacing appearance and lethal arsenal.

Taken only as a first-person shooter or an RTS contest, UPRISING 2 is merely good. But the sum of these parts comes together so well, what emerges is significantly better, if not much different than the first game. Cyclone has found struck a good balance between depth and ease of play, resulting in an addicting sci-fi experience. CGW

Scott A. May currently finds himself puzzling over JOHN SAUL'S BLACKSTONE CHRONICLES.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★½☆

APPEAL: Veteran and wannabe mech warriors.

PROS: Adjustable difficulty; scenario editor; high-res 3D graphics.

CONS: Visuals are often too dark; unit IDs a problem in battle; too much online documentation.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, Win 95/98, 32MB RAM, 46MB hard-drive space; 2MB DirectX-compatible video card, DirectX-compatible sound cards.

3D SUPPORT: DirectX5 or greater, 3Dfx (supports Voodoo² SLI).

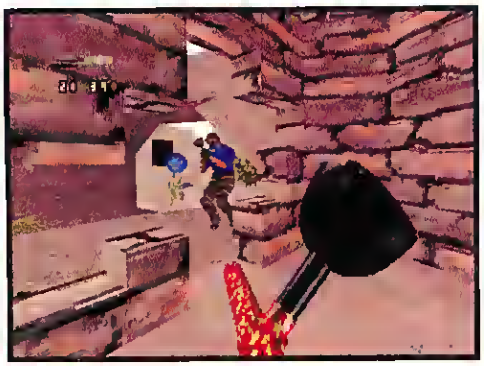
MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN or Internet (2–8 players), modem or serial link (2 players).

Price: $49.95
Publisher: The 3DO Company
Redwood City, CA 94063
(800) 336-3506

www.3do.com

Use at Your Own Risk

Scraping the Bottom of the Barrel in Action Gaming



Extreme Paintbrawl

★☆☆☆☆

Publisher: Head Games
Price: $29.99
www.headgames.com

EXTREME PAINTBRAWL is a shooter with buggy performance, bad AI, DOS networking, and lame action. Touted as the 1st non-violent 3D shooter, actually playing this game will drive even the meekest of pacifists into extreme acts of violence.

EXTREME PAINTBRAWL allows you to recruit, equip, and supply your own team for combat on five unique battlefields. First, you'll head over to the supply shack in order to equip your eight players with real world paintball markers, from Sheridan pump pistols to the coveted VM-68 Sniper Rifle. Unfortunately, supplying your team is a tedious chore and the clumsy interface and monetary hoopla begs you to dump your teammates for the game's default team.

Playing the game is where the frustration really begins. Not only do your eight AI team players run into corners and crawl in circles like spastic worms, but they'll shoot at anything *except* the enemy. When trying to shoot unsuspecting opponents, your shots do nothing more than alert ridiculously accurate opponents to your position.

EXTREME PAINTBRAWL's 2.5D graphics are just bad. Floating paint splats and clipping problems aside, the graphics look more like Intellivision than anything else. One nice touch—you actually die when a door accidentally crushes your player. Interesting paradox for a non-violent shooter.

Did EXTREME PAINTBRAWL's multiplayer *raison d'etre* fair better? Nope. After spending several hours dealing with game-crashing bugs, a clumsy DOS interface, patches (supposed to fix MP bugs), and no FAQs at the Head Games' Web site, I gave up on networking EP.

EXTREME PAINTBRAWL has it all—bugs, crashes, cheesy graphics, worthless AI, and a poorly designed interface. If paintball's your bag, then play the real thing and forget about buying this dud. —*Raphael Liberatore*

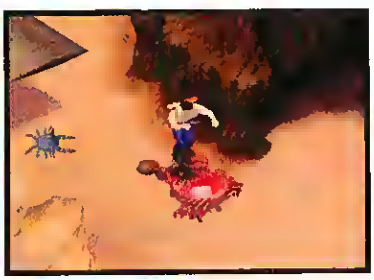
Iron John Hawk

★☆☆☆☆

Publisher: JVC Digital Studios
Price: $19.95
www.jvc.com

ESSENTIALLY an action game with puzzle elements, IRON JOHN is just plain underwhelming.

It starts out with a reasonably good premise. Papa John Hawk, a famous explorer, disappears while searching for the legendary Shards of Power in the South Pacific, in 1944. His son, Iron John, sets out to rescue him and find the Shards of Power before the Nazis. Iron John's plane crashes and it's up to him to make his way across the island, find his father (and the Shards), and stop the Nazis at the same time.



That's where the good stuff ends in IRON JOHN. You'll have to run around getting objects to use in various places while also trying to blow away an endless array of lame creatures. The crabs on the first level stand out as one of the more insipid foes.

Iron John moves like a rock with legs, his movements utterly stiff and clunky. The control scheme is exceptionally annoying since you can only use the keyboard and mouse, and you can't reconfigure. A gamepad would have been a godsend for this game.

The graphics are reasonably good, considering that the game is played from an overhead perspective. It's got the flavor of a 1930's serial adventure and the island at least serves as an interesting locale. The sound is okay, with suitable effects for various actions and situations. There's nothing distinguished in either case, however, and that's the problem with game as a whole. There's just nothing there to hold your attention.

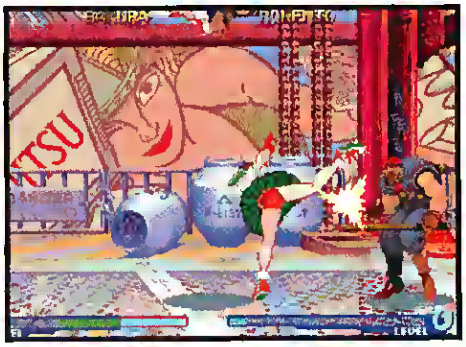
Unless you're trapped in an airport with just your PC and a copy of IRON JOHN, you'll want to avoid this turkey. —*Jim Lynch*

Street Fighter Alpha 2

★☆☆☆☆

Publisher: Capcom
Price: $39.99
www.capcom.com

IF you are a fan of the STREET FIGHTER experience, here's something that should save you some quarters. STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2 is such a faithful port of the arcade game, I almost ran into the kitchen to buy some tokens.



No fancy polygons here, just really pixelated 2D sprites and scrolling backgrounds. Weirdly enough, the game is marginally fun, despite the horribly dated graphics and tired concept. There are a couple dozen characters including the ubiquitous Japanese schoolgirl, whose skirt flies up with every panty-revealing kick, and the stereotypical brawling American tough guy. Control is good with three kinds of kicks and three kinds of punches. Combine these with various directional key rolls and all kinds of combos are possible.

This game might have some appeal as a way to explore an aspect of gaming from days gone by, but it's poorly implemented—it actually tried to install DirectX3 on my machine.

Nostalgia aside, there are much better fighting games. This game is really not worth your money unless you are a die-hard STREET FIGHTER Fan. —*Kenneth Johnson*

Subs, Sorcerers, and Scientists

Three Action Games With Nothing in Common but This Page Number

Fatal Abyss

★★★½☆

Publisher: Segasoft
Price: $29.99
www.fatalabyss.com

Microsoft's leaky and pre-scripted 1996 clunker DEADLY TIDE may have anchored underwater combat gaming firmly to the ocean floor just as it was getting ship-shape, but titles like Humansoft/Sega's FATAL ABYSS may just float this genre right back up to the surface again.

The surprisingly competent ABYSS drops you into the middle of a futuristic struggle over a newly discovered energy source found only on the ocean floor. It's your job, as a member of either the good guy Eco Systems or not-so-good-guy Proteus Tech, to fight for your extraction rights as you navigate through what is a very convincing liquid environment.

The game offers numerous mission-based scenarios, each with very specific and nicely varied objectives that tax both you and your custom-armed craft to the max. Though Humansoft's dark version of the ocean floor is really quite bland and playable sectors are limited in size, all around you are enemy and friendly ships and installations that just go nuts at the slightest sign of trouble.

Explosions are plentiful and impressive with lots of blow-apart targets, eye-popping lighting effects and associated bubbles. Yet ABYSS isn't just a blastfest. Though the game's multiple controls make for a reflex workout and a brain drain once the action heats up, a stealthy, bottom-hugging tact with engines, sonar, and headlights off is often the best approach. And that does keep things interesting.

The game manual is wanting for more information and controls are a pain to custom configure yet FATAL ABYSS is solid entertainment for the aqua-warriors among us. —*Gordon Goble*

Glover

★★☆☆☆

Publisher: Hasbro Interactive
Price: $39.95
www.hasbro.com

GLOVER has a simple story. A wizard accidentally blows up his castle, the explosion sending his magic gloves into the air. One lands safely on the ground, the other in a vat of "evil potion" (guess where your evil nemesis comes from). The explosion also knocks loose the castle's crystals. The good glove casts a spell that turns them into rubber balls, thus saving them from being destroyed. Unfortunately the balls are scattered in different places. As the good glove, it's your job to find and return them to the Wizard without getting nailed by the evil glove and his minions.

Graphically the game is pretty, with lots of primary colors and in some places the scenery reminded me of the old *Road Runner* cartoons. GLOVER has a look and feel that will probably be a hit with younger gamers.

Gameplay centers on your ability to handle the magic balls. Maneuvering them can be very tricky at times but gets easier the more you play. Once you get used to him, Glover generally handles fairly well...considering that he's a glove. In-game help is available from a profoundly annoying floating hat called Mr. Tip.

The game is worth checking out if you're really into platform games and you want something a bit different. It doesn't take itself seriously and provides an enjoyable platform romp. If you're only a casual platform gamer then you'd best stay away.—*Jim Lynch*

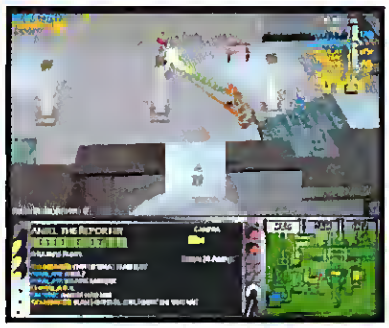
Godzilla Online

★★☆☆☆

Publisher: Gamestorm
Price: $9.95 monthly Gamestorm membership
www.gamestorm.com

Fans of the latest Godzilla movie take note: Gamestorm's GODZILLA ONLINE lets you revisit such locations as the Fulton Street Fish Market and Madison Square Garden as a gun-toting soldier, camera-carrying reporter, pepper gas-wielding scientist, or little baby Godzilla.

Each player type has a different set of capabilities: scientists stun and incapacitate, soldiers favor guns and lethal explosives, 'zillas bite and sport deadly, fishy breath; reporters can't attack at all, but can reconnoiter while avoiding damage, allowing others to monitor their camera feed. You'll find the usual ammo and health power-ups scattered



about the levels. One unique power-up, "grow fish," allows the baby 'zillas to grow in both size and strength, although never to the gargantuan proportions of their mommy. When you die as a baby 'zilla, you revert to the smallest size.

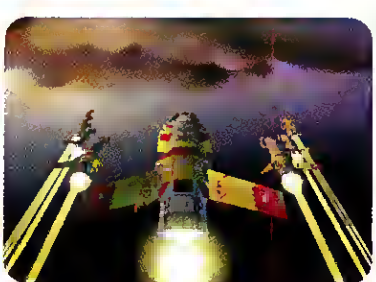
Game types vary from your basic free-for-all and team deathmatch to Capture the Flag—I mean, the Egg—and Escape from New York, in which humans cooperate to kill the Godzillas before they grow large enough to escape from the city.

The gameplay; the sound; and the software-only, third-person graphics are pretty basic and you can't even alter your view. Somehow it all comes off as a massively multiplayer, third-rate DIABLO.

And you don't even get to trash the Brooklyn Bridge.
—*Mark Clarkson*

HOMEWORLD®

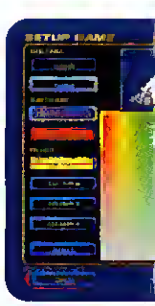
Game of the Show E3 1998 -CGW / Winner of UGO's Best Real-Time S



Choose unit types, fleet formations and flight tactics to create the best combat group for each tactical situation.

An advanced research tree lets you construct 54 ships between two distinct races, from lightly armored fighter class interceptors to gigantic carriers that can build and transport up to 250 ships into battle.

Detailed weapon systems - including mass drivers, guided missiles, ion cannons and mines - operate automatically to track multiple or single targets.



Custom
from f
and
missior
even t
for

Find detailed gameplay and ship specifications at www.sierrastudios.com

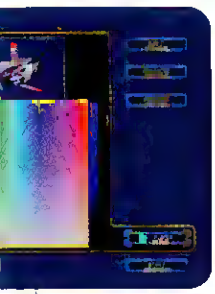
©1999 Sierra On-Line Inc., All rights reserved. Sierra, Sierra Studios and the Sierra logo are trademarks and Homeworld is a registered trademark of Sierra On-Line Inc. Relic Entertainment is a trademark of

Go to #053 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

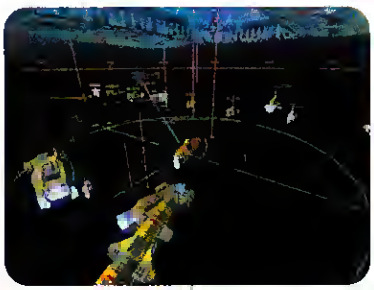
LOCATION: The Great Wasteland.

DESTINATION: Galactic Core.

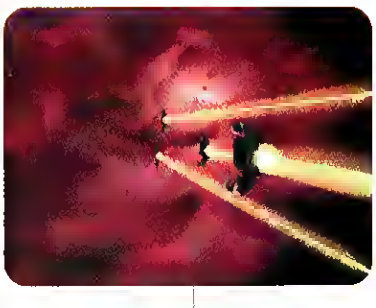
trategy Game of E3



ze your game - uel consumption leet size to objectives and he color scheme your Armada.



Command the smallest scout ship or your entire armada in an unrestricted 3D world for pinpoint control.



Explore super detailed galactic regions, from asteroid fields to nebulae to dust clouds.

Lead your Armada through 18 single-player missions, or play against seven opponents over the Internet or LAN in multiplayer scenarios. A robust mission editor lets you create your own maps for online campaigns.

Relic Entertainment Inc

SIERRA STUDIOS

relic ENTERTAINMENT

RP

YOUR PEOPLE have been trapped on a hostile world for 1,300 years.

YOUR PAST is a single ancient ruin and a blackened stone that points the way to the center of the galaxy.

YOUR PRESENT is a quest for answers and a five mile long starship that took 60 years to build.

THE FUTURE. . . is in jeopardy.

Go Team!

Dynamix Delivers the Multiplayer Goods

by Jim Lynch

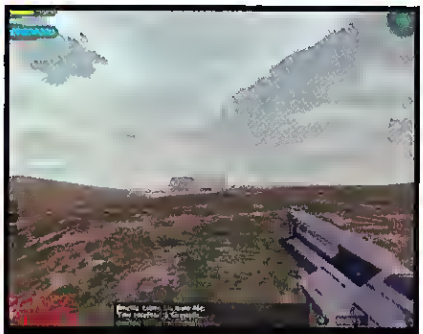
With the release of TRIBES, online multiplayer gaming has just moved to the next level. Although there's a storyline behind the game, forget it: It doesn't matter and you won't remember much of it once the action begins anyway. All you need to know is that the game is just packed with seriously great multiplayer action. TRIBES is one of the first games to seriously give the QUAKE franchise a run for its multiplayer money.

If you're a player that hates manuals, don't worry. Dynamix has a built in training mode that will have newbies up and running in just a few minutes. The training mode covers armor, weapons, piloting vehicles, interface, and play modes.

TRIBES comes with a variety of mission types. You can play Capture the Flag, Capture and Hold, Defend and Destroy, Find and Retrieve, and, of course, Deathmatch. Connecting to a server is easy, just be sure you're connected to the Internet before you launch the game. TRIBES comes with a built-in server list box, making it very easy to find a game.

For the team games, each side generally has a base (and flag) that has to be defended. The base has item dispensers for ammo and other goodies, turrets, and a generator. Enemies can wreak great amounts of havoc if they infiltrate your base and damage this stuff, so a good defense is a must.

I SEE YOU, YOU DON'T SEE ME Use the Image Enhancer to pick off targets from great distances, sniper-style.



WIDE OPEN SPACES Cross the rolling plains of TRIBES' huge outdoor environments while making your way to your enemy's base.

You'll also find the standard array of weapons including a Plasma Gun, Chaingun, Grenade Launcher, and Laser Rifle. TRIBES also features a Mortar Gun, Targeting Laser (for targeting use in tandem with a teammate), and Electron Flux Gun.

The Great Outdoors

TRIBES doesn't require a 3D accelerator (and looks pretty good without one). But if you have a 3Dfx Glide compatible card (an OpenGL patch should be available as you read this) then you're in for a real treat. Most of TRIBES is played outdoors and, when running under a 3Dfx card, the scenery is absolutely gorgeous. You'll see snow, rain, and eerie nighttime landscapes, complete with a moon in the sky. The nighttime areas are beautiful to look at and great for stalking players from the other team. Players are well animated, as is everything else. Once you get used to the sheer freedom of playing in such large outdoor environments, you'll find corridor-based shooters claustrophobic by comparison.

One unique twist in gameplay worth noting is the inclusion of jets in each player's armor. The jets allow players to fly for short distances and recharge their energy automatically in a few seconds. This might seem like a minor thing but it adds a new dimension to gameplay since there's so much space to maneuver around in. You can also fly a variety of ships including a scout flyer, HPC, and LPC.

One thing that I absolutely loved was the Image Enhancer. It gives you the ability to zoom in on objects from far away and engage in some great sniper action. At any time in the game you can click on the E button to view objects from a distance. You can toggle the magnification to 2x, 5x, 10x, or 20x your normal vision. This feature adds a whole different dimension to the game, making it possible to pick off targets from great distances.

Teamwork Makes All the Difference

Teamwork is both the greatest strength and the greatest weakness of TRIBES. If you have a strong team then chances are you'll have a blast. If your team stinks then you'll be banging your head in frustration as the other side walks away with your flag or otherwise kicks your team's collective rear end. The game lacks any sort of offline, single-player practice mode.

Teams that don't cooperate with each other will find themselves getting stomped regularly. If you're a fan of multiplayer games, you'll enjoy TRIBES. CGW

Jim Lynch can be found playing Tribes as "Jimzilla." Feel free to blow his head off.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆

APPEAL: Gamers ready for the next big thing in multiplayer action gaming

PROS: Gorgeous graphics; great gameplay.

CONS: No single-player practice mode; standard weapon mix.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Windows 95/98/NT (with SP3), Pentium 200 (Pentium 166 with 3D card), 32MB RAM, SVGA video card, sound card, 28.8 modem for Internet play.

3D SUPPORT: 3Dfx

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN, Internet (2–32 players), 1 CD per player.

Price: $39.95
Publisher: Dynamix
Eugene, OR
(800) 757-7707

www.tribesplayers.com

AMD

PGL PROFESSIONAL GAMERS' LEAGUE

PGL™ OFFICIAL NEWS UPDATE

The First Pro Sports League for the Computer Gaming Crowd

OVER $250,000 IN CASH AND PRIZES!

To Sign Up, or For More Info, Go To : www.pgl.com

Win PGL Prizes Without Competing!

So maybe you don't have the railgun skillz of Immortal, the ESP of Thresh, or the military acumen of Gadianton. That's okay! Here's your chance to win a PGL prize pack without playing a single match! Simply complete the form below and send it to us. All submissions will be entered in a drawing to take place at the PGL Spring '99 Season Championships. *The Grand Prize Winner will receive:*

A fully-loaded, AMD K6-2-powered PC ■ A Viper V550 graphics card from Diamond Multimedia (NVIDIA RIVA TNT-based) 128M8 of synchronous memory from MGV Memory ■ A LinkSys Fast Ethernet Network Starter Kit A Logitech mouse ■ An Advent Powered Partners AV390PL sound system

Just fill out the form below and send it in by April 6. 1999! Go to www.pgl.com for complete rules and for web or alternate entry info.

Question 1

Where were the PGL Season 1 live finals held?

- ❑ Orlando, FL
- ❑ San Francisco, CA
- ❑ Seattle, WA
- ❑ Dallas, TX

Question 2

Which of the following games has never been featured in a PGL season?

- ❑ Command & Conquer: Red Alert
- ❑ Ultima Online
- ❑ Quake
- ❑ Total Annihilation

Question 3

Which of the following players have competed in more than one PGL season Finals event?

- ❑ Makaveli
- ❑ Gadianton
- ❑ Immortal
- ❑ RB-Ren

Question 4

Which of these publications has never covered the PGL?

- ❑ Rolling Stone
- ❑ Reader's Digest
- ❑ Playboy
- ❑ The Wall Street Journal

Question 5

Lead PGL official Anthony Yee often goes by what screen name?

- ❑ PGLshmoobot
- ❑ Tsetsuki
- ❑ Neova
- ❑ Garthgantu

Question 6

The PGL Commissioner is:

- ❑ David Stern
- ❑ Nolan Bushnell
- ❑ Erik Lundberg
- ❑ Douglas Lowenstein

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Simply cut out this form, fill out the quiz, and mail it back by April 6, 1999 to:

Attn: PGL Spring '99 Contest
Total Entertainment Network
562 Mission Street, 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Go to #275 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

AMD ADVENT agp BEST BUY BLIZZARD CyberMax DIAMOND

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD GeoCities GTE LINKSYS Logitech NVIDIA TEN US Robotics

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. Open to U.S. residents with valid existing internet account. All entries must be submitted by April 6 and mail entries must be received by April 16. Odds of winning depend on number of correct entries. Est. prize value: $2,500; winner responsible for all taxes. Subject to Official Rules; winner must complete liability and publicity release in order to receive prize. May be terminated at any time if disrupted or corrupted by events beyond the control of the Professional Gamers League. AMD, the AMD logo, and the combination thereof, are trademarks of Advanced Micro Devices, Inc. PGL, Professional Gamers' League, and the PGL logo are trademarks of Professional Gamers' League. TEN, Total Entertainment Network, and the TEN logo are trademarks of T E Network, Inc. QUAKE is a registered trademark of Id Software, Inc. The Id Software name and the Id logo are trademarks of Id Software, Inc. Starcraft is a trademark and Blizzard Entertainment is a trademark or a registered trademark in the U.S. and/or other countries. US Robotics and the US Robotics logo are registered trademarks and the Xa logo are trademarks of 3COM Corporation or its subsidiaries. All other logos, trademarks and registered trademarks are the property of their respective owners. The Professional Gamers' League will be subject to all applicable federal and state laws.

Arms Race

GLOBAL DOMINATION's Missile-Firing Mayhem Is Fun, if Puzzling

by Jesse Hiatt

Making a game that appeals to both hard-core strategy gamers and hard-core action gamers is like recording an album for both jazz fans and heavy metal fans: Some people enjoy both, just generally not at the same time. It's a difficult mix to get right, with hard-core strategists generally suffering as a game's pace speeds up and hand-eye coordination becomes a bigger factor for success. With GLOBAL DOMINATION, Psygnosis has tried to make a genre-bending game, but has fallen short. The result is little more than a mildly addictive, fairly fun arcade game.

EAT IT, HUGH JASS In this scenario I created, my missiles are pounding Canada from the United States.

Blow Up Stuff

GLOBAL DOMINATION is extremely fast paced and action packed. Obviously, a serious attempt has been made to give the game a strategic component, but I would guess that few people will be able to stop mouse-clicking long enough to use any of these features. GLOBAL DOMINATION looks most like a frenzied implementation of Reagan-era "Star Wars" concepts. The game takes place on a beautiful 3D globe, which you rotate by moving the mouse. War between nations in the futuristic setting consists of shooting dozens of missiles at each other. Attack missiles move slowly and do various types of damage (depending on their type); defensive missiles move much faster, but only damage other missiles and airborne targets. There are also offensive and defensive naval and air units, as well as powerful satellites (which show up later in the game).

By pressing the space bar with the cursor over a country, you enter Tactical View. This allows you to see the various resources of a country, and if you control it, alter various settings (this is the strategy part). You can't spend very much time at all in this mode, unfortunately, because while you are in this view, the battle is still going on, and you are a sitting duck. This view is invaluable however, for targeting your attacks: If you click on a specific resource, that target will be highlighted when you return to attack mode, which makes hitting it easier.

GLOBAL DOMINATION deserves recognition for being one of the few unique games to be released in a long time. The gameplay is dissimilar to everything else out there, except for MISSILE COMMAND, but even this comparison doesn't hold up past a cursory look.

SITTING DUCK Using this strategy screen you can adjust the settings of your countries and aim at specific enemy targets. Unfortunately, taking the time to use this feature makes you an easy target since the battle never pauses.

What the Hell?

When a game designer breaks with convention, it is doubly important to write a clear manual or to include a good tutorial, and herein lies GLOBAL DOMINATION's biggest problem. The manual is downright terrible, making a simple game almost impossible to learn how to play. For instance, it refers to the "operation center" in the manual, but in the game it's called a "factory." Your superior officers suggest that you're fresh from training in the first FMV. What training? What happened to the tutorial? After the long and arduous task of figuring out how to play, I was even more enraged when I finally figured out how simple it was. A well-written manual would have helped this game immeasurably.

The other aspect worth noting is that the game is extremely challenging. Even in easy mode, progress through the scenarios takes superhuman feats of skill.

GLOBAL DOMINATION's saving grace is the conflict editor. Using this full-featured scenario creator you can set up any scenario you want. You can take back the western United States for Mexico, play Iraq and launch missiles at Israel and Turkey, or, if you've had a bad day, you can follow the suggestion of the game's ads and take it out on Canada.

Hard-core strategy gamers are not going to like this game. Its emphasis on frenzied mouse-clicking is sure to leave them cold. But if you're interested in a unique game, and are willing to learn on your own without benefit of a helpful manual or tutorials, GLOBAL DOMINATION can be an exciting action gaming experience. CGW

Jesse was depressed after the Persians rolled over his happy empire in CIV II, and is channeling his negative waves into tank warfare with both PANZER GENERAL II and PANZER COMMANDER.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★☆☆

APPEAL: Action gamers looking for a brand new kind of gameplay and a whoppin' challenge

PROS: Refreshingly unique; action packed

CONS: Too difficult for all but the hard-core; terrible manual, conflicts with some hardware acceleration setups.

DIFFICULTY: Advanced.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 133, Windows 95/98, 32MB RAM, 284KB hard-drive space, 2x CD-ROM drive, sound card.

3D SUPPORT: 3Dfx

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Serial (2 players), IPX, TCP/IP (2–16 players)

Price $44.99
Publisher Psygnosis
Foster City, CA
(650) 287-6500

www.psygnosis.com

Still on Approach

FALCON 4.0 Has Shipped—and Once It's Finished, It May be a Five-Star Sim

by Tom "KC" Basham

FALCON 4.0 has finally arrived, but can it live up to what more than four years of waiting has placed upon it? FALCON 4.0 looks to deliver everything a sim fan could hope for...and more. Unfortunately, due to some serious bugs, that delivery has been delayed. But assuming those bugs get ironed out, it has the potential to become the standard against which other sims are measured for years to come.

HAPPY LANDINGS The F-16 is tricky to land, and must be put down gently. Even experienced pilots will find landings challenging here.

Not Just a Jet

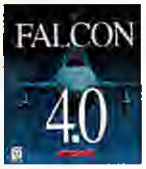
In the sim's whopper 600-page manual, producer Gilman Louie says the FALCON 4.0 team wasn't interested in just building an accurate simulation of an F-16. Instead, the team wanted to re-create the feel of being an F-16 *pilot*, operating over a modern battlefield. This meant creating more than a highly accurate flight model or impressive avionics suite, it meant creating an entire virtual world around the player.

Although the product features scripted Tactical Engagement missions, as well as an Instant Action mode for newcomers, the heart and soul of the product is the dynamic campaign mode. Here, you assume the role of a pilot in an F-16 squadron during a conflict on the Korean peninsula. The campaign engine runs an entire war, assigning missions to units throughout the theater. A list (displayed either by priority to the war effort or by launch time) shows the missions available to the player's squadron. You can fly any of these missions, with the freedom to choose whether you want to focus on air-to-air or air-to-ground sorties. Keep in mind, though, that flying "low priority" missions won't do much to help the war effort.

Once airborne, your plane is just one player in a living combat environment. To get an idea just how much is going on, you can enable the labels option, which puts a blue (friendly) or red (enemy) tag next to each object in the world. This is an excellent training aid to help less-experienced players

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★½☆



APPEAL: Wide variety of configuration options allows appeal to action-oriented and hard core simulation fans

PROS: Truly dynamic campaign; multiplayer capability, very realistic; creates amazing suspension of disbelief, many configuration options

CONS: Maximum difficulty requires significant training time, many bugs present in current version

DIFFICULTY: Configurable, beginner to advanced

REQUIREMENTS: 166MHz Pentium Win95 or Win98, 32Mb RAM

3D SUPPORT: Direct3D, Glide

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Null modem, modem, TCP/IP (number of players limited only by available bandwidth)

Price: $59.95
Publisher: Hasbro/MicroProse
Alameda, CA
(510) 864-4550

www.falcon4.com

Falcon 4.0 vs. the Real Thing

An F-16 Pilot Compare's MicroProse's F-16 to Lockheed's Version.

by Robey Price

TANKING UP FALCON 4.0 even models the F-16's decreased roll authority when your air-to-air refueling door is open.

From April 1987 until April 1988 I flew the F-16A in the 80th Fighter Squadron at Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea. I've now been able to replay that experience with the F-16C in FALCON 4.0. F-16 pilots have described flying the Viper as a "magic carpet" ride. I think the game captures this sensation with the sights and sounds from the cockpit. The whine of the engine is perfect. The reflections on the canopy make me smile. In this aspect, the game excels.

How does FALCON 4.0's flight model compare to the real thing? Very nicely, considering that you're sitting at a constant 1 *G*, playing on a 19-inch monitor. There are numerous touches that show an attention to detail. For example, during the takeoff roll, pilots disconnect the nosewheel steering (AR/NWS light on right side of HUD) around 70

develop their situational awareness skills.

In flight, the simulated radio stack can monitor any two of seven radio frequencies (including Guard, Proximity, Package, Flight, and Tower). All radio traffic is "live," that is, all radio calls are generated on the fly by AI-controlled pilots as they maneuver around the world. This creates for an amazing sense of immersion, and it can be great fun to simply listen to the battles unfold over the radio (reminiscent of Princess Leia and company listening to the Luke's dogfight over the Death Star in *Star Wars*). Surprisingly easy-to-use menus let you issue a wide variety of predefined commands to wingmen (human or computer), including formation and attack commands.

After flying, fighting, and possibly aerial refueling, you'll also rely on the radio to get home. Once within 30 nautical miles of the airbase, you'll contact the tower and request a landing (or declare an emergency). Computer-generated air traffic control then vectors you to a final approach fix and clears you for landing. Be prepared for a challenge here—landing is very realistic, and it's easy to snap your Falcon's gear off.

CLOSE FORMATION Canopy reflections help keep you from getting disoriented in virtual cockpit mode.

BASE CLOSED An F-16 makes a low pass over a damaged airbase. Some missions task you with bomb-damage assessment.

Under the Microscope

FALCON 4.0's flight model is second to none, with flight parameters conforming to real-world specifications. Although the fly-by-wire flight computer tries to keep the pilot out of trouble, attacking two or more limiters (AOA, yaw, etc) at the same time can result in some nasty departures from controlled flight. FALCON 4.0 accurately recreates such effects such as deep stall. To escape, you must use the real-world procedure of flipping the Manual Pitch Override switch and "rocking" the aircraft out. Simply lighting the afterburners won't blast you back into normal flight.

Weapon modeling is equally impressive and, except for omitting a few classified details here and there, provides an amazingly accurate representation of weapons employment. So detailed, in fact, that besides the manual the product comes with over 30 prebuilt training missions (designed by F-16 instructor pilot Pete Bonanni) just to get you up and flying. Bonanni also posts regular tactics articles on **www.falcon4.com**.

GUNS GUNS GUNS! This Su-25 Stormovik is about one more bullet hit away from being removed from the inventory of the North Korean Air Force.

knots. The game does this automatically.

The Flight Control System (FLCS) is modeled pretty well. To see this in action, next time you take off, leave the gear extended and keep your speed below 300 knots. Now roll into a steep turn. Notice the slow roll rate? Okay, raise the gear and now roll the airplane. This decreased roll authority also occurs when your refueling door is open. This is exactly like real life.

In what is called "cruise gains", the FLCS either limits your Angle of Attack (AOA) or the amount of *G* you can pull. Below approximately 380 knots in the game, the FLCS will give you maximum AOA. Above that speed, the FLCS becomes a *G* limiter. In the training missions, I can only get a maximum of 7.3 *Gs*, not the 9 *Gs* of the real airplane.

Speaking of *G* limits, in some respects the game is tougher than real life. The blackout modeling is visually similar to the real thing. However, I think your simulated pilot has a

CLEARED FOR LANDING Not only are airfields in their proper location, but the sim even includes highway landing strips.

Falcon 4.0 vs. the Real Thing (continued)

lower *G* tolerance threshold than real fighter pilots do. Fortunately, gamers don't have to tense their bodies and grunt while straining against the G forces. (My wife really appreciates this.)

The avionics are complicated on the highest realism setting. Even for a former F-16 pilot, this required an investment of time to learn how to "play the piccolo" again. Once I learn all the weapons employment stuff, I just might start using the "simplified" setting for avionics. This setting is closer to what I used in the Block 15 model F-16A (absent any NCTR functions). The Fault Warning system is extensive; all gamers should study pages 20-6 to 20-10 in the manual. One of the few errors I've noticed is a glitch in the Selective Jettison and Emergency Jettison features. Typically we could jettison everything but ECM pods and the missiles on the wingtips. In the game, you cannot jettison anything that is on the centerline station (STA 5)—not even the fuel tank.

THE REAL DEAL Captain Robey Price, 80th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Kunsan AFB, Republic of Korea, in 1988.

I toured the FALCON 4.0 world using an actual map I got while stationed in Korea. I'm pleased with what I saw. The location of airfields is superb, and the inclusion of highway landing strips is a welcomed surprise. This might seem like a small detail to gamers, but it impressed me. The gameworld does have a variety of topography, but it is not as mountainous as the real ROK. Sadly, the poorly printed game map is unusable for navigation, but the game manual is superb

In all, I like FALCON 4.0. Despite the glitches, which still need to be ironed out, MicroProse has done an excellent job of capturing the experience of piloting a real F-16. CGW

Robey Price considers himself a very lucky man. He flew RF-4s and F-16s for the Air Force, and he now flies MD-80s. As he says, "Hey, it beats working for a living."

Avionics are finely detailed, easily on par with products like Jane's F-15. The Threat Warning System (TWS) is particularly interesting, featuring a wide variety of warning tones for each type of radar. If you listen to samples of each tone in the Tactical Reference section before takeoff (focusing on the likely threats in the next mission), you may be better able to ID enemy aircraft. (However, AWACS aircraft are usually there to help you make a positive identification.)

Tactical Engagement mode provides a full-blown mission editor and single-mission play. Besides the 31 training missions shipped with the product, numerous Web sites are already posting user-built missions and minicampaigns.

Graphics are quite impressive, but be forewarned—maximum performance requires maximum hardware. Aging 200MHz Pentiums provide an acceptable frame rate, but *only* if you turn down some of the settings. If you want to crank up FALCON 4.0's graphics features, you'll want the biggest and the best hardware, such as a 400MHz+ Pentium II with at least 128Mb of RAM and a good 3D card

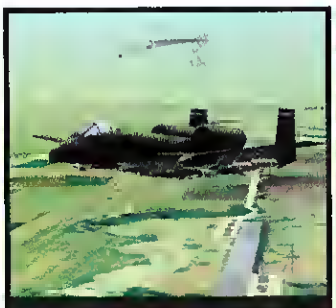
Not So Fast

So, what's the downside? As with too many computer games shipped these days, FALCON 4.0 has its fair share of bugs, some of which are quite serious. The initial version has a tendency to crash quite regularly, although the first patch (version 1.03) seems to have helped greatly. Unfortunately, the 1.03 patch inadvertently crippled the artificial intelligence, keeping many airborne and ground units from actually fighting. Radio calls often transpose call signs, making for some confusing radio conversations. The computer-controlled ATC often clears two planes for landing at the same time on the same runway, and AI pilots will often run into you while taxiing. The multiplayer mode also suffers problems.

Depending on your viewpoint, these problems can range from simple annoyances to intolerable breakages. Most of the problems impact campaign mode, with substantially less impact on Tactical Engagement missions. Fortunately, MicroProse says that it is fully committed to the project and hard at work, and additional patches are expected by the time this article sees print. As with FALCON 3.0 (which was released in a practically unplayable form) before it, FALCON 4.0 looks to significantly raise the bar for the entire industry... once the bugs are flushed out.

