

VOLUME 2

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2000

ISSUE 10

# GAMING

NEW AGE

S O U T H A F R I C A

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## GAME OF THE MILLENNIUM?

BALDUR'S GATE 2 PREVIEWED  
NAG 1999 AWARDS  
WHEEL OF TIME  
GABRIEL KNIGHT 3  
THEME PARK WORLD  
SWAT 3  
DINO CRISIS (PSX)  
SPYRO 2 (PSX)

THE NEW  
MILLENNIUM  
COLLECTORS  
EDITION

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SOUL REAVER  
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# ED's Note

## Well Done!

Well what can one say without saying it all, welcome to 2000 and a big well done to everyone and anyone reading this...you made it. No doomsday, no fiery pillows (or is that pillars) and thankfully no aliens floating around in city sized space ships. Now of course I'm writing this last year, which I shouldn't tell anyone because if something Armageddon-like does happen there will be no magazine anyway and these words will perish in the fiery hell to follow, however, being the optimistic type I'll go with what I have here. Right, now I've done my traditional bit on the New Year, blah, blah etc. and so on...

## The next 1000 years

Do you realise that in a thousand years time the people of that age will look back on us as barbarians in much the same way as we look back at our great ancestors. They'll laugh when they discuss the fact that we still used DVD for entertainment. They'll cry when they consider telephone-line based Internet access. They'll chuckle about how slow our super-sonic travel and Pentium chips were and they'll quote that during the last millennium how clever they were by going from supersonic from Paris to America to the speed of light from Earth to the next galaxy. This all has a point, eventually, and here it is... To try and conceptualise what games might look like in the next ten years is hard enough, so trying to guess what they'll look like in a thousand years time is a little beyond my limited imagination. What will a simple thing like processor speed look like, will the chip manufacturers in that age have to invent a new speed category altogether purely because the good old MHz doesn't cut the mustard anymore? The thing is, it's really beyond anything you or I could come up with, as an example try and think how you'd go about explaining a computer to someone born in the year 1034. The good news is that many of us will be fortunate enough to experience some of these technological leaps and bounds in a single lifetime. The bad news is, think of what will arrive on the scene ten years after you're dead and buried. I believe technology - the hardware and the subsequent software that always seems to follow it around, will evolve into something they'll term in gaming magazines in the future as Mind Immersion. Think about the advances in medical science and then computer hardware, we've all seen the movies - it's an inevitable merging of technologies. The only question that remains is this - will it still be a game? The only sure thing is that everything is getting faster, smaller and easier to make by the day and as the exponential technology tree grows larger by the hour games will keep getting better and better until they are no longer games anymore but something else. It's going to be an interesting journey from here on in and one can only hope they discover the fountain of eternal youth before nature makes that last big call.

Michael James, Editor

## The hook

I'm very pleased to announce that we will be starting a brand new department next issue going by the rather clever name of 'Developers Blueprint'. The section will take a long (12 month) look at how to program your own game. It's not going to be vague or hard to understand but instead it'll provide you with all the tools you need via the cover CD, all the theory behind the thinking and all the practical hands-on information necessary to starting and finishing an entire game. It's not going to show you how to program your own 3D engine but if you do spend a little effort and time you might just have a smart little arcade shooter on your hands that could even get published on our cover CD. Think of the fame and recognition you'll receive and who knows it might just be the start of something serious. The very talented Travis Bulford will be hosting the section, so you're getting it from one of the best, so to speak. There it is, now make sure you get the next issue and stop talking about making that great game and actually do it - it's called follow through!

## The line and sinker

As you can see we won't be starting the New Year with a major overhaul of the magazine as we do that every third month or so [groan, Big Ed]. What we will be doing is what we've been doing from issue number one - providing the South African market with the best and most up-to-date reviews, previews and gaming news we can get our hands on. It's all done locally so you pay a local price. The edition you're holding in your hands is a collector's edition and should anyone present a copy of this issue of New Age Gaming to the editor at that time on 1st January 3000 he/she/it will receive a free antique mouse mat.

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Well, the hardware keeps flowing in, and we keep reviewing it. It seems that the producers of these wonderful items just haven't realised that Christmas is over!

This month we feature keyboards, speakers and more.



Keep the information flowing with web cam technology. Check out our views on these and other devices in the hardware section.

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POSSIBLY THE MOST HIGHLY ANTICIPATED GAME OF THE YEAR, QUAKE 3 ARENA CERTAINLY PROVED WORTH THE WAIT. SEE THE REVIEW ON PG 44



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At last, it is here. Quake 3 Arena! Check out all the Quake 3 goodies we crammed onto this month's cover disk!

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It seems that right at the time of writing this collection of web happenings, the only thing that is actually happening on the web is a euphoria surrounding the slew of new games that are hitting the shelves. Which just goes to show that, despite all the possible discussions that could take place, all the controversial topics that deserve, nay, demand discussion, computer users still prefer games to anything else when it comes to newsworthiness. Oh well, we have to get our kicks somewhere.

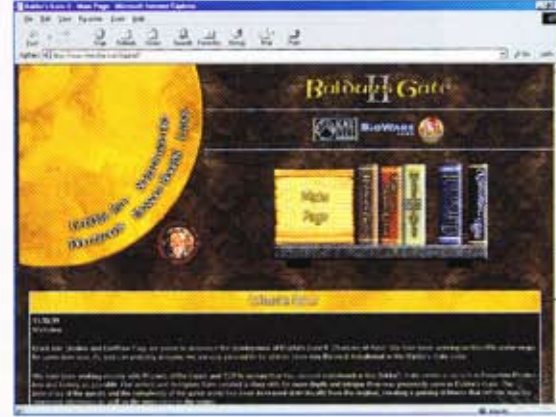
Obviously, one of the hottest gaming related topics is Quake 3, the long awaited and much praised FPS from id software. It would be point-



less to go into any great detail about the vast number of sites springing up on a daily basis that dedicate themselves to this masterpiece of mayhem. However, one particular site did grab our attention, and deserves a mention. Entitled Gamemarks, it can be found at [www.grey-maulkin.com/mkx/gamemarks](http://www.grey-maulkin.com/mkx/gamemarks) and features some rather amusing looks at Quake, or, more specifically, the game's fans. Gamemarks promises a new comic strip each day, and will certainly tickle more than a few funny bones. Created by Ermac and osx, these cartoon strips feature an off-beat sense of humour, and enable us to take a lighter look at ourselves, and the strange obsession we have with this most excellent game.



One very valuable aspect of the Internet is the ability it grants us to learn about upcoming products long before they hit the shelves. These sagas of information gathering can get quite obsessive,



but do allow us a blow by blow gaze into the world of game development. One site that offers a look into the process and timing behind the much anticipated Baldur's Gate 2 is the official Black Isle developer's site, situated at [www.blackisle.com](http://www.blackisle.com). Of note, however, is the fact that Baldur's Gate is not the only project based on Advanced Dungeons & Dragons' Forgotten Realms setting that Black Isle has on the go. As it turns out, two more titles, namely Icewind Dale, and Neverwinter Nights. Of course, the anticipated Planescape: Torment, is also a Black Isle project based on an AD&D setting, and can also be accessed from this site. See, it is important to keep up to speed with these things - you never know what you'll learn. Speaking of AD&D, those that are in the know, and those that want to be, frequent [www.tsr.com](http://www.tsr.com). This site is dedicated to Advanced Dungeons & Dragons, and is created by the people that invented the game around two and a half decades ago. This is the place to stop off at if you want to find out about what's going on in the realm of the world's most popular role playing game. And, of course, aside from announcements, product news and other interesting information, you will be able to learn a bit more about the Forgotten Realms and Planescape! For those old cronies out there who still remember the heady days of the old black Atari TV game console you'll be happy to know that, thanks to Hasbro Interactive, the days of Centipede and Missile Command are on their way back! Yes, that's right - Hasbro has decided, in conjunction with Atari, to resurrect many of the old original classics from the Atari range, for use on modern equipment. All the information you could possibly want on this new range can be found at [www.hasbrointeractive.com/atari](http://www.hasbrointeractive.com/atari). But wait!

There's more. Just for a bit of fun, four of the games that are being re-released, namely Centipede, Missile Command, Break Out and Frogger have online versions for your enjoyment. Check it out for all the fun and excitement. Finally, here's an interesting thing for local gamers to take a look at. It's called 2nd Hand Games, and it will prove to be quite a wonderful resource for collectors of gaming software. Located at [www.2ndhandgames.co.za](http://www.2ndhandgames.co.za) this site was put together to



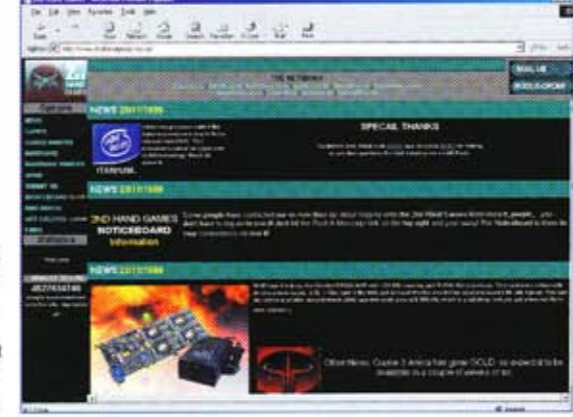
Well, you asked for it, and it's finally here. The call for a NAG website has been huge. So huge, in fact, that we finally decided to get a bunch of reprobate page designers together, chain them to chairs of various descriptions, and make them produce a page for our loyal readers. In fact, the slave ship ambiance, with Soul Assassin pounding the drum, Storm cracking the whip, Shryke screaming encouragement and RedTide sipping martinis above decks was quite homey and sweet.

But seriously, this month's web site of the month is Prophecy, which can be found at [www.prophecy.co.za](http://www.prophecy.co.za). Although this is not a bone fide New Age Gaming web site per se, it is an affiliated site - in other words, Prophecy and NAG are quite literally hand in glove in the whole endeavour. So what does this long awaited web site contain? Is it the holy grail of local gaming sites? We like to think so. Here you will find reviews, previews, feature articles and similar, taken from the sage and holy pages of New Age Gaming Magazine.

But wait, there's more for the discerning surfer to find at this most wondrous of web sites. From this very place you will be able to download demos, patches, movies and all those other wonderful things that we pack onto our cover CD. These archives will come directly from our CD archive, so if you missed it before, you'll be able to get it here! Prophecy and New Age Gaming stand together in their dedication to South African gaming and the South African gamer. You can always be assured of good quality, up to date information from this site, written by those who know and love the industry.

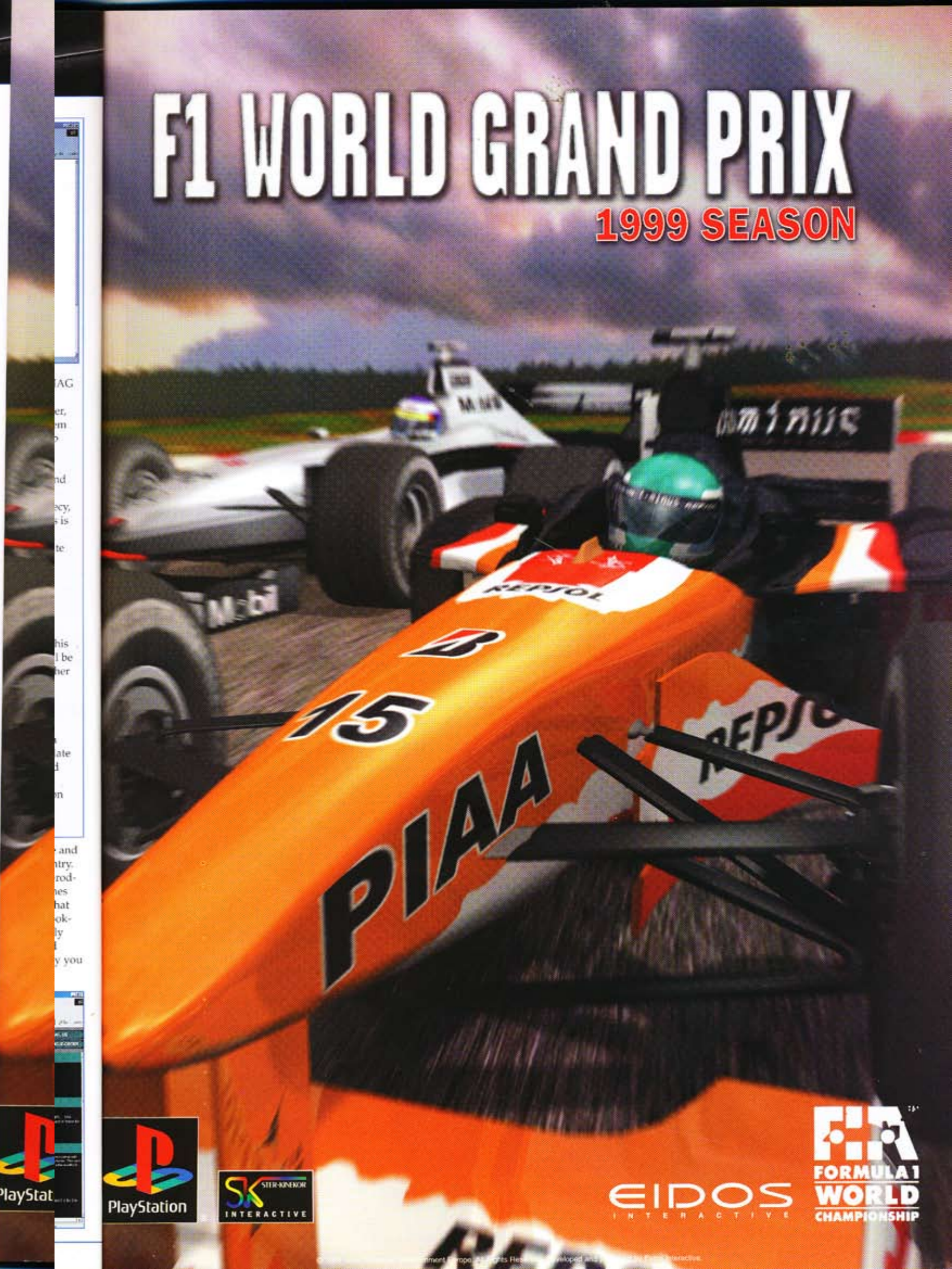
So, what are you waiting for? Get your feet wet and surf on past Prophecy, for reliable, solid and fresh gaming information!

allow gamers to buy, sell and swap software and hardware with people from around the country. Also available are announcements on new products, notice boards and the like. Also, a 'games wanted' section allows you to try and find that piece of software that you've always been looking for. This electronic classified will certainly prove very useful in the future! Oh, yes, and check out the King Moose section - hopefully you will never see your own face there!



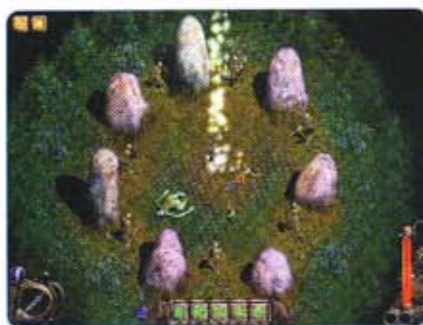
# F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX

## 1999 SEASON



## Westwood's Next Big Game

Westwood's attempt to usurp Blizzard from the Action Strategy pedestal they created comes by the way of Nox. The main villain Hecubah a beautiful sorceress, makes Diablo look like a kindergarten teacher [my kind of girl, Ed]. You are the 20th century saviour of Nox - summoned to the land in a cosmic accident. Being from Earth, you are the only living being on Nox that may touch a magic Orb in the possession of the wicked-evil queen of the undead - Hecubah. You must find this Orb and harness its power in order to construct the staff of oblivion and defeat Hecubah. It all sounds simple enough but if Westwood's track record is anything to go by then this title is going to be anything but that. The feature list is impressive with a Quest Generation System, more than 100 unique spells and weapons, devious tactics, multiple spell combinations, deadly



weapons and magical items for a new and deeper Action/RPG experience. The game is due for release sometime in March and we'll be bringing you a full preview and review closer to the time.

## Appeal for Outcast 2

Infogrames and Appeal have recently signed a deal on the sequel to Outcast, considered one of the better games released in recent memory. The first game, an action adventure, followed Cutter Slade as he explored the parallel world of Adelpha while on an important mission to save Earth. Outcast 2 is currently being planned for release on all the major next generation consoles including the PlayStation 2 and PC sometime towards the end of 2001. The first game offered players a richly detailed world put together by the imagination of the developers and a stunning, if slightly blocky, Voxel based graphics engine. For the sequel, it is generally predicted that the developers will do away with Voxels in favour of good old-fashioned polygons. This decision won't surprise too many people considering just how far 3D polygon based graphics engines have evolved over the last year. Whatever they decide,



Outcast 2 is going to be hot property, it's just a pity about the wait... 2001, that's years away!

## Chris Taylor's Dark Dungeon

The creator of Total Annihilation, Chris Taylor along with Gas Powered Games and Microsoft



have let it slip that they've been working in secrecy on a new game project for more than a year. The game, Dungeon Siege, an action fantasy role-playing game will plunge players into an enormous and continuous 3D fantasy world never before seen in the genre. For the first time, Dungeon Siege will combine the engrossing elements of a role-playing game with the intense action of real-time strategy. You'll begin the game with a single character and must travel through the land gathering a party of allies, before embarking on a quest to stop all things evil. The game offers players the flexibility to decide on completing the quest alone or with a large multi-character party. The game will run using the developers propriety 'Siege Engine' technology, which should result in a fully interactive world of immense size and scale both on top of the ground and under it. The game should arrive sometime in 2000, until then happy dreaming.