Overall, this writer is having far more fun playing FALCON 4.0 (despite wrestling with the bugs) than waiting these past years for the product to ship. There's so much depth to the sim that it may take some time before the full scope of the program is realized. Despite being a $50 "game," FALCON 4.0 is an incredibly detailed simulation that in many ways exceeds training systems in military use. How real is it? Well, this writer often consults a real-world "Dash 1" manual for the F-16 when playing the game. If you really want to know what it's like to fly an F-16, then don't pass up FALCON 4.0—just be sure to check for patches. CGW

Tom "KC" Basham is publisher of Debrief *magazine (**www.bearzone.com/debrief**), the magazine of simulation and strategy tactics. Lately, his life has consisted mostly of flying FALCON 4.0, with the occasional break for sleep.*



HOG WILD An A-10 Warthog prepares to strike as an unknown aircraft meets its doom in the distance.

FIGHTING WITH FLARE An F-4 punches flares as it evades a heat-seeking missile. AI aircraft fly with fairly realistic tactics.

EUROPEAN AIR WAR

Wants You!

PREMIER GAMING FINALIST 1999

EVERYONE E

HASBRO Interactive

What have YOU done today for VICTORY?

Fly!
20 authentically-modeled aircraft!

See!
over 250 planes in the air at once!

GO!
from Flight Officer to Colonel as your skills improve!

Download!
our FREE demo at www.microprose.com

"You can't miss the obsessive attention to detail."
www.combatsim.com

EUROPEAN AIR WAR™

MICROPROSE®

www.microprose.com

and European Air War are trademarks of Hasbro or its affiliates. MicroProse is a subsidiary of Hasbro. All other

Go to #222 @ www.computergamingworld.com/infolink

Messy-Schmitt

Good Feel of Flying Fails to Make Up for Dull, Scripted Missions

by Loyd Case

Only 4 percent of Luftwaffe fighter pilots who began World War II made it to the end of the war. The rest were either killed, incapacitated, or captured. In LUFTWAFFE COMMANDER, you get to see if you have the stuff to be one of the 4 percent that made it. Unfortunately, the sim's briefings capture the sense of desperation as the war reaches its climax far better than the flying does.

This sim does break ground in some areas. As a pilot in Germany's budding new air force, you have the chance to be a volunteer in the Condor Legion, the quasi-mercenary unit that acted as Franco's air force during the Spanish Civil War. (The game shies away from controversial issues, though: you don't fly in the bombing of Guernica, for example, a notorious example of the first mass bombing of a civilian center.)

OIL'S WELL A Condor Legion Bf-109 smokes a Republican oil refinery.

SMOKIN' (G.I.) JOE An Me-262 sends a B-17 to its death over Germany.

In addition, you can fly on the Eastern Front and the battle for France. Flying over the Soviet Union, you encounter planes such as the P-39 Airacobra, I-16, and Mig-3. Over France, you may run into lesser-known aircraft like the French D.520 and the Belgian Fokker DXXI, as well as the occasional Hurricane or Tomahawk. However, the glaring exception is that there's no flyable Focke-Wulf 190.

Model Flight

LUFTWAFFE COMMANDER was developed by Eagle Interactive, the same folks that brought you SABER ACE. SABER ACE's flight model can be charitably described as "arcade-like." The designers at Eagle took the criticism to heart and put a lot of effort into the flight modeling for LUFTWAFFE COMMANDER. There's a very distinct feeling of inertial that varies substantially among the flyable aircraft. The various Bf-109 models seem nimble, though a bit twitchy on the rudder, whereas the P-39 (flyable on in single missions) vaguely resembles a flying brick. The He-51 biplane is highly maneuverable and climbs well, but is slow.

I did notice that there seemed to be a distinct continuity between flying and spinning. Once in a spin, it's *very* difficult to recover. There were also odd lapses in the flying models of certain planes. For example, you can turn and turn in the Me-262, and never lose energy—though admittedly they are wide turns. All in all, the flying models seem reasonably competent when stacked up against the competition. You do get real sense of flying while in the pilot's seat.

It's in the Can

Unfortunately, LUFTWAFFE COMMANDER falls down badly in the mission department. At first look, it's exciting to be able to fly in thethe Spanish Civil War or on the Eastern Front. But you soon find out that all the missions are heavily scripted. Worse, the campaigns are simply missions from the single mission list strung together in order. There's no dynamic campaign, and no sense of randomness in the individual missions.

It's actually worse than that, because you get a feeling of déjà vu as you move from one mission to the next. When you encounter the enemy, there's a certain predicability to their location, no matter the mission. There will be several flights above you (if you used the "z" key to move quickly from one location to another without actually flying the leg). There will be a couple of flights off to one side. There's almost always a flight of six somewhere, moving in line formation. It gets downright dull.

The Russian missions, which initially had me fired up, proved particularly uninspiring. Part of it was the extremely dull terrain graphics. LUFTWAFFE COMMANDER makes heavy use of obviously repeating tiled textures for terrain. The only saving grace is that there's extensive use of hills and mountains, something lacking in some other WWII sims. Because of the lack of a flyable FW-190, there were no

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★☆☆☆

APPEAL: Flight Sim fans looking to fly in new environs, such as the Eastern Front and the Spanish Civil War.

PROS: Flight models of campaign-flyable planes are good; Spanish Civil War and Eastern Front missions.

CONS: Scripted missions are predictable; AI is a mixed bag; bland terrain graphics; no FW-190.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, 32MB RAM; Windows 95/98; DirectX6.

Price $40.00
Publisher: Strategic Simulations Inc
Novato, CA
(617) 761-3000
www.luftwaffecommander.com

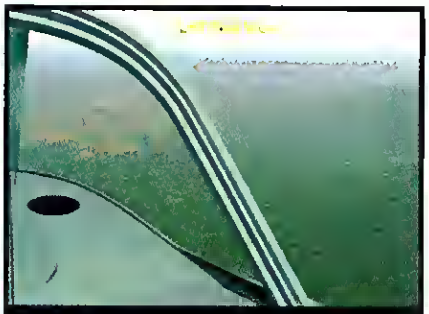
POP GUN For a change of pace, try killing barrage balloons over Dover.

FINAL APPROACH Don't lose control at low altitudes—spins are very difficult to recover from.

real ground attack missions. Even in some supposedly large ground battles, the number of vehicles was very sparse.

This is somewhat compensated for by the enemy AI. The AI does a good job of using both the horizontal and vertical. It occasional uses the strengths of the plane to its advantages—the Spitfires always seem to want to get into a turning fight if possible, whereas the P-51 tends to use its speed to better advantage. But there are odd lapses in the AI. Sometimes it will get into a rut, pulling a series of descending turns that becomes predictable.

Then there's the bombers. If you attack a formation of B-17's, they immediately scatter. This is completely against Eight Air Force doctrine, which dictated tight formation ("box") flying so the planes could protect each other better with overlapping fields of fire. But the most comical episode occurred after I attacked a formation of B-17's with an Me-262. I ran out of fuel, but rather than ditch, I tried to glide home. I managed to get close to the airfield, and under 1,500 meters, when I was suddenly attacked from behind. I checked my six and discovered a B-17 diving on me. It made a number of swooping passes. At least the gunfire came from the right locations.



FATAL MYOPIA Repeating a critical design error from SABRE ACE, the fixed views in LUFTWAFFE COMMANDER don't overlap.

OPEN SKIES You'll start your career in a biplane, and if you beat the odds, end it in a jet.

The game makes up for the canned nature of missions by offering a "Knight's Cross" difficulty level. In this level, all the flight and combat parameters are set to maximum realism. And if you die, you die. There's no reflying a mission. This is probably the best way to play the game from the outset—and avoid flying single missions if you want any sense of suspense. There's also a mission generator, but it creates relatively generic missions. It does allow you to fly other aircraft, such as the P-51 and Russian I-16. You can't save missions, however.

Atmosphere and Combat

With a 4 percent survival rate from start to finish, you'd think things would get depressing for the Luftwaffe as the war progressed. While the missions don't capture this well, the briefings do a superb job of setting atmosphere. When your CO tells you that Russian soldiers shot one of your comrades in his cockpit when he crashlanded, you suddenly feel the urge to get your plane home no matter how difficult. The voice acting is mixed, but Eagle did use real Germans (speaking in English) to give the briefings, and the content sounds authentic.

Combat is tough, but the main source of the difficulty is the viewing system. There are number of discrete views that don't overlap. Like real life, you can't see behind you in most planes. It's tough keeping your eye on the enemy. What finally worked best for me was to have the padlock view enabled in the virtual cockpit. The problem is that if you switch from the virtual cockpit (which you might do because none of the instruments are active in the virtual cockpit), the padlock stays in force, but it uses the discrete views. This is very distracting, and this viewing system won't win any awards for flexibility.

On a more positive note, realistic gunnery mode lives up to its name—you have to get "up close and personal" to score a kill. There's no pinging the target bubble from 1,000 feet.

Flight Limited

There was a lot I liked about this game, but in the end, I find it very difficult to recommend it. The canned missions, limited mission generator, and weird AI makes this one to avoid for most virtual flyers. On the other hand, if you do get the urge to fly the He-51 over Spain or escort Ju-87's on tank busting missions in Russia, then there's nothing else like it. The flying, at least, is fun. CGW

Yes, it's true, Loyd Case actually does play games on all that cool hardware he gets to test. Lately he's been pretending EUROPEAN AIR WAR is a benchmark test.

Baldur's Great?

BALDUR'S GATE Is a Very Ambitious Title That Gets Most Things Right

by Scorpia

A certain amount of hype precedes all games, the highly anticipated BALDUR'S GATE more than most. As is usually the case, there is a wide gap between fact and fancy. We'll start with what's right with the game.

Character creation allows for the full range of *AD&D* races and classes—your choice of male or female—and even multiclass characters for nonhumans. Rolling up character stats works well: The values for required professions will always be at least the minimum; you can roll the dice over and over; you can deduct points from one or more stats and add to others, subject to race and class restrictions. You can even store a "pretty good set of numbers" to recall later if you can't come up with better.

IT'S OVER WHERE THE ORC SKOOL USED TA BE The automapping features are nicely done, both for outdoor travel and for area closeups.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆

APPEAL: Gamers looking to finally have multiplayer *AD&D* sessions on their PC.

PROS: Good for multiplayer campaigning; plot starts out strongly, nice flexibility for character design; powerful game engine.

CONS: Combat system can be awkward, with questionable results; plotline and playability decline midway through; dialogue is spotty.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166 (P200MMX recommended), Windows 95/98, 32MB RAM, 300MB hard-drive space, 2MB 16-bit SVGA graphics, 4x CD-ROM, supports DirectX-compatible sound cards.

3D SUPPORT: None

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Modem (2 players), IPX or TCP/IP LAN/Internet (2–6 players); all 1 CD per player.

Price: $49.95
Publisher: Interplay
Irvine, CA
(949) 553-6655

www.interplay.com

Candlekeep Burning

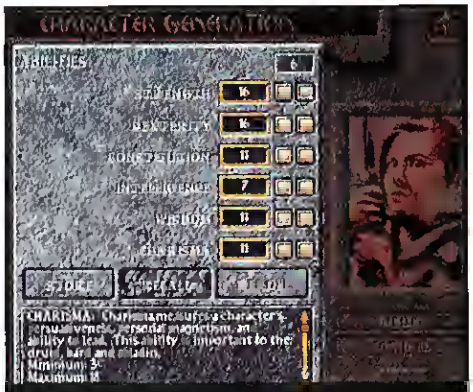
After the creation process, you go into the tutorial at Candlekeep, where you can equip your character in fairly reasonable style. You won't be sent out to face ferocious hordes before you can even draw a breath. Little green-robed monks swarm over the area, ready to declaim helpful hints for those who only scanned the manual. In one section, you can even indulge in "virtual battle" against harmless monster illusions with a temporary party, to get at least some idea of how to handle a group during fights. Start-up is thus far better than that found in most games, where you are poorly equipped and shoved into a hostile world before you even learn the interface properly.

Whenever you travel from one location to another in the outdoors, the program automatically saves your current position in a special slot before sending you off. Restoring can be done at any time, while saving is possible only if no hostile critters are in the immediate area.

No-go Solo

Nice touches notwithstanding, the game isn't a standout from the solo perspective. Part of this stems from the combat, which shoehorns *AD&D* mechanics designed for turn-based fighting into a quasi-realtime system. By hitting the space bar, you can suspend the game at any time; you can also set an autopause to freeze action based on certain events, such as a character's target being killed, a character dying, his/her weapon becoming unusable, and so on. Without pausing, it's a real mess to try to direct the detailed actions of six characters in real-time combat. As it is, the pause method proves unsatisfactory, giving the action a weird, jerky, stop-and-go feel—a bad thing, given the amount of fighting you do in BALDUR.

If you follow up directly on the main plot line, it's likely your party will soon find itself overmatched. So take time to explore all sorts of side areas to gain experience and gold, and find the occasional Neat Item. In time, this becomes inexpressibly tedious; you go from one boring combat to the next, while the game waits for you to get back to the plot.



CHARM ME Since we enjoy negotiation in BALDUR'S GATE more than Scorpia does, we usually pump up our character's Charisma points; she takes the opposite tack.

One might think that with all of this wandering, it would be easier to find a decent mage for your party. Problem is, the evil mages available can cause fights to start within the group, and the other mages, all specialists, have serious shortcomings. Dyna,

for instance, cannot use such spells as Sleep, Confusion, Flame Arrow, and Hold Person. That leaves Xan, who cannot cast such vital spells as Magic Missile, Web, Fireball, and Lightning Bolt. It is possible to finish the game without a mage, but it certainly increases the difficulty.

It could be that I missed someone with reasonable abilities, since I talked to people only when necessary. Not only because they forever wanted to send us on dreary little quests, but also because the dialogue is often awful, along the lines of "Well, if you were so stupid/weak as to be captured, you're not good enough for us, so get lost." Diplomacy, tact, and consideration obviously took low priority in the writer's mind.

When we turn to the multiplayer side, things improve. A LAN hookup affords the best experience, with everyone in the same room but on different machines. This is the closest you can get to live gaming experience, with lots of chatter and jokes in between tactical discussions.

Those discussions are important, and they relieve much of the burdensome parts of combat. You work out general strategies beforehand, having to then worry about maneuvering only your own character, instead of six. There is also greater flexibility in responding to different threats, backing off if severely injured (NPCs have no sense of self-preservation), and moving quickly to help someone in dire circumstances.

There is no question that BALDUR was designed from the first with multiplayer in mind. While solo adventuring is not exactly an afterthought, its true function seems to be for you to become familiar with the game, then export a character (of about 2nd–4th level) for the multiplayer side, so that you and your friends can indulge in a communal critter crunch.

HEAL EARLY AND OFTEN With the amount of combat in BALDUR'S GATE, you'll need more than faith and a few potions on your side.

Save the World *Again*?

The familiar plot at least offers a different focal point. Your character is the "orphan with mysterious past" marked for death by a sinister armored figure. Bounty hunters and assassins show up throughout the game, eager to collect the reward offered by Mr. Sinister.

Unfortunately, what starts as rather interesting later fizzles out. In fact, the game becomes progressively more mechanical the closer you get to the finale. By the time you're in the city of Baldur's Gate, the whole thing is more like connect-the-dots than anything else, leading you practically by the nose to the inevitable (and exceptionally nasty) Foozle fight at the finale. On the technical side, the game had a distressing tendency to crash every so often, usually when crossing a boundary line from one area to another, but also a few times during a save.

As a single-player product, BALDUR'S GATE aspires to greatness—a good engine, nice graphics, a real *D&D* feel—but has its share of flaws, particularly with *AD&D*-style combat. As a multiplayer product, it sports some interesting features and is more enjoyable by virtue of having other real people participating in the adventure. Anyone considering BALDUR should do so with an eye to the multiplayer aspect to get the most for their money. CGW

Scorpia is looking forward to DIABLO II—she's confident it will be compelling for solo- and multiplay.

Swords Clash... and Clash...

Fighting takes longer than necessary in BALDUR'S GATE. As a veteran of many live *AD&D* sessions, I know how the dice should roll. *Never* have I seen such low numbers—10 and under, before adjustments for armor—come up consistently in combat after combat. That translates into a lot of misses (on both sides, to be fair) and some very *lo-o-o-ng* battles. Worse, it means your party members will be failing too many saving throws versus spells, especially early on, when they're low-level characters. Either the random number generator is programmed incorrectly or the designers have diddled the dice.

Move Me...Please!

The movement AI needs a lot of work (so make sure you get the patch). No matter what formations are used, characters sooner or later get stuck somewhere, go in the wrong directions, or try to walk through walls. They also have a tendency to straggle when the party walks for more than a short distance, so that often one or more back-rank (usually the weaker) characters ends up well ahead of everyone else.

You can change the actual order of characters in the group, even though this info is not mentioned anywhere in either the manual or the read.me file. Simply place the cursor over the right-hand portrait, hold down the left mouse button, and slide the mouse up or down to exchange positions.

Another amazing "feature" is the inability of the party to camp out on long journeys. Whether it's a day, two days, or more, the merry band just troops along like mindless zombies, never stopping to rest. So the first thing you have to do on arrival is rest, because everyone's fatigued. In outdoor areas, that can be dangerous. In all the RPGs I've ever played, going back to the eight-bit machines, designers have made allowances for this; was that so hard to program in here?

Bloody Well Right

This KING'S QUEST Is a Good Stand-alone Game, but May Alienate Longtime Fans

by Thierry Nguyen

Remember the big changes that KING'S QUEST V: ABSENCE MAKES THE HEART GO YONDER brought to both the series and the adventure genre overall? It used a new, wordless, all-icon interface; it had hand-painted backgrounds; and it was the first Sierra game to have speech. Yet even with these changes, the core game remained the same. Well, get ready for another massive change to the KING'S QUEST name, in both design and execution.

This new KING'S QUEST is not only in 3D, but it's also the first in which you're not a member of the Royal Family and, more significant, the first in which you must shed blood in combat. You'll be disappointed if you're expecting another family adventure, but as a fantasy game in general, MASK OF ETERNITY is actually pretty good.

HOTSEAT JUMPING While there are a couple of physical jumping puzzles, most puzzles still rely on your noggin rather than your nimbleness.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆

APPEAL: Fantasy fans who like a mix of combat and old-school puzzling; longtime series fans who are prepared for a darker and bloodier KING'S QUEST.

PROS: Good puzzles; easy-to-learn combat with changeable difficulty; great character animation; good voice-acting and music; it's a KING'S QUEST game.

CONS: It's a KING'S QUEST game with gore and combat; annoying load times; high system requirements; camera-control interface interrupts gameplay; environmental graphics not as good as character graphics.

DIFFICULTY: Hard

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, Windows 95, 32MB RAM, 400MB hard-drive space, 4x CD-ROM, DirectX6-compatible sound and video cards.

3D SUPPORT: Direct3D, 3Dfx Glide.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: None

Price: $49.95
Publisher: Sierra Studios
Bellevue, WA
(800) 757 7707

www.sierrastudios.com

Back to Simpler Times

In a year that brought adventure game after adventure game with complex plots—think SANITARIUM, REDGUARD, and GRIM FANDANGO—it's a bit of a surprise to find a game with a simpler plot. Here, you play Connor, a mild-mannered peasant who is suddenly tasked with saving Daventry and a few other lands. The sacred Mask of Eternity (a beacon of all things good, like Truth, Light, and Order) has been shattered into five pieces and spread across the world; Connor needs to find all five pieces and reassemble the Mask.

MASK's plot plays off common fantasy and classical myth themes. Connor travels through seven worlds (eight, if you count the oh-so-brief Paradise Lost) and performs a series of Herculean tasks, such as slaying a mighty Basilisk in the Barren Region or healing the Sacred Heart in the Dimension of Death. There are no real back-stabbings or betrayals. The plot is a straightforward "unlikely hero rises up and defeats Foozle" scenario. In that regard, it is very much like previous KING'S QUEST games. Heck, there's even a scoring system, and your point total is displayed when you finish the game.

KILLING FOOZLE SOFTLY Combat between you and the enemies is a simple click-and-kill affair.

Thinking and Thwacking

The game's opening quickly introduces you to the first major change: the all-3D engine. Connor and the rare NPCs he runs into are rendered in full polygonal glory, and the world is now seen from either first- or third-person eyes.

The 3D engine has a huge effect on puzzle design. Object manipulation is now much more "physical." If you wanted to pull a high switch in an earlier game, for example, you probably would have typed "push box," then "get on box," and finally "pull switch." Here, you have to literally push the box, jump on top of it, and look up to pull the switch.

In general, however, the puzzles are familiar and old-school—finding and trading items, figuring out switch sequences, and so on. Don't fear that the 3D engine has turned this into a mindless action game; most of the puzzles are

quite cerebral. There are a few jumping puzzles, but I found only one of them to be annoying. They require decent timing skills, but nothing like what's needed in a game like TOMB RAIDER.

Okay, so the plot and the puzzle design are familiar, but now we get to the biggest new twist: combat (which is gory and plentiful). As in DIABLO, fighting boils down simply to a point-and-click matter, with no defensive measures (besides your armor) and some hot-keys for potions. Gamers put off by this can set the combat on "Easy" to make enemies pretty much roll over.

Combat does have a point, though, in that it (like questing/puzzle-solving) gives you experience. Every critter you slay ups your experience meter, and with every level-increase comes more hit points, along with higher stats in armor class, melee weapon damage, and ranged weapon damage. These stats also increase whenever you pick up new weapons or armor. Each armor change affects Connor's appearance as well. He starts with a simple tunic and ends the game decked-out in mighty Sun Armor.

Gremlins in the Woodwork

The main problem with MASK lies in its control scheme, which is a combination of keyboard and mouse control. The mouse controls the camera and interaction; the keyboard controls your movement and jumping.

I was able to remap the keys so that I could get a comfortable movement interface. What I *didn't* like was the controllable camera. You shift the camera around by holding down the right-button and then moving the mouse. That means the game never shifts camera angles for you. This gets very annoying, especially since combat often requires you to pause and then manipulate the camera to get a playable angle. Many times, I died in combat not from being outmatched but from having to pause to move the camera—and having those extra hits weaken me enough to kill me. Sometimes, the camera even refused to move, which limited my viewing angle.

Another problem that will annoy users is the load times. Whenever you travel between worlds, the game will unload the current world and copy the new world from the CD onto your hard drive. Even on a hotrod PII/400 with lots of RAM, this took several minutes. If you play the game perfectly, you probably won't mind. But I imagine the average player will miss an item or two along the way and not realize it until later. This happened to me on occasion, and I had to jump around three worlds to locate items for a particular puzzle. One land, Paradise Lost, was so short that I spent more time loading it than being in it. I can only imagine the frustration these problems will cause for someone with a system that's closer to the minimum requirements.

Then there's some hardware goofiness. The game says it supports Direct3D, but it really wants a Voodoo². Even if you've got a hotrod card like a RIVA TNT, you can't enable all the features like particles and shadows. If you have both a 3Dfx and a Direct3D card, it automatically selects the 3Dfx while completely graying out the Direct3D card. Thanks for giving users a choice, I guess.

While the graphics look nice enough, they have a barrenness to them. There aren't many environmental details, and the fogging distance (the point where visibility is cut off) seems a bit short. Combine that with the sparse NPCs, and the worlds feel a bit ..lonesome. In most of the worlds, it's also just too dark. Finally, the particle effects for spells and flames are very underwhelming. The character details are great (especially the lip-synching and animations as characters talk), but the environmental graphics are just adequate.

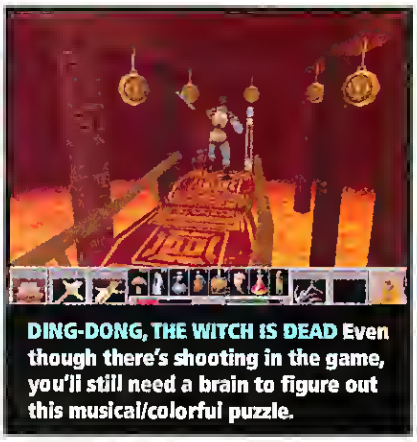
Mixed Blessings

Despite these problems, I found myself playing this game a lot—and enjoying it. There's just something appealing about thwacking monsters one moment and racking my brain with tough puzzles the next. These elements require an open mind before playing. The old-school puzzles may frustrate newbies, while the veterans may be annoyed at the jumping and the combat. If you're looking for a saccharin-sweet family adventure like the earlier games, don't go for this. But if playing an old-school adventure with lots of combat and a dash of RPG leveling seems fine for you, then get that sword and brain in gear and go save Daventry. CGW

Thierry "Scooter" Nguyen fondly remembers playing a fiddle in the original KING'S QUEST, but if you question his masculinity, he'll challenge you to a HALF-LIFE brawl.

UP, UP, AND AWAY This new adventure has epic-feeling events, such as riding on this Ice Dragon's back.

INSPIRE ME, O MUSE Cut-scenes, such as speaking to this wise Archon, use the in-game engine rather than FMV filler.



DING-DONG, THE WITCH IS DEAD Even though there's shooting in the game, you'll still need a brain to figure out this musical/colorful puzzle.

Return to Vendor

KRONDOR Makes Its Long-Awaited Return, But It's Not a Keeper

by Petra Schlunk

Dynamix's BETRAYAL AT KRONDOR, set in fantasy author Raymond Feist's world of Midkemia, was one of the great role-playing games of all time. The game featured a world immense in scope, rich in story, and replete with many side quests. It also left many players hungering for a sequel. Now after years and years of delays, it's finally here—and it's not nearly the game that it could have been.

RETURN TO KRONDOR leaves the starting gate without a hitch. The game engine differs from that of its predecessor, which is not necessarily bad, and the storyline looks fine, promising some vague continuity with BETRAYAL AT KRONOOR, with James ("Jimmy the Hand") now called Squire James and working for Prince Arutha in Krondor. The story turns upon the disappearance of an artifact of great power and the efforts made by both the villain and your party to recover it.

UM, SO WHERE'S MY WAND OF MEGADEATH? Large battles like that against this horda of goblins are where magic really shines. Mass-effect spells like Chaos Storm and Behold the Birthing Sun are particularly useful in such cases.

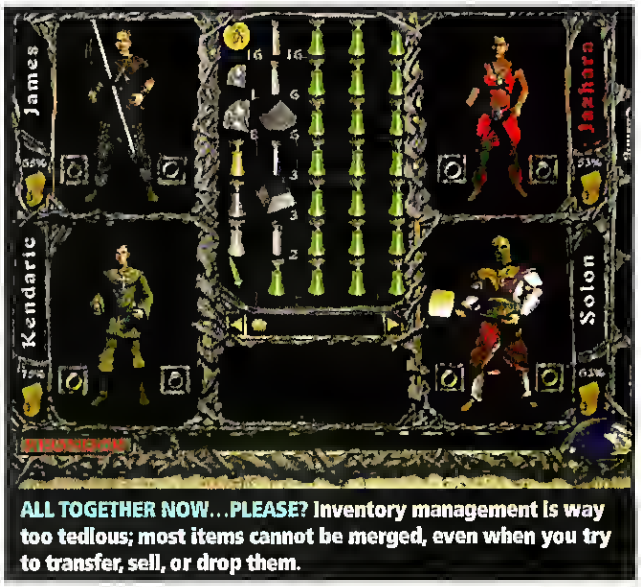
Sadly, the story—and the game itself—feels largely unfinished. Why? Maybe because the plot is too thin to stretch over the game's 10-plus chapters. Maybe because the story feels like the beginning of something much bigger, due to the deliberate insertion of elements that scream "future sequel." And maybe because the game is quite short—about 15–30 hours tops for an experienced gamer—even if you explore exhaustively.

Scavengers Hunting

Chapters begin with a text introduction read by Pug, the mage from the original game (and one of the novels' main characters), providing continuity as the story evolves. Each chapter's goal is clearly stated. Players can move directly through the story by accomplishing chapter goals. They can also take time to explore, find the lamentably few side quests, and gain experience. As is true of its parent, RETURN TO KRONDOR offers no control over who is in your party (which varies in size from one to four characters) or what skills and stats characters have. Fortunately, party reconstruction is not as frequent or drastic as in BETRAYAL.

RETURN TO KRONOOR is played from a third-person perspective with a standard point-and-click interface, although you can also control most movement with your keyboard. The blocky but well-animated characters move around in front of an attractive, if often dark, cinematic backdrop, à la adventure games. What is difficult to get used to are the frequent and capricious changes in your viewpoint as you travel—a very disorienting and maddening experience. Worse, important items, locations, and even deadly foes can occasionally be seen only by changing the camera angle, and the game is not kind about letting you know when to do this.

Besides being disorienting, movement is slow even when your



ALL TOGETHER NOW...PLEASE? Inventory management is way too tedious; most items cannot be merged, even when you try to transfer, sell, or drop them.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★½☆☆

APPEAL: Feist fans and anyone else up for a fun, short, role-playing game with adventure game elements.

PROS: Cool combat system, lots of goodies, nice graphics complement a fairly engaging story and characters

CONS: Too short; too linear, needlessly confusing and disorienting movement, poor inventory management; a terrible waste of great potential

DIFFICULTY: Easy

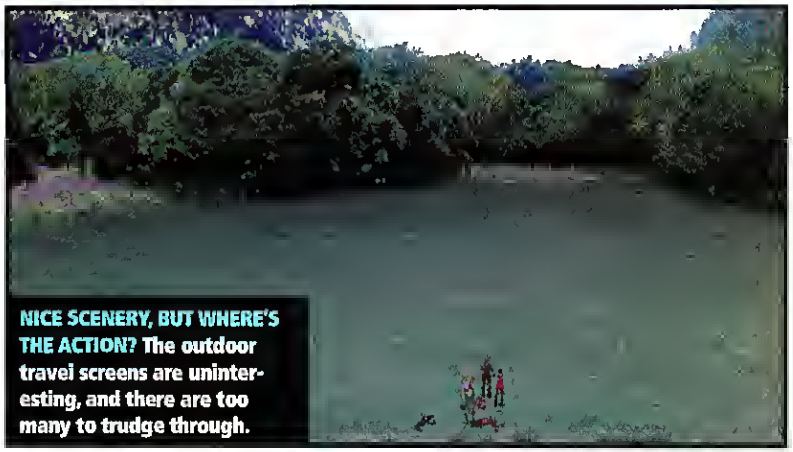
REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, Windows 95/98, 24MB RAM, 190MB hard-drive space, 4x CD-ROM drive, SVGA-high color (16-bit color), Windows-compatible sound card, mouse

3D SUPPORT: Direct3D.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: None

Price: $49.95
Publisher: Sierra Studios
Bellevue, WA
(800) 757-7707

www.sierrastudios.com



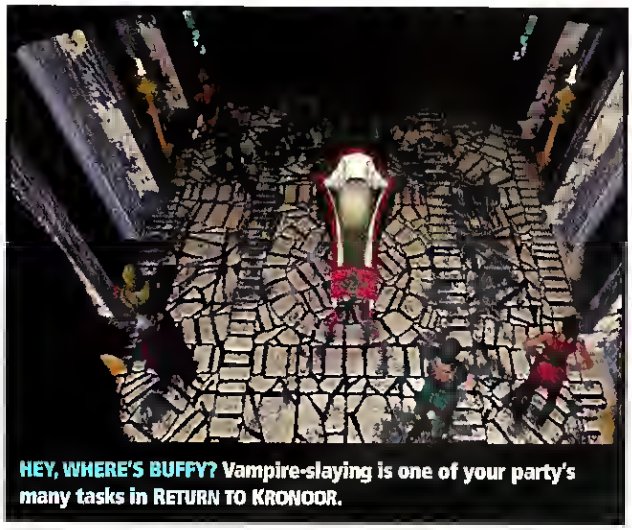
NICE SCENERY, BUT WHERE'S THE ACTION? The outdoor travel screens are uninteresting, and there are too many to trudge through.

party is running. Similarly, movement is unpredictable during combat, boring outdoors—where you use a map to move through a nearly endless series of uninteresting screens—and challenging since it's often hard to tell that you can move in a particular direction at all. One convenient travel feature exists in a few areas that lets you move between locations with an overhead map.

A Swing and a Hit

Fortunately, RETURN TO KRONDOR comes into its own in combat. The turn-based combat system provides an agreeable tension with *fate die rolls*. At the beginning of every combat round, a roll is made and the result offers an advantage, such as extra attacks, to one side or another for the upcoming round (akin to a paper role-playing game's roll for initiative). Otherwise combat is similar to that in most other grid-based, tactical combat systems. Combatants can move about the battlefield to protect friends or attack specific foes, although the lack of a provision to highlight the battlefield's grid makes it difficut to plan movement and attacks. There is no fleeing from combat for either side; you cannot even reload during a battle. However, individual characters will not die as long as someone in the party survives combat.

Combat spells eventually become very powerful and should be your main concern as you allocate skill points when mages go up in levels. Sadly, spellcasters can cast spells only if they are wielding no weapon (this small fact is well hidden in the manual). That's a pity because your party eventually acquires a warrior-priest with awesome fighting skills and cool spells. You'll end up wasting one of this character's great assets, depending on what sort of game you are playing (magic-oriented, fighter-oriented, or balanced) and how you like to play.



HEY, WHERE'S BUFFY? Vampire-slaying is one of your party's many tasks in RETURN TO KRONDOR.

Points of Disinterest

RETURN TO KRONDOR has lots of other notable points—bad and good. It features an unwieldy inventory system that doesn't let you identify items before picking them up or merge items even when you transfer, drop, or sell them. Many screens are busy and downright ugly, the voice-acting is sometimes substandard; harder difficulty settings mostly lower the experience points you are awarded from combat; some fights are rigged in your favor; one chapter requires an outrageous amount of hot-spot hunting; and there are no subtitles available. Whew!

You can, however, play back important conversations using the journal feature; the number of saved games is limited only by disk space; the music is not irritating; there are some interesting puzzles; and there are so many potions and other healing options that your party will rarely need to rest for healing purposes, which keeps things moving.

Return to Krondor or Electronic Boutique?

RETURN TO KRONDOR also has a ton of potentially cool stuff: the ability to create potions using alchemy, a nifty lock-picking system, lots of loot, and a myriad of spells. The caveat to most of these role-playing revelries is that they are not adequately exploited. Most really good potions (including those that improve your weapons, defenses, or combat abilities) can be used only during combat and take an entire combat turn per potion to use. As soon as you start getting good at picking locks, you'll never have to do it again. Despite all the loot you find and sell, there is little of value in the game to buy. Beyond a few potions, scrolls, and other odd items, the only things worth buying are secret mage books, and you can buy these only through Chapter 3.

RETURN TO KRONDOR has tremendous potential, a good combat system, a fair story (for what there is of one), and a definite fun factor. However, it is completely underdeveloped; too short; shamefully unfinished in terms of its story; and far too linear, with very little to do besides follow the main story. If you're expecting anything remotely like the experience offered by BETRAYAL AT KRONDOR, you will be very disappointed. If all you want is a lightweight RPG for a long weekend, this game will serve you well. CGW

BEHOLD THE TEMPLE OF PRANDUR Visit this place often for cheap healing.

Petra Schlunk, when not gaming, reads mysteries and keeps a watchful eye on both her three-year-old and the mounting snow around her Michigan home.

Glory Be?

Sierra FX Delivers a Final Farewell for the Fans—But We Still Want More

by Elliott Chin

For some of you, HERO'S QUEST might be nothing more than a faint, fond memory. For many others, the name rings no bells and conjures no memories at all. If you are in the latter group, then you missed out on one of the true sleepers of the past decade

HERO'S QUEST was an adventure/RPG hybrid from Sierra On-Line that came out under its QUEST lineup, which included the KING'S QUEST and SPACE QUEST series. It differed from the other two series by virtue of its role-playing system and tactical combat, while still accommodating many adventure game-style mechanics, such as puzzles and character interaction.

HERO'S QUEST became QUEST FOR GLORY, and the series went onto four titles, all following the adventures of the main character, appropriately named "Hero." With the conclusion of QUEST FOR GLORY IV, Sierra decided to abandon the franchise, but vehement fan protest has brought the series back for one final game. While QUEST FOR GLORY V isn't likely to win over anyone new, it will serve as a fond farewell for all those longtime fans who want to guide Hero through one last adventure.

CLASS REUNION QUEST FOR GLORY V is Hero's final adventure, and all his old friends, including the liontaur Rekeesh, are here to say farewell.

The King and I

QUEST FOR GLORY V: DRAGON FIRE plays much like the other games in the series. It's amazing that I could remember how the old games played, since the last time I touched a QUEST FOR GLORY game was more than four years ago (an eon in computer game time). Still, playing QUEST V was like riding a bike—I picked it up immediately As the real farewell to the series, Lon and Corey (designers on all the QUEST games) have rounded up all the old characters and transported them to the land of Silmaria, so the gang's all here for the last hurrah. Among the many familiar faces are your liontaur friend Rakeesh, the mage Erasmus, the minotaur Toro, child-turned-brigand leader Elsa von Spielburg, the shadowy Bruno, the dark master Katrina, and the fairy Erana.

As the game opens, the land of Silmaria faces a series of disasters. The Dragon of Doom, a massive creature that destroyed Atlantis and was subsequently banished under a mountain, is awakened by a mysterious, evil figure. The seven pillars that bind the dragon to the mountain are being destroyed one by one. When the last one falls, the dragon will be free to burn Silmaria to ashes. And that's not all. Brigands swarming from a base in the islands to the west have captured the fishing villages surrounding Silmaria. The tritons who live in the submerged husk of Atlantis are at war with Silmaria as well. To top this all off, the King of Silmaria has been assassinated.

JUST GIMME A HINT The interface needs improvement. It's almost impossible to find the crene opereting panel on this pletform. A cursor thet distingulshed between ective and nonective items would heve helped.

Of course, all this danger is like a beacon to our Hero, and the mage Erasmus and the liontaur Rakeesh arrange for Hero to be entered into the Rites of Rulership, which determine who should be crowned the next king of Silmaria. Five contestants vie for the crown, but you have another purpose aside from the obvious. While the others are busy with the Rites, you'll be tracking down the assassin.

The Rites of Rulership constitute the game's seven major quests. Aside from these main quests, there also side quests that don't have to be completed—however, they will give you special items, open new lines of dialogue with NPCs, and add to your score. The first two quests are very straightforward, but the later quests are less linear. In some ways, this is

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★½☆☆

APPEAL: QUEST FOR GLORY fans and old-school adventure/RPG gamers.

PROS: Good story; plenty of quests; continually updating dialogue and characters; corny humor

CONS: Pixel-hunting gameplay, sometimes awkward combat; bugs; average graphics.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, Windows 95/98, 32MB RAM, 500MB hard-drive space, 6x CD ROM drive, 1MB SVGA graphics card, mouse, sound card.

3D SUPPORT: 3Dfx Glide.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: None.

Price: $49.95
Publisher: Sierra FX
Oakhurst, CA
(800) 757-7707

www.sierrafx.com

MECHWARRIOR3

HAVOC BEGINS
MAY 1999

©1999 Hasbro Interactive, Inc. All Rights Reserved. MICROPROSE is a trademark of Hasbro or its affiliated companies. *MechWarrior* and Mech are trademarks of FASA Corporation. Used under license. All other trademarks are the property of their respective holders.

FASA CORPORATION

HASBRO Interactive

MICROPROSE
www.microprose.com

A HELLUVA TRIP Although the gameworld is actually pretty small, your quests will take you to several fantastic locations, including Hades.

good. You are left to think up solutions on your own, and to find your own way of arriving at those solutions. Some quests are clever, but others will leave you wandering around the gameworld, lost and frustrated. The middle game, especially, feels too much like an adventure game in which you have to poke and prod at every single pixel, looking for certain items.

She's Funny... and Funny-looking

While the plot, dialogue, and character interaction is very good, the graphics just aren't up to par. There is no 3D acceleration for Hero (who is polygonal), which makes him look blocky close-up. Some of the prerendered backgrounds look nice, but others are too grainy for you to discern smaller objects on the screen (a problem when hunting for small items).

The humor and style of the previous QUEST games comes through wholly intact in this final chapter. QUEST FOR GLORY has always had a juvenile sense of humor with bad jokes and sexual innuendo. It's something that longtime fans have come to expect from the series, so I didn't mind it. However, were I not a fan of the series, I don't know if I would appreciate the game's humor. Some of the voice-acting was good, but other voices were strained and annoying (Cerberus is especially terrible). The music was good, with some excellent tracks and event-specific music.

Two of my biggest complaints about the game are the combat and the lack of a zoom feature. If you are caught in a battle at the end of the map, you and your target are barely large enough to click on. (This is exacerbated by the Shrink spell.)

The interface makes the problem even worse. There's no distinguishing between "hot" items and useless ones—a nightmare when you're trying to find a specific item or panel (like the crane operation panel on Science Island). The cursor should light up when you pass over items you can pick up, locations of interest, or enemies and characters.

Real Role-playing

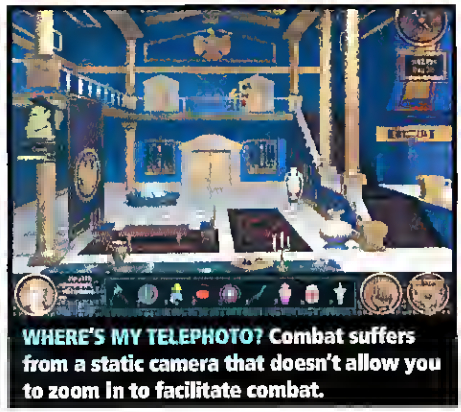
I do like that the game plays differently depending on which character you choose. Each class has a few extra quests and abilities, and solutions to certain puzzles and combat differ depending on your character's abilities. This accentuates the role-playing aspect of the game and increases the potential for replay, if you can stomach some of the game's faults.

Overall, QUEST FOR GLORY is a pretty good game, but much of what fueled my desire to play the game was nostalgia. The game plays very much like what I remembered, but with added stories and the chance to revisit old acquaintances. That's what I wanted. However, gamers unused to QUEST FOR GLORY might be put off by the less-than-stellar graphics and "old-school" gameplay.

Call Orkin

Gamers also might not want to put up with the bugs in QUEST FOR GLORY V. I ran into a few, and people on the forums have complained about several others. Some bugs prevent the completion of certain side quests, while others will dump you out to the desktop. The promised multiplayer support is absent, as well, although a patch is supposed to enable it in the future.

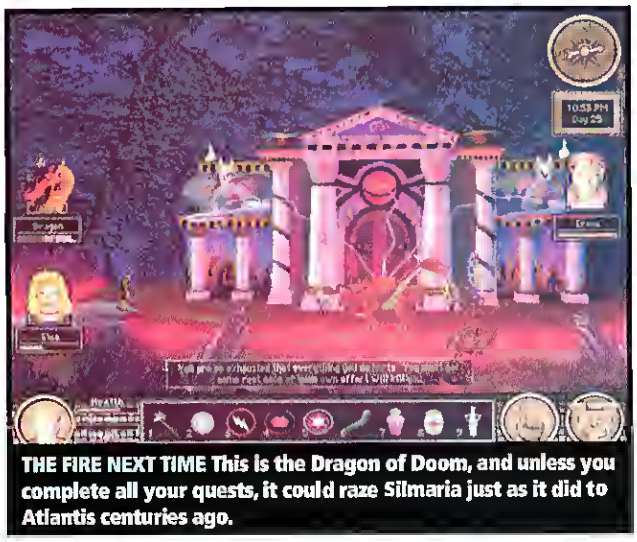
I really enjoyed the first 10 hours of QUEST FOR GLORY V, but as the game wore on, I became more frustrated by the pacing of the game and the pixel-hunting. A better interface, a quest log that showed you what you had to do, and better handling of combat would have alleviated some of my concerns. The ending was a letdown.



WHERE'S MY TELEPHOTO? Combat suffers from a static camera that doesn't allow you to zoom in to facilitate combat.

As the final farewell to our Hero, this game should have at least included an epilogue of some sort that let you know what happened to Hero and all his companions. As it was, once I finished the game, I felt very disappointed. As a fan of the series, I want another game—one that fixes the problems and bugs of this one. Let's hope Sierra can be convinced to make another "farewell" to the series so that we can retire Hero with no regrets. CGW

Elliott Chin is previews editor at GameSpot *and he left* Computer Gaming World *because he heard we were implementing author bios. Still, he continues to write reviews for us.*



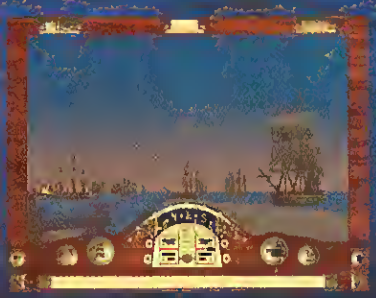
THE FIRE NEXT TIME This is the Dragon of Doom, and unless you complete all your quests, it could raze Silmaria just as it did to Atlantis centuries ago.

Watch
HORATIO HORNBLOWER
Beginning Sunday, April 4th on
A&E

Man of War II

The order is given. Prepare for battle!

In the explosive tradition of Man of War comes the all new high seas combat of Man of War 2. Take command as a Fleet Admiral, Division Commander or Ship's Captain and face the fury of a broadside, the terror of a boarding action and the thrill of a glorious victory in a dramatic real-time first person perspective.



SET SAIL FOR HIGH SEAS ADVENTURE

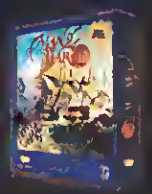
COMING THIS MARCH!

www.strategyfirst.com

©1998 Strategy First Inc. All rights reserved. Man of War 2 is a trademark of Strategy First All rights reserved.
All other trademarks and copyrights are the properties of their respective owners.

Strategy First

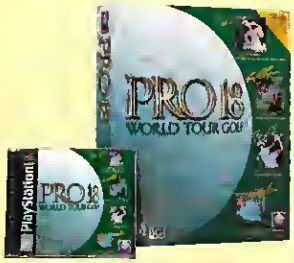
RATING PENDING
RP
ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE RATING BOARD



All the realism of an 18 hole golf course.

(Without the nasty goose droppings!)

Pro 18: World Tour Golf is the biggest thing to hit golf since titanium clubs. Unrivaled attention to course detail and TV-style coverage make a perfect foursome when combined with some of the hottest pro players and our groundbreaking 4-click swing system. Tee off on some of the world's greatest courses including Royal County Down (Ireland), The Lost City (South Africa) and Coeur d'Alene (USA). Piqued your interest? For a free demo check out www.psygnosis.com/pro18/. And while you're there, find out how you can win a real trip to The Coeur d'Alene Resort.



Pro 18's 3rd hole, Coeur d'Alene

Actual 3rd hole, Coeur d'Alene

"Honestly, if you're playing the course and you're playing the game, there is no difference!"

—Bill Reagan,
General Manager,
The Coeur D'Alene Resort

PSYGNOSIS

PlayStation

PC CD ROM

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

IG

www.psygnosis.com/pro18/

Lehman • Montgomerie • Singh • [illegible]

PRO 18
WORLD TOUR GOLF

© 1998 Intelligent Games Ltd/Psygnosis Ltd. Designed by Intelligent Games. Pro 18 World Tour Golf, Psygnosis and the Psygnosis logo are™ or © Psygnosis Limited. All rights reserved. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

Warm Wheels

MOTO RACER 2 Is a Smashing Good Time—but It's Not as Great as the Original

BUNGLE IN THE JUNGLE Starting from the last row at Amazonia, this pair of riders comes straight at ya.

by Gordon Goble

MOTO RACER 2 (MR2) is Electronic Arts' latest word on arcade superbike and motocross racing. It's fast and extremely invigorating, but at times you'll feel like a rubber-squealing pinball. However, it does feature some of the best racing graphics going outside of a coin-op machine. The catch is you'll need a knockout system to run it properly.

Developed by Delphine Software, MR2 is a study in unadulterated speed, snap-your-joystick corners, bone-crushing crashes, and big air. It's also a study in how tight tracks and dreaded invisible track-side boundaries can prevent a good game from being a great game.

Death on Two Wheels

Like the original MOTO RACER, MR2 puts you on a powerful dirt bike or hyper-powerful superbike and thrusts you into take-no-prisoners action on an assortment of circuits suited to the chosen style of competition. Racing modes range from practice and time attack to single races and championships. User preferences include weather, time-of-day, field size, number of laps, and a bounty of sound and display options.

Garages are notably absent, though you do have a choice of several bike configurations that highlight performance characteristics. You can tweak such things as brakes, grip, acceleration, and top speed. And believe me, you'd better make the right selection or you'll be smacking invisible boundaries or dropping out of the running halfway through the first lap. And it's those almost unavoidable collisions that form my one big complaint with the game.

The one true challenge of MR2 is keeping your steed within the sometimes excruciatingly narrow confines of the racing area and off those damned invisible boundaries. Make contact with a boundary in arcade mode and you'll slow to a crawl or bounce to the other side of the track; hit one in simulation mode and you'll be unceremoniously dumped to the ground. To make matters worse, said force-field may protrude onto the racing surface, sit halfway back on a shoulder, or be built into a visible wall—you won't know until you get there.

With perseverance and a lot of experience you'll begin to appreciate all that MR2 has going for it. Visually, it's simply stunning. If your PC meets the rigid system specs, get ready for a solid and exceptionally detailed 3D world filled with color, convincing lighting and shadowing, and 3D-accelerated effects such as transparent smoke, water spray, lens flare, and more.

Ambient audio is in keeping with what you'd hear if you were crazy enough to do this in the real world. Unfortunately, the commentator is an example of coin-op annoyance, spouting pearls like "Yeah!" and "You're the last one."

Road Rage

The racing? Well, it's wild, baby, with just one speed setting: fast. Superbike racing, especially in arcade mode, is a wickedly quick exercise, with just a hint of real-life subtlety and lots of breakneck racing, while simulation mode offers less forgiving, slightly more realistic corners. Motocross racing is a mixed bag. Collision detection isn't up to snuff, and the available stunt possibilities are purely for your own enjoyment—they won't improve your score. Regardless of the mode, inclement weather has virtually no effect, and the artificially intelligent riders are anything but.

The tracks, meanwhile—though there are quite a few of them and they are certainly enhanced by MR2's extremely easy-to-use course editor—are too narrow and have a slight "cookie-cutter" feel.

Did Delphine miss the mark with MR2? Pretty much. The company set quite a benchmark with the first game, and MOTO RACER 2 just doesn't live up to that legacy. For a great motorcycle sim, find a copy of the first MOTO RACER. CGW

Gordon Goble likes fast women and loose cars.

HOT ENOUGH FOR YOU? Five riders lean into it through MOTO RACER 2's sandy Sahara course.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★☆☆

APPEAL: Motorcycle racing fans.

PROS: Pretty pictures; fast action; lots of racing modes and tracks; course editor.

CONS: Lack of originality; lame commentary; barriers; narrow circuits.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, Windows 95/98, 32MB RAM, 4x CD-ROM drive, Direct Draw-compatible 2MB 2D video card or 4MB 3D accelerator board.

3D SUPPORT: 3dfx Voodoo1 & 2, Voodoo rush, Voodoo Banshee, Intel i740, nVidia RIVA 128 and RIVA TNT, Matrox G200, ATI 3D Rage Pro and Rage 128, 3D Labs Permedia, RenditionV2100.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Serial or modem (2 players), LAN (2–8 players); 1 CD for host.

Price $44.95

Publisher EA
Redwood City, CA
(800) 245-4525

www.motoracer2.com

To the Curb!

TEST DRIVE 5 Is a Racing Game That Looks Better Parked

by Brett Todd

As a Chrysler muscle-car buff from way back, I've been seriously looking forward to TEST DRIVE 5. I've never been much of a fan of the series, but getting the chance to virtually drive beauties like the '71 Hemi Barracuda, and the original '69 Dodge Charger Daytona has had my mouth watering for some time. Combine that with modern supercars like the Dodge Viper, Shelby Series 1, and Jaguar XJ220, and you've got all the makings of a great game...in theory, at least.

Fun, Meet Brick Wall

If you could play TEST DRIVE 5 by just looking at the box, you'd have a blast. The option list and car photos alone do a lot for the auto aficionado. You'd need a parking garage to hold all of the available cars. With 28 licensed vehicles representing the cream of the automotive crop from the past 30 years, there's a lot to choose from. And there are 18 tracks to run these puppies on—far more than any other racing game.

Along with single events, you can take part in six cup circuits that include 4–12 races apiece; a drag race; and you can even play as a cop out to apprehend speeders. Multiplayer options include split-screen play and modem, serial, or LAN games.

Once you boot up the game, however, the problems begin. A poor physics model is the most obvious flaw. There is little difference between playing with a gamepad and playing with a wheel and pedals. In some ways I think that the gamepad provides more accurate control, which says it all. Vehicles tend to float—it just never seems like you have all four tires on terra firma, and quite often you don't. Make even the tiniest of oversteering errors and you'll either go up on two wheels or bounce around like one of the stunt cars from *Bulworth*.

Crashes are more annoying than anything else. Minor collisions often bounce you all over the road. The most inoffensive of side-swipes will often push you onto the shoulder. Even the huge, heavy 'Cuda has little chance against relatively flimsy modem jobs like the Aston Martin Vantage. That is, as long as you're driving it. Reverse the roles and you'll find it impossible to spin out one of the computer-guided cars, or even push them out of the way. It's also impossible to accumulate damage. So feel free to spank that guard rail as much as you'd like.

Using automatic transmission is usually a bad idea in driving games, but TEST DRIVE 5 takes this handicap to new lows. Shifting is ridiculously early, so you lose a lot of ground right off the mark. The PC also can't figure out what to do after a wipe-out. So instead of dropping into reverse to get away from that nasty rock-cut, you get to grind slowly past it in first gear. I've been stuck for as long as 30 seconds before just giving in and hitting the Escape key.

Video and audio also miss the mark. The Direct3D-accelerated graphics are nice in spots, but are cluttered up with 2D sprites. Objects in the distance are flat, jagged, and appear out of nowhere. The game's sound is atrocious. The older cars sound like coffee grinders and the newer ones wouldn't make a sewing machine flinch.

As if all this isn't enough to dissuade you, Accolade has bought into the "lock it out and they'll play more" philosophy. Meaning that you have to put in a fair bit of time winning cups to enable all of the cars and tracks. What is the point of this? Locking out a large portion of the vehicles promised on the box is tantamount to fraud, since some buyers just won't be able to best all of the courses

Spin Out

TEST DRIVE 5 fails on just about every level. Unless you're desperate for the muscle cars that have been inexplicably left out of EA's far-superior NEED FOR SPEED III, there's no need to buy this game. CGW

Brett Todd still likes racing games, even after being forced to review this one.

BABY ON BOARD? One of the few cool things about TEST DRIVE 5 is the carnage left in the wake of the competing cars.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★½☆☆☆

APPEAL: Good question.

PROS: Huge variety of tracks and cars included.

CONS: Oddly sedate gameplay; poor physics; locked out cars and tracks.

OIFFICULTY: Easy

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 133, Windows 95/98, 16MB RAM, 150MB free hard-drive space, 4x CD-ROM, DirectX-compatible sound card.

3D SUPPORT: Second-generation Direct3D-compatible cards (all major chipsets), 3Dfx Glide.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN (2–6 players; 1 CD per player), hotseat (2 players).

Price: $44.95

Publisher: Accolade
San Jose, CA
(408) 296-8400

www.accolade.com

JUST SAY NYET Barreling down Moscow streets at 100 MPH has its hazards.

REVIEW • TEST DRIVE OFF-ROAD 2

Into the Ditch

by Gordon Goble

Let's see...snip the cord that leads to my joystick, blow up my computer, smash my fingers with a hammer, or burn the disk beyond recognition, encase it in cement, and drop it off a tall bridge. There's just gotta be some way to ensure that I never again mistakenly engage in another depressing bout of TEST DRIVE OFF-ROAD 2 (TDOR 2).

The game offers just one 150MB install option, a minuscule manual, and no online help. On the game's Options menu, there are no options. Well, nearly. You do get three difficulty settings, some audio adjustments, and of course, oh-so-important menu language and speedometer readout preferences. Oh yeah, there's also a Default View setting, though it works on a numerical system only, leaving you wondering just which view a "1," "3," or "6" signifies. As it turns out, all but one are variations on a rear chase perspective, and the one that isn't is a front bumper cam—there are no cockpit views. You can't alter graphics, race distances, or rules. You can't custom assign buttons on your controller, unless it has its own external programming utility. There's no garage or upgrade shop.

All this and I haven't even talked about driving. That's because there isn't much to it. The game offers arcade depictions of 20 licensed real-life off-road vehicles and a dozen courses, although most cars and circuits are unlocked only with winning rides.

Though it's supposedly an "off-road" game, the tracks are enclosed, with visible boundaries and invisible force fields forcing strict adherence to recognized thoroughfares. Most of the terrain consists of huge and ugly patterned chunks of texture repeated over and over. Obstacles are strewn about each circuit to impede your progress, though you can drive right through many of them. You can bang up against a cliffside or other boundary only to have it disappear completely, getting an unfettered view of the landscape behind it. Vehicles feature no damage modeling in either a visual or practical sense and do not come equipped with rear-view mirrors.

All in all, it's a new low for the TEST DRIVE series and for racing games in general. CGW

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★☆☆☆☆

APPEAL: Masochistic racing fans.

PROS: Lots of tracks and vehicles, jolting ride.

CONS: Amateur interfaces, virtually no user settings; many more.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 133 (with 3D card) or P200 (no 3D card), Windows 95/98, 16MB RAM, 150MB hard-drive space, 2x CD-ROM drive, DirectX6-compatible sound card, DirectX6-compatible graphic card

3D SUPPORT: 3Dfx.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN

Price $39.95

Publisher: Accolade, Inc.
(800) 245-7744

www.accolade.com

REVIEW • NEWMAN/HAAS RACING

Off the Wall

by Gordon Goble

Sporting horrendous car control, comical collisions, and embarrassingly shabby commentary, NEWMAN/HAAS just doesn't cut the mustard.

With 11 real-life tracks—most of which are part of the CART series—and 16 real-life drivers and cars, developer Studio 33 has gone to some lengths to ensure an authentic flair. Terms such as CART and Indy are avoided, and certain sponsors are absent, but it's as close to a CART-sanctioned title as you're gonna get without the actual licensing.

Visually, NEWMAN/HAAS is actually impressive and at first quite believable. Though distant objects tend to "sparkle" a bit, the cars and circuits look great, tire smoke is pretty and structures and other trackside scenery have a real sense of completion.

Sadly though, it's a downhill ride from there. Driving is an exercise in frustration. Feel the wrath of the omnipresent emergency brake as you accelerate from a stop or decelerate to one. Pendulum suddenly into a wall or competitor as you zig-zag down a straightaway. Experience the horror of the non-turning NEWMAN/HAAS physics model should you attempt to any corner at any sort of decent speed. I kid you not—it's that quirky.

Adding to the terror, the tranny shifts automatically down to 1st while the camera does a disorienting reverse zoom at just the slightest hint of contact. Worse still, even the most severe of collisions results in little more than a bumper car-type bounce and the upheaval of a few spare polygons—until the sixth or so such incident that is, at which point a real part such as a tire might pop off before you are summarily dismissed from the event.

The game won't let you drive as yourself, refuses to allow custom controller configuration, and permits menu navigation only through a bunch of weird keys. The voice commentary is beyond bad. Shall I continue? I think not. Next exit: the junkyard. CGW

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★☆☆☆☆

APPEAL: Arcade racing fans.

PROS: Inspiring graphics.

CONS: Bizarre handling; ridiculous crash modeling, nonsensical commentary.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 133, Windows 95, 16MB RAM, 2x CD-ROM drive, DirectSound-compatible sound card, 3D accelerator card

3D SUPPORT: 3Dfx

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN (2–8 players); 1 CD per player.

Price $44.99

Publisher: Psygnosis
(800) GET PSYG

www.newman-haas.com

It's a Strike!

Adrenalin Entertainment Rolls a Great, but Not Perfect, Game

by Scott A. May

Let's be brutally honest: In the wide, wide world of sports, bowling probably ranks up there with foosball and air hockey on the list of fashionable indoor recreation. Fine, that just leaves more open lanes for the rest of us.

But in the appreciably smaller world of PC bowling sims, Adrenalin Entertainment's BRUNSWICK CIRCUIT PRO BOWLING easily stands head and shoulders above anything that's come before it. Which isn't much, so you've got to take what you can get.

I'll admit to having a bad taste in my mouth since Adrenalin's horrific Windows port of its outstanding PlayStation bowling game, TEN PIN ALLEY. The graphics were awful and the control was total junk. Luckily, Adrenalin redeems itself, more or less, with this fine simulation.

BRAINS, NOT BEAUTY The graphics in CIRCUIT PRO BOWLING may be average, but the ball and pin physics are spectacular.

Everything but the Smell

Up to six players can compete on a single machine or network, choosing from a nice selection of game modes: exhibition, tournament, skins game, career, and Cosmic Bowl. There's also an excellent practice mode, where you can exercise your release or spin sans pins, or work on those maddening spares using the pin setter. Career mode is great for compiling stats and tracking your progress (or decline). Cosmic Bowl is a novelty designed to induce flashbacks, featuring neon lanes and glow-in-the-dark balls and pins. Groovy.

Your bowling alter-ego can be created from scratch, including three levels of difficulty, bowling hand, and sundry physical options. You can also bowl as, or against, up to five real-life professional bowlers, such as Mike Aulby, Curtis Odom, Steve Jaros, and Chris Barnes. Although THQ swears there are 13 pro bowlers in this circuit, I could find only 8 on the menu. Each digital pro simulates the same style and attributes as their real-world counterparts. Not that most of us would know.

Other setup options include the choice of six authentically simulated Brunswick bowling balls, from the wickedly fast Speed Demon to the ultimate pin killer, the Quantum Raven. If you're a rookie bowler, learning the subtle graces of each ball is one of the game's great pleasures. There are also 15 bowling clubs from which to choose, ranging from Akron, Ohio, to Munich, Germany. The main difference between each location is the oil pattern, pyramid, top hat, ramp, flat, and blend used to coat the lanes. Oil patterns directly affect release, ball traction, spin, and pin action.

When you finally hit the lanes, you're greeted by surprisingly simple controls for stance, aiming, spin, backswing, and release. CIRCUIT PRO BOWLING uses a three-click horizontal meter system for approach, power, and release, controlled via mouse or keyboard. Although I hate twitch-and-click sports sims based on reaction time instead of skill, I'll make an exception because this one is so smooth.

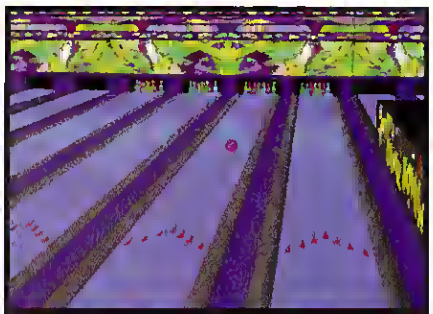
The best thing about this game is its realistic ball and pin action. It looks great, but feels even better. Bowling is a tactile sport, and this sim feels just right. All this realism is backed up by fast, smooth animation, accompanied by crisp sound samples and a terrific frame-by-frame replay feature. Bowler animation is also smooth. The mirrored surface of the polished lanes (3D hardware only) is a killer effect.

Boy's Club

Despite all these strikes, CIRCUIT PRO BOWLING rolls its share of gutter balls. The most glaring is the lack of female bowlers, and to a lesser extent, juvenile bowlers. In one of the few mixed-gender pro sports, such an omission is staggering. Other complaints include lackluster use of 3D accelerated graphics, spotty texturing, and lack of a recorded play feature, à la LINKS.

That said, BRUNSWICK CIRCUIT PRO BOWLING is still the best bowling simulation yet for the PC. Adrenalin and Brunswick are reportedly already at work on a sequel. Next time, let's hope they include the ladies. CGW

Scott May once worked as a pin monkey, but swears he's never used alley balls or rental shoes. Right.



PURPLE HAZE For a change of pace, try your hand at Cosmic Bowl, with black-light balls, pins, and garish colors galore.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆

APPEAL: Bowling fans of all ages.

PROS: Ultra-realistic ball and pin physics; great practice area; large selection of game types and lane patterns to choose from; fast action; excellent instant replay.

CONS: No female bowlers; spotty texture mapping; no recorded games; overall poor use of 3D hardware capabilities.

DIFFICULTY: Easy.

REQUIREMENTS: Windows 95/98, Pentium 133 or faster, 3MB hard drive space, 16MB RAM, 1MB of VRAM (4 MB VRAM if 3D accelerated), 4x CD-ROM drive, mouse, supports all Windows compatible sound cards.

3D SUPPORT: ATI Rage Pro, 3Dfx

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: TCP/IP (2–6 players), 1 CD per player.

Price: $34.95

Publisher: THQ, Inc.
Calabasa, CA
(818) 225-5167

www.thq.com

Mad Max Redux

Slide Your Way Around Turns and Into the Apocalyptic Future

by Brett Todd

Early in the 21st century, the ozone layer melts away, frying everything green and groovy above ground. Wars over the few remaining resources ensue. Six billion people bite it and the few survivors move underground. The good news? All those dead folks left behind some really cool cars. With entertainment in scarce supply, joyriders slap together some powerful machines and hit the desert for some rip-roaring fun. Within a few years, they've been coined "Powersliders" and a semi-pro racing circuit has been established. That's the story behind POWERSLIDE, a futuristic racing game well-worth the attention of almost any arcade racing buff.

Slip-slidin' Away

The object of POWERSLIDE is straightforward: Win races by any means possible. As you might expect, there is a lot of power-sliding into and out of turns. So get used to slamming on that hand-brake. Actual gaming options include time trials, solo races, and championships. There are four difficulty settings, ranging from easy to insane, although these only affect the smarts and aggression of the computer drivers.

BIMBEAU A-GO-GO Characters in the game have full bios, including champagne party girl Bimbeau Escargeaugeau.

AHHH, SO THAT'S WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE Capturing screens and then looking back on what you just did is about the only way to appreciate the fast-moving graphics in POWERSLIDE.

Once you decide on a challenge, you pick a vehicle. Each is rated in a number of different categories according to power, speed, traction, and so on. Then you take on the role of a specific character. Along with the fairly detailed plot that sets things up, there are also more than a dozen drivers provided, complete with goofy bios. This gives the title a lot of personality, though it makes little difference as to how the game plays out.

Classified Information

Perhaps the biggest problem with POWERSLIDE is how to categorize it. Due to the futuristic backstory, you'd have to call it an arcade racer, but that belittles what the developers, Ratbag, have accomplished by way of accurate physics. Cars roll with the dunes, and tires respond exactly as they should—meaning you immediately feel the difference between asphalt and sand. There's a great sensation of speed whether you're just blasting dead-ahead or powersliding your way into a tunnel. It's impossible to say exactly how a late 21st century car would handle on UV-ravaged soil and smashed-up highways, but this seems like a damn good guess.

Unfortunately, it's somewhat debatable as to whether this is a good thing, since you're almost always losing control. Short of cheat codes, there is no way to dial down the physics. Ratbag just tosses you into the deep end, and things can be frustrating. Losing both the back end and most of your momentum on the turns is nothing short of maddening.

All of this is exacerbated by the courses, which are nothing more than a collection of suicide curves. You're always heading into a hairpin or driving through one. This leads to some pretty frenetic, exciting gameplay, but only for a while. Everything gets repetitive once you realize that the whole challenge consists of flooring it on the few straightaways and using the handbrake to slide your way into turns. You're also never more than one miscue away from last place.

UH, CAN I GET OUT AND WALK? The other tracks have nothing on the bonus luge course.

Throw Away the Key

It's not great, but despite the flaws, POWERSLIDE is one of those games that you can't stop playing. Don't expect much in the way of longevity, but you really couldn't ask for more of an intense arcade experience. This is a very good first game, and I only hope that enough people take notice of it to warrant Ratbag doing a sequel. CGW

Brett Todd is actively looking forward to the apocalypse so that he can finally use his Charlton Heston impersonation. "They did it! They blew it up! You maniacs!"

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★☆☆

APPEAL: Arcade racing fans.

PROS: Great visuals; deep story and characterization.

CONS: No difficulty settings; slippery physics; much of the game initially locked out.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 133 MMX, Windows 95/98, 16MB RAM, 4x CD-ROM, 20MB hard-drive space, Hi-Color video card, DirectSound-compatible sound card.

3D SUPPORT: Second-generation Direct3D-compatible cards (all major chipsets), 3Dfx Glide.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: IPX, TCP/IP, modem (2–12 players); 1 CD per player.

Price: $34.99

Publisher: GT Interactive
New York, NY
(425) 398-3074

www.gtgames.com

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD EDITORS' CHOICE

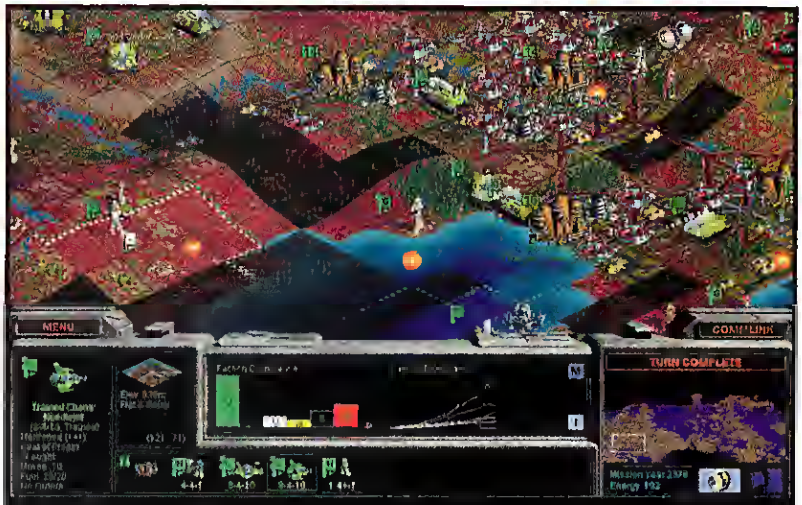
Winning the Space Race

ALPHA CENTAURI Is Great Stuff, Even by Sid Meier's Standards

by Tim Carter

Over the years—and especially after the megahit SID MEIER'S CIVILIZATION II—gamers have come to expect a lot from Sid Meier and Brian Reynolds. Even with the sky-high expectations for the designing duo's latest project, SID MEIER'S ALPHA CENTAURI, it's likely that few gamers will be disappointed. ALPHA CENTAURI, a Brian Reynolds design, is an obvious (albeit unofficial) continuation of the CIVILIZATION series, complete with all the deep, addictive gameplay of that magnum opus for turn-based strategy games.

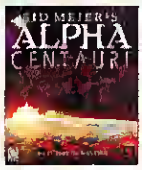
CIV II veterans will therefore have little difficulty understanding the game interface or the basic game system. Players are faced with the classic challenge of building an empire on a largely unknown planet while competing with six other factions. (The seven factions are all refugees from the spaceship launched at the end of CIV II, and each faction adheres to a different Earth philosophy.) Yet CIV-philes would be well advised to pay attention to the pop-up tutorials that begin running when a game is started, since much has changed beneath the surface.



USE YOUR AUTOGOVERNORS The ALPHA CENTAURI map looks nice, but it can become confusing when things get hectic late in the game.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★★



APPEAL: All strategy gamers, but especially CIVILIZATION and MOO fans.

PROS: Wonderful "hard" sci-fi setting, tough, adaptable AI, challenging environment; subtle diplomacy system—a quality game through and through.

CONS: Somewhat long endgame on large maps—that's about it.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 133, Windows 95/98, 16MB RAM, 100MB hard-drive space, 4x CD-ROM, SVGA DirectX-compatible sound and graphics cards

3D SUPPORT: None

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Modem (2 players), TCP/IP or LAN (2–7 players), 1 CD per player

Price: $49.95
Publisher: Firaxis/EA
San Mateo, CA
(800) 245-4525

www.ea.com

New Planet, New Challenges

Life in another star system is quite different from life on Earth, and the unknown planet and its inhabitants present players with a different and much more subtle set of challenges than Earth did in CIV II. For instance, in ALPHA CENTAURI the environment and your relationship with it greatly affect your strategies for success. Pollution has been rolled into a generic environmental damage rating for each city. Incongruity with the planet will bring on a host of problems, from destroyed facilities to hostile "brain worms" to increased growth of suffocating fungal foliage.

You can turn these problems into assets through better environmental technology, or you can engage in slash-and-burn, pollute-and-strip-mine strategies of economic growth. Don't expect the planet to stand idly by if you choose the latter course, however.

Along with a more active relationship with the environment, your faction now has many more ways to mold the planet to your liking. Terraforming units can radically alter the terrain, which in turn can affect weather patterns and the food and resources available to your cities.

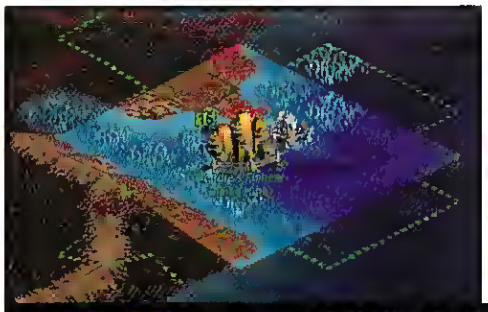
NEW PLANET POLITICS Customizing your political system is a key to success, but beware of getting into unnecessary ideological conflicts with your allies.