## DarkStone Editor

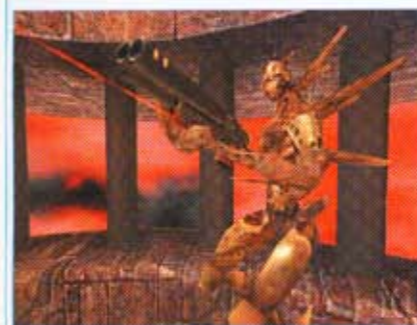
Delphine Software have announced that they will not be releasing an add-on pack for their role-playing game DarkStone but will rather release a level editor on the Internet early in



2000. The official line goes something like this. "The quest editor will allow you to create your own quests. As a separate tool, you will be able to create a scenario using a graphical interface, create and place rooms and levels, objects, enemies, add text, add voices...The editor will contain a 3D object editor which will give you the possibility to create, import and texture your own 3D elements to use in your future quests. Based on elementary automaton (or state machine), you will be able to create simple or sophisticated quests easily. A debug mode will allow you to test your quest in the game. Quests will be playable in solo and multiplayer mode." The developers are hoping that the editor will breathe some new life into the game. They have also indicated that they will be setting up a new area on their web site to deal with the deluge of user maps and quests.

## More from id Software

For many, the idea of a Diablo inspired id Software title sounds like a dream come true, well you can start holding your breath as that little fantasy might just come true. Graeme Devine, project leader for the next id Software title had this to say about Diablo and inspiration, "Diablo was one of those games that we got one copy at the office, and then two, and then by the evening the game was out I think seven people had gone and purchased the game and we were playing two games locally and going on down level by level. The first time we came across "the butcher" we literally got butchered within seconds of opening that door. The next time we opened the door and ran around screaming with him coming after us, I think it took us around 3-4 hours to kill him off (of course, once we were levelled up and went back into the game, one whack and he fell down). My interest is to make a game where the 3-4 hours, the running around screaming, and the sheer excitement of not knowing what's down the next stairway carry on for longer than the experience of Diablo. A



DM can do a lot to make this happen and I think we can introduce those into the game and stop players from getting so powerful so quickly and affect their view and abilities in other ways than sheer damage and armour protection." Just try and imagine an amalgamation of Quake 3 Arena and Diablo II and you could quite possibly have the best idea for a game ever. It's definitely going to be a long wait until the next big thing arrives from id Software.

## Sacrifice

Shiny's little secret is out with news on a new real-time strategy game for the masses, which is slightly out of their normal area of expertise. Prepare to battle your way through a magical universe of spells and mana, tackling the very essence of multiplayer enjoyment. Strangely enough it has been likened to the Command & Conquer series but in a total 3D environment. With the likes of the imaginative Dave Perry from Shiny around anything is possible and from the looks of it they intend to make a big noise about Sacrifice in the near future. We will keep you updated over the coming months on



this one. In the meantime you can have a look at [www.sacrifice.net](http://www.sacrifice.net) for a little more information.

## Sudden Strike

Set in the World War II era, Sudden Strike is set to start the New Year off with a big bang. The game promises to authentically reproduce the World War II experience using a real-time strategy game engine. Players will be able to reenact a number of historical and fictitious battles including the landing in Normandy and



the capturing of different European cities. Some of the more impressive features include up to a thousand units for each scenario, numerous destructible objects such as bridges, houses, fortifications and trees and the faithful reproduction of all original units, Russian, German, French, American and British. Whatever the details Sudden Strike certainly looks interesting and should be out early 2000.

## The Glyphs

It looks like Quake 3 Arena has started something with multiplayer only games, developers Coil are building a multiplayer only game using Raven's Heretic II engine (a modified Quake II engine). The game will be called The Glyphs. Coil plan to release the game before the end of the year and will then pass the game onto the Heretic II community to continue development of maps and player models. Once the game has been released the original



team will continue supporting the code as they receive feedback from the community. The rest of the team will then start working on a new game using the Quake 3 Arena engine. The Glyphs will be released as a free add-on and in more surprising news it will have a story line. We'll have to wait and see what Coil are able to squeeze out of the dated Quake 2 engine - it might be old technology but we always say check for a pulse before burying anything.

## New Department

In the next issue of New Age Gaming we'll be starting a section called 'Developers Blueprint'. It is all about how to go about programming a computer game, it will run for about 12 months and after that we'll be giving away a prize for the best 'reader' game of the year and publishing the game on our cover CD.

# TAKE

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Spyro 2 (PSX)	R 369.00	R 349.00	R 489.00	R 380.00
Crash Team Racing (PSX)	R 369.00	R 349.00	R 379.00	R 250.00
WCW Mayhem (PSX)	None	R 329.00	R 189.00	R 370.00
Theme Park World (PC)	R 299.00	R 299.00	NA	NA
Quake 3 Arena (PC)	R 329.99	R 299.00	NA	NA
Gabriel Knight 3 (PC)	R 299.99	R 299.99	NA	NA
SE Star Fleet Command (PC)	None	R 299.00	NA	NA

## RELEASE LISTS

NEW AGE GAMING TAKES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACCURACY OF THIS INFORMATION. ANY OF THE RELEASE DATES MAY BE CHANGED IF THE DEVELOPER DEEMS IT NECESSARY. THE ONLY OFFICIAL SHIPPING DATE THAT MOST DEVELOPERS GIVE THESE DAYS IS, "WHEN IT'S DONE!"

## PC RELEASE LIST

### JANUARY

- 03 - Adrenaline Vault - EA
- 03 - B17 Flying Fortress - HASBRO
- 03 - Croc 2 - FOX INTERACTIVE
- 03 - Fading Suns: Noble Armada - RIPCORN
- 03 - Flash Point - UBI SOFT
- 03 - Giants - INTERPLAY
- 03 - Halo - BUNGIE SOFTWARE
- 03 - J. McGrath Supercross 2000 - ACCLAIM
- 03 - Magic the Gathering Gold - HASBRO
- 03 - Monopolization - VIACOM
- 03 - Risk II - HASBRO
- 03 - Road to Moscow - UBI SOFT
- 03 - Silent Hunter II - MINDSCAPE
- 03 - Splinter - EA
- 03 - Wall Street Tycoon - UBI SOFT
- 10 - O.A.W.: Elite Edition - TALONSOFT
- 13 - F13 from Stephen King - INTERPLAY
- 14 - Mission Impossible - INFOGRAMES
- 17 - Amen: The Awakening - GT
- 17 - Dukes of Hazzard - SOUTHPEAK
- 17 - Hidden & Dangerous: MP - TALONSOFT
- 17 - Hired Guns - PSYGNOSIS
- 17 - Imperium Galactica 2 - GT INTERACTIVE
- 17 - Official Formula Racing 99 - EIDOS
- 17 - Rising Sun - TALONSOFT
- 17 - Team Fortress II - HAVAS
- 18 - Boarder Zone - INFOGRAMES
- 18 - C&C2 Tiberian Sun: Firestorm - EA
- 18 - Final Fantasy VIII - EA
- 21 - 1602 A.D. - GT INTERACTIVE
- 25 - F-18 Super Hornet - INTERPLAY
- 31 - Diablo II - BLIZZARD

### FEBRUARY

- 01 - Felony Pursuit - THQ
- 01 - KISS Psycho Circus - G.O.D.
- 01 - The Sims - MAXIS
- 01 - Star Wars Force Commander - LUCAS
- 15 - Die Hard Trilogy 2 - FOX
- 15 - Heavy Metal FAKK 2 - G.O.D.
- 15 - NOX - EA
- 15 - ST: Klingon Academy - INTERPLAY
- 15 - Superbike 2000 - EA
- 18 - Comanche 4 - EA
- 18 - Deus Ex - EIDOS
- 18 - IHRA Drag Racing - BETHESDA
- 20 - Soldier of Fortune - ACTIVISION

International Release Dates

## PSX RELEASE LIST

### JANUARY

- 03 - Big Mountain 2000 - SCEA
- 03 - Messiah - INTERPLAY
- 03 - NBA In the Zone 2000 - KONAMI
- 03 - NBA Shoot Out 2000 - SCEA
- 03 - Panzer General Assault - MINDSCAPE
- 03 - Roadsters - TITUS
- 07 - MaCross VF-X 2 - BANDAI
- 17 - Fear Effect - EIDOS
- 17 - K-1 Grand Prix - JALECO
- 18 - Army Men Sarge's Heroes - 3DO
- 18 - Caesars Palace 2000 - INTERPLAY
- 18 - Crusaders of Might & Magic - 3DO
- 18 - Road Rash Jailbreak - EA
- 18 - Tomba 2 - SCEA
- 25 - Armormines Project - ACCLAIM
- 25 - J. McGrath Supercross 2000 - ACCLAIM
- 31 - Railroad Tycoon II - TAKE 2

### FEBRUARY

- 01 - Carmegeddon - INTERPLAY
- 01 - Colin McRae Rally - SCEA
- 01 - International Rally - KONAMI
- 01 - Jeff Gordon XS Racing - ASC GAMES
- 01 - NHL Blades of Steel 2000 - KONAMI
- 08 - Team Buddies - ACTIVISION
- 14 - Forumla One 99 - ACTIVISION
- 14 - MTV Music Generator - ACTIVISION
- 14 - South Park Rally - ACCLAIM
- 15 - All Star Tennis 99 - UBI SOFT
- 15 - Fighting Force 2 - EIDOS
- 15 - LEGO Racers - LEGO MEDIA
- 15 - Die Hard Trilogy 2 - FOX INTERACTIVE
- 15 - Fighter Destiny II - SCEA
- 15 - Jackie Chan Stunt Master - MIDWAY
- 15 - LEGO Rock Raiders - LEGO MEDIA
- 15 - Rayman 2 - UBI SOFT
- 15 - Test Drive Le Mans - INFOGRAMES
- 15 - Test Drive Rally - INFOGRAMES
- 15 - Tron Bonne - CAPCOM
- 15 - Urban Chaos - EIDOS
- 15 - WWF Smackdown - THQ
- 17 - March Madness 2000 - EA
- 21 - Renegade Racer - INTERPLAY
- 23 - Gran Turismo 2 - SCEA
- 23 - Tiger Woods: PGA Tour 2000 - EA
- 25 - Spec Ops Sleath Patrol - TAKE TWO
- 28 - Formula One Racing 99 - EIDOS

International Release Dates

## In Passing...

### 70 Million PlayStations

Sony Computer Entertainment (SCE) recently announced that it has sold 70 million PlayStation units worldwide since its launch on 3rd December 1994. The big figures look like this, Japan 16.77 million, North America 25.94 million and Europe 27.33 million. SCE expects to ship an additional 17 by the end of this fiscal year.

### Final Fantasy IX

The next instalment of this popular role playing game has been pushed back until June or July in Japan, meaning the game might only hit Western territories some time in 2001. Rumour has it that Square, the game's developers, are trying to avoid competition with their other project Dragon's Quest VII, another popular role-playing series.

### 1 Million Joysticks

Microsoft announced that it has shipped its one millionth Sidewinder Force Feedback Pro Joystick (launched in 1997), making it the best selling force feedback controller for the PC. "I think it's a key milestone in force feedback history," said Microsoft SideWinder lead product manager Chris Bull. "What started as a trend two years ago has grown into an industry standard, and we are very proud of our role in that accomplishment."

### Star Wars RPG License

Wizards of the Coast has signed an exclusive licensing agreement with Lucas Licensing to publish tabletop and role-playing games based on the popular Star Wars universe and the three Star Wars prequels. Wizards will also be creating a unique line of accessories as part of the agreement, but don't get too excited just yet, the first products are only expected to ship sometime in the middle of next year.

### Quake III Arena Sales

Based on Activision's internal sales data, id Software's Q3A is off to a strong start, selling 50,000 units in its first three days on store shelves. Q3A is the third instalment in one of the most successful gaming franchises to date and is noted for its revolutionary 3D engine. This deathmatch-oriented sequel features both single and multiplayer action. The title went on sale in the U.S. and Canada on the 2nd of December 1999.

### Online Gamers Association

The Online Gamers Association is the new independent body representing the interests of those who play multiplayer computer games across the Internet. The OGA will support competitors at all levels from casual amateur players right through to those who play professionally. Their objectives are: To serve as the voice of online gamers, to further the quality and appeal of online gaming and to provide enhanced gaming services through their partners. At this rate it looks like online gaming might just feature in the next Olympics. Check out <http://www.theoga.com/> for more in depth info.

## Earth 2150



Interactively by adding more detail to the world, you'll feel like you're on the battlefield 150 years in the future. There will be three playable races, Eurasian Dynasty, United Civilized States and Lunar Corporation. The game sports a total 3D engine complete with real terrain deformation, players will even be able to dig trenches that enemy troops and vehicles can't cross. The environments will also change appearance throughout the game. Since the Earth is constantly getting closer to the sun, over the course of the game the landscapes will become more barren and hostile. The ground will become parched and cracked, and lava will spew from the Earth's core as the temperatures on the surface rise. There's a realistic day/night cycle, fog will roll in or out over the landscape depending on the time of day, and windstorms will kick up at random. All of these effects will actually affect how you play the game. There will be sea, air, and underground units, and you'll be in charge of constructing them all, or if you like you can leave that up to the computer. Earth 2150 will ship with a full editor, so you can build your own virtual battlefields to battle it out on.

Earth 2150 is the upcoming real time strategy game from European-based TopWare



Interactive and it's looking to break the mould by adding so much detail you'll feel like you're on the battlefield 150 years in the future. There will be three playable races, Eurasian Dynasty, United Civilized States and Lunar Corporation. The game sports a total 3D engine complete with real terrain deformation, players will even be able to dig trenches that enemy troops and vehicles can't cross. The environments will also change appearance throughout the game. Since the Earth is constantly getting closer to the sun, over the course of the game the landscapes will become more barren and hostile. The ground will become parched and cracked, and lava will spew from the Earth's core as the temperatures on the surface rise. There's a realistic day/night cycle, fog will roll in or out over the landscape depending on the time of day, and windstorms will kick up at random. All of these effects will actually affect how you play the game. There will be sea, air, and underground units, and you'll be in charge of constructing them all, or if you like you can leave that up to the computer. Earth 2150 will ship with a full editor, so you can build your own virtual battlefields to battle it out on.

## Kingdoms Expansion Pack

Cavedog Entertainment have announced the impending release of The Iron Plague, the official expansion pack for their fantasy real-time strategy title Total Annihilation: Kingdoms.



The Iron Plague will introduce a fifth race, the Creon, arriving on the scene fully competent on the land and sea and in the air. The Creon, contrasting with the magic using clans of Darien, prefer the more clinical qualities of science and technology and feel the time has come to challenge the balance of power. The introduction of a new race in any real-time strategy title will have far reaching implications as to how the game is played. The Iron Plague is due for release in March 2000 and besides the new look civilisation, the game expansion pack will include 25 new single player maps and 25 new multiplayer maps and a whole new storyline with plenty of twists and turns. One other thing, if you already own the game it's worth a visit to [www.cavedog.com](http://www.cavedog.com) for updates, patches and a couple of new things to download.

## John Romero Loses Daikatana

Dallas, Texas was the site of a major upset recently as legendary game designer John Romero lost to a 20-year-old gamer in the final round of a Deathmatch tournament. After hosting a month of preliminary competitions and eliminations on Mplayer.com (using the Daikatana demo), Eidos and Ion Storm brought the four finest Daikatana players - Gauss (Philip Marcus), Golden (Eric Hong), grindage (Brad McKelvie) and Messiah (Phil Kennedy) - to Dallas to engage in a double-elimination competition. The winner would receive an over-clocked and loaded out 800 MHz PC and a host of other prizes. The winner would also get a chance to engage John Romero in a head-to-head final match and try to win a specially moulded Daikatana sword. After three gruelling rounds, Messiah, a college student at the University of Central Florida, remained the last man standing. And then went on to do the unthinkable... he beat Romero at his own game - who had far more familiarity with the game map - five to four in



the ultimate challenge. When asked what happened, Romero could only reply, "The kid is good." "I got lucky," Messiah explained as he collected his prize. According to Ion Storm, Daikatana will finally appear on store shelves late January, ripe for the reviewing.

## Sid Meier's Secret Game

Firaxis has made a surprise announcement that game designer Sid Meier is currently developing a strategy game about dinosaurs set in prehistoric times. This will be the latest in the new 'Sweep of Time' series, which includes the very successful Alpha Centauri and Civilization titles. The game will be published by Electronic Arts, and should be officially named early next year. As usual no specifics have been offered yet, but you can go along and visit the related site at <http://www.firaxis.com> to read Sid



Meier's thoughts on why he wanted to design a game about dinosaurs, and what the game might be like. We can hardly wait for this one - more news will follow.

JOYSTICKS AND GAME CONTROLLERS

# Sid Meier's Secret Game



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# juSt cHARTs

With the Christmas season officially over we can look back and see what the titles were that filled Christmas stockings over the silly season. As expected, the charts are filled with no less than 15 newcomers as the local distribution network kicks in line with the overseas releases. No surprise at the top of the PC charts with Age of Empires 2 firmly entrenched at the top spot due to the large support for the title in SA. Somewhat surprising to others (not to me) is the number 2 slot that Pharaoh occupies, it seems as though building cities is a favourite past time of the gamers out there. It is nice to see Eidos back in the fray, who would have put money on Lara not to make the charts, and

Revanant makes a surprise visit. The PC charts offer a balanced mix of local distributors showing the local support for differing products. Budget is the calling on the PSX charts with 2 Platinum titles on the list. Tekken 3 Platinum lead the list of excellent candidates with strong competition from FIFA 2000 and F1'99. Surprisingly WWF Attitude maintains and NFS 4 revisits the wall. See you next month...