Once the planetary United Nations is convened and the requisite technology is available, factions or coalitions can also undertake to raise or lower entire oceans, greatly altering the map, the weather, and, obviously, your cities.

Machiavelli Wanted

If the environment has taken on a new significance, so too has politics. Through a social engineering menu, you may customize the ideology of your faction (based on the doctrines developed by your researchers) to meet your economic, social, and military needs. Be careful, however, as rival factions may find your political ideas highly threatening. A dangerous ideology can lose you allies and create enemies very quickly.

When you establish a base, the surrounding territory automatically accrues to your empire. The computer demarcates your borders based on the locations of your bases and proximity of competing bases. Borders, shown as a dotted line on the game map, allow for a more controlled diplomatic situation than was the case in CIV. You can and must defend your borders, and during peacetime you can expect them to be respected by others. Of course, you violate the



SALTWATER CITY Bases may now be built on land or sea. If the council votes to increase global temperatures, look for some of your land bases to become sea bases—or submerged ruins—in a hurry.

sovereignty of others at your peril as well.

As with cities in CIV, your bases house your population and serve as the economic centers of your empire. While restrictions on population and growth still exist, new technology will offer successful factions the chance to build much larger and more powerful cities—although supercities can be somewhat vulnerable to economic dirty tricks during wartime.

While the structures available obviously differ, the growing and maintaining of population centers hasn't changed much since CIV II. Your people must be kept happy in order to be productive, and they can be shifted into various specialties when necessary. Energy, nutrients, and minerals are the currency of ALPHA CENTAURI. They comprise the main commodities that your bases must produce. Population growth and the production of buildings and military units happen much as they did in CIV II (see "Military Options Galore" sidebar).

MY OWN PIECE OF LAND Bases still form the core of your economy and function much as cities did in CIV II.

The designers of ALPHA CENTAURI clearly put a lot of thought into the construction of the game's technology tree. Because the technology advancements don't have the cachet of history to give them context or emotional pull, it's a credit to the design team that after a few games one begins to anticipate certain key technologies almost as much as one did in CIV. At the same time, the distribution of abilities over the technology tree seems a lot more balanced, with no single technology offering the massive advantages that, for instance, the railroad gave to gamers in both CIV and CIV II.

Along with a very detailed manual (running to more than 250 pages), ALPHA CENTAURI comes with extensive online help and well thought-out tutorials. My version of the game ran smoothly, with no significant technical glitches or bugs. I did find the map somewhat hard to read in some circumstances (particularly in crowded battle situations) and would have liked more precise descriptions of the benefits of various structures on the buying and research screens.

The AI in ALPHA CENTAURI is quite clever. At higher difficulty levels, players can expect to be given a serious run for their money. Your own bases and terraforming units can also be placed under computer control. While the computer does an adequate job of running your economy, it tends to operate along generic growth principles that may not fit with the exact needs of your overall strategy. Once you tire of this, you can vie for dominance with up to six other humans via LAN or Internet in a very stable simultaneous turn-based environment.

The only fault I could find with ALPHA CENTAURI is that—as with most exploration, exploitation, and extermination games—gameplay is sometimes protracted long after a winner has been determined. The problem of overlong endgames has been greatly reduced from CIV II, but on a huge map can be somewhat taxing. Still, this is a small price to pay for an otherwise stellar game that will have players wasting time well into the wee hours. CGW

Tim Carter won't be done with ALPHA CENTAURI for a while, but he has promised to take breaks periodically to finish GRIM FANDANGO and HALF-LIFE.

NEEDS MORE SALT AND A BIGGER GUN You can design units from the ground up: This attack infantry also has AA abilities.

Military Options Galore

While combat in ALPHA CENTAURI may seem at first glance to be highly reminiscent of CIV and CIV II, significant changes in the construction of units gives army building and use an entirely new dimension. Here, you may design your units from a customized construction screen. Even though a wide range of weapons and armor are at your disposal, I generally found myself using the most up-to-date systems available.

The design component really shines in the assigning of special attributes. Each unit you design may have one or two additional abilities. Faced with an enemy who likes to use air power? You could build Interceptors and spend a lot of time and energy chasing down those attacking bombers. Or you can endow your basic infantry garrison units with SAM antiaircraft defenses.

You can also build a huge army of cannon-fodder type units (remember to use the "no support needed" special attribute to overwhelm a technologically superior enemy. Morale also plays a significant role in determining the strength of your army. Untried troops can suffer up to a 50 percent loss in strength, while elite troops gain significant bonuses. The combination of factors affecting troop strength, and their ability to influence all of them, gives gamers unprecedented control over the type and composition of their armed forces.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD EDITORS' CHOICE

Mythic Proportions

MYTH II: SOULBLIGHTER Is a Mighty Successor to a Great Game

by Robert B. Marks

With an incredible mixture of story and tactics, MYTH: THE FALLEN LORDS raised the bar of strategy gaming considerably and snagged *CGW*'s 1997 Strategy Game of the Year award to boot. Following such a groundbreaking game is no simple task, but by introducing exciting new game elements, enriching the graphics, and streamlining the interface, MYTH II: SOULBLIGHTER easily meets the high standard set by its predecessor.

MYTH II opens 60 years after the defeat of The Fallen Lords, and the kingdom of Murithemne has enjoyed a rare period of peace and prosperity under the rule of King Alric. But nothing good lasts forever. A small group of soldiers, investigating reports of grave-robbing in nearby Willow Creek, finds itself facing a group of undead, thus marking the dawn of a new and devastating war against the darkness. The final confrontation with the risen Fallen Lord, Soulblighter, awaits.

Like its predecessor, MYTH II is primarily a tactical game set in a lush, well-rendered world. But what a world it is this time around. Wildlife now graces the forests and grasses, and the landscape is rendered in resolutions up to 1024x768. Windmills spin lazily in a slight breeze, and some missions require drawbridges to be lowered and doors to be opened.

GHOST TOWN One of SOULBLIGHTER's coolest missions occurs in a haunted cave, where spectral warriors attack your troops.

Move It or Lose It

The addition of movable objects such as drawbridges brings a whole new dimension and level of challenge to the inventive set of missions—sieges, escort missions, defense assignments, indoor assaults, and one standout in which disappearing and reappearing ghosts bedevil you in a cave. Fortunately, you'll have new units well suited to meeting these challenges, including Warlocks who fire devastating fireballs, sturdy Heron Guards, and mortar-lobbing Dwarves. Perhaps the biggest tactical advancement is the use of fire—bowmen can now shoot flaming arrows to set the ground ablaze.

Of course, the other side has some new things to throw at you as well. Gamers can expect to face cannon fire and some deadly new monsters, including the werewolflike Myrkridia, brutal Mauls, and the undead Stygian Knights.

Multiplayer options have been expanded with three new types of games: Assassin, Stampede, and Hunting. In Assassin, players compete to assassinate the baron of the opposing team. Stampede and Hunting both involve the game's wildlife. In Stampede, the object is to move your herd to the enemy flags; Hunting involves the killing of any available wildlife.

CANUS HORRIBILIS The werewolflike Myrkridia, only hinted at in MYTH, make their savage debut in MYTH II.

FLAME ON! The use of fire adds new strategic elements to gameplay. Here a group of archers use a barrage of flaming arrows to cover a dwarf's retreat.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★½

APPEAL: Strategy gamers and fans of MYTH: THE FALLEN LORDS.

PROS: Refined gameplay and environment, new units, good story; map and character editors.

CONS: Some inconsistencies in gameplay and story, some AI flaws, incomplete tutorial.

DIFFICULTY: Advanced.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 133 Windows 95/98/NT 4.0 (Service pack 3), 32MB RAM, 100MB hard-drive space, 4x CD-ROM, DirectX 6.0 compatible video and sound, mouse, 28.8-Kbps modem for Internet play.

Macintosh: 100MHz PowerPC 601, System 7.5, 32MB RAM, 4x CD-ROM, 16-bit color, mouse, 28.8-Kbps modem for Internet play.

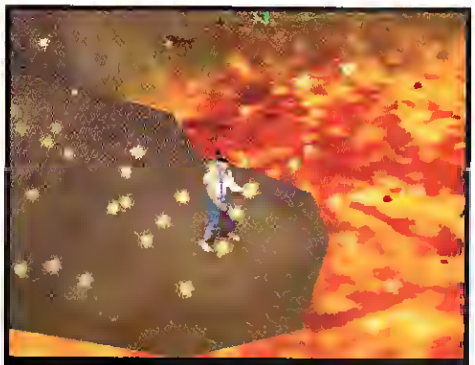
3D SUPPORT: Direct3D, 3Dfx, and Rendition.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Direct TCP/IP connection, Appletalk (Mac only), LAN, Internet via bungie.net (2–16 players), one CD per player.

Price: $49.95
Publisher: Bungie
Chicago, IL
(312) 255-9600

www.bungie.com

INTERIOR DEVASTATION MYTH II's more complex game environments let you take the battle indoors.



LORO OF FIRE The final mission lets you confront Soulblighter, the lava-loving Fallen Lord who wants you and your friends dead.

No Obscene Gestures

For some gamers, the biggest challenge in MYTH was getting a handle on the interface, particularly the "gesture-click" commands for unit facing. While the original interface is still there for MYTH veterans, everything—unit facing and camera movement especially—can be handled easily with the mouse. A handy control bar at the bottom of the screen makes unit commands and formations a one-click snap, and a dialog box can be called to get mission objectives and hints for each level.

Best of all for the legions of die-hard fans, Bungie has included its mission and unit editors, FEAR and LOATHING. FEAR allows gamers to change the parameters of the gameworld, from unit strengths to the physics of waterfalls, while LOATHING can be used to alter existing maps or create new ones. These powerful tools finally allow the gamer to alter the environment.

Hit or Myth

This is not to say that MYTH II is perfect. The unit pathfinding, while improved, is still faulty. Also, units can sometimes disobey orders and not change targets when asked (which, if it is a Dwarf or Warlock, can cause some problems with friendly fire). There is also a minor bug that causes a disappearing mouse in the multiplayer screens.

The tutorial is also problematic. While it serves as a good introduction to a new unit (the Warlock), it does not introduce any others. And while it introduces the gamer to the keyset used by MYTH: THE FALLEN LORDS, it does not deal with the new mouse-view movement or the control bar. The manual also falls somewhat short in explaining the magic system.

There are also some oversights in game consistency, both with the story and missions. As in MYTH, every mission is introduced with a journal entry. In some cases, however, the journal entry has only a tenuous connection to the mission. Bungie also made a puzzling choice at the end of the game. In the penultimate mission, Alric has an incredibly powerful magic sword; in the final mission, however, Alric has left this sword behind. While this makes the final mission quite challenging, it does not make a great deal of sense.

In the end, these flaws prove to be relatively minor. MYTH II is a standout game and certainly worth playing. Bungie has taken the predecessor, refined it, and created a very worthy sequel. CGW

Robert B. Marks is a fourth-year student of medieval history and literature at Queen's University.

REDNECK RAMPAGE A secret level lets you load up some heavy-duty blunderbusses and take some good ol' boys deer hunting.

MYTH AND THE Medieval Battlefield

Both MYTH and MYTH II are remarkable games because, unlike almost every other real-time strategy game, they come extremely close to reproducing the actual conditions of medieval battle. Any battle, by nature, is a changing dynamic, making good use of manpower and high ground imperative.

The bowmen in both titles are very close to their actual medieval equivalents. The most famous archers are longbowmen, considered to have originated in Wales. The Welsh longbow was able to punch a hole through an oak door at a relatively long range. The continental equivalent, the crossbow, was even more powerful, but slow to use and shorter ranged.

The berserks are similar to the Norse berserkers. The berserkers appeared during the Viking wars of the 9th and 10th centuries and were renowned and feared for their skill in combat. They fought in a rage wearing animal skins or nothing at all, and usually used axes or swords. The speed and ferocity of the berserks in MYTH mirror the frightening savagery of their real-life inspiration.

While there are no real comparisons to be made to the Dwarven units, the new Dwarven Mortars actually have a medieval counterpart, albeit tenuous, in the form of cannons that appeared in the 14th century for siege warfare.

The MYTH games miss the mark with the warriors, however. Infantry of the Middle Ages used polearms and axes. The sword was extremely expensive and was generally used only by the nobility before the 15th century.

One element of the authentic medieval battlefield is missing entirely, and that is the knighthood. The knighthood usually began each battle with a "heavy shock charge," using lances and horses to break up enemy formations. The infantry and archers would then take care of the rest.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD EDITORS' CHOICE

The Best Gets Better

More Units, More Missions, More Strategy Means More STARCRAFT Fun

by Robert Coffey

How do you top 1998's Strategy Game of the Year, a game that ranks as the definitive real-time strat title? Well, how about by releasing an add-on disc that sets the standard for mission packs. Once again, Blizzard shows the rest of the computer gaming industry how it should be done.

Old Friends, New Enemies

BROOD WAR introduces a handful of new units to the game, about two per race, most of which are responses to perceived weaknesses in each race in the original game. While some gamers may have been hoping for more units, passing up the kitchen-sink approach preserves the game's artful play balancing while still adding lots of strategic options.

The Protoss can now create the devastating Dark Templars that were available only as special units in STARCRAFT. Dark Templars can merge to create Dark Archons, who wield impressive psychic powers. Finally, the Protoss have an answer to pesky Terran and Zerg air units in the form of the Corsair, an air-to-air fighter that also employs a disruption web to temporarily incapacitate ground forces.

Terrans can now rip through hordes of Mutalisks and Guardians with the Valkyrie frigate, whose missile volleys are all the more vicious thanks to a large area of splash damage. The Marines, the backbone of the Terran forces, become more effective thanks to the Medic, who autoacquires injured soldiers for healing, can get locked-down vehicles operational again, and can blind organic units with an optic flare. Also, Goliaths get a new upgrade to improve their effectiveness against air units.

Lastly, the Zergs get the Devourer, an acid-spewing assault flyer that quickly weakens enemy airborne units, two new upgrades to make Ultralisks faster and tougher to kill, and the Lurker. The Lurker is great, a new Hydralisk aspect that is useless above ground but wicked when it burrows, attacking in a broad range like a very tough, portable sunken colony.

RIDE OF THE VALKYRIES Swarms of Mutalisks aren't quite the threat they used to be to Terran forces. Here a squad of Valkyrie missile frigates pounds some Mutas.

Fighting the Good Fight

Blizzard introduces all these units in a new series of 26 missions, again spread across the three races. Using some new tile sets, the new missions are undeniably tough, with early missions easily equaling the difficulty level of midgame missions in the original.

If anything, the mix of missions in BROOD WAR is superior to that of STARCRAFT. This can be attributed to scripted sequences and conditions that give many of the missions interesting twists. For instance, one Terran mission has you getting nuked back to the Stone Age right as it starts, forcing you to regroup and work diligently to avoid more nuclear assaults. Even the non-base building, "dungeon crawl" missions have been shaken up—one Protoss mission forces you to pick your way through thick Terran defenses to destroy some generators with a very limited number of troops.

Wrapping all this up is an epic story, full of treachery, deceit, and villainy, which easily surpasses that of the first game. Told in scripted sequences and the best cut-scenes in gaming, the story grabs you.

Play balance has been tweaked a bit more in a number of ways. For example, Zerg larva are generated more slowly to prevent rushes. It is a little surprising that the add-on pack still won't allow you to ally with computer-controlled forces in skirmish mode.

But that niggle isn't enough to cast much of a shadow on BROOD WAR. By giving gamers more than they could have expected, BROOD WAR is head and shoulders above other add-on discs and simply a must-have for any STARCRAFT fan. CGW

When Robert Coffey isn't punishing Thierry Nguyen with thousands of Mutalisks, he likes to unwind with a few of his zombie scientist brothers in a round of team HALF-LIFE.

BARBARIC BONUS These infected command centers are your reward for completing a secondary objective in the preceding mission.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★★

APPEAL: Anyone who considers themselves a true RTS gamer

PROS: Great new units add more strategic depth; challenging mission design; beautifully balanced gameplay; even better story than STARCRAFT

CONS: Missions get hard quickly, still can't ally with AI units in skirmish mode

DIFFICULTY: Advanced

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 90, Windows 95/98 or NT4.0, 16MB RAM, 80MB hard-drive space, 2x CD-ROM drive, SVGA video card, sound card, original version of STARCRAFT

3D SUPPORT: None

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Modem, (2 players), LAN, Internet via battle.net (2–8 players); one CD per game

Price: $29.95
Publisher: Blizzard Entertainment
Irvine, CA
(800) 953-SNOW

www.blizzard.com

Retribution, Profit, and Loss

More Missions, More Spreadsheets, More Hexagons

Retribution

★★★½☆

Publisher: WizardWorks
Price: $19.95
www.wizworks.com

Since STARCRAFT gave gamers the tools to make their own campaigns and maps, one wonders what appeal a mission pack would have. With homemade maps of variable quality available to gamers free on the Internet, the big draw for a commercial release would have to be its assumed quality testing. Thankfully, Stardock Systems did a nice job designing the new maps and scenarios in RETRIBUTION.

The campaign story deals with the three races vying for control of an ancient X'El Nagan artifact. Here, the designers have linked the scenarios together, so you automatically progress through them instead of having to manually load each one. The scenarios themselves vary in quality but some genuine surprises were thrown in for good measure. Take, for instance, the scenario in which the two other races periodically fight each other, leaving you to pick off the survivors; or the one in which you use civilians to activate defensive mechanisms. Also, at times, the missions offer multiple goals, with whichever one you achieve determining your next mission. There weren't too many new heroes, and the voice-acting, while not as good as the original game's, was tolerable.

Multiplayer maps are subdivided into short games, co-op games, and general free-for-alls. They're a decent and aren't buggy. Still, these are only new maps, and there are no new units or cut-scenes. It's no BROOD WAR, but it's not a total waste of money either. —*Thierry Nguyen*

Profitania Deluxe

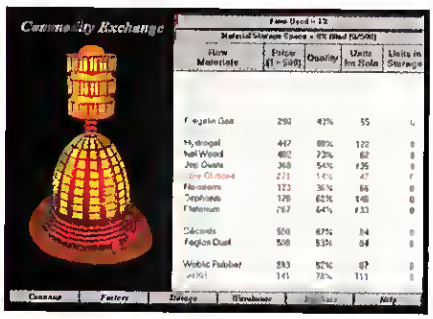
★★☆☆☆

Publisher: LavaMind
Price: $44.99
www.lavamind.com

No one can accuse LavaMind of creating derivative games. Their business sims are festooned with weird sounds, shapes, words, and characters, all poured over familiar concepts. GAZILLIONARE focused on trading, ZAPITALISM recreated retail sales, and now PROFITANIA adopts the manufacturer's point of view. But they have all trafficked in weirdness, as if widgets met chaos theory on acid and exploded in a shower of baby talk: Dithol Grog, Balpus Nobs, and Woblic Rubber.

This whimsy is one reason PROFITANIA's lack of printed docs is so annoying. The mechanics are fairly simple, but the game needs some sort of printed reference for all these weird products and raw materials, so you can actually figure out the difference between an Atok Wire and a Bigmal Cord.

LavaMind throws characters and subplots into the mix, but they make for an odd juxtaposition of calculation and chance. You spend most of your time carefully figuring profit margins and maintenance costs, but it's anyone's guess whether a visit to the Nupre Mati Temple or Buttercup Ladies will lead to extra money or lost reputation. I can think of no fitter caveat for PROFITANIA's haphazard gameplay than Robert Burns' aphorism: "The best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley." There's a similarly odd juxtaposition with the real-time commodities exchange, which is like playing whack-a-mole with numbers. To paraphrase Freud, sometimes a spreadsheet is just a spreadsheet. —*Tom Chick*



Dragoon Battlepack 3: Zorndorf

★★½☆☆

Publisher: Art of War
Price: $29.95
www.boku.simplenet.com/index.html

The third entry in Friedrich the Great's battles features the Prussian master in two of his bad years, 1758 and 1759. To say that Friedrich came away with a draw would be kind, as these campaigns marked the beginning of the dark days of the Seven Years' War. The three battles of Paltzig, Kunersdorf, and Zorndorf show not only why Friedrich had a rough time, but also how he was able to still maintain a viable army.

The game still emphasizes command morale and unit cohesion. Russian numbers and fire doctrine set it apart from the Austrian battles of earlier DRAGOON battlepacks, and even veteran Prussian grenadiers look bad going against massed cannon and steady musketry.

A simple yet accurate interface helps play, although the hex-by-hex movement becomes tedious when troops are not in enemy range. The AI is solid on defense, giving the Prussian player all he can handle. An odd bug for General Demicoud at Zorndorf for WIN98 is the only major flaw. I look forward to BATTLEPACK 4: LEUTHEN. —*Jim Cobb*

Mob Mentality

Manage a Criminal Empire in GANGSTERS

by Charles Ardai

Organized crime has a powerful hold on the popular imagination. Decades before *The Godfather* made them classy, gangster films were already packing audiences into movie houses. So why hasn't there been a successful computer game about gangsters? The same industry that has enshrined the Civil War and the Roman Empire in a dozen games apiece has been all but silent about the days of Al Capone and Lucky Luciano.

Now, along comes Eidos' GANGSTERS to set things right and, boy, is its heart ever in the right place. The designers must have wanted to make up for lost time, because they packed about five games' worth of material into this title. No simple gunfights-and-speakeasies stuff here—you've got to manage every detail of an organized-crime empire, from the activities of the lowliest thug squeezing the neighborhood grocer for money up to the delicate top-level relationships between competing crime families. It's a game about recruiting hoods and retaining them when they whine for a bigger cut; it's about deciding how much staff time to allocate to extortion and how much to intimidation; it's about carrying out blood rivalries in a ruthless, calculating way, and it's about making money, any way you can. In short, GANGSTERS is an organized-crime simulation that treats a criminal empire as a variant on a business empire, asking you to watch every detail as if you were the CEO.

This can be both good and bad. Good, because GANGSTERS is a much richer game than it might have been, as a result of its complexity and depth: It's a full-fledged simulation in the SIMCITY vein. Enough features change from game to game (the entire city of "New Temperance" is generated randomly each time you play) and there are enough subtle interactions among the countless pieces that you can revisit the game again and again. Bad, because GANGSTERS is so complex, and asks you to keep track of so many moving pieces, that many gamers will find it completely unplayable.

BIG BOMB THEORY With one explosion already ripping the city, a mob car waits outside FBI headquarters before bombing it as well. If nothing else, GANGSTERS lets you live out your most antisocial tendencies.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★½☆☆

APPEAL: People who came out of *The Godfather* wanting to be a *consigliere*.

PROS: Enormously detailed simulation, with thousands of characters and enough randomness to be unpredictable.

CONS: Interface is overly hard to use and even harder to learn—most gamers will give up in frustration.

DIFFICULTY: Advanced.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, Windows 95/98, 32MB RAM, 150MB hard-drive space, 4x CD-ROM drive, 2MB SVGA video card, sound card.

3D SUPPORT: None.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN, Internet via Mplayer (2–4 players), one CD per player

Price: $44.99
Publisher: Eidos Interactive
San Francisco, CA
(415) 547-1200

www.eidosinteractive.com

THE WORD ON THE STREET Ability ratings for all the thugs in your command let you assign them to the criminal activities to which they are best suited.

The Gang's All Here

You start each game with a small gang operating out of a single building; your goal is to build your organization until it controls more territory than any other gang. The way you accomplish this is, first and foremost, by recruiting more hoods. (You can find good candidates hanging out in gyms and pool halls or at the docks.) You issue orders to thugs through your lieutenants, who decide which individual hood to send on each assignment. If you select your lieutenants with an eye to a high Intelligence rating, you can expect them to send the hood with the five-star Explosives rating to bomb a squealer's store and the hood with the five-star Business rating to run your casino, rather than the other way around.

The game features two phases that alternate as the action proceeds. First, you issue a week's worth of orders in the Gang Organizer interface, then you set events in motion and watch the results in a real-time environment called the Working Week. The Gang Organizer is where you assign hoods to lieutenants' teams, decide

which lieutenants will handle what missions, determine which gang members to promote and which to fire (or kill), and outfit your gang with weapons and vehicles. It's also where you get to read endless reports, ranging from your accountant's profit-and-loss statement to a rolodex full of notes on the results of each gang member's activities.

The Working Week is where the game switches more to an action mode, as you follow your gang members around the streets, watching them extort, bomb, kill, die, and skulk around. You have some control over your gang's activities—for instance, you can interrupt a hood's preprogrammed extortion rounds to have him assault or kill an enemy gang member—but for the most part success here is determined by planning and order selection in the Gang Organizer. Once a Working Week ends, you're sent back to the Gang Organizer to plan the next week.

MEAN STREETS Your hoods blend in with the teeming street life in New Temperance. Whatever its faults, GANGSTERS does feature detailed city environments that are impressive.

A Matter of Control

The two-phase structure is not a bad idea, but the real-time section is sufficiently less important than the planning and analysis section, especially early in the game, that the balance feels off. You spend a lot of time scrolling along impeccably rendered city streets, watching as men stroll among literally thousands of other pedestrians, but it's not time well spent from a gaming point of view. In the street-level view, where the graphics are prettiest, you can't watch enough territory to be effective; in the rooftop or city-plan views you can cover more ground, but your men are just colored dots and you can't tell which is which. The temptation to accelerate the Working Week and get it over with quickly is enormous, but this impinges your ability to respond to unplanned events.

Problems with the Gang Organizer are even more serious. The interface is so complicated and so multilayered that it takes hours just to find every part of it, never mind learn it well enough to play. There are screens within screens, buttons within tabs, and so many unlabeled icons that anyone but a truly dedicated gamer with lots of free time will probably throw up his hands in despair. I can appreciate a complex simulation as much as anyone, but you have to draw the line somewhere: Learning to play a game shouldn't require as much study and practice as learning to play the flute.

Then there are some design errors that suggest GANGSTERS just wasn't playtested adequately. When recruiting generates 10 interested candidates, can you hire all 10 with a single button click? No, you have to hire each one separately. When a week ends, can you get a report of all the orders that failed? No, you have to look at each order's results separately. Worse still is the game's real-time message system: It bombards you with a constant stream of (mostly useless) messages during the Working Week; unfortunately, I could find no way to sort the important messages from the unimportant automatically, so you have to deal with them all one by one. It's the death-by-a-thousand-cuts school of game design, draining the fun out of playing the game by forcing the player to perform countless boring tasks.

This is not to say that the game isn't any fun at all. I have never played a game that seemed more convincingly alive than this one, and it's fun just to watch the city as the people of New Temperance go about their simulated lives. The strategist in me also enjoyed the subtle ways in which decisions you make have unanticipated consequences. But the fun is certainly diminished by the game's interface, which stands as a barrier first to learning the game and then to playing it. (There is a tutorial, but it mainly intimidates new players by drowning them in information they have no chance of retaining.)

Was there really no way to make the game so detailed without making the controls unmanageably complex? If so, the smart move would have been to sacrifice some of the detail. As it is, I think only the hardest of hardcore gamers (and reviewers, who have no choice) will stick with this game to the bloody end. Those who do will find it rewarding, but still painful to play—and, frankly, not rewarding enough to make up for the pain. CGW

Charles Ardai edited Kingpins: Tales From Inside the Mob, *published by Carroll & Graf.*

TOO MANY BUTTONMEN Scads of buttons, tons of tabs, too many icons, and a very unhelpful tutorial make GANGSTERS' interface unbelievably cumbersome.

COOKIN' THE BOOKS Your accountant keeps you updated on your gang's financial progress. Treat him well—remember what happened to Al Capone.

Settling for Less

It May Take a Village, Just Not the Ones You Build in SETTLERS III

by Samuel Brown Baker II

SETTLERS III is a SIMCITY-ish look at medieval times...with an added overlay of magic courtesy of patron deities. Gameplay revolves around creating the infrastructure for society. You put up the right buildings in the right relation to each other, and the cute Weeble-like guys do the rest.

You can be Roman, Asian, or Egyptian, with appropriate building architecture. Each race has its quirks, but the major difference is how much stone and wood they use to construct buildings, since wood is renewable and stone is not. Asians use the most wood and the least stone, Egyptians are the reverse, and Romans strike a happy medium.

THE SWEET PROOF OF VICTORY Enemy buildings vanish as their territory falls to your invading hordes.

Pig Iron

There are different buildings for everything, and only a half-dozen or so are specific to each race. Economic interrelationships are complex. For example, say you want to mine iron ore: Simple, you build a mine. But for optimum performance of your miners you need a slaughterhouse that turns pigs into ham. Then you need a pig farm. Pigs need grain, so you build a farm. They also need water, hence a waterworks. And the butcher, farmer, and miner all need the appropriate tools. You build a tool smithy. The toolsmith needs...and so on. Most of the time you're deciding what buildings you want, where to put new buildings, and why your (fill in the blank) aren't producing.

Buildings require territory, and territory requires guard towers and castles to hold against a foe. Because you spend so much time building, combat feels more like an interloper than a boon companion. You select soldiers and the odd siege weapon and march off to war, fighting over the enemy fortifications. Your troops knock on the door, and the enemy conveniently present themselves one at a time while enemy archers shoot at you from the battlements. If you win, you take both the tower and territory while other enemy buildings—in an apparent fit of embarrassment—vanish in a cloud of smoke, leaving half their construction cost in supplies behind. Though they require occasional retargeting, the troops fight well enough by themselves.

TEMPLE OF TOON Asian priests gather outside a temple. This shot really shows off the game's pretty, stylized graphics.

Who Needs That Fancy Book Learnin'?

The printed "manual" is a CD-pamphlet strategy guide apparently for children, while the real manual is an HTML document put on your hard drive. It does a fair job of explaining the basics of play, though the end words of many lines run into the dark border and are illegible.

Taken as a whole, the printed manual, HTML manual, and tutorial still don't do enough to explain the game. I felt as if I had been told how to drive a car and then been dropped into the middle of afternoon rush-hour traffic on the Beltway. There is no gradual introduction of game elements.

Then there are the bugs. The copy protection scheme has problems that appear related to the speed of your CD-ROM drive. New systems with fast CD-ROM drives make the program think it's been copied, so their trees don't reach full maturity, ironworks produce piglets (as in oink) instead of pig iron, and so on. A patch has been issued, but as of this writing some users were still having troubles.

There are other problems. You have to leave the scenario you're playing in order to load a game or quit. The game calls you a loser when you do, even in the tutorial. Save games are huge (13+ MB) and take a long time to save or load on a Pentium Pro Overdrive 333MHz machine. The game crawls on large maps.

There is something compelling about SETTLERS III. Many times I played longer than intended, wanting to tweak just one more thing. But in the end, the feeling of playing a loser remains. CGW

Samuel Baker has been writing about computer games since there's been an IBM PC.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★½☆☆

APPEAL: Dedicated fans of the first two SETTLERS games.

PROS: Excellent individual AI; like watching a Lego village come to life.

CONS: Poor documentation; no loading saves from within a scenario; huge save files; severe copy protection difficulties for some users.

DIFFICULTY: Advanced.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 100, Windows 95/98, 32MB RAM, 250MB hard-drive space, 4x CD-ROM drive, 2MB DirectX compatible video card, sound card, 28.8 modem for Internet gaming.

3D SUPPORT: None.

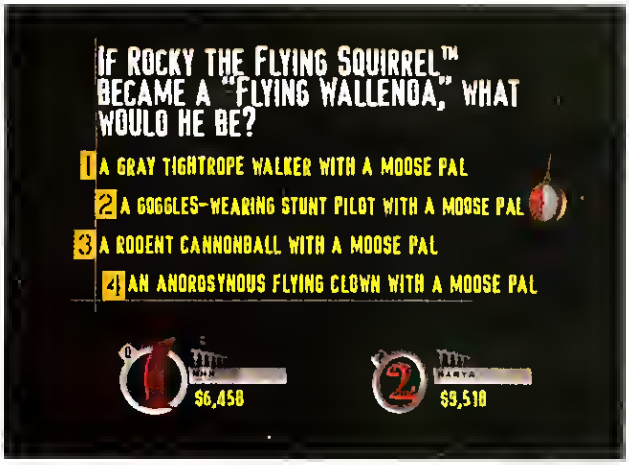
MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN and Internet (2–10 players), 1 CD per player.

Price: $39.99
Publisher: Blue Byte
Austin, TX
(800) 933-BYTE

www.settlers3.com

Two Jacks in the After Dark

Three Classics/Puzzles From Berkeley Systems



You Don't Know Jack 4: The Ride

★★★★½

Publisher: Sierra Attractions/ Berkeley Systems
Price: $29.95
www.sierra.com

If you feel like you *do* know Jack, you'll be happy to know that YOU DON'T KNOW JACK 4: THE RIDE juices up the irreverent quiz game with modified rules, new games, and new sounds and animations, making for a fresh experience that doesn't lose the tasty flavor of the original.

The premise is unchanged—up to three players participate in a game show, buzzing in and answering a series of irreverent questions while trying not to get overly annoyed at the "witty" banter of the host. JACK now starts with a moral question, which is used to select a overlying theme for that particular game, such as politics or censorship. Players now buzz in to choose the value of each question—one right answer may gamer $12,539, while the next might win a mere $153.

As a bonus, the installation CD includes a feature called "You Don't Hear Jack: You Don't *Know* Jack without all the annoying questions," 20 minutes of humorous fake ads from earlier JACK volumes.

JACK's play couldn't be simpler—buzz in and choose an answer—making it a great party game that anyone can join in. Just make sure to find at least one friend—this Ride is fun with friends, but is pretty pointless solo. —*Dawn Jepsen*

After Dark

★★★

Publisher: Berkeley/Sierra On-Line
Price: $29.95
www.sierra.com

They're back: the twisted, silly characters from the AFTER DARK screen savers. Mowing Maniac, Bad Dog, the Hula Girls, and others are no longer content merely to protect our screens. Now they star in their own games.

There are 11 games offered here, plus a screen saver. Some of the 11, such as *Mahjong*, are simply traditional games dressed up in the bizarre AFTER DARK motif. Only *Solitaire* appears without some sort of mutilation. Other of the program's exercises are less traditional.

Roof Rats is a challenge to eliminate colored rooms in order to rescue twisted tenants, while *Toaster Run* lets you navigate a flying toaster through 3D mazes. These, plus *Foggy Boxes*, a *tic-tac-toe* relative, were the standout games for me, each proving addictive in its own way. Most of the remainder will appeal to arcade fanatics. Several of the games will actually appeal to children as well as to more mature players.

Unfortunately, the screen saver is rather a disappointment and is merely a repetitive collection of short demonstrations of the different games. Given Berkeley Systems' history of screen savers, I expected better.

The graphics and sounds are amusing and well executed. However, the graphics are rather small. For some reason, the games only run at 640x480 in 256 colors. At higher screen resolutions, they are forced to live in windows.

AFTER DARK GAMES is an interesting collection that will appeal to a wide audience. If nothing else, it makes for a good time-killer. —*Samuel Baker II*

HeadRush

★★★½

Publisher: Berkeley/Sierra On-Line
Price: $29.95
www.sierra.com

HEADRUSH is a clone of YOU DON'T KNOW JACK with some, though not all, of the sexy stuff taken out and youth-oriented music and graphics thrown in. Instead of being able to force another player to answer a tough question by choosing the *Screw Your Neighbor* option, for instance, you choose *Bite Your Neighbor* instead. On the other hand, you still have the occasional testicle joke.

The soundtrack is jangly and loud, and each round is introduced by a gross little cartoon instead of by a witty musical pun. Furthermore, the questions refer to *Party of Five* and *Beanie Babies* instead of their 1970s counterparts. The trivia has a high school flavor to it: Water is made of hydrogen and oxygen and the Boston Tea Party involved throwing tea in a harbor.