## Local PC Charts

Position	Name	Last Month	Total Months
1.	Age of Empires 2 - Microsoft - Crew/SDD	1	1
2.	Pharaoh - Sierra/Havas - Crew/SDD	New	New
3.	Tiberian Sun - Westwood - EA Africa	2	3
4.	Flight Sim 2000 Standard - Microsoft - Crew/SDD	New	New
5.	Tomb Raider 4 - Eidos Int. - Crew/SDD	New	New
6.	FIFA 2000 - EA Sports - EA Africa	New	New
7.	SWAT 3 - Sierra/Havas - Crew/SDD	New	New
8.	Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear - Redstorm - MMW/SDD	New	New
9.	Cricket 97 Classic - EA Classics - EA Africa	Re-entry	Re-entry
10.	Revanant - Eidos interactive - Crew/SDD	New	New

## International PC Charts

Position	Name	Developer - Local Dist.
1.	Age of Empires 2	Microsoft - Crew/SDD
2.	Quake 3 Arena	id/Activision - MMW/SDD
3.	Jagged Alliance 2	TalonSoft - Gametronics
4.	Baldur's Gate	Biosware - MMW/SDD
5.	Alpha Centauri/Allen Crossfire	Firaxis/EA - EA Africa
6.	Homeworld	Relic/Sierra - Crew/SDD
7.	Unreal Tournament	Epic/GT - MMW/SDD
8.	Half-Life/Opposing Force	Valve/Sierra - Crew/SDD
9.	Fifa 2000	EA Sports - EA Africa
10.	System Shock 2	Looking Glass - EA Africa

## Local PlayStation Charts

Position	Name	Last Month	Total Months
1.	Tekken 3 Platinum - Ster Kinekor Int.	New	New
2.	FIFA 2000 - EA Sports - EA Africa	New	New
3.	Formula 1 99 - Ster Kinekor Int.	New	New
4.	TOCA Touring Car 2 Platinum - Ster Kinekor Int.	New	New
5.	Tarzan - Disney - Ster Kinekor Int.	New	New
6.	Tomorrow Never Dies - EA Africa	New	New
7.	Final Fantasy 8 - Squaresoft - Ster Kinekor Int.	New	New
8.	Croc 2 - EA Africa	New	New
9.	WWF Attitude - Acclaim - MMW/SDD	7	2
10.	Need for Speed Road Challenge - EA Africa	Re-entry	Re-entry

## International PSX Charts

Position	Name	Developer - Local Dist.
1.	Final Fantasy VIII	Square - Ster Kinekor Int.
2.	Resident Evil 3 (Nemesis)	Capcom - Ster Kinekor Int.
3.	Ridge Racer Type 4	Namco - Ster Kinekor Int.
4.	Driver	GT/Reflections - Crew/SDD
5.	Metal Gear Solid	Konami - Ster Kinekor Int.
6.	Tomorrow Never Dies	Black Ops/EA - EA Africa
7.	Syphon Filter	989 Studios - Ster Kinekor Int.
8.	Shadow Man	Acclaim - MMW/SDD
9.	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	Activision - MMW/SDD
10.	No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking	Codemasters - MMW/SDD

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SPECIAL EDITION  
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## NAG FEBRUARY COMPETITIONS

NAG IS GIVING AWAY TO COPIES OF ACCLAIM'S AWESOME WWF ATTITUDE FOR PLAYSTATION  
Can you tackle the toughest men alive?



WHICH ACTION GAME WILL BE USED FOR THE NEXT GESA MULTIPAYER EVENT TO BE HELD IN SOUTH AFRICA?  
CLUE: NAG QUAKE 3 REVIEW (PREVIOUS)

Send your answers to the questions on a postcard to the NAG Quake 3 Special Edition Competition or NAG WWF Attitude Competition.  
PO Box 2749, Alberton, 1450 or e-mail it to comp@nag.co.za

**ATTITUDE**  
Get It!  
Name two wrestling superstars featured in the WWF Attitude PSX game from Acclaim?

## TACTICS

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## The Devil Made Me Do It

Well, it seems that we have entered the new Millennium without so much as a whisper of the Apocalypse that was supposed to occur, according to some of the more radically religious elements in our society. I had a party, of course, while they were hiding under their beds praying fervently. It would seem that there is something of an upswing in religious mania these days, and I was actually expecting some half naked, bell ringing lunatics wandering around the streets wearing sandwich board signs emblazoned with slogans like "The End is Nigh" and "Repent, Foul Sinners." They would have been good for a laugh, at least.

Which sort of takes me, via the scenic route, to my point. However, before I get there, I would like to point something small out to the average reader, who will, as a matter of course, take whatever is said here in the worst possible way and start sending me E-mail accusing me of being in cahoots with the antichrist. What I would like to say to these individuals is, read carefully. Understand. Comprehend. Think.

Okay, so, here we go... and this is something that really bites my ass. There seems to be some kind of strange idea that games, be they role playing games, computer games, or whatever, are some kind of Satanically inspired plot to ensnare the hearts and minds of everyone who experiences them and turn them into willing servants of Satan, Beelzebub, Baal, the Whore of Babylon and that strange old geezer down the road who eats cabbage and farts a lot. According to these people and their annoying little flyers that get jammed into your face at every street corner, gamers are some kind of weak minded sheep who are easily lead to 'darkness' through their association with these activities. And it doesn't stop there. In fact, it gets pretty damn stupid. Aside from the obvious victims, like heavy music and horror novels (which have had their fair share of accusations levelled at them) there are a few other targets for these zealots to aim at. When last did you see a He-Man cartoon (remember him... "By the power of some or other Skull" and all that?). Been a long time, right? That's because they don't make them anymore. Why not? Quite simply because pressure from certain quarters, which insisted that this was a "Satanic cartoon" resulted in the series being pulled. Oh, yes, and I bet you didn't know that the Smurfs were Satanic, too? Of course they are, because old Grandpa Smurf is a wizard! This kind of stuff gets me madder than a [... word we shouldn't publish, Ed. How many times must I tell you?] rat. What do these people want? A society of passionless, unimaginative robots? A generation of people incapable of free thought? A whole population of bland, boring, brainwashed people? Apparently they do, and

**With the New Year just beginning, RamJet throws caution to the wind and takes on a very touchy subject.**

Any comments or replies (or general slating) can be sent to: [rampage@nag.co.za](mailto:rampage@nag.co.za)



they're trying hard to get it. But why aim at these targets? Because they are easy targets. See, the majority of the population doesn't understand much about any of these elements that are deemed as Satanic. And it is human nature to condemn that which we do not understand, which makes it so much easier to pick on 'alternative' past times. Should these people actually remove their heads from their rectums and investigate the subject completely (not just referring to their thumb suck brochures) they may actually realise that they are dead wrong. They would see that they are being spoon fed that which they should find

out for themselves. They will see that all the 'evidence' is circumstantial, spurious and contrived. Games are nothing more than just that: games. They are a past time, a form of entertainment, and we - by we I mean gamers - use them for enjoyment, excitement and relaxation. We do not worship them. We do not revere them. We, quite simply, enjoy them, because we have been given the ability to imagine, experience and enjoy a great deal of things. I issue a challenge to everyone who believes this rubbish.

Go out, and find out for yourself. Go and investigate, and formulate your opinion. You don't have to tell anyone about what you discover - just do it for yourself and whatever conclusion you reach, fine. As long as it's your own, not one fed to you on a spoon. Get a brain. Stop being a sheep led around by the nose, and learn to think for yourself.

It gets quite silly at times, really. Take this very magazine that you hold in your sweaty little hands, for example. We receive endless letters wondering about the nature of the magazine, due to the name New Age Gaming. New Age. It must, obviously, be religiously connected, right? Of course. The fact that it deals exclusively with computer games, and that this article is probably the first and only religiously oriented piece of writing that will ever be published in it is completely besides the point.

It is a given that, because the name of the magazine contains the words 'New Age' that it has to have a religious connotation. That's called taking things at face value, or 'judging a book by its cover,' if you need a cliché to dig through the fluff on the inside of your skull. The same standard gets applied to everything listed above. But remember, the cliché above is incomplete. It should read 'don't judge a book by its cover.'

Now, before you jump on your high horse and start spamming me with E-mail calling me all sorts of horrible things, realise this: this article is in no way a criticism of religion, in any way, means or form. Religion, no matter which (with a few obvious exceptions) is an incredibly positive force. It is one of the bindings of modern society, and its importance can never be understated, or underestimated. All that I ask is this - think. You were granted a very powerful tool for deduction and reason by your deity of choice. It is situated between your ears, and can prove invaluable. Isn't it something of an insult to the creator if you don't make use of it?

RAMJET

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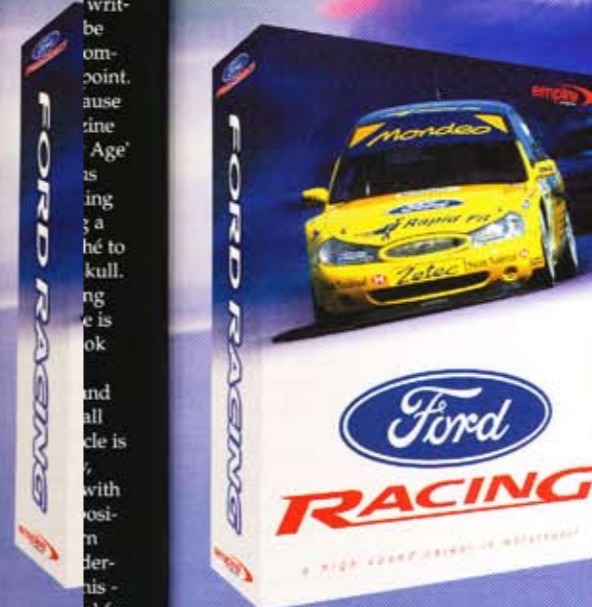
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PC CD-ROM



# BACKCHAT

POSTAGE  
LOCAL  
R1 25  
INTERNATIONAL  
R1 25

Thank you to everyone who wrote in this month. Unfortunately we cannot reply to all of the letters we receive, but we do read them all. You can send your letters and e-mail to the addresses on the postcard. Please remember to include all your details when you write in or we can't send you your prize should you win. Don't ask us to change your prize or magically convert it into cash. As always, the Editors' decision is final and that's that. Any arguing will be dealt with violently!

Well done to **Leon Myburgh** who wins our letter of the month - keep the questions coming. Until next month...

PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR FOR THE MAGAZINE. MAILING ONLY

**Backchat**  
**PO Box 2749**  
**Alberton**  
**1449**

letters@nag.co.za

## Can u Help?

My friends and I are keen on the idea of developing games. But we lack a little thing called programming knowledge. Sure we have the basics but the best I could do there is flashing disco lights. Then my one friend read in one of your issues about a gaming bible. Now we don't seem to have our facts straight. So I would be much obliged to you in filling in the blanks for us. For example is there such a thing, and if there is what do you put into something like that? As I said our programming skills are at a minimum so if you can shed some light on the gaming bible we would really appreciate it.

## Some People

**E-mail**  
*I can and will help. Firstly the term gaming bible is a term we reviewers used to refer to everything about games, the jargon involved, the three letter acronyms like RPG and FPS, it's an ancient book that only the very few and privileged will ever get a glimpse at. The other 'bible' we've mentioned is a design bible, a phrase coined by people like John Romero, and this refers to personal notes, pictures and scraps of paper used when designing and putting a game together. This we don't have and it's something that needs to be created before writing the first line of programming code. How I can help is by telling you and everyone else out there that we are officially starting, in our March issue, a new section called Developers Blueprint, where the developers are you, our readers. We'll be starting a game step by step with the help of the very talented and intelligent Travis Bulford from Twitzy Productions. The objective is to teach you how to make a game and when the 12 part series is complete we'll be giving away a huge prize to the best entry. So don't forget to reserve your copy, you won't be disappointed.*  
Ed

## A good argument

I was reading the Ed's notes on multiplayer in the November edition of NAG and I must fully agree that putting a super nail gun to a human players head and hitting that fire button has never been so fun and amusing, anyways what I

was thinking is what it would be like if we here in SA had to take on a few boys from America in a not so friendly game of Quake. I would fry them and then stand over their arrogant bodies and proudly pump more lead into their once living corpse, then run off into the distant passages laughing about my recent kill and then probably get my head blown off by a shotgun at close range. Yes I know with the lag that's pretty much impossible but hey I can dream can't I? I am sure one day we can all log on to Quake with a small memory of that once irritating bug known as lag.

## Mario

**E-mail**  
*Only now am I starting to understand how some people link violence and computer games together...*  
Ed

## Gaming in the future

In which direction do you think gaming will be going in the future? Sports, RPG, platform, FPS, or whatever else? Most South Africans seem to like sports games the most these days. Will this continue? I think that maybe we will get totally multiplayer games in the future (not like Quake Arena, the whole game would be online. All the characters and people would be real. New areas and objects could be added to the game online.) This would be especially great in adventure games or quests. What do you think?

## Willem

**E-mail**  
*If citing a game like Black & White as an example then I'd say it's impossible to predict the future of gaming. So many new ideas are surfacing almost everyday, but I believe 50% of it will be based around hardware, 40% on remakes, clones and sequels and around an optimistic 10% will be truly revolutionary. It's a tough call but ultimately as the hardware gets better so will the games. I also believe the on-line play is going to play a major role in the future. I'm happy with anything that arrives these days as long as they don't forget the single player game in the flurry of online and multiplayer concepts.*  
Ed

## In need of advice

I am an IT student who is currently looking for work this year while I finish my final year. For the past month I have been enquiring about job vacancies at a number of places. The general response is "I am sorry, but we don't employ entry level people!" Now my problem is that I don't have the necessary experience, and my second problem is that no one will give me a chance and hire me. Catch 22. I don't have experience, so I can't get a job, but I can't get a job so I can't get experience. Is there a solution to my dilemma?

## Jason

**E-mail**  
*I believe this is more commonly known as real life, it's a sad picture but believe it or not almost everyone going into the field has the same kind of problem. As far as advice goes, keep trying and don't give up. I told my first interviewer that I'd been using computers since I was eleven and that was more experience than his entire IT staff put together - I got the job, but then I'm usually quite lucky. As the saying goes, it's all about being in the right place at the right time...*  
Ed

## RE: one of your letters

I'm just writing in response to a letter that was published in your November issue, from a guy called Justus Ortlepp, about getting a casual multiplayer gaming club together. I think it's a great idea! What I'd really like for you to do is just forward this e-mail on to him if you can, as I and one or two of my friends stay in the Randburg area too and might just be interested in joining his club if he manages to get it off the ground.

## Quinn Reynolds

**E-mail**  
*Will do, I don't like using the letters section for this kind of thing, but our offices are in Randburg and I'd like to see this thing happen as well. So, to all the gaming people of Randburg, this is your local gaming authority telling you to send in your details and I'll go about putting everyone in touch with everyone else. I also promise to solve the worlds overpopulation problem by getting all able bodied men to play more with their computers and less with their wives - vote for Ed.*  
Ed

## Re-playability of games

Please add a re-playability value to your NAG rating system. In addition, in games that are campaign based can you please state if the campaign is mission based or dynamic. The problem is I spend 14 to 16 days a month playing computer games up to 18 hours a day, and it seems today's games have no replay value at all. Take Outcast and Mechwarrior3 for instance the

second time around it is still the same - everything is in the same place every time. Have most game companies never heard of dynamic campaigns where life goes on even if you miss some objectives? What really pains me is that you people give these games high ratings even though you must realise they are lacking in re-playability value and most of them can be completed in a few days even on the hardest level. A person is losing money by spending R300 on a game because you gave it a high rating of 80% only to find out it is the same every time you start playing it from the beginning. I am buying new games every month only to find out they're not worth it.

## Anonymous

**E-mail**  
*We do have a re-playability score in the rating bar, it's called continuity. Besides that, it isn't all that easy to generate new missions or put together a dynamic campaign for every game. It is something developers should be taking a long hard look at but for now we'll just have to make do with what we have.*  
Ed

## Hormones and Hexes

The mention of the classic game, Barbarian, in the November issue of NAG dredged up some distant memories. One of the things that I remembered was the novel choice of a male or female character. The female character wore little enough to cause a stir on South Africa's conservative beaches at the time. Paging through the magazine, I noted how many of the games involve (in varying degrees) scantily clad... ahem... babes. It seems that not everything has changed at such a dramatic rate in our industry. A recent movie-trailer for Duke Forever promises more strippers and hints of an improbably proportioned female character. As the Tomb Raider series has progressed, Lara's clothes seem to have shrunk, her waist narrowed and her bust grown. One begins to wonder if your glossy pages are not designed to be drool-proof. Before I am misinterpreted, let me acknowledge that in no way can NAG be singled out. Clearly this is characteristic of the marketing campaigns of the computer game industry. Cries for censorship or other controls are missing the point. The market has recognized the demand for these aspects to be included in games and accented in advertisements. We, the gamers, are the cause of the trend. Having said that, I honestly can't see that anybody wants to watch the awful washing powder adverts, yet they keep coming back with Zombie-like resilience. Also of note is that the adverts and games are largely tailored for the US market. It is possible (if not plausible) that the South African gamers have just been carried along with the tide. South African oriented releases

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would surely include a level for Unreal Tournament where the aim would be to maim and kill Australian Sportsmen, perhaps running around in their underwear? As it is, I'm expecting a Christmas add-on for Tomb Raider with Lara barely dressed as one of Santa's sexier Elves. Evan Barbie's famous breasts have been reduced, and a Disabled Barbie is due for release. Are similar changes overdue in our beloved world; are the changes needed?

## David

**Port Elizabeth**

## Five Things

After all these years there are still some things about the gaming industry that bother me. First, I can't help feeling that should games cost less I for one would buy more. This in turn would undoubtedly lead to more units being sold (also less piracy), and although at a lower price, generate far greater income for producers and retailers alike. Second, and a point with which I hope to generate some debate, is the question: How should we approach playing our games? Every month one or two purchase-worthy games are released. I more often than not end up buying all of them for fear of missing out, only to find myself hardly ever completing one of them before the next batch is released. I therefore end up stockpiling games that I'll never play. Would it therefore not be better to play one or maybe two games at a time (and accept that you can't play all of them), and finish them completely before buying again? Or should one rather employ cheat codes and use a walk-through to rapidly progress through and finish every game out there? Maybe games should even become shorter but of a higher quality, enabling one to complete them quicker and thus end up playing more games overall. Thirdly, many leading gaming magazines (both local and international) give contradicting scores to the same game. When only a ten percent variance is encountered, no problem, but when the same game scores 79% and 41%, respectively, the question beckons who do you believe? I guess the answer lies in trial and error - finding the magazine with which you agree. Alternatively reading the article, playing the demo and then deciding for yourself. Fourthly, and coupled to the third, is the principle of what I like to call, competitive scoring. What I mean is that the score that one game obtains is not always a true reflection when compared to other and sometimes even older games in the same genre. For example, way back Quake 2 may have achieved a score of 95% while Unreal only managed 93%. In other words, although Quake 2 scored more, Unreal may have proved the better game. I think when the game being reviewed is compared to other, similar games, a ranking mechanism should be employed. Finally, and believe it or not, some leading gaming magazines only manage to review a game once the game has already been released for a couple of months. By the time one reads the review and decides to purchase the product, no more copies are to be found (especially when the game is very popular). Sure new stock will arrive, but by that time your financial resources are probably tapped dry or new games have been released. I've experienced this bizarre situation on a couple of occasions before, but luckily no longer with NAG.