There is nothing wrong with knowing these things, of course, and the questions are still asked in funny terms. The host of HEADRUSH batters the players with fewer putdowns than JACK's, but on the whole I enjoyed the game far less. HEADRUSH is a reasonable JACK knock-off, but it doesn't have the JACK magic. —*Charles Ardai*

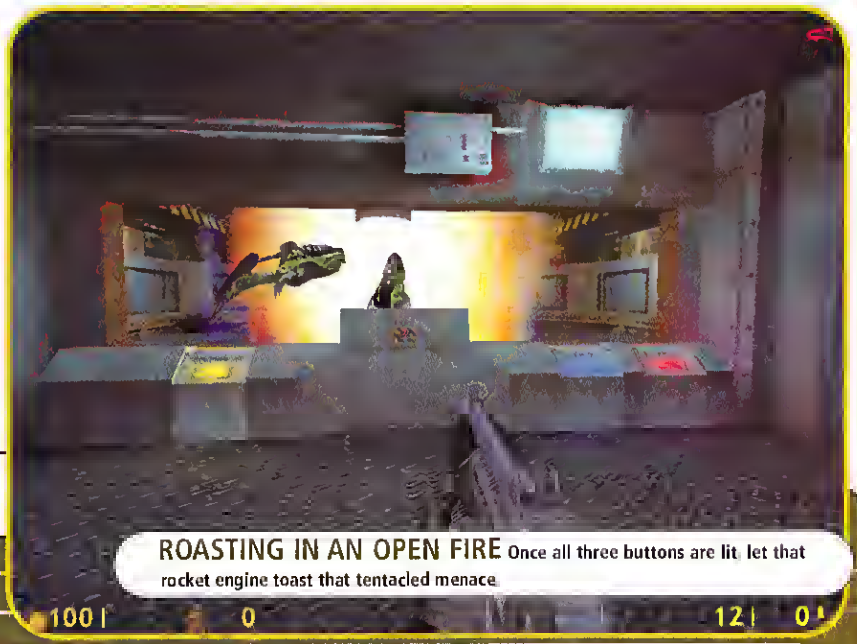
Half-Life

How to Maximize Every Advantage—the Surgical Approach

by Greg Fortune

I tend to work my way through the various defenses of HALF-LIFE by meticulously picking apart the structure of the enemy defense. This allows me to penetrate each level with a minimum of risk. If you're in the mood for John Wayne "cavalry charge" kind of tactics, you'll want to look elsewhere. On the other hand, if you want to maximize every advantage and surgically take out your enemies, then you've come to the right place.

Spoilers! If you don't want to know.....don't look!



ROASTING IN AN OPEN FIRE Once all three buttons are lit, let that rocket engine toast that tentacled menace.

Blast Pit

Here's a puzzle to keep you busy. The first indication you get that this isn't going to be your standard firefight is when the scientist gets dragged out of the control room by one of the tentacles. Don't bother trying to shoot them, they're rather safe from your puny arsenal. Exit the control room, make your way past the barnacle and up the stairs. Waiting on the platform, a Barney says, "Be quiet, this thing hears us!" That's your first major clue. Remember what you learned in the training course: There is a way that you can move quietly. Also, take notice of the stash of a certain type of weapon in the next room—more, in fact, than you're able to carry at one time. Fill up. Now, move out onto the platform.

There are a couple ways out of the silo, all of them blocked. You should have the method of fixing that already in your hand. I suggest opening the way before trying to sneak through. There's one handy thing to keep in mind: If you crouch while you use a ladder, you will remain stealthy and have a much better chance of making it out alive. Use your grenades to distract the tentacles as you quietly work your way down the ladders and across the platforms. Make your way through the now open doorway on the bottom level, jump across the broken walkways, and cycle the door you find in the corridor.

Head down the corridor ahead until you get to the platform. I wonder what that button does? If you have any trouble with the elevator, get to a ladder before you express to the ground floor. Once at the bottom, head down the hall to the small platform. Turning on the generator takes a bit of work, but you can do it if you make your way up both ladders leading to the generator and avoid getting run over by the speeding platform. Make your way back to the ladder and head back up to the loading dock. Those boxes in the loading area aren't just for show, at least not if you want to avoid getting shocked by the now-electrified puddle down the corridor ahead. Head back to the silo.

Follow the red and blue pipes until you get to the fuel room. You didn't actually think it would be that easy, did you? Turn around and look for a ladder leading into a dark area. Now listen carefully for a moment. Once you're ready, head down the ladder, break the grate covering the hole, and head down the second ladder.

At the pipe junction, hang a left and climb up the ladder. There's a zombie at the top. You can fix that. Break out and grab some more grenades in the room around the corner. Down the hall and past the door is the biggest fan you've ever seen. Hmmm, there must be a way to turn on that fan...

Now that you've found the switch, be careful. Once you turn it on, it won't take long for those blades to reach full speed, and then you'll have no chance to make it back up that ladder.

So now what? You still haven't gained entry to the fuel room! I'll also guarantee that the door isn't open just because you've turned on a fan. Boy, that's one big fan though...

Still stuck? Try throwing a grenade at the fan. Where'd it go?

Once you've reached the air vent, work your way to the fuel room. Now turn on the oxygen and fuel. Head up the ladder, out the door, and follow the pipes back to the silo.

Stock up on grenades, work your way back up to the control room, and fire the rocket. Then get away from the broken window. It gets kind of hot in there, as the tentacle will surely confirm. Now go ahead and make as much noise as you want.

See the Review
FEBRUARY ISSUE • 5 STARS

Gargantuan Power-up

As you begin Power Up, you'll immediately stumble on a couple of grunts getting toasted by a gargantua. This should be your first clue that firing your rifle at this beasty isn't going to do the trick. This guy is a lot tougher than that. While he's busy with the grunts, run into the smaller tunnel that's directly across from you. Now head down toward the power generator. Beware of serious grunt activity ahead. Before you head down the elevator that lies behind the grunt position hideout above the generator room, try setting some laser trip mines in strategic places, in case any grunts come back while you're down there. When you have reached the generator room, you'll notice that unit one is offline. Why don't you go back to the stairs and look for the Maintenance Area? Once you've found the pump, you should see what's blocking your progress. Now go back upstairs and turn on that generator. Head all the way back to the Track Control Room where the platform broke earlier. Once you're in the control room, lure the gargantua to the window by letting it catch sight of you. Now run down to the tunnel that leads back to the room the gargantua is in, run out into the room, and high tail it down the tunnel immediately on your left. Don't bother looking behind you, because the gargantua is right on your tail. Run past the coils and look for a switch that has a shocking surprise for your big ugly friend.

BUG ZAPPER DELUXE You need to think electrical to take out this Gargantuan.

Nest on a Rail

You will get to a point where you reach a gate blocking the rail that has a large semicircular area off to the left. You'll see a machine-gun emplacement, several stacks of boxes, and a bunker on the right side of this area. This won't be too tricky if you've got a couple of grenades, particularly the AR5 grenades you should have picked up where the last rail ended. Don't bother going for the machine-gun emplacement because the bunker that overlooks it will take you out. I like to get off the train before it reaches the gate and take up a position at the entrance to this area opposite the vacant machine gun. From here, with a couple of grenades, you can decimate the grunts hiding behind the crates on the platform. There's one grunt behind each set of wooden crates, and another hiding behind some green crates next to the bunker. First, lob grenades behind the wooden crates. Preferably use AR grenades because they'll explode on contact, eliminating the possibility of escape, and if you do end up flushing them out you've already got your AR5 ready. Once you've taken care of the grunts, hop across the tracks to a position opposite the red ladder that's leading up to the platform. The bunker will fire at you, but keep moving and hide once under cover until the bunker stops firing. Jump across the track, climb the ladder, and quickly duck behind the green box closest to the top of the ladder. Again, wait for the shooting to stop. Now quickly move to the green boxes up ahead of you to the left. Once you've made it there, you can stroll over to the side of the bunker (where the switch is) and shoot the grunt in the bunker through the crack in the side. Now go grab some health at the med station on the other side.

BUNKER HILL Defended areas like this hallway force you to fine-tune your assault skills.

Gonarch's Lair

Upon entering Gonarch's Lair, the first thing you'll want to do is get to cover around the rock to the right of where Gonarch is approaching. Gonarch has a nasty kick attack, so the best place to be is somewhere Gonarch can't get. Beware being too much in view of this guy, because he'll launch a toxic chemical attack at you through the air. Nail Gonarch with heavy weapons (category 4 or 5) until he runs away. I prefer to use my store of hand grenades first, as they will be much less useful later on. Try to save your rockets and AR grenades for later. Once he's gone, check behind the rock by the two pointed towers to find a healing pool. Now follow Gonarch down his hole to the second area. Make sure to grab the battery and the ammo case lying in the tunnel before you hit section two.

SPIDER AND THE FLY Chase Gonarch down into its lair before cornering and killing it once and for all.

As you enter the second area, you'll notice a mesh area in the center of the open space. Therein lies your best chance for survival. Below are a healing pool and another unfortunate colleague who has been good enough to leave you some ammo. Use your long jump to leap between the two areas and watch out for headcrabs. Gonarch should give you ample opportunity to fire on him from below with your rockets. If Gonarch runs where you can't see him, use the jump pad in one of the tunnels to pop up and let Gonarch see you. He'll move so you can hit him again. Whatever you do, don't let the pad bounce you out of the cave! If you fall and take damage while inside the cave with the pad, just jump over to the pool and heal yourself. Use the hornet gun to dispatch any little hoppers that end up below with you, and keep working on him. Once you've damaged Gonarch enough, he'll again run away to a deeper part of his lair. Now you can use the pad to jump out of your hiding place and pursue Gonarch further.

Jump down to the ledge with the glowing crystals, face the wall, and back down into the hole behind you. This lets you start the third stage facing Gonarch. He'll jump down into a pit, and you will be compelled to follow. Fall through the mesh and collect the batteries and ammunition below. Take cover under a ledge and begin hitting Gonarch with everything you've got. When Gonarch takes a certain amount of damage, he'll fall through the mesh and drop down with you. When that happens, you're almost there. Don't worry about the crabs jumping on you, you can take them out when your first objective is complete. When Gonarch dies, he leaves a gaping hole with a teleporter at the bottom and a healing pool on one side. Now you have the time to clean up the rest of the little crabs. Then, jump down the hole to finally escape Gonarch's Lair.

Crabby Enemies

Headcrabs I like to take these out with two shots from the Glock. Sure you can use the crowbar, but who wants to crawl around on the floor with the crabs?

Barnacles Easily killed, barnacles can be taken out with any of your small arms. In fact, if the barnacle isn't hanging from too great a height, I'll save some ammo, take a barnacle ride to the top, and give it a single kiss with my crowbar.

Leeches Leeches are only a minor nuisance. Use your crowbar on them and dispatch them with ease.

Houndeyes Grab your crowbar, rush in, and pummel one. When you hear the telltale whine, run out of range of the blast. Then run in and take out another one. They're easy to kill, so save your ammo. If this seems a little much for you, a couple of rounds with the Glock or a close range shotgun blast will clear out any Houndeyes you meet.

Alien Grunts These hulking aliens like to use the Hornet Gun, which allows them to hit you from around corners. These guys are pretty resistant to bullets, so use energy or explosive weapons against them for best results.

Alien Slaves These unarmored foes will fall easily to the Glock, the shotgun, the MP5, or just about anything else you throw at them.

Zombies Zombies used to be your friends, but now they've changed their minds. Any small arms will work—as will the crowbar—provided that you step away from the Zombies' one-two punch.

Bullsquid These aliens are pretty random shots, which should give you plenty of time to deal with them. Just make sure you don't get close enough for them to bite you.

Ichthyosaur The great white sharks of HALF-LIFE, these are best dealt with from the shore, or from the comfort of a protective cage. Underwater, use your crossbow for maximum effect.

Flyers My weapon of choice against the flyers is the Hornet Gun, due to the fact that it doesn't run out of ammo and the rounds track their target. Lead them a little and you'll get 'em every time. All other weapons work on them as well, although the crowbar isn't recommended.

Human Grunts They hunt in groups, tend to wait in strategic spots, use cover, and keep moving, so plan your attack. I prefer to use the MP5 and grenades, mainly because grunts drop that kind of ammunition when you take them out. When you get the crossbow, use it to snipe them from a distance. It's silent, and a crossbow hit anywhere on a grunt scores a kill.

Human Assassins Fast, agile, and accurate, they are deadly foes, found only in two areas, each filled with stacks of boxes. I crouch through the rooms using the crossbow and the scope, because I can take out one assassin without alerting the others. If you prefer, blow a few MP5 clips and toss grenades. Don't chase an assassin; his friends will nail you as you pass.

Tactical Tips

Bunkers

The best way to take out a bunker is to get close enough to it that you no longer fall within its fire zone. Then, either lob a grenade or place a det pack through the crack where the bunker meets the wall. Sometimes, you can even shoot the grunt inside through the crack. And save your explosives.

Grunts with Rocket Launchers (On a Rail)

The best way to get past grunts with big guns is to duck! These guns have no vertical movement, just horizontal, so approach low and you should be okay. Be sure to stay away from walls where a missile could hit behind or above you.

How Do I Get Out of This Water?

If you are having trouble getting to that doorway on the other side of the water immediately after your train takes a plunge, get out your crowbar and do something besides killing leeches. Hey, some things look kind of new, like they haven't spent all this time under water...

Big Bad Bosses

Gargantua

These towering aliens have both a devastating short-range flame attack and a long-range energy attack. They also have a left hook you won't soon forget. Usually there is a specific way to kill each of the three Gargantua that appear in HALF-LIFE, but if you've got the ammo to burn and want to dispatch them without the formalities, 10 grenades will do the trick.

Gonarch

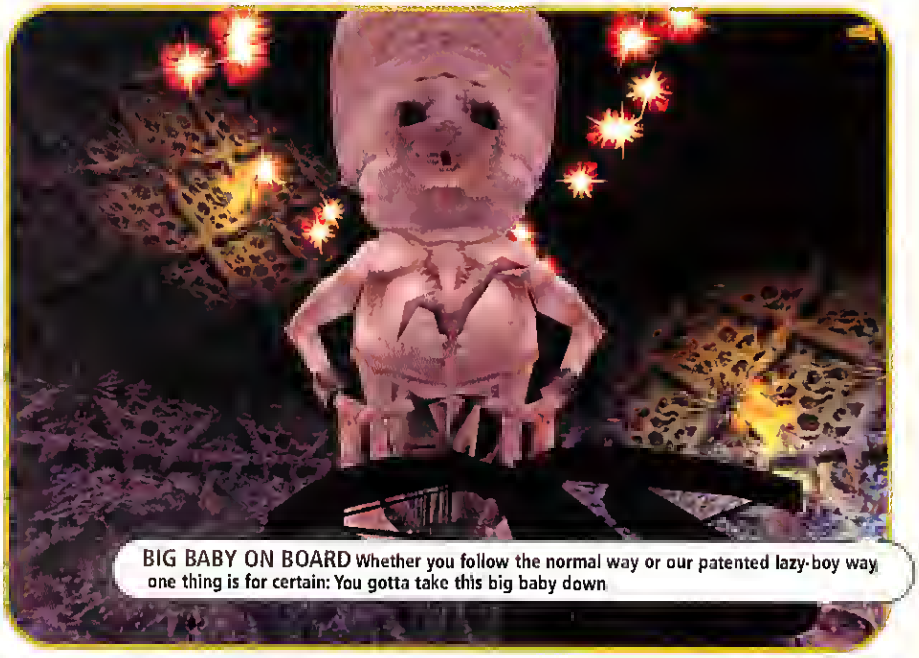
This adversary had me rolling around on the floor laughing. And, no, we don't really want to know exactly who this is supposedly modeled after. We just know that somebody at Valve really needs help. In any case, Gonarch is a creature you will only encounter once, in Gonarch's Lair. You will need to drive Gonarch away twice before you will be able to kill it, and it's recommended you use explosives and energy weapons. The trigger to driving Gonarch into the next area is damage, so don't waste your bullets on it. Aim for the sack hanging from its belly, and stay away from this bad boy's kick attack. You'll also be fighting off crabs and dodging toxic chemicals, so be sure to look for the relatively safe area in each section of Gonarch's Lair to launch your attack.

Tentacle

The huge green stalks you see are just the tip of the problem, so don't waste your time trying to kill them. They may retreat briefly after taking damage, but they will be right back. The key to tentacles is sound: If the tentacles can't hear you, they don't know where you are. Use grenades to distract them while you sneak by in stealth mode. Where they need to be destroyed, there will be a special method at hand, as your standard weapons aren't up to the task.

Nihilanth

Well, excuse me if I found a way to nuke the big guy without a fight! If you want a walkthrough of what to do when you let yourself get zapped halfway across the freaking galaxy and put into all kinds of silly situations, you'll need to go somewhere else. Here's the lazy man's way to take Nihilanth out of the picture without a fight. First, save your rockets. You will not need them until his head is open. As soon as you drop to the floor, run behind one of the large protrusions in the middle of the floor and get close to it so you can't see Nihilanth's face. If you can't see him, he can't hit or teleport you. Now turn around and use your .357 magnum to blow up the yellow crystals on the wall. Three shots each will do the trick. When you've run out of crystals from your vantage, run to the next and repeat the process until all three crystals are destroyed. Now, notice the glowing orbs on his head. Whenever he takes damage, one of these orbs heals him and disappears. Normally, the orb would be replaced by one of the crystals, but we've already taken care of that, haven't we? Now step back just enough so that you've got a piece of his head to shoot at, but not enough for him to see you. Use everything but the rockets on him. Fire once, let the orb do its trick, then hit him again. You'll begin to notice that there are fewer and fewer elements to his "halo." When the last one is used, his head will split open like one of those eggs from *Alien*. There's a fourth crystal in the center of his head that must be destroyed. Now, we could rush out and try to use those jump pads or get to the ledges to get a fair shot at the last crystal, but why bother? We've still got our laser-guided rockets! Fire one off to the side (make sure it's in laser mode by pointing it at the rock in front of you and right-clicking until you see a red dot) and move the pointer onto his head. If you angle it correctly, you'll pop that crystal and send him into his death throes. Talk about an Achilles heel!



BIG BABY ON BOARD Whether you follow the normal way or our patented lazy-boy way, one thing is for certain: You gotta take this big baby down.

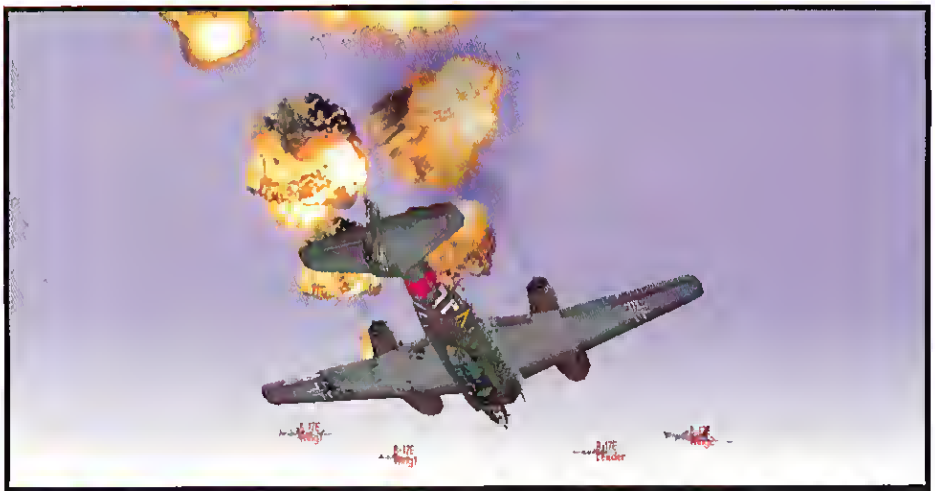
When not thinking of new ways to use his crowbar in HALF-LIFE, Greg Fortune enjoys blowing up the world with a friend in MYTH II

WWII Air Combat Primer

Strategy and Tactics for WWII Rookie Pilots

by Jeff Lackey

These are good times for the PC pilot with a yearning to fly the not-so-friendly skies of WWII Europe, due to sims like MicroProse's EUROPEAN AIR WAR, WWII FIGHTERS from EA/Jane's, and Microsoft's COMBAT FLIGHT SIMULATOR. However, if you're a novice to flight sims in general or perhaps a jet jock who hasn't recently flown a prop job, you may need a few pointers to help you get the most out of your new program. Here are some hints and tips to help transform you from a rookie target to a feared Ace.



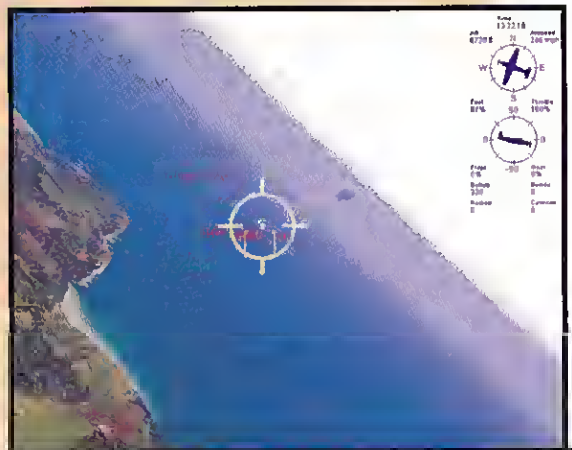
IT SEEMED LIKE A GOOD IDEA AT THE TIME This is the usual result of attacking heavily armed bombers from the rear.

"Move toward any dot in the sky that remotely resembles an airplane."
—Robert Scott Jr., USAAF ace with 10 victories

"Never, ever attack unless you have the advantage."
—Kurt Bühligen, *Luftwaffe* ace with 112 victories

The top aces in World War II thoroughly understood the relative strengths and weaknesses of each plane, so it's tempting to jump from one plane to another, hoping to get a feel for the differences. But a more effective approach is to select one aircraft, for example the Supermarine Spitfire, and fly it exclusively, playing through every mission or campaign in the game that allows you to stick with that plane. You'll develop an intimate knowledge of the plane, and you'll become far more effective and deadly in that aircraft than you would if you frequently switched mounts.

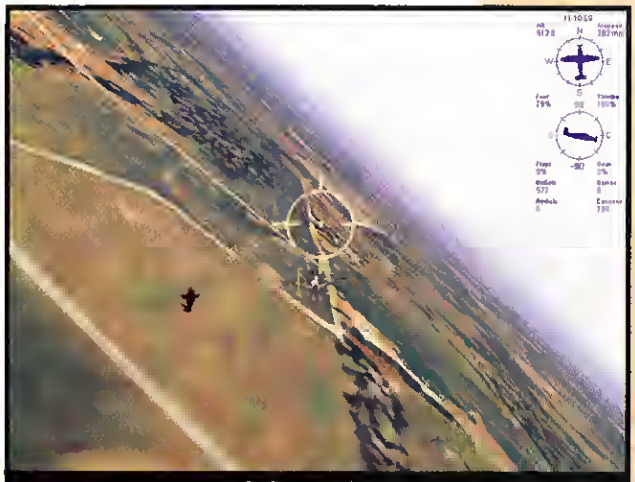
When you've done everything you can in the one plane, switch to a plane that you've frequently faced. For example, you might switch from the Spitfire to the Bf-109. You'll gain a real appreciation for the differences between the planes as well as an appreciation for the historical perspectives of each side. By the way, there's real-life precedent for sticking to one plane: Erich Hartmann flew the Bf-109g exclusively and apparently got to know it pretty well—he scored 352 kills.



WHO'S US AND WHO'S THEM? You can use optional labels to help distinguish the good guys from the bad guys.

While it's tempting to set every option to "totally realistic," you may want to start out using some player aids, especially if you're new to WWII flight sims. For example, it's very difficult at a distance to tell one fighter from another; no fancy cockpit radar here. Two options that can help are "labeling," which identifies every plane in the sky, and "object size," which makes planes appear larger than normal. That may feel like cheating, but it also compensates for the resolution limits of PC monitors. Likewise, you can toggle cockpit graphics off to gain a more unrestricted view.

Another cheat is to disable stalls and spins. Don't do this, though, if you want a feel for the differences in the planes, since stalls and spins were a significant factor in WWII air combat. Each sim has audio indicators that warn of an impending spin—turn the volume up loud enough to be able to hear them in time to react. If you do get into a spin, cut the throttle and apply neutral stick and opposite rudder. When the spin converts to a dive, level out *gently* and regain speed.



DOWN ON THE DECK Twisting dogfights that stick close to the ground typically favor the better turning fighters over "boom-and-zoom" aircraft.

"Just keep pressing the (trigger) until you think you're going to collide..."

—Pete Townsend, RAF No. 85 Squadron, 9 victories

No matter how skillful your flying, the bottom line is shooting down the enemy. These planes don't have long-range missiles that you can lock on, fire, and forget: They've got guns. When you're lining up your target, remember that you have to aim not where the enemy is, but where he's going to be when the bullets finally get there. The closer you are, the less lead you have to pull and thus the better your odds are of getting a kill.

Tommy McGuire, a USAAF ace with 38 victories, advised "Go in close, and then when you think you're too close, go in closer." Erich Hartmann stated, "Only when the windshield is filled up, then pull the trigger." If you're frustrated by an empty gun and an adversary who's flying away untouched, make it a point to get closer than you think is necessary before you pull the trigger.

"I never cared much for the dogfight...90 percent of my attacks were surprise attacks."

—Erich Hartmann, JG 52, 352 victories

Basic fighter maneuvers (BFM) are described in the various sims' manuals and are beyond the space allotted here (read Robert Shaw's *Fighter Combat* for everything you'll ever need to know about BFM), but as you study these, understand that your goal is not to fly fancier aerobatics than your adversary—it's to shoot him down.

John Meyer, who achieved 23 victories in a P-51 and two MiG-15s during the Korean War, stated, "I didn't turn with enemy pilots as a rule...it was too risky." The main thing to keep in mind as you learn to Immelman, Chandelle, and Yo-yo is that the victor is the pilot who keeps his energy level higher than his opponent's and then uses that energy advantage to get the enemy in his sights. Energy from altitude and energy from speed are interchangeable, whereas high-speed turns tend to bleed energy that can be made up only by either diving or adding engine power. Remember that the latter option is not nearly as effective in these prop planes as it is in a modern jet fighter! Therefore, if you're in an airplane that can turn tighter and has a lower stall speed than your enemy, pulling him into a low-altitude turning battle gives you the advantage—your intent is to make him lose energy and stall, then shoot him as he waddles helplessly through the air.

On the other hand, if you're flying a plane that has a poor turn rate but is fast and can climb to the moon, you want to maintain an energy advantage by diving onto your prey, taking your shots, then regain your energy by climbing back to altitude. If you can lure a poor climbing plane into following you up into the clouds, watch him with your rear view; when he begins to fall away, swoop down and put him out of his low-energy misery. Adolph Galland's brother was killed this way, trying to follow an opponent in a climb, stalling, and then being shot down as he fell back. Interestingly enough, he was flying a Bf-109, a craft that would be considered a "Boom and Zoom" fighter, and his enemy was flying a "turning" fighter, a Spitfire.

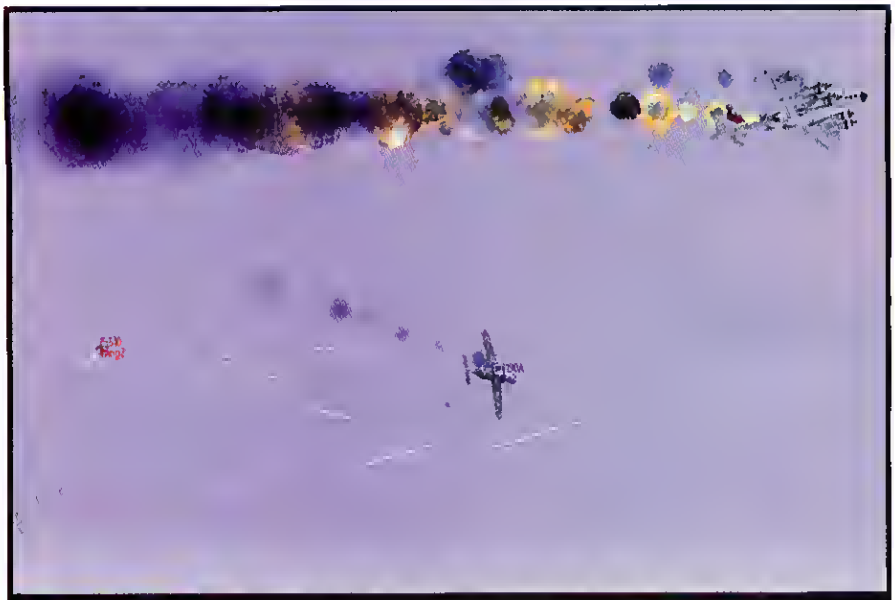
This illustrates a very important point: Effective energy management is more important than the comparative specifications of individual aircraft. In this case, the Spitfire had a large speed advantage at the time of his climb, Galland having bled his energy while trying to turn with the Spitfire. Many players complain that the computer pilots must be cheating when they get outmaneuvered by "inferior" planes. Nope: The computer pilots simply are masters of energy management. If you're a novice to BFM, and you find yourself unable to understand how your opponent is countering your moves, take advantage of the slow-motion option available in COMBAT FLIGHT SIMULATOR and WWII FIGHTERS. This makes the action unfold at a much slower pace, giving you time to use your view keys to observe your adversary's maneuvers.

Novices should note that the fastest way to turn an airplane is *not* to push the throttle to the wall and yank hard on the stick. It's like trying to do a U-turn around a pylon in an automobile: If you try to do a 180 in your car by going 120 MPH and wrenching the wheel, you'll go very wide (turn radius) and it will take longer to get turned around (turn rate). At slower speeds you'll turn around in a shorter radius and more quickly. Of course, if you slow down to 2 MPH you may turn in the shortest radius of all, but it will take longer to turn around. The same holds for your fighter: Each plane has an optimal speed at which it will have the highest turn rate and smallest turn radius. Understanding the best cornering speed for the fighter you're flying and that of your opponent is critical to getting the upper hand.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS The target window in WWII FIGHTERS can help you learn how the computer pilots counter your moves.

"...the curve into 70 (B-17) Fortresses lets all the sins of one's life pass before one's eyes."

—Hans Phillip, JG 1, 206 victories



TARGET FIXATION This Fw-190 was so focused on attacking the bomber that he forgot to check his six, with predictable results.

You've been scrambled to intercept an incoming B-17 bomber raid. You find the bomber group, then slowly slide into a shooting position behind them. The next thing you know your plane is shredded by an angry fusillade of .50 caliber bullets pouring out of every Fortress in sight. As you parachute down you mumble, "There must be a better way..."

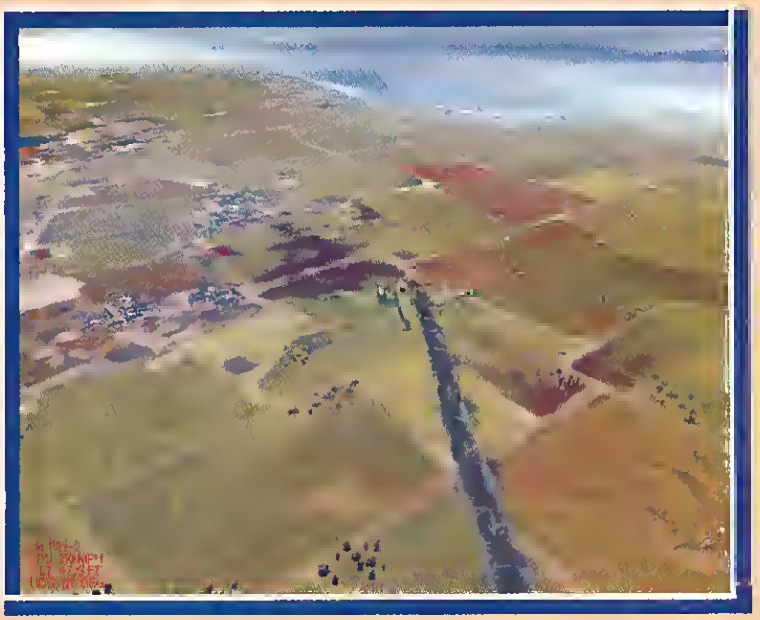
Don't feel stupid: The German fighters quickly learned the power of massed bombers. Latter variants of the B-17 carried 10 .50 caliber machine guns; multiply this by 10 or more bombers in formation, focusing all of their firepower on an interceptor, and you quickly realize the challenge of knocking these behemoths out of the sky. Adolph Galland's famous *JG 26* developed a tactic worth trying: Fly parallel (but out of gun range) to the bomber group, to establish their course. Then fly ahead and turn into them for a slightly high, diving, head-on attack. The combined closing speeds results in a minimum time for the bombers to fire at you. Fill your sights with the front of the bomber, fire, then zoom safely below the formation. Extend out of range, climb, turn and repeat. You probably won't immediately destroy the bombers—rarely were bombers shot down on the initial pass. Instead, you'll create cripples that will fall behind the pack, where they can be picked off, safe from the deadly combined formation fire. This was a common tactic for the *Luftwaffe*, leading to the famous cry of bomber crews as they sighted bandits at "12 o'clock high!"

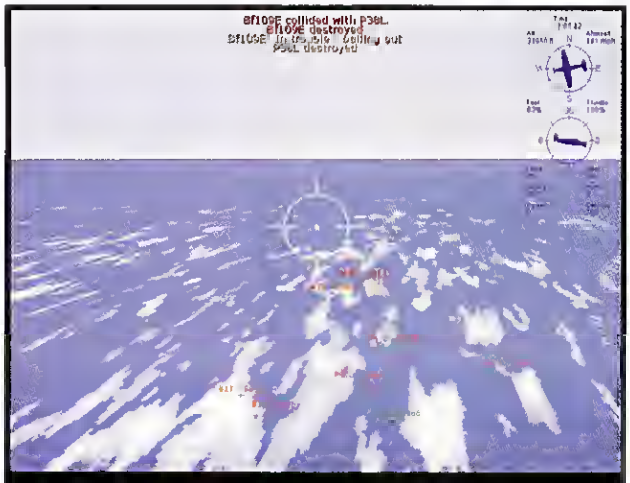
What if the bombers are escorted by fighters? If your sim supports wingman commands, send some of your squadron off to keep the escort busy. If this isn't an option, your best bet is to simply watch your rear and press on attacking the bombers. Remember your goal isn't to shoot down fighters, but rather to prevent the bombers from delivering their load. Also, shooting the bombers down *after* they've dropped their bombs is much less desirable than preventing them from destroying their target. If you can do enough damage to cause them to abort their mission and turn for home, then your job is done.

If your role is to protect a flight of bombers, remember that your task is *not* shooting down enemy fighters! The most common mistake for a beginner on escort missions is to leave his charge to chase a fighter, only to find that the bomber formation is miles away, being picked apart by the remaining interceptors. Drive away the enemy fighters, but always stay close to the formation you are protecting.

Alone Again, Naturally

This crippled bomber has fallen away from the pack, making him easy pickings.





TOP OF THE WORLD An effective strategy for so-called boom-and-zoom fighters, such as the Bf 109, is to circle above the fray, diving down on select targets.

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS When escorting a bomber group, you must stay near the formation, resisting the temptation to chase enemy fighters.

Reliving History

While the game manuals provide some information on basic fighter maneuvering, plane specifications, and historical background, there are a huge number of books of interest to the WWII sim pilot. Not only will they provide ideas on tactics, but reading firsthand accounts of the pilots who flew and fought in World War II will also give you a better historical perspective and a richer flying experience. The quotes used in this article all came from the following sources, which are highly recommended:

Fighter Combat: Tactics and Maneuvering
Robert Shaw
Naval Institute Press, 19BS

Don't be fooled by the jets on the cover: This is *the* bible of fighter tactics, with teachings applicable whether you're flying a Sopwith Camel, a P-51, or an F-16.

Allied Fighter Aces of World War II
Mike Spick
Stackpole Books, 1997

Luftwaffe Fighter Aces
Mike Spick
Stackpole Books, 1996

If you fly WWII air-combat sims, these are must reads. Excellent descriptions of the tactics, planes, and pilots of the war.

JG 26: Top Guns of the Luftwaffe
Donald Caldwell
Orion Books, 1991

I had the privilege of working with Don Caldwell as he was writing this book and was amazed at the amount of painstaking research he put into *JG 26*. Equally amazing was the quantity and quality of data the survivors of *JG 26* provided to Caldwell. A great read.

The Mighty Eighth
Gerald Astor
Dell Publishing, 1997

The story of the bombing campaign over Europe, in the words of the bomber and fighter crews of the U.S. Eighth Air Force. Gripping stuff.

"There are only two types of aircraft: fighters and targets."

—Major Doyle "Wahoo" Nicholson, USMC fighter pilot

GIVING ORDERS You can issue squadron orders while paused in EUROPEAN AIR WAR.

The only hard and fast rule in WWII air combat was that there were no hard and fast rules. Every pilot played to his strengths and avoided his weaknesses. Once you've figured out the basics, experiment and find what works for you. You have a major advantage that your real life counterparts didn't have—the "restart mission" key! CGW

Jeff Lackey has been computer gaming since 1979 and, given the chance, will bore you to death talking about "the good old days" of the Apple II.

Railroad Tycoon II

Don't Tie Those Tracks in Frustration!

by Samuel Baker II

While RAILROAD TYCOON II (RRT2) can be a fascinating game, it takes time to master. Part of the reason for this steep learning curve is that RRT2 has a number of unfamiliar concepts, many of which aren't fully explained in the manual. I hope the following will help you keep the trains on time.

THE BEST ALL-AROUND ENGINE The GG1 offers great speed and load capacity, along with low maintenance and fuel costs, in a single engine.

Think Before You Lay

Since laying track and stations is your company's biggest capital outlay, you need to plan things out in detail before committing to anything. It pays to think about which way stations should be oriented and where you'll want track to run. If your line will be running east to west, for example, you don't want your stations oriented north to south. Ideally, you want traffic to be able to enter both ends of the station, not just one.

Trying to serve large cities that produce and demand multiple cargoes with one station can result in massive congestion—even with double track. If the funds are available, consider building one or more additional stations to serve different industries. You could establish separate lines, though that is more difficult, since the program will always route trains by what it believes is the shortest distance. If you keep all crossings between the two systems at right angles it should prevent trains from straying

ROCK (OR BLOCK) THE VOTE Owning 51 percent or more of your company guarantees that the blasted board of directors can't throw you out on the first economic downturn.

See the Review
MARCH ISSUE • 4.5 STARS

Industrial Strength

When you're starting out, don't try to do everything at once. Pick two cities that have complementary demands and run a train between them. For example, you might have cattle in one city and a meat packer in another, letting you run full trains in both directions. As you expand, look for grouped basic industries. Grain is a favorite. Find two or three farms together and look for an area nearby with cattle or dairy farms; if you can carry off the increased milk or cattle production, so much the better.

Buy any industries you intend to serve as soon as you can. Buying key industries ensures they won't disappear. At times a crucial industry will go poof and the great run that produced millions for you is gone. Any industry you own will stay in the game. You'll also make lots of money off of them.

If one of your opponents buys an industry you're serving before you do, quit running trains to support it. Eventually the competitor will give up and sell off, then you can buy the industry back and run trains to it.

Cargo has a shelf life (listed in days on the reference card). Like some manufacturers' warrantees, the clock starts as soon as a car's worth of that cargo appears at a station. Cargo value decays even while in transit. If cargo has not been picked up by its expiration date it disappears. If expired cargo is on a train it will stick around until it is sold for its minimum price. The shorter "shelf-life" a cargo has, the steeper its decline in value becomes. When cargoes with multiple "born on" dates are at a station they will be picked up in "age before beauty" order (oldest to youngest).

Passenger and mail service fluctuate much more with the economy than other cargoes and are too easy to "overserve." It's probably better to leave passenger and mail service alone until you have good engines like the Pacifics and Atlantics that can make long runs quickly.

Electrifying

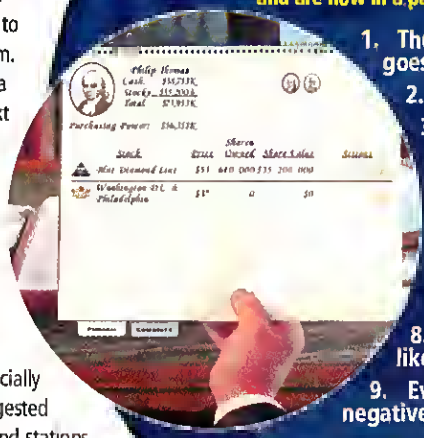
You'll see the "train can't reach station" message a lot. There are several different situations that generate that message. Like heartburn, the symptom may represent a minor condition or something more serious. First, trains always show that message for a brief period when they've just been created. If this or any other benign situations have generated this message it will disappear within a few moments.

If the train remains in distress for a protracted period there are three primary suspects: If the engine is electric you probably haven't electrified all of your track, it's easy to miss a spot when

upgrading. Go into the maximum zoom level and examine the train's route. Check for the electric poles, especially around stations and bridges. On the other hand, you may have accidentally sent your train to a competitor's station not connected to your system. If you put a station next door to his, it's all too easy to do. Or you might be missing a piece of track, especially in the congested areas around stations.

The Margin Call Spiral of Doom

Watch your purchasing power. Keep it in the black by a comfortable margin—say, $100k. Buy stock a little at a time, not all at once. If you buy all at once, the price will artificially rise a great deal and thereby inflate your purchasing power—worse still if you take advantage of the increased purchasing power and buy more stock. If you've bought a lot of stock during a boom economy—and are now in a panic—you'll risk entering the Margin Call Spiral of Doom.



1. The Spiral of Doom begins when your purchasing power goes negative.
2. The broker calls in your loan.
3. You are "heavily margined," having bought a large amount of stock with credit.
4. You sell some stock to try and dig yourself out.
5. Problem is, selling stock deflates the price of that stock.
6. So, if your stock holdings are in large chunks you will have *reduced* your purchasing power.
7. You sell *more* stock.
8. Your purchasing power either doesn't rise or, more likely, drops further.
9. Eventually you've sold all your stock and have negative wealth.

To avoid the downward spiral, limit your stock purchases and spread them out. Instead of selling stock to meet the margin call, have your company buy back some of the outstanding shares. This will raise the stock price and thus your purchasing power. You can also raise the dividend rate to put some cash back in your pocket.

What Goes Up

The stock market model in RRT2 is complex and requires us to learn about all those nifty phrases we've heard, but never understood. RRT2 also can cause split personality by giving us personal fortunes and goals as well as our company's. Frequently, what's good for General Railways will lose us the scenario.

Pause the game any time you're manipulating the market. Computer players love to take advantage of your position and will do nasty things like buy up all that stock you just had your company issue (and that you intended to buy).

At the beginning you can rest assured that everybody's stock will quickly rise and then split, so you can safely invest in everyone. Buy as much of your stock as you can while still maintaining positive Purchasing Power.

In addition to letting you buy and sell stocks and bonds, RRT2 puts two more double edged swords in your arsenal: buying on margin and selling short. Indulging in either one to excess can have you bleeding like a stuck pig. You can end up owing several millions of dollars and have no assets. In both cases you're doing something with nothing. Buying on margin lets you continue to acquire stock when you have no cash. Selling short lets you sell stock you don't own.

To do both successfully you have to keep track of your Purchasing Power, the state of the economy, and plans for your railroad's future. Purchasing Power represents the total of all your cash and half the value of any stock you own. Whenever your Purchasing Power becomes negative the broker will call. Your Purchasing Power is listed just underneath your portrait on the stock page.

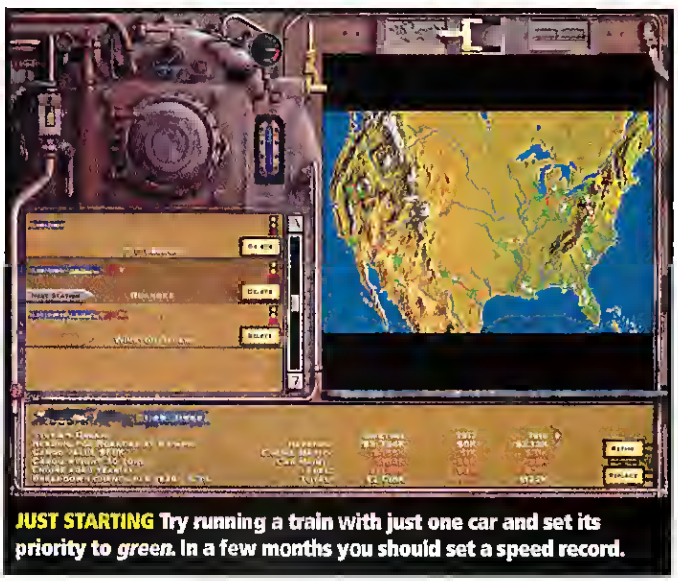
The tired maxim, "buy low and sell high" has real weight in RRT2. A boom economy is the optimum time to sell stocks or buy bonds. Bond interest rates are the lowest then. If you had to buy bonds in a less enthusiastic climate you should consider turning them over in good times. Buy enough bonds to repay the ones you have and repay them immediately. Even though you'll pay a penalty for paying off a bond early you'll make that up in a few years from the lower interest payments.

Normally you have to have cash to buy stocks. Once you've used up all your personal cash in RRT2, you are allowed (when playing at the hard difficulty setting) to buy on margin, where you are essentially taking out a loan with your broker. He agrees to let you buy stock, using the stock you already own as the collateral.

Don't Sell Yourself Short

Unless you have a good reason to think that a stock is about to tank, don't sell any stock short. (You can tell when you're buying on margin or selling short if either "buy" or "sell" is in parentheses.) When you sell short you are borrowing stock from the broker again, but this time you immediately sell it. Your short shares will show as a negative number of shares held. Eventually you'll need to buy them back to take a profit.

Consider selling short as an offensive tactic to use against other players. For example, if another player has bought a lot of stock on margin and the economy



JUST STARTING Try running a train with just one car and set its priority to *green*. In a few months you should set a speed record.

Operating multiple stations serving the same area can alleviate a back-up.

Stations start out with single track. Convert them to double track to double the number of trains that can be serviced at once.

It may be obvious, but keep your track as straight and level as you can, even around coastlines.

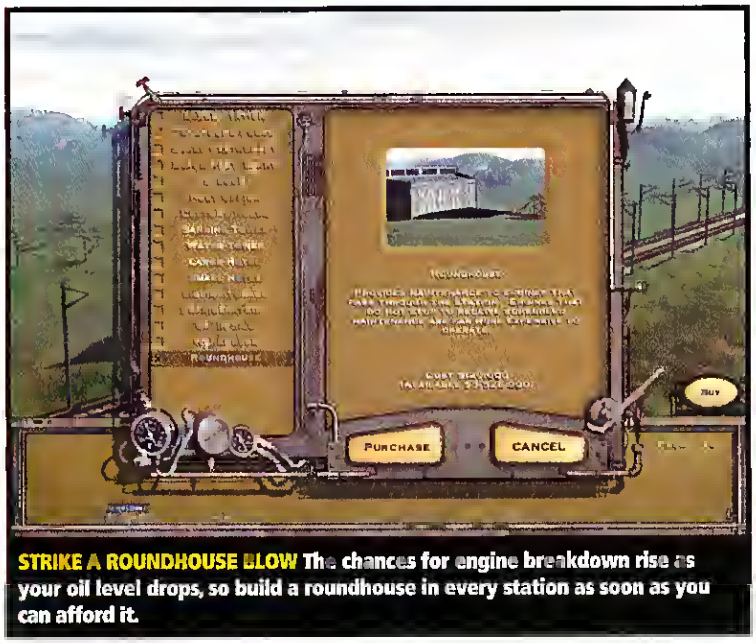
has just entered a downturn, sell that company short as much as possible. You may precipitate a margin call and force them out of the company.

You can also use selling short as a scorched-earth tactic. For example, your starting railroad has been doing well, but other players are way ahead of you in shares. Wait until the fall and pause the game. Then sell all your stock. Sell as short as you can. Next, depending on how evil you're feeling, rip up the track and sell off all your engines. Sell as many bonds as you can and use the money to buy up its shares. Un-pause the game and watch the show. This works especially well if the economy is down. The stock will tank and you'll probably sucker the other players into buying even more of the company. Eventually the stock will drop to a dollar a share. Buy up all the stock (you'll make a fortune on your short shares) and rebuild your railroad. The stock prices will skyrocket as service and profits return. Generally speaking, this isn't as efficient as operating a successful railroad, but it's a lot of fun.

Personal Worth

The company's making piles of money, but your personal worth is squat. What do you do? Over a long period of time (as described in the Margin Call Spiral of Doom) buy all your company's stock and have your company buy back its stock. These two steps increase your share of the company. Having you company buy back stock reduces your competitors' shares and boosts the price of your company's stock, which will also help stave off the MCSoD and increase your Purchasing Power. Once you have control of a substantial percentage of the company, crank up those dividends. You will want to have at least 60 percent of the stock before doing this. Remember your competitors will get rich off this too if they own stock in your company.

BE INDUSTRIOUS Inspect industries in your competitor's cities and buy any of them rated "lucrative" or better.



STRIKE A ROUNDHOUSE BLOW The chances for engine breakdown rise as your oil level drops, so build a roundhouse in every station as soon as you can afford it.

If it's near the end of a scenario in which part of the victory conditions involve personal wealth, sell as many bonds as you can and increase the dividends even more. As long as your company meets whatever goals are in the scenario, it doesn't matter if it goes belly up one minute after the game ends.

In those scenarios where you can start another railroad company there is a more efficient method of "money laundering" if you have a cash-rich railroad in which you are the major stockholder. Start another "shell" railroad with whatever spare change you have lying around. Use only your own money, don't use any outside investors. Don't bother building stations, laying track, etc. Resign as chairman and return as chairman of your starting railroad. Offer to merge with the shell company and pay as much as your railroad can afford. Since you're the sole stockholder the merger will succeed and all that lovely moolah will go into your pocket. You can use this process in reverse to prop up a railroad in trouble, though it requires having a large personal fortune.

Happy trains to you. This is my stop, and I have another market to corner.... CGW

Samuel Baker II returns to the world of fast tracks next issue with a review of RAILROAD 3D MASTER.

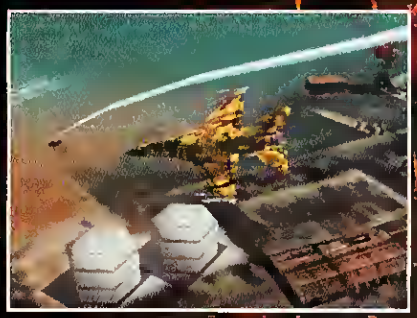
STRIKE HARD
GET PAID

F16 AGGRESSOR

F-16 AGGRESSOR

is the closest anyone outside the military will get to experiencing flight in the cockpit of an F-16 Falcon. No other combat flight sim comes close to the real Falcon's sophisticated fly-by-wire system.

- World class technology featuring a flight model so realistic military-only secret features had to be removed
- Fly over 40 geo-political missions over destabilized regions of Africa
- Beautifully accurate landscapes from Madagascar, The Rift Valley, Morocco, and Ethiopia
- Powerful AI controls tanks, planes, helicopters, ships, trucks and other vehicles with stunning realism
- Engage opponents in simultaneous air combat in target-rich environments over the Internet or LAN



BETHESDA SOFTWORKS™ • 1370 Piccard Drive, Suite 120, Rockville, MD 20850 • Fax: 301 926-8010 • www.bethsoft.com

F-16 Aggressor Copyright ©1998 GSI Limited. All Rights Reserved. Distributed under license from Virgin Interactive Entertainment (Europe) Limited.

Baldur's Gate

Getting That Party Underway

by Scorpia

Most of these tips apply more to solitaire play of BALDUR'S GATE than multiplay. However, the suggestions on character creation can be of value regardless of how you play the game. Unless noted otherwise, "thief" includes bard, "fighter" includes paladin and ranger, and "cleric" includes Druid.

Character Development

Given that BALDUR'S experience cap keeps you from advancing very far, you'll want to have the best possible character right off the bat. Single-classes will peak at level 7 (8 for thieves), multiclasses peak at either 6/6 or 6/7, depending on the mix.

Everyone should have dexterity of 18, if possible. This is an immediate four-point improvement in armor class, and is especially valuable for characters limited to little or no armor, such as thieves and mages. Anything that makes you harder to hit is worth having. For any character with thieving abilities, 18 is again the dexterity to shoot for.

For nonfighters, a constitution of 16 is sufficient; higher doesn't do much for you. Fighters should aim for a constitution of 17 or 18, to gain the extra hit-point bonus per level. The front lines can be pretty rugged in this game.

As regards strength, fighters should have at least 18/51 or better, both for the plus to hit and the extra damage. A high strength (14 or more) is also handy for clerics, since they, like fighters, can wear the heavy armor, such as plate mail. If you plan on having your cleric fight often, bring the strength up to 17 or 18 for maximum benefit.

Wisdom is important, primarily for clerics, and should be 18 for that class. In particular, it allows the cleric to memorize extra spells of each level, and we can all use the extra healing. Likewise, mages should come with 18 intelligence.

Charisma is not as important in the game as reputation, so you can get by easily with only an average (10+) score in this stat.

Have Some Class

I don't recommend multiclassing in the solo version, there are far too many drawbacks involved. Advancement is slower, and the restrictions on armor and weapons make the character less efficient in either class. This is especially true when combining fighter with mage. You can't cast spells in armor of any kind, and a fighter without armor is a dead duck. Unless you plan on hanging out in the back ranks with no armor and a bow, this is a combination to avoid.

Fighter with cleric is somewhat better, since you can wear the good armor, and still cast spells. Unfortunately, weapons are limited in this case to only what a cleric can wield, and that leaves out bows of all kinds. So this character can fight a little better than a regular cleric, but that's about all.

In the same way, dual classing for human characters should be avoided. There is an overall experience cap of 89,000 in the game (as noted when you go to the dual class screen). That means you must switch classes fairly early on, thereby limiting your abilities in the original class, and even when the new class exceeds the old, you're stuck with the same drawbacks a multiclass character has. Definitely not a good thing.

Generally, you are best off with a single-class character, although you can also try multiclassing later on when you're familiar with the game, and have a good idea of who will be in the party overtime.

Regarding weapon proficiencies, fighters get a star every three levels; thieves and clerics every four levels, and mages every six levels. This includes multiclass, who get a star at the appropriate level for whichever class gives the most beneficial results; e.g., a fighter/something combo gets a star every three levels, while a cleric/mage gets one every fourth level. Keep in mind that fighters combined with another class cannot go beyond two stars in any weapon type.

Fighters do well by starting with two stars in Large Sword, one in Bow, and the fourth into whatever else you please. At levels 3 and 6, put the stars into Large Sword. The better weapons are always swords, so make the most of that by advancing in this specialty.

Thieves should choose Small Sword and Bow. Since armor for this class is limited, it's better to stay back and use arrows whenever possible.

Clerics take Missile Weapons and either Blunt or Spiked Weapons. Druids should take Missile Weapons and Small Sword. Taking Small Sword will allow the Druid to use that very nice Dagger of Venom for sale in Beregost (once you can afford it). Blunt weapons will limit the Druid to only Club or Quarterstaff, neither an especially great weapon.

Mages should take missile weapons. This allows for using darts and slings, thus keeping the mage in the back, where such characters belong. "Back" is, however, a relative term. Monsters can attack from any angle, don't expect them to always be coming from the front. That's another reason everyone (not just your personal character!) should have the best armor possible.

Non-magical weapons in this game, especially swords, break

POINTED STAR It's just as important to have proper "marching order" in outdoor combat situations as it is inside dungeons or castles. Note how our magic user in the back rank is sufficiently shielded by the fighters up front, so that he has plenty of time to cast his spell. Our cleric (in the stylish robe) covers the flank and any surprises from the rear.

See the Review
THIS ISSUE • 4 STARS

fairly often; all fighter types should carry at least two weapons on their belts at all times. Once a character acquires a magical weapon (+1 or better), you won't have to worry about that anymore. Until then, be prepared with backups.

A Side-questing We Will Go?

Once you have a full party of six, be careful of which quests you accept (it's wise to save before talking to people in this game!). Sometimes, the person with a job to be done wants to join the group, and then you must drop one of your own regulars to make room for him or her. Jaheira and Khalid are a pair, and dropping one means dropping both. Branwen doesn't take kindly to being "cast off," either. The Nashkell-mines mage is usually the best bet for temporary drop-off, but you'll be out his spellcasting ability for the duration.

Then again, these "joiner" quests are not a part of the main storyline, so declining them won't prevent you from moving on with the game. There is plenty to do in the game, and going out on every little quest is not necessary.

Speaking of which, the main line primarily follows the mines/bandits until you get into Baldur's Gate. Most everything else is extra, designed for experience and finding the occasional neat item or two. There is no rush here, and you shouldn't be in a hurry to follow up on the story. For one thing, you probably won't be powerful enough to handle the opposition if you go too fast.

So, take your time and explore the side areas. These start showing up on your world map when you exit a location to the east or west (sometimes north or south, also, depending where you are). You don't usually need anyone to tell you about them; most will just be there when you leave an area.

Some people will ask you to find their missing/stolen items, such as the Boots of Stealth or the Belt of Piercing. By all means, find these things, just don't return them. You need this stuff far more than they do, and the rewards for bringing them back are paltry at best. Remember, you're saving the world, and they're just sitting around doing nothing important.

To Arms, Men (and Women)

Handling combat with six characters in quasi-realtime can be difficult until you get the hang of it. There are two types of combat, the general outdoor encounter and the set-piece.

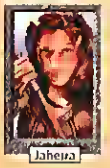
In general encounters, fighting begins when something hostile targets a party member. This is always mentioned in the text, so hit pause as soon as such messages appear. Scroll the map to see where the monsters are coming from, and how many there are. You may need to move some people around to get them out of

PYROMANIA Fireball is a great attack spell, but its radius of effect is rather large. Take care you don't cast it too close to friends.

Who's in the Party?

Imoen

Imoen, your childhood pal, is with you almost from the start, and provides thief abilities. Bring up her skills in Lockpicking and Find Traps as she advances in level.


Jaheira

Khalid

Jaheira and Khalid, at the Friendly Arms Inn, are also good to have for the long term. At the carnival east of Nashkell, you can buy a stone-to-flesh scroll for 500 gold and de-petrify Branwen the cleric, another good addition to the party. Note that clerics and Druids have slightly different spells, so one of each in the group is a good thing.

Mage

If your character is not a mage, you may want to pick up the spellcaster you rescue at the end of the Nashkell mines. Otherwise, it may be a very longtime before you find someone else who is a mage to join your group. Even if you are a mage yourself, having a second spellcaster won't hurt.

Coran

Fairly late in the game, in the Cloakwood Forest, you'll meet Coran, a fighter/thief. He is the supreme Archer, and also excellent at Lockpicking. If you have a spot open, he's well worth taking on.

NO SOMINEX REQUIRED When beset by troublesome foes, such as this flying Wyvern, don't waste time: have someone in your party cast Sleep.

'DAIKATANA' Slash your way through time with the aid of your trusty sword. Chase down the evil Dr Benedict through 4 different eras. Advance in multiple skill levels such as Attack Power, Attack Speed, Running Speed, Maximum Health and more. Incredible graphics and challenging artificial intelligence

Eidos (Action)
Release: 4/99
PC CD

$39.99

'FLY!' Choose from 1 of 5 prop or jet aircraft. Time-of-day & passage of time, global flight area, worldwide elevation terrain model & true satellite imagery. Realistic cockpit & avionics systems, GPS navigation, & air traffic. Built-in GPS navigation systems for each aircraft allow instant & accurate navigation at any time, anywhere in the world. Multiplayer Internet support. **GOD (Simulation)**
Release: 4/99
PC CD

$46.99

'DESCENT 3' New lethal weapons will be at your side as you obliterate the robot-infestation in the mines & on the surface! Every creature has personality & its AI is tailored to its environment. In-depth, diverse levels with multiple objectives for each mission. Real-time lighting, new weapons, & new ships. LAN, modem, or TCP/IP play with up to 8 players.

Interplay (Action)
Release: 4/99
PC CD

$48.99

'DUKE NUKEM FOREVER' Duke is back and badder than before in this retooled sequel. Dr. Proton has taken over Area 51 & nuked Las Vegas. Making use of the Quake II engine, the team at 3D realms promises not to disappoint with new weapons, new villains, and full 3Dfx support. Multiplayer options & incredible lifelike environments.

GT Interactive (Action)
Release: 4/99
PC CD

$46.99

'LEGACY KAIN SOUL REAVER' continues the story of Kain, evil vampire. Full 3D polygonal environments to explore with abilities to shunt from one world to another. Run, jump and fly while harvesting souls for the dark master. Eleven bosses, 20 different enemies, & 10 classes of vampires.

Crystal Dynamics (Roleplaying)
Release:3/99
PSX

$46.99

'LUNAR SILVER STAR' Join Alex as he begins a quest to save the land from the advance of the Magic Emperor. Explore dungeons, fight monsters, & gather information as you advance toward confrontation with the Emperor himself! Features menu-driven combat & over 45 minutes of awesome animation sequences!

Working Designs (Roleplaying)
Release 3/99
PSX

$54.99

CGW499PT

CHIPS&BITS INC.

POB 234 DEPT 11121
ROCHESTER, VT 05767
INT'L 802-767-3033 FAX 802-767-3382

Huge Selection

Great Prices

COMPUTER GAMES: SIMULATION

Title	Release	Price	Title	Release	Price	Title	Release	Price	Title	Release	Price
1943 Euro Air War	11/98	$39.99	Gunship 3	04/99	$48.99	NHRA Drag Racing	02/99	$34.99	SU-27 Flanker 2	03/99	$49.9
3D Naval Battles	03/99	$49.99	IA 10 Warthog	03/99	$43.99	Panzer Elite	02/99	$39.99	SU 27 Flnkr 2 Add On	09/99	$29.9
3D Railroad Master	10/98	$49.99	Independence War	09/98	$44.99	Phantom Ace	01/99	$46.99	Super Hornet 2000	01/99	$46.9
A 10 Warthog	03/99	$46.99	Inertia	04/99	$43.99	Privateer 3	03/99	$52.99	Super Touring Cars	03/99	$43.9
Aces X-Fighters W95	06/99	$49.99	Interceptor	03/99	$26.99	Prof Sportscar Racing	02/99	$42.99	Superbike World Champ	02/99	$39.9
Anarchy	01/99	$41.99	Jeff Gordon Racing	02/99	$44.99	Recoil	01/99	$39.99	Tanki	04/99	$48.9
Apache Havoc	02/99	$39.99	Jet Warrior Vietnam	04/99	$44.99	Red Baron 3D	11/98	$39.99	Terminus	05/99	$49.9
Boss Rally	03/99	$34.99	Luftwaffe Commander	12/98	$49.99	Redline	03/99	$38.99	Test Drive 5	12/98	$37.9
Burnout Champ Drgrcg CE	11/98	$37.99	Man of War 2	03/99	$39.99	ReVolt	03/99	$46.99	Tie Fighters W/ Refrnce	12/98	$32.9
Descent Freespace 2	04/99	$44.99	MechWarrior 3	04/99	$49.99	Rollcage	04/99	$42.99	TOCA Racing	12/98	$37.9
F1 98	03/99	$35.99	Mig Alley	03/99	$39.99	Rush 2	01/99	$43.99	Top Gun 2 Hornets Nest	01/99	$26.9
F-16 Agressor	03/99	$46.99	Monaco Grand Prix Rcg 2	02/99	$43.99	S.G.P.	02/99	$39.99	Trans Am Racing 68/72	06/99	$42.9
F22 Total Air War	10/98	$38.99	Motorhead	01/99	$44.99	Screamin Demon Europe	02/98	$44.99	UltraFighters	12/98	$37.9
Falcon 4.0	12/98	$49.99	MS Combat Flight Sim	11/98	$48.99	SHOGO Legacy of Fallen	04/98	$26.99	V-Rally	02/98	$44.9
Falcon 4.0: MIG 29	03/99	$32.99	MS Combat FS Cbt Pll 1	02/99	$21.99	Sierra Pro Pilot 99	11/98	$39.99	Warbirds	02/99	$26.9
Fighter Duel 2	05/99	$46.99	Nascar Racing 3	03/99	$47.99	Silent Hunter 2	03/99	$46.99	Wings of Destiny	04/99	$39.9
Flight Unlimited 3	03/99	$45.99	Nations Fighter Command	02/99	$35.99	Spearhead Exp Pack	02/99	$22.99	WW II Fighters	11/98	$44.9
FLY!	03/99	$46.99	Need for Speed 3	09/98	$42.99	Starlancer	09/99	$48.99	Xenocracy	02/99	$39.9
Flying Nightmares 2	05/99	$39.99	Newman-Haas Racing 2	02/99	$35.99	Starsiege	02/99	$45.99	X Wing Alliance	03/99	$49.9

COMPUTER GAMES: HARDWARE

Controllers			CH Pro Throttle	03/96	$84.99	Quickshot Mstr Pll Val	03/98	$59.99	Video Cards & Sound Cards		
ANKO GC FBWI Wheel	12/98	$179.99	CH Virtual Pilot Pro	12/94	$74.99	Saitek Cyborg 2000 Jstk	01/99	$24.99	Diamond Monster MX300	01/99	$89.9
CH EXL 500 Racing Sel	09/96	$52.99	Gravis Xtrmtr Gme Pd	07/98	$43.99	Saitek Cybrg 3D Jstk USB	12/98	$55.99	Sound Blaster LIVE! Value	10/98	$89.9
CH Fl 6 Fighterstick	11/96	$84.99	Gravs PC Gm Pd Pro USB	01/99	$29.99	Saitek R4 Frc Fdbk Wl	11/98	$169.99	Turtle Bch Mnlgo A3DX 2	12/98	$119.9
CH Flight Stick	05/91	$19.99	Logitch WingMan Force	10/98	$94.99	Saitek X-36 Cont Sys	05/98	$107.99	ATI Rage Fury 32MB	01/99	$189.9
CH Game Card 3 Auto	02/91	$25.99	Ltech WM Form Frc Whl	11/98	$139.99	Space Orb 360	10/96	$42.99	Creativ 3D Blstr Banshee	01/99	$119.9
CH Gamestick 3D USB	11/98	$45.99	MS SideWinder FF Whl	10/98	$169.99	TM Frag Master	12/98	$65.99	Diamond Viper V550 AGP	01/99	$199.9
CH Jane's Combt Stck	07/97	$58.99	Mad Catz Panther XL	01/98	$62.99	TM Nscr Frc GT Rcg Whl	12/98	$149.99	Dmd Mnstr Fsn AGP 16	01/99	$149.9
CH Joystick Switchbox	12/97	$23.99	PDPI L4 Dig Game Card	12/95	$79.99	TM Nscr Frc Olg Rcg Whl	03/99	$89.99	Meta Wkd3D Vngnce 16	01/99	$119.9
CH Pro Pedals	12/94	$79.99	Quickshot Master Pilot 98	04/98	$37.99	TM Nscr Spr Sprt Rcng Wl	12/98	$69.99	Qntm3D Dbsdn2 PCITV12	08/98	$139.9

COMPUTER GAMES: ACTION

Battlezone 2	07/99	$48.99	Frax War	03/99	$44.99	Abe's Exodus	12/98	$39.99	Dutcasl	03/99	$44.9
Carmageddon 2	11/98	$44.99	Quake 2 Bundle Pack	01/99	$47.99	Asghan: The Dragon Slyr	03/99	$39.99	Patriot Games	02/99	$48.9
Daikatana	03/99	$39.99	Quake 3 Arena	06/99	$48.99	Badlands	03/99	$48.99	Prince of Persia 3D	05/99	$48.9
Delta Force	10/98	$37.99	Rainbow 6: Eagle Watch	01/99	$19.99	Beavis & Butthd Do U	01/99	$25.99	Quest for Glory 5	12/98	$29.9
Descent 3	03/99	$43.99	Rainbow Six	08/98	$29.99	Blade Runner	11/97	$19.99	Quest Glory 5 Exp Pk	01/99	$29.9
Descent Freespace	06/98	$29.99	Requiem	03/99	$45.99	Curse of Monkey Isle	11/97	$19.99	Redguard	11/98	$49.9
Duality	02/99	$46.99	Resident Evil 2	01/99	$34.99	Dark Side of Moon	12/98	$46.99	Return to Krondor	12/98	$29.9
Duke Nukem Forever	03/99	$48.99	Shadowman	02/99	$49.99	Eyes of the Nation	02/99	$39.99	Robot Club	02/99	$43.9
Gruntz	03/99	$34.99	SHOGO: Mobile Armr Div	10/98	$29.99	Gabriel Knight 3	04/99	$48.99	Sanitarium	05/98	$29.9
Half Life	11/98	$34.99	Sin Mission Pack 1	02/99	$26.99	Grim Fandango	10/98	$39.99	Salm Rift	02/99	$44.9
Half Life: Tm Fortress	02/99	$24.99	South Park	04/99	$43.99	Indy Jones Infrnl Mchne	09/99	$46.99	Siege of Stormhaven	04/99	$48.9
Heavy Gear 2	02/99	$45.99	SpeedTribes	03/99	$42.99	Journeyman Project 3	02/98	$29.99	Soulblinger	02/99	$47.9
Heretic 2	12/98	$39.99	Star Trek Klingon Academy	03/99	$48.99	KDB: Mask of Eternity	12/98	$29.99	Space Circus	02/99	$44.9
Hired Guns	01/99	$39.99	Starship Troopers	03/99	$46.99	Lilith	04/99	$39.99	Starship Titanic DVD	02/99	$48.9
Interstate 82	02/99	$45.99	Starsiege: Tribes	12/98	$38.99	Long Journey	06/99	$39.99	Str Trk Scrt Vtch Fry	09/99	$48.9
Kingpin	03/99	$44.99	System Shock 2	06/99	$45.99	Morpheus	10/98	$29.99	Symblocom	02/99	$24.9
MDK 2	02/99	$44.99	Thief: The Dark Prjct	12/98	$29.99	Myst 2: Riven	11/97	$29.99	Time Lapse Ancient Civ	01/99	$29.9
Messiah	02/99	$48.99	Tomb Raider 3	11/98	$29.99	Neverhood	11/96	$22.99	Time Warrior	02/99	$37.9
Metal Fatigue	02/99	$35.99	Turok Dinosr Huntr 2	02/99	$46.99	Nightlong: Union City	02/99	$39.99	Wheel of Time	02/99	$46.9
Mortyr	03/99	$37.99	Unreal 2	08/99	$44.99	Nocturne	02/99	$46.99	X-Files Adventure Game	06/98	$45.9
Phoenix	02/99	$39.99	Unreal Tournament	03/99	$44.99	Omikron: Nomad Soul	09/99	$39.99	Zero Critical	02/99	$24.9

COMPUTER GAMES: ADVENTURE

COMPUTER GAMES: SPORTS

3D Hunting: Grizzly	01/99	$19.99	Football Mogul	02/99	$29.99	NFL DB Club 99	02/99	$44.99	3D 3 Pack	01/99	$19.9
African Trophy Hunter	01/99	$18.99	High Heat Baseball 2K	03/99	$25.99	NIRA Drag Racing	03/99	$34.99	Adrenaline Archive	02/99	$29.9
All Star Baseball 2K	03/99	$34.99	Jack Nicklaus Presents	03/99	$39.99	PBA Bowling 2	03/99	$35.99	Ages of Myst	10/98	$49.9
Baseball Mgl Wrld Srs	12/98	$28.99	Knockout Kings	03/99	$44.99	PGA Championship Golf	01/99	$26.99	Battlegrnd Coll 1or2 ea	01/99	$37.9
Brnswk Pro Pool 3D 2	01/99	$19.99	Links LS 99	11/98	$39.99	Pro 18 World Tour Golf	02/99	$39.99	F/A 18 Hornet/Korea Bndl	01/99	$26.9
Cabela Big Gme Hntr 2	02/99	$19.99	MS Golf 99	11/98	$38.99	Sports Car GT	02/99	$37.99	F-16 / MiG 29 Bundle	10/98	$44.9
Deer Avenger	02/99	$25.99	NASCAR Revolution	02/98	$42.99	Triple Play 2000	03/99	$37.99	F 22 ADF/ Red Sea Bndl	12/98	$19.9
FIFA Soccer 99	12/98	$36.99	NBA Live 99	11/98	$42.99	Zebco Pro Fishing 3D	02/99	$19.99	Gabriel Knight Coll Ed	12/95	$36.9
									Gmal Battls Srles CE	10/98	$37.9
									Might & Magic Compllatn	11/98	$29.9
									Police Quest SWAT Fc Pk	02/99	$39.9
									Rebel Assault I & 2	02/99	$32.9
									Star Trek Fed Complin	11/98	$19.9
									Star Trk Dp Spce 9 Gift St	10/98	$29.9
									Starcraft Btl Chest	12/98	$59.9
									Tot Annihiltn Comm Pk	11/98	$46.9
									Ultimate Wizardry Archvs	11/98	$26.9
									Ultimate WW2 Gme Clctn	02/99	$36.9
									You Dn t Knw Invnt Coll	12/98	$44.9

HINT BOOKS

Alpha Centauri	01/99	$16.99	Grim Fandango	11/98	$17.99	Railroad Tycoon 2	12/98	$19.99
Baldur's Gate	01/99	$16.99	Half Life	11/98	$16.99	Return to Krondor	12/98	$16.99
C&C 2	03/99	$17.99	Heroes M&M 3	03/99	$16.99	SimCity 3000	01/99	$16.99
Caesar 3	11/98	$16.99	Homeworld	03/99	$16.99	Starcraft: Brood Wars	01/99	$16.99
Dungeon Keeper 2	03/99	$17.99	King's Quest 8	12/98	$16.99	Starsiege	02/98	$16.99
Everquest	02/99	$16.99	Lands of Lore 3	02/98	$16.99	Starsiege: Tribes	01/99	$16.99
Fallout 2	01/99	$17.99	Mechwarrior 3	03/99	$16.99	Thief: Dark Projct	12/98	$16.99
Gabriel Knight 3	03/99	$17.99	Myth 2	01/99	$16.99	Tomb Raider 3	12/98	$14.99
Gangsters	12/98	$16.99	Quest for Glory 5	01/99	$16.99	Wargasm	01/99	$17.99

SONY PLAYSTATION

Akuji the Heartless	01/99	$44.99	Jeff Gordon XS Racing	03/99	$46.99	PSX Dual Analog Contr	05/98	$29.99
Alien Resurrection	01/99	$44.99	Kawasaki Motocross	03/99	$39.99	PSX 7000 System	06/98	$139.99
Army Men	01/99	$42.99	King of Fighters 98	06/99	$46.99	R4 Ridge Racer Type4	03/99	$46.99
Battleship	01/99	$39.99	Knockout Kings	11/98	$42.99	Rushdown	03/99	$42.99
Big Air	03/99	$42.99	Legacy Kain Soul Reavr	02/99	$46.99	SaGa Frontier 2	06/99	$49.99
Brigandine	11/98	$46.99	Legend of Legaia	03/99	$52.99	Silent Hill	02/99	$46.99
Carmageddon 2	02/99	$42.99	Lunar Silver Star Story	03/99	$54.99	Silhoutte Mirage	03/99	$43.99
Civilization 2	01/99	$39.99	Match Madness 99	01/99	$44.99	Sports Car Supreme GT	02/99	$39.99
Clock Tower 2	01/99	$42.99	MarvelSprHero Vs SF	01/99	$42.99	Street Skater	02/99	$39.99
Destreger	01/99	$46.99	Metal Gear Solid	10/98	$49.99	Sulkoden 2	05/99	$45.99
Earthworm Jim 3	03/99	$42.99	Monaco Grand Prix	03/99	$46.99	Tomb Raider 3	11/98	$49.99
FIFA Soccer 99	11/98	$39.99	NBA In the Zone 99	02/99	$46.99	Triple Play 2000	03/99	$41.99
Final Fantasy 8	08/99	$59.99	NCAA Final Four 99	01/99	$44.99	WCW NWO Live Thunder	01/99	$46.99
Guardian's Crusade	03/99	$46.99	NHL Hockey 99	09/98	$44.99	Warzone 2100	02/99	$46.99
Irritating Stick	02/99	$44.99	Need for Speed 4	03/99	$42.99	Xenogears	10/98	$46.99

PC:BUNDLES

NINTENDO 64

Beetle Adv. Racing	03/99	$54.99						
Castlevania 64	01/99	$52.99						
Conker's Quest	02/99	$53.99						
Jet Force Gemini	02/99	$62.99						
Legend of Zelda	11/98	$69.99						
Magical Tetris Mickey	02/99	$56.99						
Mario Party	02/99	$54.99						
N64 Controller Gray	10/96	$26.99						
N64 System Purple	11/98	$139.99						
Ogre Battle 3	03/99	$65.99						
Penny Racers	01/99	$52.99						
Snowboard Kids 2	01/99	$56.99						
South Park	12/98	$68.99						
Star Wars Rogue Squad	12/98	$54.99						
Turok Dinosaur Hunter 2	12/98	$69.99						

©1999 CHIPS & BITS, INC.