## Leon Myburgh

**Thornton**  
*Thanks ... for the first winning letter of 2000, well done. Your idea on the pricing structure of games sounds like the miracle solution we've all been waiting for, maybe someone out there is listening... hello, anyone? On your second point, how you play your games is up to you, perhaps someone else could shed a little light on this - what is the best thing to do, use the cheats, buy less games or stockpile them? In answer to your third point, reviews are largely about opinion, which is why reviewers need to have a solid background in playing games so their educated opinions are as close to the bone as possible, it's a lot like movie reviews, even though they are more about opinion than anything else. What you're getting in NAG is a considered opinion from a bunch of, dare I say professionals, with around 40 years of cumulative gaming experience. However, the bottom line is, decide for yourself, we only provide a unique service to gamers. On your fourth point, you are right and wrong all in the same breath, time relevancy equates to better games today scoring lower than similar but older games yesterday, trying to work out an accurate ranking system between all three versions of Quake is in itself impossible, not to mention how much debate would ensue. The best solution is to read the review for when it was written. Lastly, thanks, we really do spend many late nights sometimes bringing our readers the latest games first and it always pays off.*  
Ed

Interesting point on the tide sweeping through South Africa, but marketing at the end of the day is aimed at people, these 'people' are mostly young males so it was only a matter of time that sex was used to sell, yet again. With everything said, thankfully or should that be hopefully, down the line people will soon figure out that just because a game features a tightly packaged sexy virtual character doesn't mean it'll be fun to play. Tomb Raider was an exception, and somehow started this trend quite by accident, they're just milking the cow now but people are already getting bored. Where to next, perhaps a pet rock revival? Changes are needed in everything but trying to

# BACKCHAT

force change will get you nowhere.  
Ed

## Plug

I have a Rugby 2000 website, and I would like to publicise it. I wanted to know if you have any ideas or suggestions of how I can get the public to know about it. I see all these other game fan sites with lots of people visiting each day. I know this isn't your job, but I would greatly appreciate it if you could do that for me. I would love to see people know about this game, and I am the only fan site that I know of which publicises this game. Do you think you could maybe just put the address in one of your magazines, too? I know I am asking a lot and you will probably agree with me, but hey, might as well get it all out before Quake III takes over. You can find the site at <http://rugby2000.8m.com>

## Ryo

**E-mail**  
*Happy now? Prepare for a flood of traffic. To all the readers who do visit the site give this person some constructive feedback on what you think.*  
Ed

## Backchat Volume 2 Issue 6

Your answer to DC Grobbelaar was unfair. There are a lot of gullible people out there. We are not all IT specialists. We are however consumers, always looking for the best price. Piracy exists because commodities are overpriced. Check the retail price (I stress retail) of software in the USA (available on the Net) and compare it to the SA price. The SA retailers are coining it! The software is not bulky, so shipping can't be too much. I do not know what the import duty is, so it is difficult to make direct comparisons. The retailer buys in bulk from US wholesalers (same as US retailers) and marks up - the difference is 30% above the average US price. Remember, the consuming public reads your magazine.

## Barry Eslick

**E-mail**  
*Thanks for the letter, I don't think I was overly harsh with that letter and you really don't need to be an IT expert to figure out that a new release title selling at a flea market for under a hundred Rand might be just a little strange.*  
Ed

## All figured out

I had an epiphany about your magazine. On the cover at the top of every magazine stands the month, issue and the year, example: July 1999. However, in essence this isn't

correct, you are a month ahead. Bear with me a minute, an issue hits the shelves around the fourth or fifth of the new month, like July. But everything in the magazine: articles, reviews, previews and so on, were written in June, so the issue should be called June and not July. And all the games in the magazine were released in June and not July. Yours is not the only magazine with this strange phenomenon. Is it just me or has the world gone mad?

## Willie Kruger

**Pretoria**  
*The world has gone mad.*  
Ed

## To whom it may concern

I wrote this letter to criticize what you call a magazine. The ink smells awful, the whole thing is badly put together (pages fall out due to the poor spine of the magazine). As for the stupid names your team call themselves, well what immediately appears in my mind are immature young children making up dumb names for each other. Oh, and by the way, why the hell are you raising the price of your magazine? It sucks anyway. I had better see some improvement or I'll be spreading the news about how poor your reference guide to the biggest piece of junk in the country is. Your rating system also sucks, what the hell were you smoking when you thought of it?

## The wet sheep

**Durban**  
*Thanks for your comments, now this is what I get up for in the morning, like I've always said there is nothing better than getting positive constructive criticism on what we do. You'll be happy to know that I've asked our printers to add a little natural fragrance to their ink and to use better glue for the spine. We've also all decided to change our handles back to our real names, we didn't think it was all that silly until you pointed it out to us, thanks for that. Based on your thoughtful insights into our financials I've decided to lower the price of the magazine and as a special bonus I've toned down that comprehensive list you provided of things that suck in the magazine. I've also secretly been wanting to change our entire rating system but now that you've highlighted its flaws... yawn.*  
Ed

Please send all questions and any opinion related mail to:  
**Backchat**  
Please send all technical related questions to:  
**Backchat Technical**

Last year in archives, we spent a lot of time looking at the various old games from the 80's, and where they came from, the history behind them and who designed them. During that time I received loads of E-mails from readers asking about actually purchasing these games. Well, seeing that the 80's thing is being revived around the globe, I thought we'd start the year off with a bang by looking at something that has brought back the nostalgia of old to the gaming world of new.

The subjects in question are emulators. One just has to do an Internet search with 'emulators' as the key word to get the full picture. Everything from Atari computers to Commodore 64's are now available on some sort of an emulator. One can even get the games of old like Silent Service, Summer Games and not forgetting the first 3D space adventure, Elite. These are all great to have, but lets face it, the main reason you convinced your mother to get you the old 8-bit computer was so that you could play all the old arcade games that were released on most of these computers in the 80's. So why get the computer emulator when you can have the real arcade game, and more!

### Multiple Arcade Machine Emulator

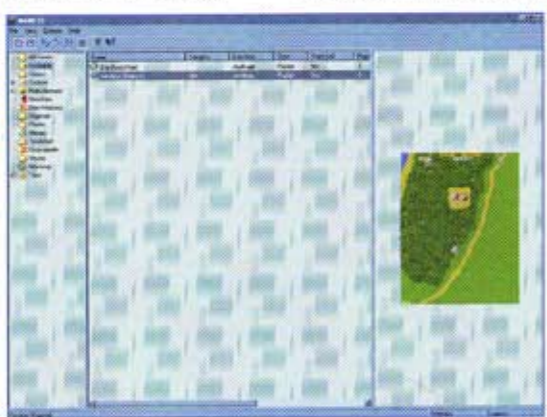
In the emulator world there has been one that has been able to stand out above the rest and truly capture the magic of yester-

year. It is the emulator that has caused the biggest uproar in the international gaming world! We are talking about the Multiple Arcade Machine Emulator, or MAME, for short. MAME has been around for the past 2 years and has proved to be the best supported arcade emulator around, supporting around 1800 games or ROMs. Although MAME is a very current piece of software it allows us to really go back into the archives, and that is why I thought it deserves a mention in our Archives section. So how does this MAME thingy work. Well, before we delve into that, let me tell you that the entire MAME thing was started by an Italian gent by the name of Nicola Salmoria. Together with a host of other programmers and gaming experts from around the world Salmoria set out to code one of the worlds most amazing pieces of software. One could see it as a global effort to emulate all the great games of old. Okay now you know who wrote it, but how does it work? Well let me start by giving the basics on the average arcade game. The easiest way to explain it is to think of an arcade game as a P.C. on its own. Using its own processor and software to run the game programme and another to run the sound. Except here the game or software is not stored on a CD ROM or hard drive, but rather on a set of ROMs that are mounted on the games P.C. board. In addition to the ROMs almost all of the games have onboard static ram as well. I assume most of you understand the basics of ROM and RAM and that the Z80 processor on the game will process the information sent to it by both. Right, well what MAME does, is it uses a seriously coded programme to emulate the Z80 processor that is used on the arcade game. This is amazing if one considers that it actually runs the real programme that is found on the ROM of the arcade

## Multiple Arcade Machine Emulator

ATARI BABY FINDS OUT YOU CAN'T TEACH AN OLD TRICK TO A NEW DOG...

game. The great thing is that it runs the programme in such a way that it feels, looks, sounds and plays like the actual game that you would find in the arcade. It all sounds very basic, and it all appears to be but the actual emulation bits gets very tricky. In most cases the real arcade game uses 2 sets of CPU's running at anything from 3 or 5 MHz, to the equivalent of a P75. It might sound basic, and I can already hear most gamers saying, "No problem, my P2 will munch that for breakfast." Well, a P2 can handle this pretty well. But keep in mind that emulating



THE 'WINDOWS' VERSION OF MAME

something usually robs a processor of half its speed. This is due to the complex amount of calculations the CPU has to make in order to create the perfect environment for the programme to run in. Apart from emulating the CPU's it still has to run the graphics card (and No, a Voodoo2 will not help you here) and the software!

You might ask, how

does this help me? Well if you are a serious arcade junkie like me that grew up in the 80's and fantasized about having a real arcade game in your room this is a dream come true. MAME can emulate just about any arcade game. This includes all the oldies like Asteroids, Pac-Man, Donkey Kong, Xevious and many more - 1800 to be exact! Which by the way are all found on the Internet free of charge. MAME even emulates games as up to date as 1996 like the famous Neo-Geo monsters found in most arcades. Okay so you have heard enough and want it all now... Well, to share in the glory of 80's gaming you are going to need a reasonably fast Pentium. Something like a P 200. You can get away with a P100 or a maybe even a P75 they tend to struggle when it comes to the bigger and more complicated games like Neo-Geo. You would also need a good sound card, preferably a PCI slot type or later. I have found that these work best. The older ones slow the machine and game down terribly, motions and sounds become very jerky, and you get a bad frame rate! MAME will only work with a normal SVGA monitor that supports VESA mode, so keep that in mind. If you still have a DX4 100 or a P1 type



MARIO - Nintendo saga, so who knows you might just have the Italian lad over for a visit soon. If you have any questions on MAME or experience any problems with it, I'll be willing to lend a helping hand... will@radioalgoa.com

ATARI BABY

machine there are ways to run MAME at a reasonable speed on these machines, but I suggest you check out the read me file or Help file in MAME to get more detail on how to do this.

### Where is it already?

So now you have all that you need to get the emulator. This you can find at the official MAME web page, <http://www.mame.net>. Get the latest binary executable and that should do it. Keep in mind that MAME effectively runs under DOS, so unless you want to download a GUI (graphic user interface) I suggest that you brush up on your DOS commands! Otherwise a good GUI like MAME32 is available on the net for download [or even on this months cover CD, Ed]. What the GUI does is give you easy access to all the games in your ROMS library. It also has a great feature that gives you the history on the game and gives you a screen shot of the actual game. The screen shots usually have to be downloaded as an optional extra, but believe me, it is well worth it. Once all this is done you would want some games to download. Due to serious restrictions on copyright laws internationally, you will never find ROMs on the same site that you downloaded the emulator from. Why, I hear you moan? "Because it is illegal". The games cannot be distributed with the emulation code, but thankfully they are easy to find, as there are hundreds of ROM sites on the net. Do a search under MAME ARCADE ROMS and you will see what I mean! You can always try <http://www.download.net/arcade/roms/>. I know that most gamers will really appreciate the retro feel about MAME and will spend hours playing it. The amazing thing is that when playing MAME all the old arcade games seem to look and feel more attractive than the latest 3D shooter or strategy game. If you want to get a great emulator that supports just about all the old games and more, MAME is it. It has seen numerous programming upgrades and test versions since its release and has a huge following worldwide.

Well it looks like our modern gaming world has once again shown a weakness toward the older games of yester-year and with all the emulating going on, it might just be worth while dusting off the old C64, Spectrum or Atari for a bit of post millennium fun. If that is not your cup of tea, download yourself an arcade game emulator and relive all your childhood memories. At least now you will be able to finish all the games in the comfort of your own home, and the best thing is it wont cost you an arm and a leg! That's all from me for this month. I had lots of requests to look at the history of the

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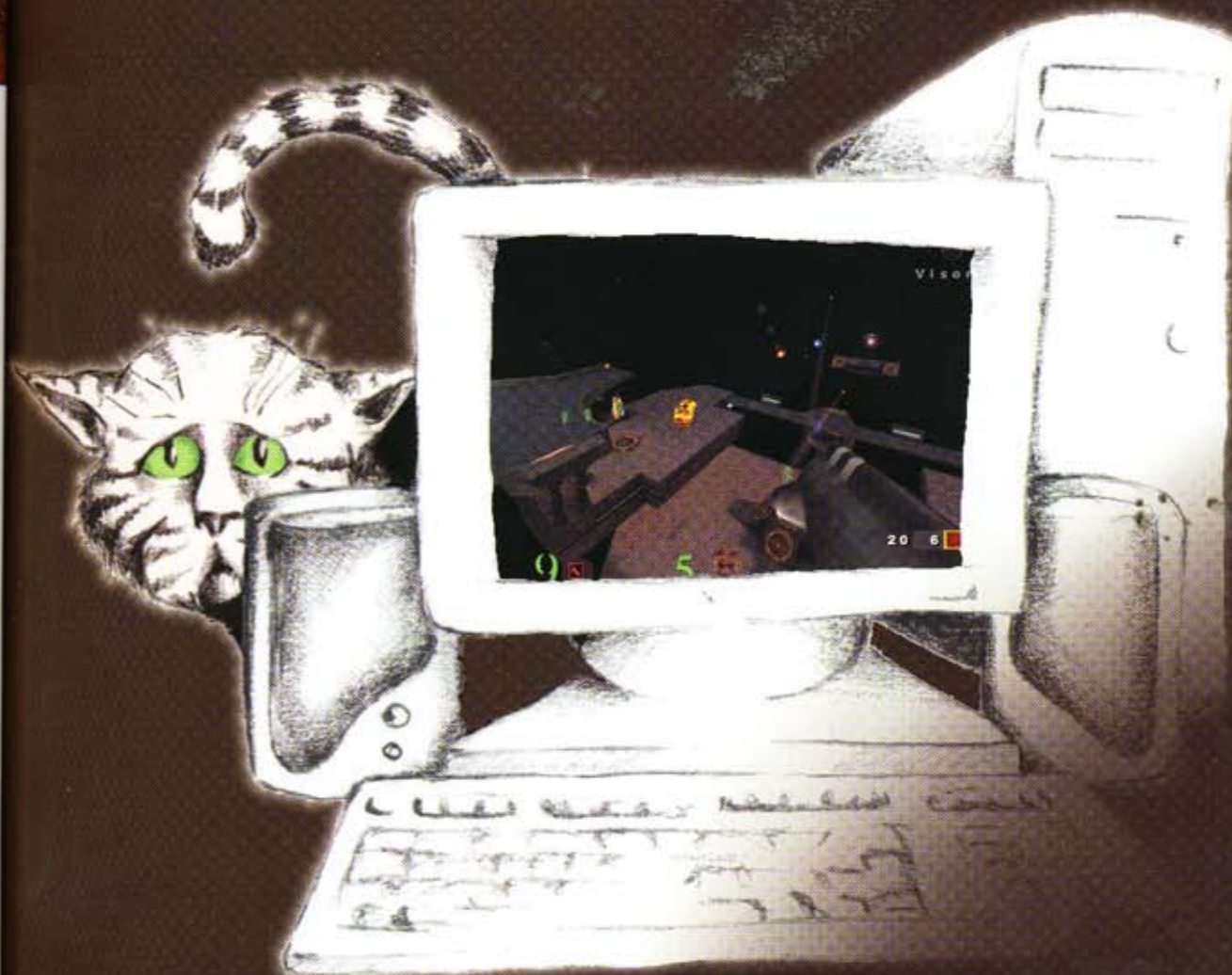
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# WingMan GAMING MOUSE

## THIS MOUSE AIN'T FOR PUSSIES!

- Features:
- Heavier Mouse Ball
- USB & PS/2 Support
- Higher Sampling Rate



Available at **Incredible CONNECTION**



**CREW**

If you're going to learn how to read what better place could there be than under the sea. It's quite, comfortable and you never have to worry about being bothered by anyone. The only problems are the wet soggy pages, not having enough air and a fishy smell.

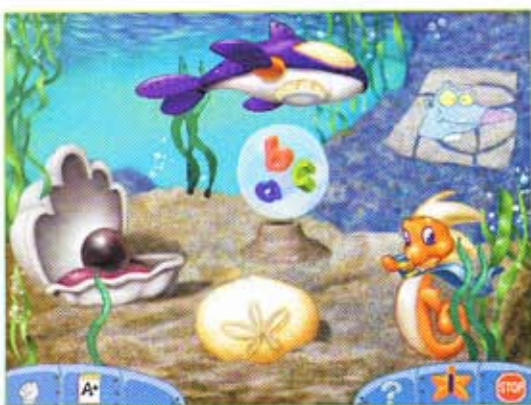
Knowledge Adventure's products have been making kids smarter around the world since 1983. Their all-new Blaster series of educational and fun titles is no exception to this hard earned track record and choosing the right product for your kid is as easy as taking candy from a baby.