New Releases

Order Online

www.cdmag.com/chips.html or call 1-800-699-4263

Source Code 11121

COMPUTER GAMES: STRATEGY

Title	Release	Price
1830 RR/Robr Baron	04/95	$19.99
Age Empires Frnt Conqst	07/98	$18.99
Age of Empires	10/97	$29.99
Age of Empires 2	05/99	$48.99
Age of Empirs Cnqst Ages	02/99	$26.99
Age of Empirs Rise Rme	11/98	$29.99
Age of Wonders	02/99	$46.99
Alien Intelligence	01/99	$45.99
Alpha Centaurr	02/99	$43.99
Ancnt Cnqst Gldn Fice	03/99	$42.99
Anno 1602	01/99	$42.99
Armored Moon	02/98	$26.99
Army Men	05/98	$26.99
Army Men 2	02/99	$35.99
Axis & Allies	09/98	$39.99
Battlecru ser 3000 AD V2	12/96	$17.99
Battlecruiser 3020 AD	04/99	$44.99
Black & White	04/99	$48.99
Blackstone Chronicles	11/98	$39.99
Braveheart	05/99	$37.99
C & C Red Alert	11/96	$19.99
C&C 2 Tiberian Sun	03/99	$54.99
C&C Gold Bundle	11/98	$19.99
C&C Gold W95	02/97	$14.99
C&C Red Alert Ansnl	12/96	$26.99
C&C Solo Survivor Onlne	12/97	$25.99
C&C Worldwide Warfre	11/98	$43.99
Caesar 3	10/98	$39.99
Capitalism Plus	05/97	$29.99
Civ 2 Fantasy Worlds	11/97	$19.99
Civ 2 Multiplayer Gold Ed	12/98	$27.99
Civ 2 Test of Time	02/99	$48.99
Civilization 2	03/96	$24.99
Civilization 2 Scen	11/96	$23.99
Civiltn Call to Powr	02/99	$44.99
Cmmndos Bynd Call Duty	03/99	$29.99
Commandos	09/98	$29.99
Conflict of Natrons	01/99	$46.99
Conq New World Dlx	11/96	$15.99
Cpr Art War Exp Pk 1	01/99	$22.99
Crusader	05/95	$19.99
Crusader 2	11/96	$19.99
Cvlztn 2 Fantastic Worlds	03/99	$29.99
Cvlztn 2 Test of Time	03/99	$29.99
Cvlztn 2 Ultimate Rec	03/99	$39.99
Cvlztn Call to Powr	02/99	$44.99
Dark Colony	11/96	$19.99
Dark Reign	06/97	$19.99
Dark Reign 2	11/98	$39.99
Dark Reign MP 2	07/98	$26.99
Dark Reign MP 2	07/98	$26.99
Dark Reign SE	11/98	$39.99
Dawn of War	02/99	$39.99
Deadlock 2	03/98	$19.99
Dominant Species	10/98	$29.99
Dominion Storm	06/98	$22.99
Dune 2000	03/98	$39.99
Dungeon Keeper 2	04/99	$45.99
Dungeon Keeper Gold	04/98	$19.99
Earth 2140	10/97	$14.99
Emergency	09/98	$19.99
Emperor of Fading Suns	01/97	$18.99
Empire of the Ants	02/99	$42.99
Entrepreneur	10/97	$38.99
Entrepreneur Corp Exp	01/99	$24.99
Extreme Tactics	10/98	$46.99
Fleet Command	03/99	$46.99
Force Commander	11/99	$49.99
Fragile Allegiance	03/97	$14.99
Galtean Conflict	02/99	$35.99
Gangsters	12/98	$29.99
Global Dominatron	11/98	$39.99
Heroes M&M 2 Exp Pk	05/97	$17.99
Heroes M&M 2 Gold	12/98	$18.99
Heroes M&M W95	02/96	$19.99
Heroes of M & M 3	03/99	$44.99
Hidden Wars	01/99	$46.99
Hollywood Mogul	12/97	$29.99
Homeworld	03/99	$46.99
Imperialism 2	03/99	$44.99
Imperrum Galactica	06/97	$32.99
Incubatron	10/97	$38.99
Incubation Wilderness	05/96	$19.99
Industry Giant	04/98	$36.99
Jagged Alliance 2	04/99	$44.99
Jakkal Flesh+Bones	01/99	$39.99
KKND 2	10/98	$34.99
Knights & Merchants	10/98	$39.99
Legend of the Five Rings	12/99	$42.99
Lords of Magic	12/97	$34.99
Lords of Magic SE	11/98	$39.99
Lords Realm 2 Exp Pk	06/97	$28.99
Machine Hunter	03/99	$39.95
Magic & Mayham	03/99	$46.99
Magic Spells of Anct	10/97	$19.99
MechCommander	07/98	$29.99
MechCommander 2	10/99	$48.99
MechCommander Exp Pck	02/99	$29.99
Missn Frc Cybrstrm 2	06/98	$36.99
MTG Duels of Planeswalker	02/98	$19.99
Myth	11/97	$29.99
Mythr 2	01/99	$42.99
Pax Imperia 2	11/97	$26.99
Plague	04/99	$42.99
Populous 3	11/98	$45.99
Railroad Tycoon 2	11/96	$49.99
Reach for Stars 2	04/99	$48.99
Rebel Moon Revolution	03/99	$36.99
Rebellion W/ Strat Gde	01/99	$46.99
Risk	11/96	$19.99
RoboRumble	12/98	$26.99
Roller Coaster Tycoon	04/99	$39.99
Ruthless com	11/96	$19.99
Sentinel Returns	10/96	$26.99
Settlers 3	11/98	$37.99
Seven Kingdms Anc Adv	06/98	$34.99
Seven Kingdoms	12/97	$35.99
Seven Kingdoms 2	05/99	$39.99
Shadow Company	04/99	$42.99
Shadowpact	02/99	$43.99
SimCity 3000	01/99	$44.99
SimSalarr	03/98	$19.99
Soldiers at War	05/98	$27.99
Star Control 3	09/96	$14.99
Star Trek Birth Fed	02/99	$48.99
Star Trek: New Worlds	04/99	$46.99
Star Trk Starfit Comm	01/99	$48.99
StarCon	03/99	$44.99
Starcraft	04/98	$36.99
Starcraft Brood Wars	12/98	$29.99
Starcraft Insurrection	08/98	$26.99
Starcraft Retnbutron	01/99	$19.99
Stars Twinpack	06/98	$27.99
Starship Diplomacy	05/99	$48.99
Stellar Frontier	05/99	$44.99
Stratosphere	06/96	$46.99
Submarine Titans	04/99	$39.99
SWAT 2	07/98	$34.99
Theme Hospital	04/97	$14.99
Theocracy	05/99	$37.99
Total Annihltn Kingdoms	02/99	$46.99
Total Annihilation	10/97	$29.99
Total Annihilatron 2	08/99	$48.99
Total Annihtn Ct Cigcy	04/98	$19.99
Tot Annihtn Bttl Tcics	06/98	$19.99
Uprising 2	12/98	$37.99
Wall Street Tycoon	05/99	$44.99
WallStreet Trader 99	02/99	$39.99
War of the Worlds	01/99	$36.99
Warbreeds	03/98	$19.99
Warcraft 2 Platinum	03/99	$39.99
Warcraft 3	09/99	$46.99
Wargasm	01/99	$46.99
Warhammr 40K Chs Gate	11/96	$39.99
Warlords 3	08/97	$14.99
Warlrds 3 Drk Lrd Rsg	08/98	$37.99
Warlords 4	06/99	$48.99
Warzone 2100	02/99	$34.99
Worldcraft Pro	02/99	$39.99
Worms 2	01/98	$24.99
Worms Armageddon	01/99	$39.99

COMPUTER GAMES: WAR

101st Airborne Normandy	10/98	$35.99
Aida de Camp 2	01/98	$44.99
Battle of Britain	01/99	$37.99
Battlegrnd Bull Run	05/97	$19.99
Battlegrnd Gettysbrg	12/95	$16.99
Battlegrnd Shiloh	07/96	$18.99
Battlegrnd Waterloo	05/96	$18.99
Close Combat 2	11/97	$19.99
Close Combat 3	01/99	$46.99
Combat Mission	05/99	$45.99
Dragons in the Mist	05/98	$23.99
Dragoon Bttle Pk 1 5 ea	09/96	$22.99
East Front	11/97	$39.99
East Front Camp	03/98	$19.99
Great Battles Caesar	03/98	$29.99
Great Battls Alexndr	06/97	$34.99
Great Bttles Hannibal	11/97	$29.99
Harpoon 4	07/98	$46.99
Medieval	07/98	$32.99
North Vs South	01/99	$39.99
Operation Art War	06/96	$29.99
Operational Art War 2	03/99	$42.99
Oprtn Blood & Guts	04/99	$35.99
Pacific General Budget	07/98	$9.99
Pacific Tide	02/99	$45.99
Panzer General 2	10/97	$19.99
Panzer General 3	03/99	$44.99
People's General	09/98	$29.99
Road to Moscow	02/99	$44.99
Shogun Total War	02/99	$46.99
Sid Meier's Gettysbrg	10/97	$22.99
Steel Panthers 3	11/97	$17.99
Steel Panthers Arsenal	05/96	$36.99
Storm in the West	04/98	$33.99
Taisho	06/99	$47.99
Tides of War	11/98	$36.99
War Along the Mohawk	09/96	$19.99
War In Europe	10/98	$39.99
War in the East 1-5 ea	04/96	$24.99
West Front	11/98	$37.99
Wrhmmr 40k Rites War	03/99	$42.99

COMPUTER GAMES: ROLEPLAYING

Anachronox	04/99	$46.99
Ancient Evil	02/99	$45.99
Baldur's Gate	12/98	$44.99
Baldurs Gate Exp Pk	03/99	$19.99
Battlespire	12/97	$32.99
Blade	02/99	$45.99
Celtica	02/99	$44.99
Clans	03/99	$43.99
Darkstone	04/99	$45.99
Diablo	01/97	$19.99
Diablo 2	05/99	$46.99
Diablo Bundle	10/98	$29.99
Diablo Hellfire	12/97	$21.99
Dungeon Master 2	07/95	$15.99
Elder Scrolls 2	09/96	$39.99
Elder Scrlls Mrrowind	03/99	$54.99
EverQuest	03/99	$44.99
Fr Descent Undermin	01/96	$19.99
Fallout 2	11/98	$29.99
Final Fantasy VII	06/98	$32.99
Good & Evil	06/99	$46.99
Gothica	02/99	$46.99
Hexplore	09/98	$25.99
Icarus: Sanctuary of Gods	11/98	$26.99
Lands of Lore 3	03/99	$44.99
Legacy of Kain Bld Omn	09/97	$16.99
Might & Magic 6	04/98	$29.99
Might & Magic 7	03/99	$48.99
Mordor 2	02/99	$42.99
Odium	06/99	$39.99
Planescape Torment	05/99	$47.99
Rage of Mages	10/98	$25.99
Rage of Mages 2	06/99	$44.99
Revenant	04/99	$29.99
Swords & Sorcery	02/99	$48.99
Swords of Heroes	05/99	$46.99
The Summoner	06/99	$44.99
Ultima Online 2nd Age	11/98	$44.99
Warhammr 2 Dk Omen	11/98	$39.99

RDLE PLAYING

AD&D DM Guide	02/95	$23.99
Alternity Player's Handbook	04/98	$27.99
Ars Magica 4th Ed	08/95	$25.99
Call of Cthulhu 5th Ed	07/98	$24.99
Conspiracy X	09/96	$22.99
Cyberpunk 2020	05/95	$17.99
Deadlands Rulebook	10/97	$27.99
Dragonlance 5th Age	09/96	$20.99
Earthdawn	06/95	$17.99
GURPS Rulebook	02/95	$22.99
MERP 2 Softcover	10/95	$19.99
Mechwarrior	07/95	$13.99
Pendragon 4th Ed	05/95	$19.99
Rifts	06/95	$21.99
Robotech	04/95	$11.99
Shadowrun 3rd Edition	10/98	$28.99
StarWars Revised	01/97	$27.99
Tribe 8	10/96	$27.99
Trinity	03/98	$26.99
Vampire 3rd Edition	10/96	$27.99
Wraith	02/95	$24.99

BOARD GAMES

Axiines	06/96	$34.99
Axis & Allies	11/94	$45.99
El Caballero	12/96	$16.99
Epic WH 40K	10/97	$69.99
Hannibal	03/96	$33.99
History of the World	12/94	$29.99
Lionheart	10/97	$35.99
Risk	03/96	$34.99
Robo Rally	01/96	$36.99
Samurai Swords	04/97	$32.99
Scrabble Dlx	08/97	$46.99
Settlers of Catan	11/96	$29.99
Sushi-Jalapeno War	01/99	$39.99
World in Flames Dlx	11/96	$89.99

PC: ADULT GAMES

Aladdin & City of Sin	04/98	$32.99
Arabian Nights	03/98	$39.99
BJ Babes	01/98	$25.99
Busty Babes 4	11/95	$36.99
Cabin Fever	07/97	$34.99
Catchin' Kylie	09/96	$39.99
Cyber Photographer	08/96	$29.99
Dada House	02/98	$19.99
Days of Dblvion	11/98	$49.99
Diva X Kaoru	11/97	$34.99
Girlfriend Donna	12/96	$39.99
Hot Frolique	02/96	$35.99
Private Pics Park 2	08/96	$30.99
Pyram d Maze	08/98	$39.99
Romsoft Three Pack	02/96	$19.99
Sex With Farrah	07/98	$42.99
Space Sirens 2	09/95	$34.99
Strip Poker Pro 2	12/95	$39.99
Ultra Vixen 2	12/98	$39.99
Virtual Valerie 2	08/95	$29.99
X Plorations Female Base	10/98	$49.99

FREE GAME OFFER!

Spend the specified amount on any in-stock software and choose one free IBM game from the corresponding list. Request must be made at time of order. Offer good on in stock software only, while supplies last. Limit 2 per customer. Valid through 04/08/99.

Spend $60- Cyberjudas CD, Fable CD, Nihilist CD, Spaceward Ho! 4 CD,
Spend $10B- 3D Ultra Pinball Creep Night CD,British Open Golf CD,Cyberjudes CD, Wages of War CD
Spend $2D0- Apecho Gold CD, Conquer the Skies CD,Empire 2 CD, Jutland CD, Under a Killing Moon CD

Visa MC & Discover accepted. Checks held 4 weeks. Money Orders under $200 same as cash. COD $8. Price, release availability, shipping times & offer not guaranteed & are subject to change at any time. Hardware may require added S&H. Within 10 days defectives repaired or replaced at our discretion. After 10 days the manufacturer's warrantee applies. All sales final. S&H calculated on a per order, per shipment, and per item basis. The "per order" charge is charged once per order placed, the "per item" charge is charged once for each item ordered and the "per shipment" charge is charged once for each shipment we make to you. For each US order $10.00 will be allocated to a 12 issue subscription to Computer Games Strategy Plus. Call for details.

	Standard US Mail 7-10 Days	Priority US Mail 2-3 Days	Express 2 Day	Express 1 Day	Mail To Canada 4-7 Days	Mail To The World 7-14 Days
Per Order	$1.00	$2.00	$2.00	$2.00	$2.00	$2.00
Per Shipment	$1.25	$1.00	$5.00	$13.00	$2.00	$2.00
Per Item	$0.75	$1.00	$1.00	$2.00	$2.00	$6.00

$37.99

'BRAVEHEART' Follow in the footsteps of Scottish hero William Wallace, taking on the might of the English army to gain your freedom! Braveheart combines real-time strategy with global management in a brutal reenactment of the war between sword-wielding Scottish clansman and expansionist English forces. With the latest 3D engine and state-of-the-art motion capture technology, Braveheart delivers unparalleled combat realism.

Eidos (Strategy)
Release: 2/99
PC CD

$44.99

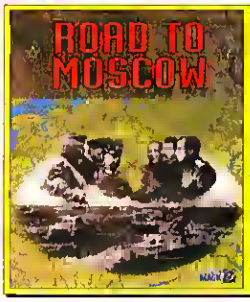
'CIVILIZATION: CALL TO POWER' Build an empire from the ground up. Lead the world in technological knowledge. Exert your military might. Features a 7000-year time span from primitive history to the future. The experience is enriched with unique non-military strategies, vivid graphics, an engaging multiplayer mode and breakthrough empire management options.

Activision (Strategy)
Release: 2/99
PC CD

$48.99

'STAR TREK GENERATIONS: BIRTH OF THE FEDERATION' Manage resources, solar systems and trade routes. Construct, maintain and refit a Starship fleet -- and engage in turn-base 3-D space combat! Features multiple skill levels, galaxy sizes and other options for long-term replayability. Multiplayer support for up to five players via LAN, direct connect, modem and internet.

Microprose (Strategy)
Release: 2/99
PC CD



$44.99

'ROAD TO MOSCOW' Control Russian or German troops while the game engine simulates movement and engagements. Play any of 12 scenarios or command the entire Eastern Front. Wage war on real terrain with realistic command and control - no hexes, no turns, just pure simulation of military command. Authentic, richly detailed maps convey tremendous depths of information.

Inter. Magic (War)
Release: 2/99
PC CD

$37.99

'BATTLE OF BRITAIN' Fight this historic battle as the German attackers or the British defenders. As the German player you can launch up to 100 raids/day, selecting from over 300 targets. As the British defender you select squadrons to intercept raids, place squadrons on patrol & move AA guns & barrage balloons. Includes all planes from battle, target types & night rules.

Talonsoft (War)
Release: 3/99
PC CD

$48.99

'DIABLO II: INFERNO' Five new character classes with unique attributes & abilities. Four different fully populated towns, multiple dungeons, caverns & crypts. Expanded world filled with all-new quests, weapons, spells, armor & monsters. Advanced combat system which incorporates class-specific fighting techniques & spells.

Blizzard (Roleplaying)
Release: 5/99
PC CD

BALDURS GATE

HEROES CAST IN STONE In all *D&D* games—BALDUR'S GATE is no exception—statues are more than they seem, and it might be a good idea to cast Dispel Magic here.

harm's way, especially if weaker characters are the target.

Against just a couple of opponents, setting the whole party against one at a time can kill them off quickly. Against multiple monsters, advance the fighters to head the critters off and keep them occupied while other party members use missile weapons or spells. I usually have an auto-pause set for "target gone," which is especially helpful during large fights.

Normally, the NPC members (any character other than your own) automatically choose another target when their current one is gone, and you can just leave them to it. However, there are times when you may want to redirect attacks to a specific opponent, and auto-pause lets you do that without having to hit the space bar all the time.

The set piece is where you have one or more opponents waiting especially for you, and one of them has something to say before fighting starts. You can't sneak up on them, although if you're fast enough, you can hit pause and direct your spellcasters to start some magic going. After conversation ends, your people will continue with their spells. This is another good place to pause, so you can direct physical attacks against specific opponents.

Spellcasters are the toughest opponents. Mage types invariably cast either Mirror Image or Invisibility before you can stop them. Physical attacks will eventually destroy the images (you have to get all of those before you can hit the mage). You can also try area effect spells, such as Fireball, or Dispel Magic to remove the images. Command may also work in this situation. Against invisible enemies, Purge Invisibility is the spell of choice.

Silence, with its 15-foot effect radius, can prevent opponents from doing nasty things to your party. Web is another good spell, though it takes a little practice to use properly; webbed opponents of all kinds are helpless while trapped (this is much better than entangle, which only stops movement, not spells or physical attacks). Hold Person can also be effective against difficult opponents.

Your people who are held, confused, charmed, and the like, can often be brought back to normal with Dispel Magic or Remove Paralysis. Be sure to have a few of those spells always memorized. Charm is especially nasty, as the victim will immediately start attacking someone in the party, and the party members will attack him or her in return. So, undo that effect as soon as possible, then pause the game and redirect everyone's attacks to the proper opponents; sometimes, it takes a while for the group to realize the person has been restored.

It won't be long before you start coming across set pieces with more than one enemy, usually a spellcaster or two, as well as tough fighters. You'll live longer if you take them out one at a time. The "tiptoe" technique is good for this.

Basically, you just move very slowly so as the darkness rolls back on the map, only one enemy is revealed, then stop. If it's an ordinary fighter, let him come to you. If it's a mage, use missile weapons and spells as necessary. The important thing here is *not* to move farther along, uncovering more opponents before you're ready. One spellcaster and a couple of friends (sometimes, even just one magic-user) can easily trash your whole group.

Keep an eye on the right-hand portraits during combat. Your party members have no sense of self-preservation, and will fight to the death if you let them. Anyone severely injured should be moved away from the fighting and given some healing if you can manage it. While dead companions can be resurrected later, they drop everything they're carrying, which can make for problems. Also, anyone who dies from poison or fire is gone for good, and can't be raised from the dead; their portraits disappear from the list. Ouch!

Finally, save often. You never know what may turn up in the next few steps. Bounty hunters after your scalp can show up anywhere, not just in town. A group of unusually powerful monsters may be sitting around in an area populated by weak ones. Anything can happen out there, much of it nasty. Walk with care and be prepared at all times. CGW

Visit Scorpia

Internet: **www.scorpia.com**
Email: *scorpia@scorpia.com*
IRC chat: *Thursdays, 9:30 PM Eastern (port: 6667; server: scorpia.com)*
U.S. Mail: *Scorpia, P.O. Box 338, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028.*
(Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you live in the U.S.)

GO TO #157 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Hi-Tech Jobs www.dice.com

Try the largest online job service for high tech professionals! Point your browser to **www.dice.com** for FREE access to thousands of IT jobs. DICE has contract and full-time job listings for Programmers, Software Engineers and much more! Use DICE - *it works!*

dice
High tech jobs online

Real Jobs. Real Fast. DICE: 515-280-1144
Go to #169 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

CDAccess.com
1-800-959-5260
1-408-366-6700 V
1-406-366-9066 F

You Want Games?

http://www.cdaccess.com

GO TO #**160** @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Netscape: Student Section

ADDRESS FOR SUCCESS

Location: http://www.aics.edu

Welcome to the NEW AICS Virtual Campus

- Earn B.S. and M.S. in Computer Science
- *INTRODUCING: B.S. program in Information Systems*
- Distance Education
- Object oriented B.S. program
- Approved by more than 275 companies
- Follows ACM/IEEE guidelines
- Thousands of students throughout U.S.

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF COMPUTER SCIENCES

STATE LICENSED AND APPROVED

ACCREDITED

FREE CATALOGUE:
1-800-767-AICS
or ***www.aics.edu***

Document: Done

Never Mind What We Say About the PDPI L4 Digital Game Card. Here's What a Few of the Ones That Really Count Have To Say:

"Silky-smooth frame rate and deadly precise control. I knocked 2.5 seconds off my best time at Spa after only a few laps."

Alison Hine

"The best thing to happen to online gaming since the modem."

John MacQueen

New for the Racing Sim Community
Watch our website for news of our special version of the ACT Labs RS Racing System optimized for the L4. These two great products paired together are guaranteed to be the biggest advance in racing sim gear since the advent of the L4 itself.

Pacific Digital Peripherals, Inc. 2631 East New St., Simi Valley, CA 93065 (805) 581-7024 e-mail: pdpi@aol.com www.pdpi.net

Go to #050 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

ADVERTISER INDEX

Order Free Product Information @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

INFO#	COMPANY	PRODUCT	PAGE
*	3DO Co.	Heroes of Might & Magic VII	128-131
*	3DO Co.	Army Men II	154-155
*	3DO Co.	High Heat Baseball	106-107
93	3DO Co.	Heroes III	166-167
*	3DO Co.	Requiem	72-73
210	Game Dealer	Game Dealer	85
140	Activision	Heavy Gear 2	136-137
190	Activision	Jack Nicklaus	25
236	Activision	Heretic 2	116-117
145	Activision	Civ: Call to Power	12-13
*	AICS	AICS	235
116	ASC Games	Jeff Gordon XS Racing	88-89
*	ATI Technologies, Inc.	Rage Testimonial Ad	147
161	Aureal Semiconductor	A3D	151
*	Bethesda Softworks	F-16	229
*	Bethesda Softworks	Magic & Mayhem	50
266	Blizzard Entertainment	StarCraft: BroodWars	4-5
88	Brady Games	Strategy Guide: Civ: Call to Power	38
110	Bungie Software	Myth II Soul Blighter	75
*	Capcom	Resident Evil2	118-119
172	Cavedog	Total Annihilation:Kingdoms	14-15
160	CD-ROM Access	CD-Rom Access	235
68	Chips & Bits	www.cdmag.com/chips.html	92
68	Chips & Bits	www.cdmag.com/chips.html	232-233
265	D-Link	Network Kit	138
*	Dell Computer Corp.	Dell Computer Corp.	CS-C8
169	DICE	Hi-Tech Jobs	235
*	EA Sports	Nascar Virtual Athelete	48-49
276	Eidos Interactive	Commandos: BeyondCall of Duty	18-19
272	Eidos Interactive	Soulreaver: Legacy of Kain	52-53
290	Eidos Interactive	Tomb Raider III	54-55
152	Eidos Interactive	Warzone 2100	56-57
158	Eidos Interactive	Gangsters	58-59
273	Eidos Interactive	Thief: The Dark Project	60-61
292	Eidos Interactive	Contest Page	182
257	Falcon Northwest	Falcon Mach V	34-35
187	Fox Interactive	Alien vs. Predator	169
124	Gathering of Developers	RailRoad Tycoon II	47
*	GT Interactive	Unreal Tournament	C2-C4,1
183	GT Interactive	Abe's Exodus	45

INFO#	COMPANY	PRODUCT	PAGE
*	Hasbro Interactive	Birth of a Federation	78
*	Hasbro Interactive	MechWarrior 3.0	197-199
*	Hasbro Interactive	MechWarrior	187
*	Interact Accessories, Inc.	Advent Speakers	144-145
175	Interactive Magic	Seven Kingdoms II	76-77
173	Interactive Magic	Shadow Company	97,99,101
299	Interplay	Kingpin	16-17
262	Interplay	Interplay Affinity Program	30
163	Interplay	Baldur's Gate	171
67	Interplay	Descent III	2-3
*	Jane's Combat Sims	A-10 Warthog	94-95
97	LucasArts Entertainment	X-Wing Alliance	8-9
*	Micron Electronics	Millennia	140-141
*	Microsoft	CCIII: The Russian Front	28-29
139	Monolith Productions	Odium	156
144	Monolith Productions	Rage of Mages II	172
50	Pacific Digital Periph., Inc.	PDPI	235
*	Psygnosis	Pro 18 PSX	202
178	Sierra On-Line	Tribes	81
174	Sierra On-Line	Starsiege	83
186	Sierra Studios	King's Quest: Mask of Eternity	158-160
53	Sierra Studios	Homeworld	178-180
182	Sierra Studios	Half Life	126-127
192	Sierra Studios	Return to Krondor	112-113
180	Sierra Studios	Caesar III	68-69
194	Sierra Studios	Sierra Studios	22-23
*	Sierra On-Line	Sierra On-Line	32
157	Stargate Software	Stargate Software	234
211	Strategic Simulations	Fighting Steel	26
212	Strategic Simulations	Flanker 2.0	42-43
218	Strategic Simulations	Imperialism II	64-65
*	Strategy First	Clans	36
*	Strategy First	Man O'War II	201
242	Talonsoft	Battle of Britain	20
289	THQ	Sinistar	67
111	Thrustmaster, Inc.	Talk n Play	153
275	Total Entertainment Net.	PGL	90
252	Westwood Studios	C&C Tiberian Sun	122-123
255	Westwood Studios	Lands of Lore III	6-7
291	Yamaha Corp. of America	Speakers	135

WELCOME TO THE COOPERSTOWN OF COMPUTER GAMES. These are the games that broke the records, established the benchmarks, and held gamers in delighted trances for hours untold.

Alone in the Dark (I-Motion, 1992)

The Bard's Tale (EA, 1985)

Battle Chess (Interplay, 1988)

Betrayal at Krondor (Dynamix, 1993)

Chessmaster (Software Toolworks, 1986)

Command & Conquer (Virgin/Westwood 1995)

Day of the Tentacle (LucasArts, 1993)

DOOM (id Software, 1993)

Dungeon Master (FTL Software, 1987)

Earl Weaver Baseball (EA, 1986)

Empire (Interstel, 1978)

F-19 Stealth Fighter (MicroProse, 1988)

Falcon 3.0 (Spectrum Holo8yte, 1991)

Front Page Sports Football Pro (Dynamix, 1993)

Gettysburg: The Turning Point (SSI, 1986)

Gunship (MicroProse, 1986)

Harpoon (360 Pacific, 1989)

Kampfgruppe (SSI, 1985)

King's Quest V (Sierra On-Line, 1990)

Lemmings (Psygnosis, 1991)

Links 3B6 Pro (Access Software, 1992)

M-1 Tank Platoon (MicroProse, 1989)

Master of Magic (MicroProse, 1994)

Master of Orion (MicroProse, 1993)

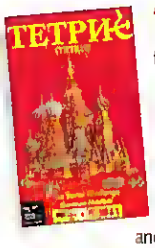
Mech Brigade (SSI, 1985)

MechWarrior 2 (Activision, 1995)

Might & Magic (New World Computing, 1986)

M.U.L.E. (EA, 1983)

Hall of Fame—New Inductees



Tetris (Spectrum Holobyte, 1988)

If there ever really was a communist plot to destroy American productivity, it was the Soviet-developed TETRIS. It was a simple little game in which you tried to line blocks up into rows as they ceaselessly fell from the sky. Success was rewarded only by the occasional change of a crudely drawn Russian-themed background and the ever-quickening pace of falling blocks.

It was such a simple game with few rewards, yet somehow we never stopped playing it. The EGA version still sits on a number of hard drives in our offices. We bought Gameboys to play TETRIS on plane flights. We installed TETRIS on our laptops. We kept ancient Atari ST's running long past their prime as dedicated TETRIS workstations. We revel in the fact that we look like we're working when we play TETRIS on our PalmPilots in really boring meetings. The blocks keep coming, and someone has to put them in their places. We can't walk away.

So TETRIS has been belatedly inducted into the Hall of Fame. Maybe, finally, those dreams we've all had of falling blocks from the sky will at last stop. Or at least they'll move on to the next level.

Quake (id Software, 1996)

After QUAKE's revolutionary mouselook concept, first-person shooters would never be the same. Suddenly, the enemy could rain destruction down (or up) on you from any direction. This left gamers not only jumping out of their chairs as they played the game, but also had them creeping around corners in the real world long after their PCs had been shut down. The dreaded hiss of a Scrag had you instantly searching the skies in a desperate attempt to kill before being killed, and Shamblers made us quiver with fear.

Still, QUAKE owes its status as the definitive action-game benchmark to its incredible Death-Match play, which at the time offered the ultimate outlet for office-wide (and Internet-wide) aggression. We can think of few joys in life more satisfying than brutally turning fellow *CGW* Editor Dave Salvator into a pile of bloody chunks and reveling in his tortured cries of "Nooooooooo!!!!!" and "Camping Ho!" QUAKE immersed us in fantastic killing fields like no game before it, and it still holds up after all these years.

Panzer General (SSI, 1994)

Red Baron (Dynamix, 1990)

The Secret of Monkey Island (LucasArts, 1990)

Sid Meier's Civilization (MicroProse, 1991)

Sid Meier's Pirates (MicroProse, 1987)

Sid Meier's Railroad Tycoon (MicroProse, 1990)

SimCity (Maxis, 1987)

Starflight (EA, 1986)

Their Finest Hour (LucasArts, 1989)

TIE Fighter (LucasArts, 1994)

Ultima III (Origin Systems, 1983)

Ultima IV (Origin Systems, 1985)

Ultima VI (Origin Systems, 1990)

Ultima Underworld (Origin Systems, 1992)

War in Russia (SSI, 1984)

WarCraft II (8lizzard, 1996)

Wasteland (Interplay, 1986)

Wing Commander (Origin Systems, 1990)

Wing Commander II (Origin Systems, 1991)

Wing Commander III (Origin Systems, 1994)

Wizardry (Sir-Tech Software, 1981)

Wolfenstein 3-D (id Software, 1992)

X-COM (MicroProse, 1994)

You Don't Know Jack (8erkeley Systems, 1996)

Zork (Infocom, 1981)

TOP 100

CGW'S MONTHLY READERS' POLL

Each month, 2,000 *CGW* subscribers are selected at random to rate 100 computer games. The results of that poll are combined with the results of previous months to yield a cumulative average for the best plays in gaming. If you receive a ballot, please return it with your ratings so that other gamers and game publishers can benefit from your feedback.