## Reading Blaster For Kindergarten

Reading Blaster for Kindergarten caters for kids aged between 4 and 6 with up to five levels of difficulty that can be set anytime during play. The game is all about finding lost treasure on the Aquatic Moon with a little help from your friends Max Blaster, Mel and G.C. The presentation is flawless and a colourful cartoon movie sets the scene for the treasure hunting fun to follow. This title's main aim is to enhance reading

five stars and you'll get the chance to find some treasure after completing a basic maze game, again the maze game has some challenging elements such as selecting the correctly coloured

treasure room is filled with different activities starting with the message board - this activity allows you to create works of art using stickers or text. E-mail is Reading Blaster's version of E-mail and from here you can read, write, receive and send E-mail to your new friends within the game world. The next activity is the



MAIN MENU: FROM HERE YOU CAN ACCESS EVERYTHING

skills through fun games and activities. Everything from the simple interface to the cute characters populating the world seems to have been designed with a great deal of care and thought. The most impressive feature has to be the ease with which one can navigate through the different menus and never once will you experience difficulty exiting one activity and entering the next. The voice acting is also well presented and is fortunately not plagued with accents and region specific games or activities so it's well suited for the South African market. The game has two general areas, the main menu screen where you can access any of the five main activities and there's the Treasure Room (a submarine strapped to a friendly whale) with all the fun stuff inside. As you successfully complete each activity you are awarded a star, collect



THE SEAHORSE RACE

**Category:** Education | **Ages:** 4-6 | **Internet:** <http://www.blasternaut.com> | **System Requirements:** Pentium 90 MHz or Higher - Windows 95/98 - 16 MB RAM or more - 10 MB HDD - 1 MB Video Card | **Developer:** Knowledge Adventure | **Publisher:** Havas Interactive | **Distributor:** Crew (011) 203-9100 | **RRP:** R 229.00

fish to open the corresponding door. The

treasure room is filled with different activities starting with the message board - this activity allows you to create works of art using stickers or text. E-mail is Reading Blaster's version of E-mail and from here you can read, write, receive and send E-mail to your new friends within the game world. The next activity is the Story Corner and here you can read a number of different books, which encourages kids to use what they've learned while progressing through the activities. In the treasure room you can also print out word cards and posters, and even check up on your child's progress and print out a special certificate. Overall the game is well designed and presented, the only thing that might annoy is the fact that you cannot quickly skip past any of the voice acted instructions and are forced to listen to every detail each time you play again and again. The title is also geared around being able to print, so it's a good idea to own a printer to make the most of this title, especially

since the game encourages kids to make use of the printing feature, so stock up on those ink cartridges and paper.

### The Activities

#### Letter Dive

In this game a series of letters in either upper or lower case appear on the extended body of Mel the robotic dog. You must click on and 'vacuum' up the correct alphabetic sequence on letters floating around in bubbles before they reach the surface. If you can't get it right the game will help you by providing hints.

#### Hidden Pictures

Here you'll need to uncover a hidden image under the sea sand to earn a star. The idea is to select a category from the icons at the bottom of the screen and then click on all the pictures that belong to that category, for example you'll have to find all the insects or all the items of clothing.

#### Sand Dollar Matching

This is a matching game where letters, words, pictures or phonic sounds are hidden under sand dollars. The idea is to click on a sand dollar to hear or see what is revealed, now click on another

and try and match them. Correctly matched pairs will wash away while incorrect matches will flip back over.

#### Seahorse Race

A simple seahorse racing game where correctly choosing and matching different shapes or letters makes your seahorse swim faster. Each win earns you a star.

#### Clamshell Scramble

In this game you need to unscramble letters or words to spell a word or make a sentence. Clicking on a letter or word picks it up and from here you have to move it to the correct position below.



## Kids Net



This innovative site caters for kids who eventually want to grow up and write a bestseller. The welcoming message encourages children of all ages to get creative and share stories with other kids from around the world. The site includes poems and stories with an 'under construction' puzzles section (read 'wait and see'). The stories are lethally cute, here's a small example by a girl called Ellen, '...Once upon a time, there was this crazy man. He was really crazy and he was funny too. When the man ate his dinner, he played with it. And when he played with it, he ate it like a pig. And when he went to bed, his mouth was messy and he got his sheet messy all over. And when he woke up, he looked like he had spaghetti and broccoli all over him. And every day...' The people who run the site are trying to encourage creativity and are always on the lookout for new material. So if you have any potential authors in the house you now know where to go. Enter this address in your Internet browser and start sending - <http://www.kidauthors.com>

**Category:** Education | **Ages:** 4-6 | **Internet:** <http://www.blasternaut.com> | **System Requirements:** Pentium 90 MHz or Higher - Windows 95/98 - 16 MB RAM or more - 10 MB HDD - 1 MB Video Card | **Developer:** Knowledge Adventure | **Publisher:** Havas Interactive | **Distributor:** Crew (011) 203-9100 | **RRP:** R 229.00

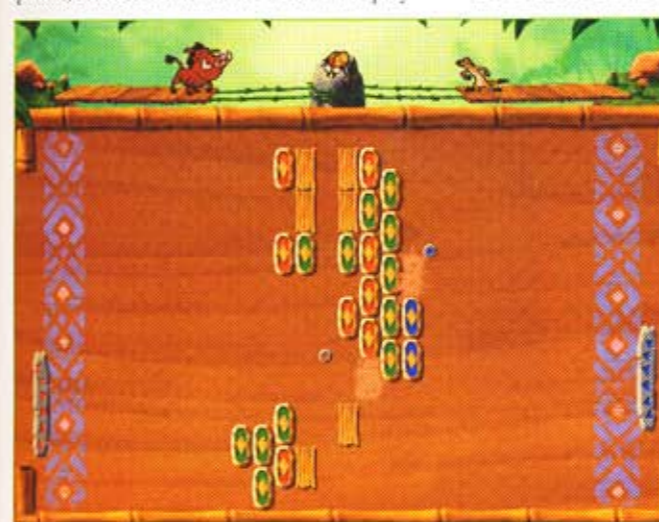
Disney have taken on the classic Breakout with their cheap and cheerful Paddle Bash, the best part about the whole deal is that you even get an extra game thrown in for free.

## Paddle Bash

Paddle Bash is one of those simple but addictive games that will keep children and adults occupied for more time than they'll ever admit to. The object of the game is to keep your puck in the playing field using just a paddle, some skill and a little luck. In the play-

ing field are a number of blocks that when hit by the puck disappear, some of these blocks are made from stone which cannot be destroyed and others are made of wood, hitting a wooden block will extend a rope bridge above the field onto which Timon or

puck into three, some reset the playing field and some just explode taking rocks, blocks and anything else with them. The game is simple but fun and should keep kids occupied for a while. There is a bonus game included in the deal called Conga Longa, where you must move around a small patch of jungle and get animals to join your dancing Conga line. The more ani-



BRIGHT, COLOURFUL WITH PLENTY OF FUNNY ANIMATIONS AND SOUNDS

Pumbaa can walk to reach a grub. The first player to extend the bridge all the way to the bug wins that round, so reaching the grub first will earn you points while letting the puck go past you will lose you points and at the end of the game the most points ultimately wins the game. Occasionally special blocks appear that do different things such as turn the puck into a sticky blob which makes it hard to get rid of, some turn your single



mals you get the higher your score, bonus points are also awarded for catching animals of the same type together or catching fast animals. It's simple and fun but doesn't have the staying power that Paddle Bash offers. Overall Paddle Bash is a great buy at the price, just don't expect too much.

**Category:** Games | **Ages:** All Ages | **Internet:** <http://www.disneyinteractive.com> | **System Requirements:** Pentium 90 MHz - Windows 95/98 - 16 MB RAM - 15 MB HDD - 1 MB Video Card | **Developer:** Disney Interactive | **Publisher:** Infogrames | **Distributor:** Crew (011) 203-9100 | **RRP:** R 149.00

Puzzle games are compelling for a number of reasons, they challenge the mind, they put free time to good use and they make you think you're smart if you beat them.

## DR. Brain Puzzleopolis

Dr. Brain, being a brain in a jar decided he needed a few more hands around the lab and in an ill-fated experiment accidentally cloned himself twice. One of the clones became pure evil and fled to the city to carry out evil plans of destruction. The remaining clone, you, is the world's only hope. It's a weak story that just barely serves to link together the six different puzzles the game has on offer. The basic objective is to move around

the city solving puzzles and collecting items and sidekicks until you have enough to defeat the evil clone. The encounters are a little like rock, paper and scissors, only this time there are more options and

harder a group of renegade robots will do just about anything to prevent you reconnecting the machines. In Power Towers you have to restore an energy stream by adjusting the Power Towers to attract or repel the particles streaming out of the Energy Particle Emitter. If you fancy a little virus killing then Network Nuisance might be fun. The object here is to rotate and fire anti-virus information at a grid of triangles - the



Category: Games | Ages: 10 & Up | Internet: http://www.knowledgeadventure.com | System Requirements: Pentium 90 MHz - Windows 95/98 - 16 MB RAM - 15 MB HDD - 1 MB Video Card | Developer: Knowledge Adventure | Publisher: Havas Interactive | Distributor: Crew (011) 203-9100 | RRP: R 229.00

the more you have the better your chances of winning. The puzzles themselves are simple and if you're persistent enough will provide a little distraction from every day life. The first puzzle is Blimp Aeronaut where you navigate a giant blimp through the cities skyscrapers while avoiding or compensating for wind currents generated by giant fans. Next is Crystal Lock, a simple game where you fire different coloured lasers at different coloured crystals. On the harder levels some of these crystals are covered up. Factory Fracas is a hectic little game where you have to reconnect a number of pipes to different pieces of machinery on the factory floor. To make life

triangles indicate infected areas, you and the computer take turns trying to dominate most of the network. Cyborisk Battles is a miniature turn-based strategy game of capture the flag. By customising your units you can decide what type of track they use as well as what kind of weapon. Set all your commands and watch as the battle unfolds. The last game is Hazardous Containment where you must guide canisters of waste material into their correct disposal units - mess up and you'll have a big problem on your hands. It's simple, fun and very basic, so don't expect great graphics or innovation and you won't be disappointed.

**Category:** Games | **Ages:** 10 & Up | **Internet:** <http://www.knowledgeadventure.com> | **System Requirements:** Pentium 90 MHz - Windows 95/98 - 16 MB RAM - 15 MB HDD - 1 MB Video Card | **Developer:** Knowledge Adventure | **Publisher:** Havas Interactive | **Distributor:** Crew (011) 203-9100 | **RRP:** R 229.00

## Wants

1. Disney Tarzan Action Game - Disney/Crew/SDD
2. Jumpstart Preschool - Havas/Crew/SDD
3. Pink Panther (Passport to Peril) - TCM Warehouse
4. Jumpstart 1st Grade - Havas/Crew/SDD
5. Disney Tarzan Activity Centre - Disney/Crew/SDD

Top Educational Sales dated 20/12/99



Interplay, which is now part of the Virgin group, has been seen as the sleeping giant for many years. It is one of the few publishers to constantly release top-notch titles but for some unknown reason many of their releases inexplicably fail to make the mark. Baldur's Gate has been one of the company's biggest success stories in 1999, being in the top three selling games of the year, with even the follow up add-on disc outselling many games. The lucky few, a small collection of journalists, were privy to the unveiling of BGII: SOA in the USA and although the project is not scheduled until mid 2000 what was shown was impressive enough to get everyone excited.

Derek dela Fuente

Baldur's Gate, which came from Canadian developer BioWare, is seen as the benchmark RPG and along with Black Isle, Interplay's own in-house RPG specialists will be working in collaboration on the sequel which will be more of the same but bigger, better and more impressive! A spokesperson was eager to point out that in bringing two collective teams together with their vast amount of experience with AD&D games, along with the vast understanding of the TSR pen and paper system, the follow up will be something special! Players expecting vast changes to the setting and style of the game will be glad to know this will not happen, for it is more to do with adding stronger ideas, a more detailed look and strong scripting. From the first showing of the demo the game looked polished and the attention to detail was apparent although putting your finger on what it becomes harder! The now rendered architecture, the interiors/exterior/locations, now comes in higher resolution which looks awesome - everything looks clean and more roomy, giving the player more to see and a freer feel to the environments.

### Starters

The actual storyline is still being kept tightly under wraps but what is known is that the game takes off after a large confrontation. An unknown attacker assaults your Party, you are knocked unconscious, and wake up in a dark dungeon with no knowledge of how you got there or who has

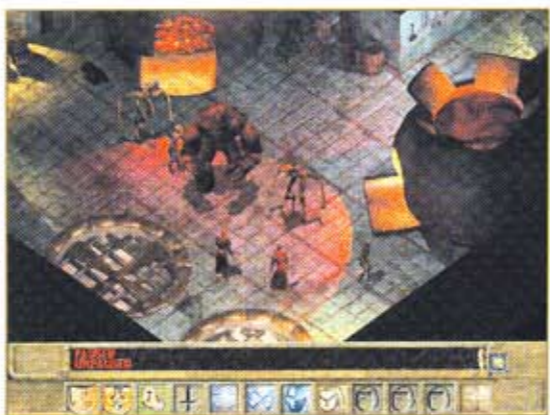
imprisoned you. An old friend, Imoen, helps you to escape where you will meet up with a group of friends, Minsc and Jaheira, all of whom are being held captive in that same dark dungeon. The first facet is to help free others and that is where the game starts to pull the player in.

### Views to seek

The first setting is in Athkatla, the capital city of Amn. A myriad of exciting and lush locations will be on view as you explore the epic world on offer (5 discs will make up the game). They include; the Cloud Peak Mountains, cities of the Underdark, Elven forests of Tethir, underwater cities populated by disparate-yet-similar creatures, the Astral Plane, and even the nether regions of the Abyss. A special graphical set and style is being created to give diversity to the game, a point that was constantly made. The design, look and layout of the game are paramount and the sheer size of the game is massive. The game is viewed from an isometric (3/4 angle), top down view. Shadows of Amn allow you to create one character of your choice.

Throughout the adventure you meet many different people who can join your party. The maximum number in your party at any given time is six. The game offers an intriguing mix of PC's and NPC's who you can get to join you whenever you like. A spokesperson explained, "Party members will be able to follow the party leader in a formation. The formation is determined by the relative location to the leader when he/she

selects 'follow'. You will be able to form and reform at any time. There are a lot of formations planned right now - some are offensive, some are defensive. To aid your progress a map of the areas that you have explored will be generated



THE LENGTHS YOU HAVE TO GO TO FOR DECENT WEAPONS

automatically. A nice feature is a journal that will automatically chronicle your adventures, including the quests you have agreed to accomplish and major milestones in the story. Being able to annotate the map with your own notes and comments will aid the player".



One aspect of the game that was brought up a few times was the need to manage food and other minor actions, like money or weight of items you can carry. It appears that food



ANYONE REMEMBER THE FLASHLIGHT?

rationing and other mundane events will not be part of the game that the players need attend to, for the characters are smart and so you only have to focus on the main events. Money and especially weight will be limited for each player but hidden objects is a clever play although others like the thieves, who's AI is vastly improved, can end up stealing it! Rest is instantaneous but time does pass during rest (in

## Baldur's Gate II (Continued)



**Interface**  
This remains close to the original with only minor changes but it does look nicer being more akin to the graphical surroundings making it merge more into the game instead of standing out. New options include 'rest' to aid game play.

**Time Out**  
BGII will contain over 100 hours of solo game play, plus the multiplayer component from the original where up to six people will still be able to take part in the role-playing fun, progressing through the storyline as a party.

**Added Value**  
Over 20 new kits and classes have been added to the already extensive class list from Baldur's Gate to make BGII even better. There are 15 new NPC characters available to join players in their quest, along with hundreds of completely new creatures with access to over 130 new spells presenting over 300 in total! Hundreds of new items also add flavour to the game including the legendary Holy Avenger and the venerated Staff of the Magi. Higher-level character development and the exceptionally diverse combat proficiency system will allow for an expanded skill set including dual wielding or single weapon mastery. The AI of the game is one of the main areas that players will be pleased with.

**They Say**  
"We will be adding new classes, spells and items, so that means we will be adding new rules to accommodate these additions".

**Technology**  
Using BioWare Infinity engine, which will support resolutions of up to 800x600. Full 3-D acceleration support will be provided through the popular API Open GL for a number of hardware accelerators.

**They Said**  
"The game is in its very early stages even though there is a lot to see. The actual size of the game has not been decided but even if it is the same play area size of the original game it will be bigger if we are going to ensure that there are no screens or areas where there is nothing going on. In the original game there were scenes in the game that were empty and lifeless! At present a figure of around 120 hours of game play is being targeted".

**They Are**  
BioWare developed the original Baldur's Gate and Baldur's Gate: Tales of the Sword Coast. Black Isle, a studio, is the division of Interplay Productions that developed Planescape Torment.

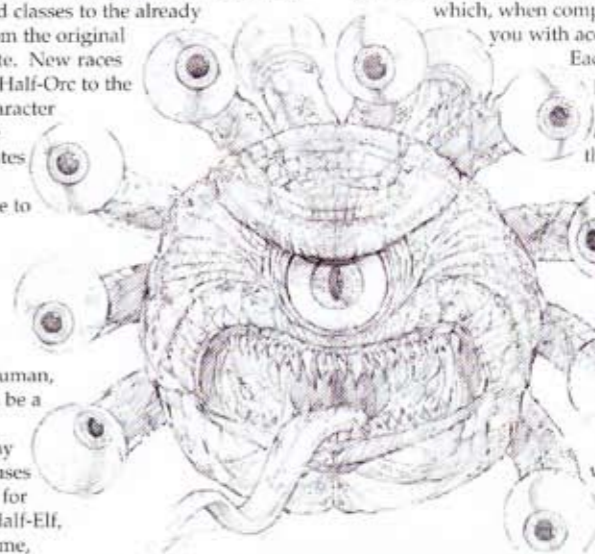
the game) - and you will wake up in the next morning unless interrupted by combat. There are inns and taverns where you can get a much more secure and restful night of sleep. There are so many new details and features added it is hard to pinpoint the most important ones without missing anything

out, suffice to say there is a lot more to be spoken about in the next few months. The user can play any number of classes, including the assassins as well as many others. There are 20 plus kits and classes to the already large list from the original Baldur's Gate. New races include the Half-Orc to the playable character races. These massive brutes make great warriors due to their rather strong physiques. The list of playable character races are: Human, Elf (you can be a Dwarf, but won't get any special bonuses or penalties for doing so), Half-Elf, Dwarf, Gnome, Halfling and Half-Orc. There are new and improved monsters; Golems, Beholders, Sabaugin, Djinnis, Kuo Toa, Mind Flayers, etc. Some of these will be considerably larger and imposing than any of the opponents in Baldur's Gate.

Spokesperson: "Improvements to the Baldur's Gate engine make the game even more rich and engrossing, as well as increasing the realism, depth, and beauty of the world. Our monsters are bigger and have more animation, the spells are more stunning, our environments are more varied to ensure the overall look of the game is



LOOK AT THE PRETTY LIGHTS!



amazing. Game play improvements such as better journal management, and various tweaks to the multiplayer game should greatly increase the experience for all players. It does not end there for to aid your prospects in combat wider selection of weapons, armour and items will be available, hundreds of different ones in

all. For fans that are deep into this style of game a stimulating expansion to Baldur's Gate II is strongholds. At or above the 9th character level, you will be able to undertake an optional quest which, when completed, will reward you with access to a stronghold. Each class will have a particular type particularly suited to it, and once acquired, the stronghold will play an ongoing role in the "game". With such a long time before completion it does seem that they have taken into account all the extras that fans put on their wish list and it does appear that they are doing the impossible by improving on what many said was nigh on the perfect game. Thankfully the technology of the game is taking a back seat although it will be innovative on the technical side but the focus is on game play, ambience and the mechanics of the game. From the interaction to ensuring the game is totally representing

of the AD&D rules. The original game sold over 1 million copies and so for it to be successful it has to achieve even larger sales figures! Bigger, better and more impressive seems to be the basic requirements for this sequel.

Genre: Role Playing Game [PC]

Developer: Black Isle Studios

Publisher: Interplay

Supplier: Multimedia Warehouse

Tel: (011) 315-1000

Expected Release Date: March 2000

Internet:

<http://www.interplay.com/bgate2/>

# THE NEW AGE GAMING AWARDS 1999

1999 has been the year of revivals and sequels based on the list of titles that NAG has been privileged enough to have reviewed. NAG takes this opportunity to offer its highest accolades to the industries top games and products, culminating in the Game of the Millennium. Unfortunately we were unable to review the entire batch of end of 1999 releases due to dodgy release dates, therefore we can only nominate those that passed through the NAG doors. Please note that all the nominations were thoroughly evaluated and all results stem from serious pizza and arm wrestling sessions that have no doubt left a few of our staff members scarred for life.

**PC** **Quake 3 Arena**  
NAG 93% - id Software - MMW / SDD

A highly debated winner but most certainly a deserved one. 'id' have once again outdone themselves with a superb graphics engine and masterly multiplayer gameplay. The debate will rage long but NAG is sure it has its champion for the genre.

Runner-Up: **Half-Life** - NAG 93% - Sierra Studios - Crew / SDD  
Nomination: **System Shock 2** - NAG 89% - EA - EA Africa

**ACT I O N**

**PSX** **Metal Gear Solid**  
NAG 90% - Konami - Star Kinekor Interactive

Metal Gear Solid takes the trophy in this category for providing a compelling experience that many have described as the perfect action game on the PlayStation.

Runner-Up: **Soul Reaver** - NAG 90% - Eidos Interactive - Crew / SDD

**PC** **Falcon 4.0**  
NAG 85% (Patched 91%) - Microprose - EA Africa

Another pizza session was fought out to ascertain that Falcon 4 was truly the king of the flyers, and whether the patches were allowed an audience. Not many people can argue the fact that the patches elevated F4 to one of the best flight sims ever produced and NAG agrees.

Runner-Up: **FLY!** - NAG 88% - Take 2 - MMW / SDD  
Nomination: **Mig Alley** - NAG 85% - Empire - MMW / SDD

**FIGHTING PSX (BELOW) FLIGHT SIM PC (ABOVE)**

**PSX** **WWF Attitude**  
NAG 90% - Acclaim - MMW / SDD

This follow up to the highly successful WWF Warzone is the definitive wrestling game on the market. Winning this genre on what is regarded the fighter console shows the worthiness of the title.

Runner-Up: **Tai Fu** - NAG 89% - Activision - MMW / SDD

**PC** **The Nomad Soul**  
NAG 94% - Eidos - Crew / SDD

TNS is fundamentally a true epic adventure tinted with ample doses of other genres, making the scope and scale of the game beyond anything seen in 1999. NAG's choice is based on innovation, storytelling and pure enjoyment, something that TNS thrives on.

Runner-Up: **Nocturne** - NAG 93% - GOD Games - MMW / SDD  
Nomination: **Gabriel Knight 3** - NAG 91% - Sierra - Crew / SDD

**ADVENTURE**

**PSX** **Dino Crisis**  
NAG 90% - Capcom - Star Kinekor Interactive

The innovative puzzles that need solving and the inventory customisation suits all playing styles, add that all up and Dino Crisis comes out of the jostling for first position as the clear winner.

Runner-Up: **Silent Hill** - NAG 86% - Konami - Star Kinekor Interactive

**PC** **Planescape: Torment**  
NAG 91% - Interplay - MMW / SDD

UNDER REVIEW - The title that finally revived the corroding RPG genre in 1999. D&D role-playing based on the popular Planescape setting rekindled the desire that PC users had lost. This title is currently under review but is the convincing winner.

Runner-Up: **Everquest** - NAG 88% - Sony CEA - No SA Dist.  
Nomination: **Silver** - NAG 92% - Infogrames - Crew / SDD

**ROLE PLAYING GAME**

**PSX** **Final Fantasy VIII**  
NAG 92% - Squaresoft - Star Kinekor Interactive

Attempting to find a worthy competitor to FFXIII is like trying to find fish on land. A new story and suped up graphics takes the challenge to the competing developers for 2000.

Runner-Up: **Nothing to compete against brilliance**

**PC** **Rally Championship**  
NAG 91% - Entropress - EA Africa

UNDER REVIEW - Even though the review is currently still under construction, the title has done its rounds in the NAG offices and has impressed to no end. Some of the most sublime graphics and top-notch physics added to the electrifying fun of rallying creates endless fun and excitement.

Runner-Up: **GP 500** - NAG 91% - Microprose - No SA Dist.  
Nomination: **TOCA 2** - NAG 92% - Codemasters - MMW / SDD

**DRIVING**

**PSX** **Driver**  
NAG 92% - GT Interactive - Crew / SDD

Driving has never been such fun by adding what can only be described as pure entertainment by gelling espionage and big cylinder cars. Its pure gameplay connected with all at NAG.

Runner-Up: **Need for Speed 4** - NAG 88% - Electronic Arts - EA Africa

**PC** **Age of Empires 2**  
NAG 91% - Microsoft - Crew / SDD

Ever since NAG's escapades to E3 in May, we had been touched by all of our nominations. AOE2 finally won over the NAG judges with its depth of civilisations and its polished micro management. The Developers of AOE2 certainly listened to the gaming public's needs and wishes and made the necessary additions and changes to the game making it one of the best strategy titles around.

Runner-Up: **Homeworld** - NAG 91% - Sierra Studios - Crew / SDD

A very warm round of applause must go to the Developers of Homeworld for a thoroughly engrossing story and innovative gameplay that was only just pipped at the voting station by AOE 2.

Nomination: **Pharaoh** - NAG 89% - Sierra Studios - Crew / SDD

A personal favourite of many of the NAG staff, losing out by the narrowest of margins due to the strong contenders in this genre.

**PC** **Jack Nicklaus 6**  
NAG 93% - Activision - MMW / SDD

Finally a golf game that has topped 'Links' from its pedestal 'it' created. Beautifully rendered graphics and superb ball physics combine for some of the most compelling gameplay in a golf sim. The Course Designer included finally clinched the title for Activision.

Runner-Up: **FIFA 2000** - NAG 90% - EA Sports - EA Africa  
Nomination: **Brian Lara Cricket** - NAG 85% - Codemasters - MMW

**S P O R T**

**PSX** **Brian Lara Cricket**  
NAG 87% - Codemasters - MMW / SDD

1999 must be regarded as the year of the cricket sim especially after the controversy of the World Cup. Codemasters managed to simulate the addictive nature of the sport with its TV style gameplay.

Runner-Up: **Tiger Woods 99** - NAG 83% - EA Sports - EA Africa

**NAG's Hardware Innovation Award**  
**nVidia TNT 2 Chipset**

nVidia not only stopped the 3Dx domination but surpassed it with surprising ease. At this very moment next generation cards are being tested and evaluated but 1999 is most certainly the year of the TNT2.

**NAG's Most Disappointing Award**  
**Ultima Ascension**

Under Review - Origin - EA Africa: How can this be? Well believe us when we say that this game needs some serious patches. Disappointing for the best of the series.

**NAG's Best Hardware Award**  
**Gravis Xterminator - Accord Multimedia**  
**Creative Labs Desktop Theater 5.1**  
**DT2800 Digital - Creative Labs Africa / MMW / SDD**

Yes, we have a tie, inseparable in the parcel. Take our word for it, they both deserve it.

**NAG's Achievement Award**  
**Sony PlayStation**

Sony - Star Kinekor Interactive: Soon we will bid farewell to the king of the consoles as the end 2000 PSX 2 release date beckons. NAG wishes to show its gratitude to the little device that has sold more consoles than our authors, for its service to the gaming public.

## Game of the Millennium

### QUAKE III ARENA



Never before has there been so much anticipation for a title as there was for Quake 3 Arena. NAG's days are constantly preoccupied with Deathmatch and CTF sessions since the arrival of the review sample, and even then the staff's only Christmas wish was to receive a Collector's Edition copy (which planet? Ed). There can be only one and Q3A is it, the NAG Game of the Millennium. It should be played at every LAN, competition and social gaming event in the world, we know it will be!



## NAG TOP GAMES OF 1999 & 2000 PREDICTIONS

After sending our crystal ball in for a thorough service, we look deep into the depths of its reflection to predict the hottest games of the year 2000. We'll check back same time next year to see how we did.

- 10  
**Messiah**  
Shiny Entertainment
- 9  
**Giants: Citizen Kabuto**  
Planet Moon Studios
- 8  
**Daikatana**  
Ion Storm
- 7  
**Vampire: The Masquerade**  
Nihilistic Studios
- 6  
**Warcraft 3**  
Blizzard Entertainment

- 5  
**Freelancer**  
Digital Anvil
- 4  
**Black & White**  
Lionhead Studios
- 3  
**Duke Nukem Forever**  
3D Realms
- 2  
**Baldur's Gate 2**  
BioWare
- 1  
**Diablo 2**  
Blizzard Entertainment

## "BUT HONEY..."

There was undoubtedly a large amount of software and hardware under the Christmas trees this past festive season. One such gift would most certainly have been the Sony PlayStation, which has been a popular Christmas gift since its first appearance back in 1995. Unfortunately, the PlayStation in its current state is about to become obsolete, with the introduction of the PlayStation 2, a much faster, much more powerful and ultimately more capable TV game console. The software used by the little grey box will still be useable by its bigger, badder, blockier brother, but that is roughly where the similarities end. The question lies in whether, with the introduction of this new console, PlayStation will still find itself in the upper echelons of the Christmas gift category. How many people out there are going to replace their existing console with the new one, rendering the expenditure on buying the original unit (especially those bought this year) to the realms of wastage. But who cares. This is the PlayStation 2 we're talking about! We all want one, of course. It's a guy thing. So, we have to become ultimately sneaky. Buying one for your two year old just won't work, boys, because the ladies sussed this trick out back in the days when fathers were buying Scalectrix for their three-month-old sons. No, this time we are going to need to be more creative. Slyly slipping one into the shopping trolley may do the trick with little things, but we're talking a pretty big box here, which she is sure to notice. Buying one when she is not around, having it wrapped and surreptitiously slipping it beneath all the other presents around the Christmas tree is a pretty good option, but there are bound to be questions later, possibly accompanied by handcuffs, a bright light and a horrible German accent. At least Sony have provided us with an excellent counter argument to any smart remarks the little lady may come up with. The PlayStation runs software written to DVD, which, aside from better speed, more data and a host of other advantages, makes the PlayStation 2 a DVD player. Remember this as an important argument, guys: "But, honey, it's also a DVD player." On second thoughts, maybe that's not such a good idea. Think of all those valuable gaming hours going to waste while the better half insists on watching endless streams of chick flicks instead of letting you get down to some serious virtual butt kicking. We are going to need a serious plan B by Christmas 2000...

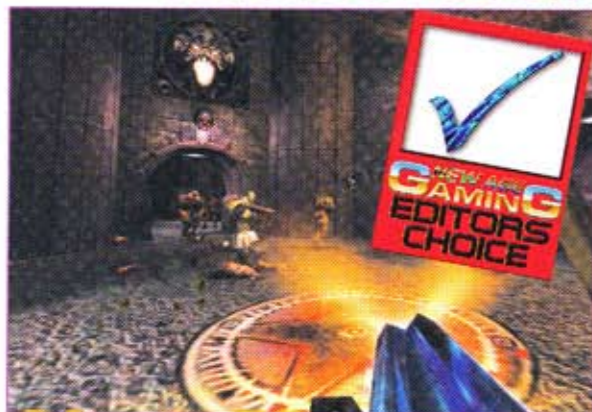
**CREATIVE**  
ALL GAMES REVIEWED ON  
**CREATIVE LABS BLASTER PC PREMIUM SYSTEMS**



Intel Pentium III 500 MHz Processor  
Intel 440BX AGP-Chipset Motherboard  
128 MB SDRAM Memory (PC-100)  
13 GB Ultra DMA Harddisk  
1.44 MB Floppy Drive  
Microsoft Windows 98 Pre-Installed  
Sound Blaster Live!  
PC-DVD 6X MPEG2 Kit with Dxr2 Technology  
3D Blaster Riva TNT 2 Ultra 32 MB  
Cambridge SoundWorks FPS 2000 Speakers  
Modem Blaster Flash56 PCI Modem  
BlasterPC Black Case with INFRARED Remote & FM Tuner  
17" High Resolution Monitor  
104 Key Keyboard  
PS/2 Mouse

**BLASTER PC**

### Awards Ceremony



GABRIEL KNIGHT 3



WHEEL OF TIME



SOUL REAVER



DINO CRISIS

Quake 3 Arena is here. We would talk all about it's wonderful qualities, and about the stunning review Soul Assassin put together, but we'd rather get a server going... see page 34

Gabriel Knight 3 Page 38

Return to GK's world of mystery and horror.

Wheel of Time Page 44

Fantasy action will never be the same again.

Soul Reaver Page 46

Jolly good puzzling, impaling fun, what?

Dino Crisis Page 52

Who's afraid of the big bad... AAARGH!

### Evaluation System

**90 - 100**

The ultimate achievement for a game is to get over the magic 90%. It represents an automatic purchase if you enjoy the type of game an offer. Also a good place to shop if you're tired of one kind of game and would like to broaden your horizons.

**80 - 89**

Any game reaching this status deserves your attention. Good in every way but just lacks that little extra that separates it from classic status. No game is ever perfect but some come very close and here is where you'll find them.

**70 - 79**

Tricky territory here, there is usually no good reason for not buying a game that scores in this range. Good games here suffer from a tired formula or lack of innovation. Technically flawless but just not very inspired.

**60 - 69**

Good solid games usually score around this mark. Combinations of serious flaws or lacking features prevent these games from scoring anything better. Fanatical gamers or fans of the genre will probably love these titles.

**50 - 59**

Middle of the road. Games scoring here are average games, not too good and not too bad. Games like these usually end up in your Christmas stocking from well meaning but clueless grandparents.

**40 - 49**

Very poor games fall into this range. Terrible they may be but a few redeeming qualities rescue them from dropping into the next bracket. Sometimes worth a look if they sell in Rands what they scored.

**0 - 39**

Any game scoring in this dreaded range isn't even worthy of bargain bin status. Avoid completely. Go lower down the scale and these games just keep getting worse, although titles scoring in the single digits might be good for a laugh. It got 20% for doing something right after all.

Sequel to "Action Game of the Year" - Computer Gaming World - PC Games



South African Activision is a division of SDD - www.mmw.co.za

# BATTLEZONE II

## COMBAT COMMANDER

Sequel to "Action Game of the Year" - Computer Gaming World - PC Games



**Control a Battalion**  
Face the front lines in first-person, calling in airstrikes and commanding futuristic customizable vehicles, including tanks, walkers and hoverbikes.



**Destroy Alien Scum**  
Take on marauding enemies with advanced unit tactics like mine-laying, instant action and strategy missions get you right into the solo or online battle fray.



**Battle and Build**  
Use the terrain to your advantage on five completely 3-D planets. Form armies, construct bases and deploy your defenses across an alien solar system.

Multimedia WAREHOUSE

www.activision.com  
**ACTIVISION**

South African Distributors: Multimedia Warehouse a division of SDD - www.mmw.co.za JHB (011) 652-8400 Bloem (051) 447-3193 CT (021) 550-8300 DBN (031) 263-0121 PE (041) 363-0540 Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. © 1997-1999 Activision, Inc. Battlezone is a trademark of Atari Interactive Inc., a Hasbro company. Combat Commander is a trademark of Activision, Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All rights reserved. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

Instead of riding a desk from 9 to 5 everyday you've decided to build and run a theme park. You've gathered a little money together and bought a slice of land, you've made a sound investment and your future looks good, or does it? It's a really good plan except for rioting staff, piles of vomit, dirty toilets and unhappy kids littering in your park. There always seems to be a downside to everything but at least now you can go on all the rides for free and you can always hire someone to deal with the staff, beat the kids and clean those toilets yourself.

RedTide

# theme PARK WORLD

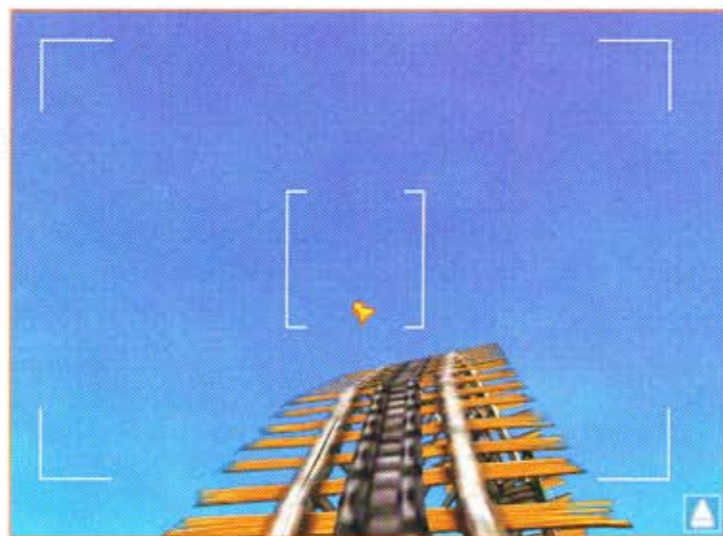
You start the game with an empty piece of land, some cash and an advisor - from here you must build the biggest and best theme park in the world. Sounds easy, shouldn't be a problem. True on paper but in practice it's a completely different story. The game is exactly the kind of quality you'd expect from Bullfrog. What this means is that the presentation, graphics, sound, control and interface are almost perfect in every sense, although it isn't a game that can be rated on these simple factors alone. You need to look at how it plays and how long you'll be playing it and more importantly why you should play it in the first place.