TOP ACTION GAMES

THIS MO.	LAST MO.	GAME/COMPANY	SCORE	RATING
1	1	**Shogo: Mobile Armor Division** Monolith	8.56	3.5
2	2	**Quake II** Activision	8.47	4.5
3	3	**Jedi Knight: Dark Forces II** LucasArts	8.46	4.5
4	4	**Quake Pack 1: Armagon** id Software/Ritual	8.45	4.5
5	4	**Quake Pack 2: Dissolution** id Software/Rogue	8.44	5
6	7	**Jedi Knight: Mysteries of the Sith** LucasArts	8.32	4
7	6	**Quake II Pack 2: Ground Zero** Activision	8.30	3.5
8	8	**Unreal** GT Interactive	8.29	4
9	9	**Rainbow 6** Red Storm	8.12	3.5
10	10	**Quake II Pack: The Reckoning** id Software/Activision	7.98	3.5

TOP ADVENTURE GAMES

THIS MO.	LAST MO.	GAME/COMPANY	SCORE	RATING
1	1	**Curse of Monkey Island** LucasArts	8.21	5
2	2	**Sanitarium** ASC Games	7.76	4.5
3	3	**Twinsen's Odyssey** Activision	7.67	5
4	4	**Zork: Grand Inquisitor** Activision	7.60	N/R
5	5	**Blade Runner** Virgin/Westwood	7.59	4.5
6	6	**Realms of the Haunting** Interplay	7.44	4.5
7	7	**Last Express** Red Orb	7.40	4.5
8	—	**Leisure Suit Larry 7** Sierra	7.16	3
9	9	**Black Dahlia** Interplay	7.07	3
10	—	**Riven** Red Orb	6.91	3.5

TOP CLASSIC/PUZZLE GAMES

THIS MO.	LAST MO.	GAME/COMPANY	SCORE	RATING
1	1	**You Don't Know Jack 2** Berkeley Systems	8.18	4.5
2	3	**You Don't Know Jack Movies** Berkeley Systems	7.93	4.5
3	2	**You Don't Know Jack 3** Berkeley Systems	7.91	4
4	4	**Smart Games Challenge 2** Smart Games Inc	7.79	5
—	5	**Worms 2** MicroProse	7.79	4
6	6	**You Don't Know Jack TV** Berkeley Systems	7.70	2.5
7	7	**You Don't Know Jack Sports** Berkeley Systems	7.43	4.5
8	9	**Shanghai Dynasty** Activision	7.22	3
9	—	**Magic: Duels of the Planeswalker** MicroProse	6.87	2.5
10	9	**Lose Your Marbles** SegaSoft	6.62	4.5

TOP SIMULATION/SPACE COMBAT

THIS MO.	LAST MO.	GAME/COMPANY	SCORE	RATING
1	1	**Longbow 2** EA	8.43	5
2	2	**Wing Commander: Prophecy** Origin	8.33	4.5
3	3	**F-15** EA/Origin	8.16	4.5
4	4	**F-22 ADF** DID	7.71	4.5
5	6	**Fighters Anthology** EA	7.68	3.5
6	7	**MechWarrior 2: Mercenaries** Activision	7.58	4.5
7	5	**Independence War** Ocean	7.55	5
8	9	**Flight Unlimited 2** Looking Glass	7.55	4.5
9	8	**Descent: Freespace** Interplay	7.52	4
10	—	**Flight Simulator 98** Microsoft	7.30	3.5

TOP SPORTS/RACING GAMES

THIS MO.	LAST MO.	GAME/COMPANY	SCORE	RATING
1	1	**NHL 98** EA Sports	8.61	4
2	5	**Need for Speed III** EA	8.35	5
3	2	**World Cup 98** EA Sports	8.33	4.5
4	3	**FIFA Road to World Cup 98** EA Sports	8.31	4.5
—	3	**NBA Live 98** EA Sports	8.31	4.5
6	6	**Motocross Madness** Microsoft	8.13	4.5
7	7	**Jack Nicklaus 5** Accolade	8.01	5
8	8	**Madden NFL '99** EA Sports	7.92	4.5
9	10	**Diamond Mind Baseball 7.0** Diamond Mind	7.64	3.5
10	—	**NFL Gameday 99** 989 Studios/Sony	7.59	3

TOP STRATEGY GAMES

THIS MO.	LAST MO.	GAME/COMPANY	SCORE	RATING
1	1	**Heroes II: Price of Loyalty** 3DO/New World	8.95	5
2	2	**StarCraft** Blizzard	8.80	5
3	3	**TA: Core Contingency** Cavedog	8.73	4.5
4	4	**Total Annihilation** GT Interactive	8.23	4.5
5	5	**Red Alert: Counterstrike** Virgin/Westwood	8.14	4
6	7	**StarCraft: Insurrection** BlueByte	8.02	3.5
7	8	**Age of Empires: Rise of Rome** Microsoft	8.00	4
8	9	**Age of Empires** Microsoft	7.97	4.5
9	6	**Total Annihilation: Battle Tactics** Cavedog	7.94	3.5
10	—	**Civilization II: Fantastic Worlds** MicroProse	7.83	4

TOP ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

THIS MO.	LAST MO.	GAME/COMPANY	SCORE	RATING
1	1	**Might and Magic VI** 3DO/New World	8.84	4.5
2	2	**Fallout** Interplay	8.34	4.5
3	3	**Final Fantasy VII** Eidos/Squaresoft	8.22	4
4	4	**Hellfire** Sierra	7.83	4
5	—	**Dark Earth** MicroProse	6.65	3.5
6	5	**Shadows Over Riva** Sir-Tech	6.60	N/R
7	6	**Rage of Mages** Monolith	6.33	3
8	7	**Lands of Lore II** Westwood	6.16	N/R
9	8	**Meridian 59** 3DO	5.41	3.5
10	9	**Ultima Online** Origin	4.82	1.5

TOP WARGAMES

THIS MO.	LAST MO.	GAME/COMPANY	SCORE	RATING
1	1	**Steel Panthers II Camp Disk** SSI	8.30	4.5
2	2	**Panzer General II** SSI	8.25	5
3	3	**The Operational Art of War** TalonSoft	8.24	4.5
4	4	**Sid Meier's Gettysburg** Firaxis	7.99	4.5
5	5	**Steel Panthers II** SSI	7.96	4.5
6	8	**People's General** SSI	7.80	3
7	7	**Battleground: Bull Run** TalonSoft	7.75	4
8	6	**Battleground: Napoleon in Russia** TalonSoft	7.72	4.5
9	9	**Great Battles of Julius Caesar** Interactive Magic	7.51	4
10	10	**Steel Panthers III** SSI	7.27	3

Games on unnumbered lines are tied with game on line above. ★ = Top game of genre. Red = New Game, **AD** = Adventure, **RP** = Role-Playing, **SI** = Simulation/Space Combat, **ST** = Strategy, **WG** = Wargame, **AC** = Action, **SP** = Sports, **CP** = Classic/Puzzle. Games are retired after two years and become eligible for the Hall of Fame.

	THIS MO.	LAST MO.	GAME/ PUBLISHER	GAME GENRE	POLL SCORE	CGW RATING
★	1	1	**Heroes II: Price of Loyalty** New World Computing	ST	8.95	5
★	2	2	**Might and Magic VI** 3DO/New World	RP	8.84	4.5
	3	3	**StarCraft** Blizzard	ST	8.80	5
	4	4	**Total Annihilation: Core Contingency** Cavedog	ST	8.73	4.5
★	5	5	**NHL 98** EA Sports	SP	8.61	4
★	6	6	**Shogo: Mobile Armor Division** Monolith	AC	8.56	3.5
	7	7	**Quake II** Activision	AC	8.47	4.5
	8	8	**Jedi Knight: Dark Forces II** LucasArts	AC	8.46	4.5
	9	9	**Quake Pack 1: Armagon** id Software/Ritual	AC	8.45	4.5
	10	9	**Quake Pack 2: Dissolution** id Software/Rogue	AC	8.44	5
★	11	9	**Longbow 2** EA/Jane's	SI	8.43	5
	12	19	**Need for Speed III** EA	SP	8.35	5
	13	14	**Fallout** Interplay	RP	8.34	4.5
	14	9	**World Cup 98** EA Sports	SP	8.33	4.5
	—	15	**Wing Commander: Prophecy** Origin	SI	8.33	4.5
	16	16	**Jedi Knight: Mysteries of the Sith** LucasArts	AC	8.32	4
	17	17	**FIFA 98: Road to the World Cup** EA Sports	SP	8.31	4.5
	—	17	**NBA Live 98** EA Sports	SP	8.31	4.5
★	19	20	**Steel Panthers II Campaign Disk** SSI	WG	8.30	4.5
	—	13	**Quake II Pack 2: Ground Zero** Activision	AC	8.30	3.5
	21	20	**Unreal** GT Interactive	AC	8.29	4
	22	23	**Panzer General II** SSI	WG	8.25	5
	23	28	**The Operational Art of War** TalonSoft	WG	8.24	4.5
	24	24	**Total Annihilation** GT Interactive	ST	8.23	4.5
	25	22	**Final Fantasy VII** Eidos	RP	8.22	4
★	26	25	**Curse of Monkey Island** LucasArts	AD	8.21	5
★	27	26	**You Don't Know Jack 2** Berkeley Systems	CP	8.18	4.5
	28	29	**F-15** EA/Origin	SI	8.16	4.5
	29	30	**Red Alert: Counterstrike** Westwood	ST	8.14	4
	30	30	**Motocross Madness** Microsoft	SP	8.13	4.5
	31	27	**Rainbow 6** Red Storm	AC	8.12	3.5
	32	34	**StarCraft: Insurrection** BlueByte	ST	8.02	3.5
	33	33	**Jack Nicklaus 5** Accolade	SP	8.01	5
	34	36	**Age of Empires: Rise of Rome** Microsoft	ST	8.00	4
	35	37	**Sid Meier's Gettysburg** EA/Firaxis	WG	7.99	4.5
	36	34	**Quake II Pack: The Reckoning** id Software/Activision	AC	7.98	3.5
	37	38	**Age of Empires** Microsoft	ST	7.97	4.5
	38	39	**Steel Panthers II** SSI	WG	7.96	4.5
	39	32	**Total Annihilation: Battle Tactics** Cavedog	ST	7.94	3.5
	40	41	**You Don't Know Jack Movies** Berkeley Systems	CP	7.93	4.5
	41	40	**Madden NFL 99** EA Sports	SP	7.92	4.5
	42	41	**You Don't Know Jack 3** Berkeley Systems	CP	7.91	4
	43	44	**Civilization II: Fantastic Worlds** MicroProse	ST	7.83	4
	—	45	**Hellfire** Sierra	RP	7.83	4
	45	60	**People's General** SSI	WG	7.80	3
	46	48	**Smart Games Challenge 2** Smart Games Inc	CP	7.79	5
	—	48	**Worms 2** MicroProse	CP	7.79	4
	48	47	**Sanitarium** ASC Games	AO	7.76	4.5
	49	51	**Battleground: Bull Run** TalonSoft	WG	7.75	4
	50	55	**Caesar III** Sierra	ST	7.74	4.5
	51	48	**Warlords III: Darklords Rising** Red Orb/SSG	ST	7.73	4.5
	52	46	**Battleground: Napoleon In Russia** TalonSoft	WG	7.72	4.5
	53	53	**Moto Racer** EA	AC	7.71	4
	—	54	**F22 ADF** NovaLogic	SI	7.71	4.5
	55	55	**You Don't Know Jack TV** Berkeley Systems	CP	7.70	2.5
	56	58	**Tomb Raider II** Eidos	AC	7.69	4
	57	59	**Fighters Anthology** EA	SI	7.68	3.5
	58	61	**Twinsen's Odyssey** Activision	AD	7.67	5
	59	62	**Diamond Mind Baseball 7.0** Diamond Mind	SP	7.64	3.5
	60	64	**Zork: Grand Inquisitor** Activision	AD	7.60	N/R
	61	64	**Blade Runner** Westwood/Virgin	AD	7.59	4.5
	—	68	**NFL Gameday 99** 989 Studios/Sony	SP	7.59	3
	63	65	**Tripleplay 99** EA Sports	SP	7.58	2.5
	—	66	**MechWarrior 2: Mercenaries** Activision	SI	7.58	4.5
	65	55	**Independence War** Ocean	SI	7.55	5
	—	68	**Battlezone** Activision	AC	7.55	5
	—	68	**Flight Unlimited 2** Looking Glass	SI	7.55	4.5
	68	72	**Dungeon Keeper Expansion** EA/Bullfrog	ST	7.54	4.5
	69	71	**MechCommander** MicroProse	ST	7.53	4
	70	67	**Descent: Freespace—The Great War** Interplay	SI	7.52	4
	71	73	**Great Battles of Julius Caesar** Interactive Magic	WG	7.51	4
	72	75	**Myth** Bungie	ST	7.46	4.5
	73	77	**F1 Racing Simulation** Ubi Soft	SP	7.45	5
	74	73	**Realms of the Haunting** Interplay	AD	7.44	4.5
	75	76	**You Don't Know Jack Sports** Berkeley Systems	CP	7.43	4.5
	76	77	**Triple Play 98** EA Sports	SP	7.42	3
	77	80	**Last Express** Red Orb	AD	7.40	4.5
	78	73	**Interstate 76** Activision	AC	7.39	4.5
	79	84	**Baseball Mogul** Infinite Monkey	SP	7.36	4
	80	85	**Dungeon Keeper** EA/Bullfrog	ST	7.35	4.5
	81	82	**Virtual Pool 2** Interplay	SP	7.31	4.5
	82	86	**Flight Simulator 98** Microsoft	SI	7.30	3.5
	83	88	**Steel Panthers III** SSI	WG	7.27	3
	84	87	**M1 Tank Platoon II** MicroProse	SI	7.26	3.5
	85	90	**PGA Tour Pro** EA Sports	SP	7.24	3.5
	86	90	**Age of Rifles Campaign Disk** SSI	WG	7.23	4
	87	88	**Shanghai Dynasty** Activision	CP	7.22	3
	88	92	**Close Combat: A Bridge Too Far** Microsoft/Atomic	WG	7.20	4.5
	89	92	**Achtung! Spitfire** Avalon Hill	WG	7.19	5
	90	—	**Leisure Suit Larry 7** Sierra	AD	7.16	3.5
	—	96	**X-COM: Apocalypse** MicroProse	ST	7.16	4
	92	97	**Commandos** Eidos	ST	7.15	2.5
	93	97	**MDK** Playmates/Shiny	AC	7.13	4.5
	94	—	**FPS Football Pro 97** Sierra	SP	7.10	4.5
	95	—	**Panzer Commander** SSI	SI	7.09	4
	96	94	**Uprising** 3DO	AC	7.08	4
	97	100	**Black Dahlia** Interplay	AD	7.07	3
	98	—	**Hexen II** Activision	AC	7.05	3.5
	99	—	**Shadows of the Empire** LucasArts	AC	6.92	3.5
	100	—	**Riven** Red Orb	AD	6.91	3.5

Planet of the Geeks

Or, Yo, Pencil Neck—This Is Our World Now!

Hi, my name is Jeff, and I am a geek.

Chances are high that you too, now holding this magazine, are also a geek. Call it a hunch. Just to be sure, though, so I'm certain we're speaking the same language, please take a moment to answer True or False to the following statements:

1. I think that anyone who says that Kirk/Picard (take your pick) was the better Enterprise captain is an ill-informed moron and poseur with no understanding whatsoever of the qualities necessary to be a leader in interplanetary space travel and conflict management.

2. I know how to use the phrase "RAM cache" in a sentence.

3. I am afraid to read my comic books out of fear that I'll bend the pages and lower their value.

4. The toughest and most important decision I've made so far this year was deciding whether to be a halfling or half-elf in BALDUR'S GATE.

5. I have named one of my pets, children, or body parts "Frodo."

I'd say answering True to any one of these puts you squarely on Team Geek.

But don't worry. I'm not putting you through this process to make fun of you. On the contrary. Other people may laugh at you or kick sand in your face, but not me. You're always welcome here at Chez Greenspeak, as long as you observe the rules: No speaking in Klingon, no yammering on about the new *Star Wars* movie, no loud public recitations of Monty Python routines. Also, I'll have to ask you to keep away from my daughter.

■ ■ ■

So now that we know where we stand, I would like to address the gallery. I would like to say that of late, as I have wandered this great land of ours, I have heard lots of grumbling and naysaying from my fellow gaming geeks. And I must say, friends, that it disturbs me. What I have heard is resistance, resentment, and repulsion toward the hordes of unwashed "normal" people now flooding the gates of our Fortress of Dorkitude.

JEFF GREEN

We see them buying copies of RIVEN and DEER HUNTER, and we do not like what we see. We say to one another: "That is not a real game! These are not real gamers!" And we wish to drive them away, to send them back to their world of Range Rovers and outdoor barbecues and Yanni CDs. But I wish to say, friends, that this is wrong. Just as Zera must kiss Taylor at the end of *Planet of the Apes*, we must embrace these people, as unpleasant as it might be.

Why? Because we won. Because they are living in our world now. Because, in just two short decades, The Geek has been radically transformed from picked-upon social reject to admired prince of the new world order. And with such power comes responsibility.

■ ■ ■

As someone who grew up in the fetid cultural dungheap of the San Fernando Valley in the 1970s, I'm here to testify: The Geek has not always had it so good. It was not hip to be square—it was an invitation to an ass-kicking. Studied sullenness was the order of the day. Brains were not valued. The coolest guys in the school were those glassy-eyed mouth-breathers who majored in wood shop and played air guitar to "Cat Scratch Fever." Displaying even the slightest interest in something like a computer was tantamount to showing up at school in "I Love Mommy" underwear.

But it's all changed now. Suddenly, there are rock bands with Web sites and TV commercials for Pentium II chips and junior-high kids with home networks. We won, you see? And the more people converted to the cause, the more power we have. The more people play computer games, the more the world works the way we want it to.

It's easy to laugh at people who play games we think are "beneath" us or scoff at those who don't have the same oh-so-important gaming knowledge. But once we start playing with the politics of exclusion, well, then we're just as bad as the lummoxes who broke our glasses. Any game that gets someone behind a computer—thinking, analyzing—is a good thing.

> I have **named** one of my **pets**, children, or **body** parts "Frodo."

So lighten up, Poindexter. Geeks have never had it so good. Let the Wal Mart crowd play their hunting games, and stop being a snob about it. With some encouragement from us, they'll come around to STARCRAFT, HALF-LIFE, and ALPHA CENTAURI.

And when they do—*then* we kick their bumpkin asses. CGW

What Jeff doesn't realize is that neither Kirk nor Picard could have handled Seven of Nine without ending up in a sexual harassment court-martial. Call him a poseur at jhgreen@zd.com

Computer Gaming World (ISSN 0744 6667) is published monthly by ZD Inc. One Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016. Subscription rate is $27.97 for a one year subscription (12 issues). Canada and all other countries add $16.00 for surface mail. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Computer Gaming World*, PO Box 57167, Boulder, CO 80328-7167. Canadian GST registration number is 89371 0442 RT. Canada Post International Pub's Mail Product (Canada Distribution) Sales Agreement No. 1058649. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY 10016 and additional mailing offices. **Printed in the U.S.A.**

Packed with the just-released Pentium® II processor at 366MHz, 4MB of VRAM and a 15-inch display, the Dell® Inspiron™ 7000 A366LT notebook lets you put the pedal to the metal. After all, you won't find these kinds of numbers on just any notebook. Because this isn't just any notebook.

Call us or visit www.dell.com/evalue to build yours today.

DELL® INSPIRON™ 7000 A366LT
PENTIUM® II PROCESSOR AT 366MHz

All-in-One Multimedia Performance

- 15" XGA Active Matrix Display
- 64MB SDRAM (384MB Max[Ω])
- 4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- Removable Combo 24X Max[^^] Variable CD-ROM and 3.5" Floppy Drive
- 2X AGP 4MB ATI RAGE LT Pro 3D Video
- 3D Surround Sound and Hardware Wavetable
- 12-Cell Intelligent Lithium Ion Battery
- Internal 56K Capable[¤] V.90 Fax Modem with Trial Offer ConnectDirect℠ Internet Access
- MS® Works Suite 99 with Money 99 Basic
- MS Windows® 98
- Touchpad
- 3-Year Limited Warranty[†]

$2999

Personal Lease[*]: $112/Mo., 36 Mos.[#]

E•VALUE CODE: 88716-8002290

USE THE POWER OF THE E•VALUE™ CODE.

MATCH OUR LATEST TECHNOLOGY WITH OUR LATEST PRICES. ENTER THE E•VALUE CODE ONLINE AT WWW.DELL.COM/EVALUE, OR GIVE IT TO YOUR SALES REP OVER THE PHONE.

TO ORDER TOLL-FREE

888-686-3355

BUILD YOUR OWN AND ORDER ONLINE

BE DIRECT™

DELL®

www.dell.com/evalue

intel inside
pentium® II

Phone Hours: M-F 7a-11p • Sat-Sun 8a-8p CT • In Canada,* call 800-839-0148 • In Mexico,* call 001-800-210-7607

*Personal leasing arranged by Dell Financial Services L.P., an independent entity, to qualified customers. Amount of monthly lease payments above based on 36-month lease. All above monthly lease payments exclude taxes which may vary (for example, Hartford City, IN sales tax #$5.60/month). Shipping cost due with first payment. No security deposit required; subject to credit approval and availability. Lease terms subject to change without notice.

www.dell.com/evalue

WHERE PEOPLE LIKE YOU BUILD COMPUTERS LIKE THESE.

You don't always have time during your busy day to call and talk to someone about a computer. Now you don't have to. Because Dell's website means you never have to pick up the phone. You can custom configure and buy or lease your own system online, exactly the way you want. You can check on your order status at anytime. And receive technical support 24 hours a day. We believe it is the easiest, smartest way to buy a system. So stop in for a visit today at www.dell.com/evalue.

DELL® DIMENSION™ DESKTOPS

Common features: Mini-Tower Model ◆ 512KB Integrated L2 Cache (128KB on Intel Celer Access^v ◆ 3.5" Floppy Disk Drive ◆ 2 Universal Serial Bus (USB) Ports ◆ McAfee VirusScan ◆ HP ScanJet 6200 Cse, add $399 ◆ APC Back-UPS Office, add $99

DELL DIMENSION V333c
INTEL CELERON PROCESSOR AT 333MHz

- 64MB SDRAM
- 8.4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 17" (16.0" viewable, .26dp) M780 Monitor
- ATI 8MB 3D AGP Graphics
- 32X Max^ Variable CD-ROM Drive
- Yamaha XG 64V Wavetable Sound
- harman/kardon HK-195 Speakers
- MS Works Suite 99 with Money 99 Basic
- Dell QuietKey® Keyboard
- Logitech First Mouse+ Wheel
- ★ *Upgrade to 128MB SDRAM, add $139*
- ★ *Upgrade to a NEW 12.9GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive, add $79*
- ★ *Iomega Zip 100MB Internal Drive with Two Cartridges, add $99*

$1299

Personal Lease°: $50/Mo., 36 Mos.

E•VALUE CODE: 88717-500212

NEW DELL DIMENSION V350
PENTIUM® II PROCESSOR AT 350MHz

- 64MB 100MHz SDRAM
- 8.4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 17" (16.0" viewable, .26dp) M780 Monitor
- ATI 8MB 3D AGP Graphics
- 4 BX DVD-ROM Drive
- Yamaha XG 64V Wavetable Sound
- ACS-295 Speakers with Subwoofer
- MS Works Suite 99 with Money 99 Basic
- Iomega Zip 100MB Internal Drive
- Dell QuietKey Keyboard
- Logitech First Mouse+ Wheel
- ★ *Upgrade to a NEW 12.9GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive, add $79*
- ★ *APC SurgeStation Pro8T2, add $39*

$1599

Personal Lease°: $61/Mo., 36 Mos.

E•VALUE CODE: 88717-500215

DELL INSPIRON™ NOTEBOOKS

Common features for Inspiron 3500: 3D Surround Sound and Software Wavetable ◆ M ◆ MS Windows 98 ◆ Touchpad ◆ 3-Year Limited Warranty† **Common features for Inspir** Ion Battery ◆ MS Windows 98 ◆ Touchpad ◆ 3-Year Limited Warranty† **Upgrades:** Canon

DELL INSPIRON 3500 D266XT
PENTIUM II PROCESSOR AT 266MHz

- 13.3" XGA Active Matrix Display
- 32MB SDRAM (256MB Max)
- 3.2GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- Modular 24X Max^^ Variable CD-ROM
- Modular 3.5" Floppy Drive
- MS Office 97 Small Business Edition v2.0
- ★ *Internal 56K Capable™ Data/Fax Modem, add $99*
- ★ *Upgrade to a 4.3GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive, add $99*
- ★ *Upgrade to 64MB SDRAM, add $99*
- ★ *APC Notebook Surge Protector, add $29*

$1999

Personal Lease°: $75/Mo., 36 Mos.

E•VALUE CODE: 88717-500219

DELL INSPIRON 7000 A333GT
PENTIUM II PROCESSOR AT 333MHz

- 14.1" XGA Active Matrix Display
- 32MB SDRAM (384MB Max^^)
- 4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- Removable Combo 24X Max^^ Variable CD-ROM and 3.5" Floppy Drive
- 2X AGP 8MB ATI RAGE LT Pro 3D Video
- Internal 56K Capable™ V.90 Fax Modem with Trial Offer ConnectDirect Internet Access^v
- MS Office 97 Small Business Edition v2.0
- ★ *Upgrade to a 6.4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive, add $149*
- ★ *Upgrade to 64MB SDRAM, add $99*
- ★ *Deluxe Nylon Case, add $49*

$2599

Personal Lease°: $87/Mo., 36 Mos.

E•VALUE CODE: 88717-500225

Phone Hours: M-F 7a-11p • Sa-Su 8a-8p CT
In Canada,* call 800-839-0148 • In Mexico,* call 001-800-210-7607

Pricing not discountable. ★Prices and specifications valid in U.S. only and subject to change without notice. †For a complete copy of Guarantees or Limited Warranties write Dell USA L.P., Attn: Warranties, One Dell Way, Round Rock, TX 78682. *†Requires Windows 98. ‡At home or on site service provided via service contract between customer and third-party provider, and is not available in certain remote areas. Technician dispatched if necessary pursuant to phone based troubleshooting with technical support personnel. ††*PC World* 12/98. **Family PC* 9/28/98. ‡‡*PC Computing* 1/99. ^32X Max/14X Min. ^^24X Max/10X Min. ^^Download speeds limited to 53Kbps. Upload speeds are less (in the 30Kbps range) and vary by modem manufacturer. Speeds also vary depending on line conditions. Analog phone line and compatible server equipment required. ^vOffers differ for AT&T WorldNet and GTE Internetworking. Some charges may apply. ◊Limit two (2) per household. Not valid with other Hewlett Packard (HP) offers unless otherwise specified by that offer. Customer will mail in completed rebate coupon(s) and original or copy of receipt(s) dated from 1/31/99 to 5/1/99 for all products. Submissions must be postmarked no later than 5/1/99 and received no later than 5/16/99. Customer will receive a $50 rebate check approximately 8-10 weeks after receipt of rebate materials. ◊◊Maximum RAM configurations require a factory installed 128MB SoDIMM, which must be installed at time of initial purchase. Intel, the Intel Inside logo and Pentium are registered trademarks and Celeron is a trademark of Intel Corporation. MS, Microsoft, IntelliMouse and Windows are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. 3Com is a registered trademark of 3Com Corporation. HP and DeskJet are registered trademarks of Hewlett Packard Corporation. Trinitron is a registered trademark of Sony Corporation. ©1999 Dell Computer Corporation. All rights reserved.

°Personal leasing arranged by Dell Financial Services L.P., an independent entity, to qualified customers. Amount of monthly lease payments above based on 36-month lease. All above monthly lease payments exclude taxes which may vary (for example, Hartford City, IN sales tax °$2.50/month). Shipping cost due with first payment. No security deposit required, subject to credit approval and availability. Lease terms subject to change without notice.

on® Processor-based Systems) ◆ *NEW* 3Com® USR V.90™ PCI Telephony WinModem with Trial Offer ConnectDirect™ Internet
◆ MS® Windows® 98 ◆ 3-Year Limited Warranty† ◆ 1-Year At-home‡ Service **Upgrades:** HP® OfficeJet 710, add $499

LL DIMENSION XPS R450 ITIUM II PROCESSOR AT 450MHz	DELL DIMENSION XPS R450 PENTIUM II PROCESSOR AT 450MHz	DELL DIMENSION XPS R450 PENTIUM II PROCESSOR AT 450MHz
28MB 100MHz SDRAM	• 128MB 100MHz SDRAM	• 128MB 100MHz SDRAM
EW 12.9GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive	• 12.9GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive	• *NEW* 17.2GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
7" (16.0" viewable, 26dp) M780 Monitor	• 17" (16.0" viewable, 26dp) Trinitron 1000HS Monitor	• *NEW* 19" (18.0" viewable, 26dp) Trinitron P990 Monitor
MB ATI XPERT 98D 3D AGP raphics Card	• 8MB ATI XPERT 98D 3D AGP Graphics Card	• 16MB STB nVidia TNT 3D AGP Graphics Card with STB PCI TV/FM Tuner
8X DVD-ROM Drive	• 4.8X DVD-ROM Drive	• 4.8X DVD-ROM Drive and Decoder Card with TV Out
urtle Beach Montego A3D 64V ound Card	• Turtle Beach Montego II A3D 320V Sound Card	• Turtle Beach Montego II A3D 320V Sound Card
CS-295 Speakers with Subwoofer	• ACS-495 Dolby Surround Sound Speakers with Subwoofer	• *NEW* ADA880 Dolby Digital Speakers with Subwoofer
IS Works Suite 99 with Money 99 Basic	• Iomega Zip 100MB Internal Drive	• MS Office 97 Small Business Edition v2.0 plus Encarta Encyclopedia
ell Comfort Key Keyboard	• MS Works Suite 99 with Money 99 Basic	• Dell Comfort Key Keyboard
IS IntelliMouse®	• Dell Comfort Key Keyboard	• Logitech MouseMan Wheel
pgrade to a 17" (16.0" viewable) rinitron® 1000HS Monitor, add $109	• Logitech MouseMan Wheel	
omega Zip 100MB Internal Drive with wo Cartridges, add $99		
1999	**$2299**	**$2899**
sonal Lease°: $75/Mo., 36 Mos.	Personal Lease°: $86/Mo., 36 Mos.	Personal Lease°: $108/Mo., 36 Mos.
E•VALUE CODE: 88717-500219	E•VALUE CODE: 88717-500222	E•VALUE CODE: 88717-500228A

PRE-LOADED SOFTWARE OPTIONS

Microsoft® Office 97 Small Business Edition v2.0:
(Ask about Our *FREE* MS Office 2000 Upgrade Offer)
Word 97, Excel 97, Publisher 98, Outlook 98, Small Business Financial Mgr. 98 and Expedia Streets 98.

Microsoft Works Suite 99:
Word 97, Encarta Standard 99, Money 99 Basic, Works 4.5a, Works Calendar, Graphic Studio Greetings and Expedia Streets 98.

DIMENSION SOFTWARE BUNDLES

NEW

Fast Track Game Pack $79:
Tomb Raider 2, Jack Nicklaus Golf 5.0, Titanic Adventure Out of Time, Hardball 6.0 and Total Annihilation

Quicken 99 Power Bundle $79:
Quicken Deluxe 99, Quicken Financial Planner, Quicken Family Lawyer and a Coupon for Quicken Turbo Tax 99

eoMagic MediaMagic 256AV AGP Video ◆ 9-Cell Intelligent Lithium Ion Battery
n 7000: 3D Surround Sound and Hardware Wavetable ◆ 12-Cell Intelligent Lithium
JC-50 Portable Printer, add $349 ◆ Targus Defcon Notebook Alarm, add $49

LL INSPIRON 7000 A333LT ITIUM II PROCESSOR AT 333MHz	DELL INSPIRON 7000 A366LT PENTIUM II PROCESSOR AT 366MHz
5" XGA Active Matrix Display	• 15" XGA Active Matrix Display
4MB SDRAM (384MB Max^)	• 96MB SDRAM (384MB Max^)
4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive	• 6.4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
emovable Combo 24X Max^^ Variable D-ROM and 3.5" Floppy Drive	• Removable Combo 2X DVD-ROM and 3.5" Floppy Drive
X AGP 8MB ATI RAGE LT Pro 3D Video	• 2X AGP 8MB ATI RAGE LT Pro 3D Video
nternal 56K Capable™ V.90 Fax Modem ith Trial Offer ConnectDirect Internet ccess‡	• Internal 56K Capable™ V.90 Fax Modem with Trial Offer ConnectDirect Internet Access‡
IS Works Suite 99 with Money 99 Basic	• MS Works Suite 99 with Money 99 Basic
emovable Combo 2X DVD-ROM Drive nd Floppy Drive, add $199	★ *APC Notebook Surge Protector, add $29*
eather Carrying Case, add $99	★ *Upgrade to 128MB SDRAM, add $99*
2999	**$3499**
sonal Lease°: $112/Mo., 36 Mos.	Personal Lease°: $130/Mo., 36 Mos.
E•VALUE CODE: 88717-800229	E•VALUE CODE: 88717-800234

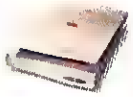
POWER UPGRADES

RECEIVE UP TO $100 OFF WITH MAIL-IN REBATES ON THESE HP PRODUCTS WHEN PURCHASED WITH A DELL DIMENSION DESKTOP AND MONITOR. OFFER EXPIRES 5/1/99¤¤

HP DESKJET® 722C COLOR PRINTER
- *PC World's*** "Best Buy"
- Photo-quality printing on any paper
- Up to 8 ppm black, 4 ppm color
- Add a printer cable for $25

$199
$249 – $50 HP MAIL-IN REBATE¤

***NEW* HP SCANJET 4100Cse SCANNER**
- *FamilyPC's** "Top-rated" award
- Push-button scanning and copying
- USB** connectivity for easy installation
- 600 dpi, 1200 dpi enhanced, 36-bit color



$149
$199 – $50 HP MAIL-IN REBATE¤

APC SURGESTATION PRO8T2
- Helps protect your system against electrical surges
- 8 outlets with block spacing for 3 outlets
- Provides $10K equipment protection warranty

$39

PREMIER 3-YEAR ON-SITE‡ SERVICE
- Sends a technician to your door the next business day if necessary after phone-based troubleshooting
- Protects your PC from expensive technical support costs down the road

$99 Desktop Service
$149 Notebook Service

USE THE POWER OF THE E•VALUE™ CODE.
MATCH OUR LATEST TECHNOLOGY WITH OUR LATEST PRICES. ENTER THE E•VALUE CODE ONLINE AT WWW.DELL.COM/EVALUE, OR GIVE IT TO YOUR SALES REP OVER THE PHONE. ALSO, GO ONLINE TO DESIGN YOUR IDEAL COMPUTER, CHECK THE LATEST PRICES AND GET 24-HR. ONLINE TECH SUPPORT.

TO ORDER TOLL-FREE
888-686-3355
BUILD YOUR OWN AND ORDER ONLINE

BE DIRECT™
DELL®
www.dell.com/evalue

AFTER OUR THIRD YEAR OF MVP WINS, WE THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE TO TAKE HOME THE TROPHY.

"THE FASTEST PC ON THE PLANET"
–PC Computing, January 1999

We did it again. For the third year in a row, Dell® Dimension® systems have been named "MVP" winners by *PC Computing*.‡‡ Loaded with Intel's fastest desktop processor, the Dell Dimension XPS R450 earned the "MVP State-of-the-Art" award. While its sister system, the Dell Dimension XPS R400, scored with the "MVP High Performance" award. So call, or visit www.dell.com/evalue and get one of these prize systems for your desk. From the most "MVP"-awarded desktop line since 1990.

DELL™ DIMENSION™ XPS R450
PENTIUM® II PROCESSOR AT 450MHz

- 128MB 100MHz SDRAM
- 12.9GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 17" (16.0" viewable, .26dp) Trinitron® 1000HS Monitor
- 16MB STB nVidia TNT 3D AGP Graphics Card
- 40X Max℠ Variable CD-ROM Drive
- Turtle Beach Montego II A3D 320V Sound Card
- ACS-295 Speakers with Subwoofer
- 3Com® USR V.90 PCI WinModem with Trial Offer ConnectDirect℠ Internet Access√
- MS® Office 97 Small Business Edition v2.0 plus Encarta Encyclopedia 98 (Ask about Our *FREE* Office 2000 Upgrade Offer)
- MS Windows® 98/Logitech MouseMan Wheel
- Dell QuietKey® Keyboard
- 3-Year Limited Warranty†
- 1-Year Next-Business-Day At-home△ Service

$2199

Personal Lease°: $83/Mo., 36 Mos.*

E•VALUE CODE: 88715-500221A

UPGRADE TO THE MVP STATE-OF-THE-ART SYSTEM

- ★ *14.4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive (7200 rpm)*
- ★ *4.8X DVD-ROM Drive and Decoder Card*
- ★ *3Com 3C905B 10/100 NIC*
- ★ *Iomega Zip 100MB Internal Drive*

ADD $379

Personal Lease°: $9/Mo., 36 Mos.*

E•VALUE CODE: 88715-500225A

USE THE POWER OF THE E•VALUE™ CODE.

MATCH OUR LATEST TECHNOLOGY WITH OUR LATEST PRICES. ENTER THE E•VALUE CODE ONLINE AT WWW.DELL.COM/EVALUE OR GIVE IT TO YOUR SALES REP OVER THE PHONE.

TO ORDER TOLL-FREE

888-686-3355

BUILD YOUR OWN AND ORDER ONLINE

Phone Hours: M-F 7e-11p • Set-Sun 8a-8p CT
In Canada,* call 800-839-0148 • In Mexico,* call 001-800-210-7607

°Personal leasing arranged by Dell Financial Services L.P., an independent entity, to qualified customers. Amount of monthly lease payments above based on 36-month lease. All above monthly lease payments exclude taxes which may vary (for example, Hartford City, IN sales tax °$4.15/month). Shipping cost due with first payment. No security deposit required, subject to credit approval and availability. Lease terms subject to change without notice.

BE DIRECT™

DELL®

www.dell.com/evalue