**If you build it will they come?**  
Before you even open your gates you need to have a few essentials in place. Firstly you place a few pathways down, walkways to get to the rides, as well as a few shops and toilets. Each game starts with only a few shops, rides, sideshows and miscellaneous items available, to get more you'll need to hire scientists and research new attractions, shops and other items. However, at the start of each game you have enough to complete a small theme park. The first shops you should place are drink and food shops, after you've decided on a suitable location (connected to a pathway) you can then change the name of the particular shop. Other than simple name changing you can also decide on the quality of the items on sale, how much salt you should add to your fries or even how

much ice should be added to each drink sold. All these micro changes affect the cost of the food and therefore how much you should raise or lower the price. Just make sure you don't lose money and you'll be fine. Other things to consider here are customer satisfaction and accessibility for example don't overcharge for poor quality goods and make sure your patrons can get to the shops (sounds obvious but when you've got 30 ice cream shops to run it's easy to forget something silly like connecting the entrance to a walkway). Once you've placed your shops you can then add a sideshow or two depending on what is available. Sideshows are games of chance where customers (kids) can win prizes, these shows offer some secondary amusement other than the big rides and give you the opportunity to make a little more cash. The sideshows can also be tweaked to suit your greed and you can adjust the chance of winning, value of the prize and how much customers pay to play, a good balance of all three sliders will almost

while you laugh all the way to the bank. One flaw with the sideshows is that you can up the price of the game while the customer is playing, so it is altogether possible to charge someone \$10 000 for a game and get away with it, this is technically a cheat/flaw but is far too tempting when your bank balance starts heading south.



WE ALL KNOW HOW THIS ONE TURNS OUT... IT'S A PRELUDE TO THE FLASHING PAST OF SCREAMING GREEN FACES

After placing a few sideshows it's time to think about toilets, security cameras, litterbins and other decorative features such as trees, bushes and flowers. The miscellaneous items on offer all fall in-between essential purchases (security cameras) and park enhancement features (foun-

Money good be a in the Tide

tains place while such your immun readyep ing alppy reallyne open the prospyng, availne amplys is place ting ith. you p you n and e the r your you n should peopl even cycles should is no price rides tomer at the implie how y ride s will u succes ride s after t increa break impor succes ting, d sides fer all /oun-

Theme Park World (Continued)



THE NEW AGE GAMING DRINKS AND FRIES SHOPS

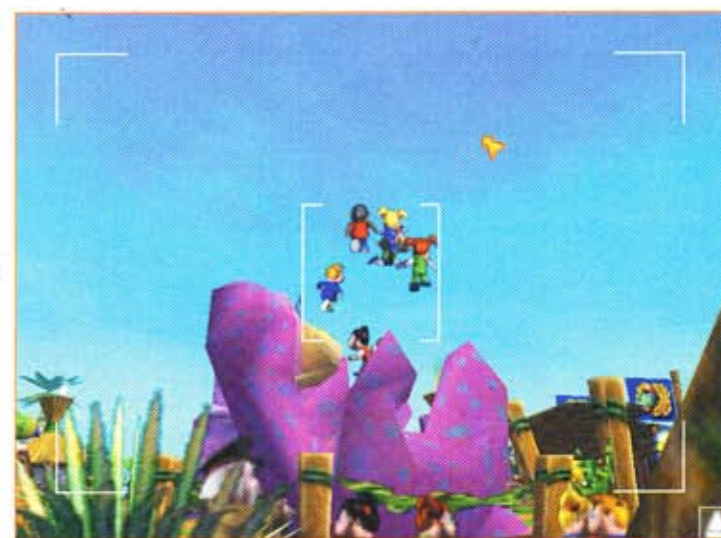
tain (trees). The important items must be placed in the park to keep customers happy while other items have more of an aesthetic use such as putting a few flowers and trees near your toilets to keep nasal offence down to a minimum. Once everything is in place and you're ready to entertain it's a good idea to start thinking about your rides, a theme park without rides really won't interest anyone, so build rides and open your gates and look forward to a long prosperous career. Again not all the rides are available right off the bat but you're given an ample selection to get going. Select a ride and place it in your park, remembering to keep an eye on accessibility. Once you place the ride in the park you must connect the queue and exit points. After placing the ride and making sure your customers can get to it you must decide how fast it should go, how many people it can take and even how many cycles each ride should run. There is no admission price on the rides as customers pay that at the gate. The implications of how you set your ride sliders are far reaching and will ultimately determine if your park will be a success or a failure. For example if you set your ride speed too fast many customers will feel sick after the ride and won't go on it again, if you increase the capacity too much then the ride will break down a lot quicker. All the settings are important but it is possible to achieve moderate success by leaving everything on default settings. At this stage you should have a few shops, sideshows, toilets, walkways and a couple of rides, you're all ready to go but there is still one



other step before you can open your park. Staff. There are five different types of staff and they all perform essential roles in a successful theme park. Cleaners who will keep the place tidy; Mechanics who will fix or upgrade your rides if something should happen; Entertainers who simply walk around your park and keep kids happy; Security Guards to patrol the park and keep things in order and Scientists who are responsible for researching new rides, shops, sideshows and ride upgrades. Once everything is in place you can open your park and start making money. There isn't

any real order in which you need to do anything, it's entirely up to you, which is part of the game's overall charm.

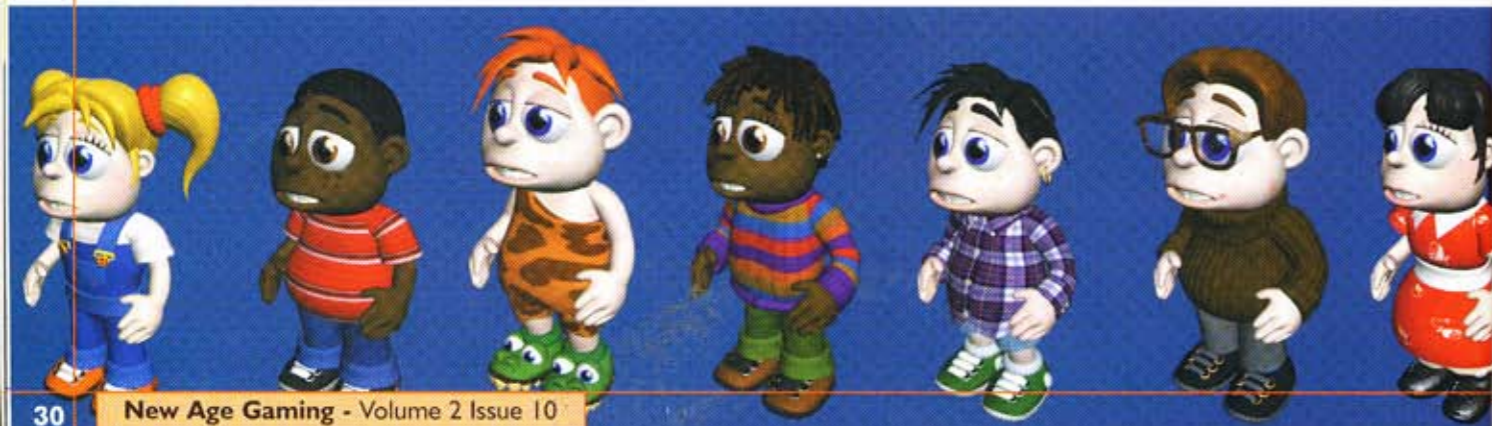
**Fine tune**  
The above miniature instruction guide only serves to start the game and from there you must expand. As your park grows your customers become more demanding and if you don't start opening new rides they'll soon get bored and move on. At the very start of each of the four different theme parks on offer things are easy to run, you've got everything covered and your park is finally showing a little profit. Soon problems start cropping up on a regular basis, rides break down, stink bombs are dropped and eventually the money runs out forcing you to take a loan. It is at this point that you need to start taking the advisor seriously - the advisor is a well-animated character that appears when something needs your attention. This character is always dressed appropriately for the problem for example if someone is causing trouble in the park he'll be dressed in a security guard outfit. The advisor is helpful but can be turned off which is a good option especially after you've heard the same phrase



for the twentieth time. Soon after you've built your ten rides the game turns into a constant hands-on management exercise so you're never left wondering what to do next, there is always something you can improve on or enhance no matter how well you designed the park initially. One of the more unique features is the ability to build your own rides from scratch. If you place a roller coaster in your park you decide on the location, height, track banking, rotation and other design aspects as you build the ultimate ride, some options are not available immediately and if you want to include a loop in your design you'll have to wait until it has been researched via an upgrade. The track construction is simple and all you need to do is



point, click, and let the track design engine work out the rest. The best part about designing a ride in this fashion is that after you've placed the last pylon you can actually go on the ride in a unique 3D mode that shows you what your customers will be experiencing on each ride. The developers have managed to create a realistic representation of that stomach churning sensation as you slip over the edge of a roller coaster and rush towards the ground. It's an excellent concept that has been perfectly executed. The game has one carrot system in place that ensures







ADD A TON OF FAT TO YOUR BURGERS OR RESEARCH A NEW RIDE - IT'S UP TO YOU!



players will keep on perfecting their parks indefinitely. In the game while you play and depending on your performance you will be awarded golden tickets, you get these for having a certain number of guests in your park or if you make a certain amount of money within a specific period of time. The idea is to earn three tickets and for every three golden tickets you managed to acquire you'll receive a golden key. The golden keys are used for unlocking the other theme parks in the game, with a total of five needed for the final park, Space Zone. This system works well but obviously loses its effectiveness after you've reached the final park. Extra golden tickets also allow you to build mystery rides without researching, the final theme park has a requirement of five golden tickets to build the last mystery ride but fortunately you can return to your other parks and earn the tickets there as they never expire no matter where you are in the game. In addition to the ticket system you are also offered occasional challenges, meet the requirements of these



challenges and you can earn some extra cash. The challenges usually come in the form of, "sell 90 burgers in the next 50 days to win the cash." What this boils down to is besides managing your park and building rides there is an overall purpose to the proceedings to keep things interesting, but only for so long.

**Theme problem**

The game isn't without its share of problems and the major worry here is the longevity of the title, after you've won all the tickets and keys and explored the numerous on-line options you're left with four theme parks in various stages of completion. The ticket and key system almost relegates the earlier parks into the category of been there got what I need and I'm not going back. This is a problem as eventually you will have nothing left to research and may grow bored of sending your cleaners in to clean yet another toilet. One thing that might save this situation is the imminent release of new attractions on the Internet - perhaps we might even see another entire theme park available for download soon. The other problem is that these theme parks aren't all that different to each other, the only real changes are of a graphical nature and you can only get so excited about so many different 'looking' sideshows and rides. This limited variation should be forgiven based on the effort put into getting each park to look so different but the time would have been better spent inventing completely different rides and not just variations on a common theme. Graphically the game runs smooth all of the time and there are a number of options available for changing resolutions and other miscellaneous options. The sound effects and music are superb and for each different park the sounds and overall feel is well conveyed. From a control



THIS IS THE FUN PART WHERE YOU GET TO BUILD YOUR OWN ROLLER COASTER - IT'S AS EASY AS PIE

point of view everything can be accessed easily and the inclusion of hot keys is a blessing, so accessing the multitude of menus and options is easy.



THE MAP - USEFUL IF YOU LIKE KNOWING WHAT'S GOING ON

**You're left with what exactly**

Make no mistake Theme Park World is a revolutionary title that is sure to find favour with almost anyone who plays it, the only problem is how long are you going to be playing it? The game is great for a week of casual play but after that you'll soon grow bored unless of course Bullfrog really starts to back up the game with new attractions on their web site and based on their poor performance with Dungeon Keeper 2 we'll just have to wait and see...

CREATIVE ALL GAMES REVIEWED ON CREATIVE LABS BLASTER PREMIUM SYSTEM BLASTER PC

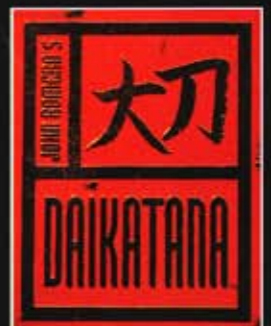
<b>GENRE</b> Theme Park Simulation	<b>DEVELOPER</b> Bullfrog Productions	<b>PUBLISHER</b> Electronic Arts	<b>SUPPLIER</b> Electronic Arts Africa (011) 803-1212	<b>MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS</b> Pentium 200 MHz MMX 32 MB Ram 4 X CD Rom 4 MB Video Card 300 MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6.1)	<b>RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS</b> Pentium II 300 MHz 64 MB Ram 16 X CD Rom 8 MB 3D Accelerator 300+ MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 7.1)	<b>PC CD ROM</b>
While Theme Park World improves on the original a hundred fold and offers players a stunning sequel you can't help wondering how long you'll be playing it in the months to come. The fact that you can actually go on the rides makes up for this a little but like a real theme park, you won't be visiting it everyday.	<b>COMPARATIVES</b> Theme Park Roller Coaster Tycoon	<b>PROS</b> Presentation Ride Creation Graphics	<b>CONS</b> Limited Life No Real Variation Repetitive	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLY</b> Yes	<b>NEW AGE GAMING</b> MULTIPLAYER? No	<b>RedTide</b>
<b>GRAPHICS</b> 89	<b>STORY</b> NA	<b>CONTROL</b> 86	<b>CONTINUITY</b> 68	<b>84</b>		
<b>SOUND</b> 90	<b>ORIGINALITY</b> 92	<b>PLAYABILITY</b> 87	<b>JUDGEMENT</b> 75			

http://www.themeparkworld.com RRP R 299.00



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By John Romero



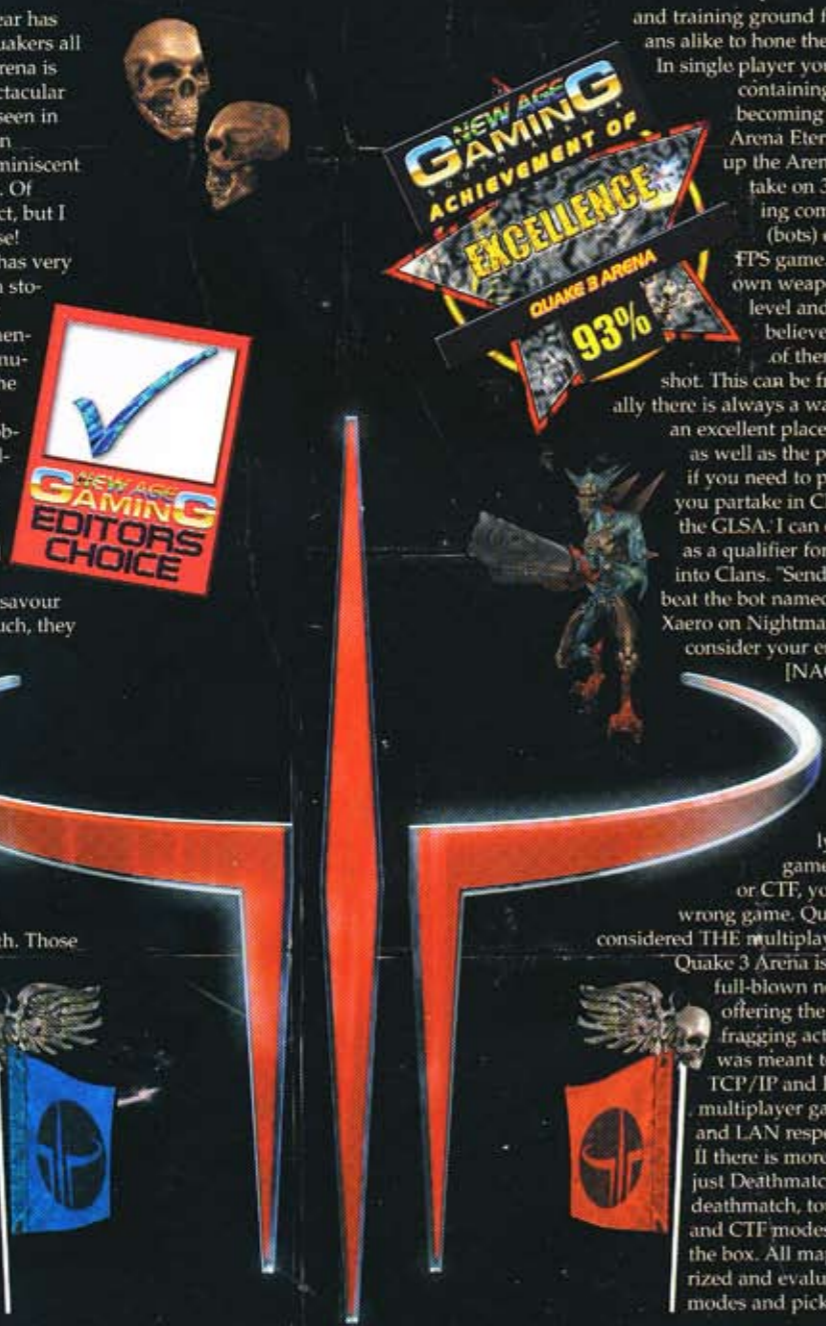
www.eidos.com

## IT HAS BEEN A LONG WAIT BUT FINALLY THE THIRD COMING IS HERE. QUAKE 3 ARENA HAS ARRIVED! - SOUL ASSASSIN

The most anticipated game of the year has finally graced our presence and Quakers all over the world are rejoicing. Quake 3 Arena is available offering some of the most spectacular graphics and sound that has ever been seen in any FPS game, not to mention fast action packed gameplay that is somewhere reminiscent of a blend between Quake and Quake 2. Of course no game can be absolutely perfect, but I must say that Quake 3 comes damn close! Unlike its predecessors Quake 3 Arena has very little to offer the single player as far as a storyline goes, and this is its single biggest flaw. Although it has a story, the only mention you will ever find of it is in the manual and during the intro. I have quoted the story below since I know most Quakers never read the manual and this will probably be the only place they might actually have a glimpse at it.

"Untold centuries ago the Vadrigar, the mysterious Arena Masters, constructed the Arena Eternal for their own infernal amusement. Virtually nothing is known of these beings except that they savour the carnage and clamour of battle. As such, they have stocked the arena with the greatest warriors of all time. And you have just joined their ranks. As a gladiator in the Arena Eternal, you must not only survive, but also win each and every battle against ever more powerful opponents. Don't worry overly much about getting "fraggd." The Vadrigar won't be cheated of their favourite sport by a little thing like death. Those who fall are instantly restored to life and immediately thrust back into the battle, perhaps a little wiser for their misfortunes. When the dust, blood, and gibbs settle, all warriors will have earned the right to battle again, providing further entertainment for the Vadrigar. But only the warrior who has fragged the most foes will be lauded as the winner. The victorious gladiator advances to a more challenging array of arenas, until, at last, he or she faces Xaero, Lord of the Final Arena."

You will find no plot or anything that even remotely resembles it in Q3A. This is a conscious decision that id Software made, and I for one agree with them. Be honest how many times did you play Quake 2 single player? Most of us played it through once and eventually it only ends up to be the place where you configure your keys quickly before entering a deathmatch or CTF game. In Q3A the single player element has merely become an extension of the multiplayer aspect and in essence a providing



# QUAKE III ARENA



and training ground for newbies and veterans alike to hone their skills. In single player you explore 7 tiers each containing 4 maps to ultimately becoming the Champion of the Arena Eternal. These tiers make up the Arena Eternal where you take on 32 of the most devastating computer opponents (bots) ever unleashed in a FPS game. Each of them has their own weapons preference, skill level and style of play, and believe me when I say some of them just don't miss a shot. This can be frustrating but eventually there is always a way to beat the bots. It is an excellent place to measure your skill as well as the perfect training ground if you need to practise, especially if you partake in Clan competitions or in the GLSA. I can even see it being used as a qualifier for gaining membership into Clans. "Send us a demo where you beat the bot named Storm... Umm sorry Xaero on Nightmare difficulty and we'll consider your entrance into Clan [NAG]" - Clan Leader.

That being said I have to caution everyone that if you buy Quake 3 Arena for its single player aspect and don't really enjoy multiplayer games such as deathmatch or CTF, you are buying the wrong game. Quake has always been considered THE multiplayer action game and Quake 3 Arena is no different. It is a full-blown network capable game offering the hottest multiplayer fragging action around, the way it was meant to be. Q3A supports TCP/IP and IPX/SPX for playing multiplayer games over the Internet and LAN respectively. Unlike Quake II there is more to choose from than just Deathmatch. Q3A ships with deathmatch, tournament, teamplay and CTF modes of play right out of the box. All maps have been categorized and evaluated for the different modes and picking one is a snap with the in-game map browser that displays a thumbnail picture of the level.

Deathmatch hasn't changed in its concept and is still run, hide, frag and stay alive style gameplay. The only difference is the speed at which the game takes place. id Software has listened to the community and made the speed of Q3A games to fall somewhere between Quake and Quake 2, which will appease fans of both the games. For the first time CTF is supported right out of the box and teamplay modes have become a favourite over the last year with titles such

as Team Fortress classic, Tribes and Counterstrike promoting it. There is one major change from the Quake II style CTF however, namely the lack of a grappling hook. No longer can you zip in with the hook, grab the flag and grapple out. In Q3A CTF you require teamwork, without it you can kiss your chances of capturing a flag goodbye. In Q3A it requires a team to capture the flag, i.e. a flag carrier, and some serious backup players to cover the carriers hide while he escapes. A point structure has also been implemented for CTF where you can score 'frags' for killing a flag carrier or defending a flag carrier depending on what your objective is. Unfortunately CTF lacks maps and 4 maps is hardly enough. For this reason the Q3A community have already started designing maps and currently they are coming in droves and can be downloaded from the Internet. For those who don't have the Internet be sure to check our Cover CD every month as we will be bringing you the latest and greatest that the Quake community has to offer.

## Quake III Arena (Continued)

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For the first time all the maps are totally multiplayer orientated and the id Software map designers should be applauded for their inventiveness. To say that the maps look absolutely spectacular would be an injustice. Curved surfaces are used to bring to life some of the most fantastic architecture, they even modelled a mouth complete with tongue on one of the levels. It doesn't sound too appetising but it does look spectacular. Most of the maps are the usual corridor type levels you would expect to find in FPS games, but then there are space based levels or as we like to call them "bouncy levels". These maps consist of platforms floating in space and are covered with numerous jump pads, no walls or statues to hide behind. Generally you are a moving target all of the time. One level even has complete platforms that move up and down in a continuous cycle acting like elevators. You either love the space maps or hate them, the reason being that you

drastically have to alter your gameplay for these levels to survive.

Personally I love them to death and it's a Railers dream come true, so many targets bouncing around ripe for the sniping. In total there are 30 maps (20 DM maps, 6 Tourney Maps and 4 CTF maps) for your fragging pleasure, and there is a rumour that more maps are going to be released in an upcoming point release. For some the weapons will be disappointing for others the return of familiar weapons will be a blessing. Personally I believe the 'unsophisticated' nature of the weapons can be considered a bonus. Anyone that ever played id Software's games will feel right at home with the familiar shotgun, rocket launcher, rail gun, grenade launcher, lightning gun and machinegun. The only newcomer in the Quake series is the



## The Legacy of id Software



(Top Left): Castle Wolfenstein  
(Top Right): Doom  
(Middle Left): Doom II  
(Middle Right): Quake  
(Bottom Right): Quake II

First there was Castle Wolfenstein, which is considered the first FPS game, then came Doom and Doom II the first multiplayer FPS on the market. And over the last couple of years we saw Quake and Quake II introduce dedicated servers and customisability that spawned a community worldwide with the help of the Internet. Today Quakers are a global phenomenon with a gaming community that is second to none and the foundation of id Software's success. Unfortunately the duo that established id Software has broken up, and John Carmack is now heading up id Software while John Romero has established a new company named Ion Storm. It was a sad day when they split up but Ion Storm is developing some of the most anticipated games today. Now that Quake 3 Arena is released John Carmack is focusing on the next great engine codenamed Trinity which will be used for their next product.



gone the extra mile with all the graphical splendour and physics of the Q3A engine. The new engine introduces support for curved surfaces, volumetric fog, translucency, environmental lighting, larger textures, more complex models, as well as portals and of course 32-bit colour. The rocket smoke trails and explosions not only feel right but they look ultra realistic. Even when firing a rocket underwater the smoke trail disappears and is replaced by air bubbles as it goes zooming to its target. As for the player models and skins all I can say is WOW! They are extremely detailed and skins can now even incorporate animated textures as well as glows.

The only bad news about the Q3A engine is that it does require hardware acceleration and quite a decent card if you want to turn on all the bells and whistles. While it is stated that the card will work with almost any 3D accelerator I would suggest a minimum of a Voodoo 3 or TNT based 3D accelerator, and if you can afford it the best card around for Q3A is a nVidia GeForce 256 based accelerator. The game also requires a hefty amount of RAM, and the stated minimum is 64MB. Quite a large chunk, but definitely worth it if you're a die hard Quaker. The most interesting feature introduced into the actual physics of the game that totally changes the dynamics of gameplay is the new jump pads. These pads are very predominant on the space levels and once in the air you have a certain measure of control and can strafe slightly left or right and even decrease the speed at which you are moving. Admittedly id Software has scaled down the control from the test versions, but it can still save your hide on numerous occasions.



WEAPON: GAUNTLET
DAMAGE: 50
PROJECTILES: NA
TYPE: CONTACT
RADIUS: 0
SPEED: INSTANT



WEAPON: MACHINEGUN
DAMAGE: 8
PROJECTILES: 1
TYPE: IMPACT
RADIUS: NA
SPEED: INSTANT



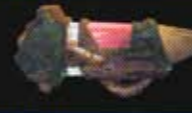
WEAPON: SHOTGUN
DAMAGE: 10
PROJECTILES: 11
TYPE: IMPACT
RADIUS: NA
SPEED: INSTANT



WEAPON: GRENADE LAUNCHER
DAMAGE: 120
PROJECTILES: 1
TYPE: IMPACT/SPLASH
RADIUS: 120
SPEED: 700



WEAPON: ROCKET LAUNCHER
DAMAGE: 100
PROJECTILES: 1
TYPE: IMPACT/SPLASH
RADIUS: 100
SPEED: 900



WEAPON: LIGHTNING GUN
DAMAGE: 24
PROJECTILES: NA
TYPE: IMPACT
RADIUS: NA
SPEED: INSTANT



WEAPON: RAIL GUN
DAMAGE: 100
PROJECTILES: 1
TYPE: IMPACT
RADIUS: NA
SPEED: INSTANT



WEAPON: PLASMA GUN
DAMAGE: 20
PROJECTILES: 1
TYPE: IMPACT/SPLASH
RADIUS: 20
SPEED: 2000



WEAPON: BFG10K
DAMAGE: 40
PROJECTILES: 1
TYPE: IMPACT/SPLASH
RADIUS: 100
SPEED: 2500



There is even a gravity parameter, which can be set on levels for increased buoyancy while in the air. As always the rest of the control model offers instant response to user input and this has always been a strong point of the Quake engines and the reason why players are so holy about their settings and config files while playing the game.

While a newbie to the Quake phenomenon can set all control and most graphics and sound options from the easy to use menu, veterans will prefer to manually edit their config files to customize graphics, sound and control options. The sheer number of settings are overwhelming, but knowing how to edit the config files allows you to script specific commands such as a custom zoom function, a map voting system, an auto taunt function and so the list goes on. While considered cheating by some the config file allows you more control over your characters actions and to date the Quake series has been the only FPS that allows scripting. This is also the reason that most gamers will carry their config files around on a floppy. While this worked well for Quake and Quake II, I would caution anyone considering purchasing Q3A against this. The game now incorporates a CD-Key verification system that authorizes you via an online server at id Software. Without this verification you will be unable to play on Internet servers. This key is saved in your config file in an unencrypted form and anyone that has

access to your config file can use this key. Once it is misused or id Software detects multiple connections on the one key, it may be disabled and you could lose your privileges to play on the Internet. While a CD-Key may be annoying, it



does have possibilities and id Software could use it to create a global ranking system. Wouldn't it be great to see just how well you rank in the global spectrum? To date nothing has been announced in the way of a global ladder, but the possibility is there. I have only one word of advice - Guard your CD-Key as you would any other personal

### First Person Shooter

Quake arrived it addressed fast paced play. Excellent realistic only in that context. Probably the best of the Q3A unmistakable the

## Quake III Arena (Continued)

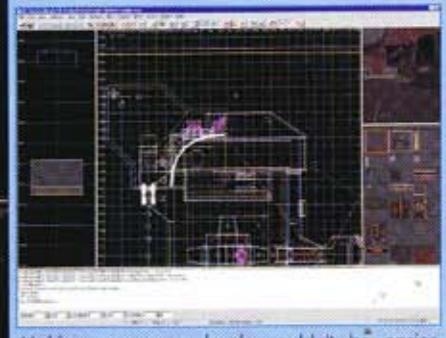
information, without it Quake 3 Arena becomes a lot less fun. In the sound department Q3A lives up to its predecessors with an adrenaline-pumping soundtrack and weapons sound effects that actually make you feel like you're holding the real deal. Unfortunately no NiN tracks since Trent Reznor and his group were busy with a new album, and all of the tracks feature Sonic Blast and FLA. Over the years all of id Software's games have spawned a generation of Quakers, and I know they will buy the game to support id Software and continue their collections. But for those of you that have never played FPS games, Quake 3 Arena is the perfect start. Spectacular graphics, adrenaline pumping sound, fast paced gameplay and a worldwide community bringing out more maps, weapons and mods on a daily basis. Get your butt down to your local computer retailer and buy it now!

### Famous Models



As you can see from the model pictured above, even Electronic Arts have jumped on the bandwagon and have worked with id Software to create a player model of the Horned Reaper from Dungeon Keeper fame. Owners of Quake 3 Arena can expect numerous models and skins for download over the next few months and if any thing can be gauged from the number released for Quake II, there will be hundreds of them.

### Level Editing



Making your own levels couldn't be easier. Included on our Cover CD is the Quake 3 level editor. I would suggest that anyone that takes up making levels search the Internet for tutorials on how exactly to go about it. The three included sample maps do however give you a good idea on how to implement advanced features such as bounce pads and teleporters. Making maps is definitely only for those of us with lots of time and patience.



CREATIVE ALL GAMES REVIEWED ON CREATIVE LABS BLASTER PREMIUM SYSTEM

<p>GENRE: First Person Shooter</p> <p>Quake 3 Arena has arrived and brings with it adrenaline pumping fast paced action gameplay. Excellent Graphics, hard rock music and realistic sound effects only enhance the game that continues the legacy of id Software. Probably the most anticipated game of 99, Q3A will leave an unmistakable mark on the FPS genre.</p>	<p>DEVELOPER: id Software</p> <p>PUBLISHER: Activision</p> <p>SUPPLIER: Multimedia Warehouse (011) 315-1000</p>	<p>MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: Pentium III 233 MHz, 64 MB Ram, 4 X CD Rom, 8 MB 3D Accelerator, 70 MB HD, Windows 95/98 (DirectX 7.0)</p> <p>RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS: Pentium II 350 MHz, 128 MB Ram, 6 X CD Rom, 8 MB AGP Accelerator, 550 MB HD, Windows 95/98 (DirectX 7.1)</p>	<p>PC CD ROM</p> <p>Soul Assassin</p> <p>Environmental Audio Ready</p> <p>MULTIPLAYER? Yes</p>
<p>COMPARATIVES: Quake, Quake II, Half-Life</p> <p>PRO'S: Spectacular Graphics, Fast-Paced Gameplay, Excellent Sound</p> <p>CONS: No Single-Player Story</p> <p>http://www.quake3arena.com RRP R 299.00</p>	<p>GRAPHICS: 96</p> <p>SOUND: 93</p>	<p>STORY: 78</p> <p>ORIGINALITY: 93</p>	<p>CONTROL: 95</p> <p>PLAYABILITY: 93</p>
<p>CONTINUITY: 95</p> <p>JUDGEMENT: 99</p>			<p><b>93</b></p>

Sierra are well known for their adventure series games. King's Quest, Space Quest and Police Quest are just three examples of their long running, popular titles that span several episodes. One of these titles has just entered its third incarnation - the mystery-horror adventures of Gabriel Knight.

I was some time ago that I first played the initial Gabriel Knight adventure, entitled Sins of the Fathers. This game, set in New Orleans and investigating its mysterious, voodoo rich darker side, introduced us to the wise-cracking book store owner come author, Gabriel Knight, and his unconventional style of going about his investigations. This first episode was typical of the Sierra titles of the time, with a basic interface and graphics that, for the time, were rich, full and engrossing.

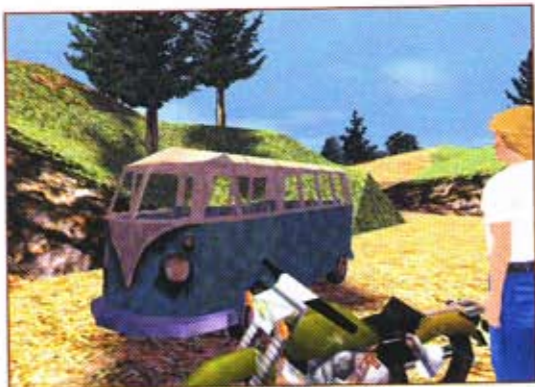
Gabriel returned in The Beast Within - now a fully-fledged Schattenjaeger, or Shadow Chaser - to travel to Germany, where a rather hairy question of werewolves is raised. This time around,

intriguing mysteries that both frighten and delight the gamer. Let me just say that GK3 is filled with intrigue, and will certainly not disappoint fans and newcomers alike as the tale twists around itself like a snake, only to come back and bite you when you least expect it, and poison your mind with yet another burst of addictive twists and turns. This is a world of lost treasure, ancient orders, mysterious powers and twists within twists, set in a small French town with a strange (and very historically accurate) history. There are, however, a number of arguments surrounding some of the decisions made by the developers floating around the ether of the Internet. The largest

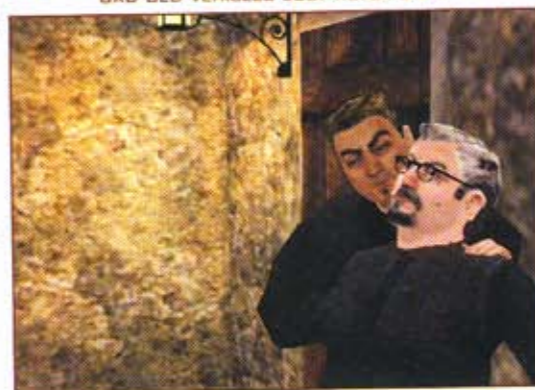
## Blood of the sacred GABRIELKNIGHT3 Blood of the damned

we saw Gabriel represented in full motion video, a real life rendition of the hero we came to love in the first episode. His fearless assistant, Grace Nakimura, also took a larger part in the game,

adding a female touch to the game. Now he is back again, and this time in the glory of a fully 3D environment. Gabriel is now a fully interactive, walking, talking cyber guy, with a voice supplied by actor Tim Curry. Gabriel Knight 3, subtitled Blood of the Sacred, Blood of the Damned, sees Gabriel and Grace travelling to France in search of Vampires and a holy relic of awesome power. As always, the tale presented in this game is full, rich and complex. I am loathe to divulge any details here,



BAD OLD VEHICLES JUST NEVER DIE...



FORGIVE ME FATHER... FOR I AM ABOUT TO SIN!

because I don't want to be like those guys who tell you the end of a movie before you've seen it. This is one of the joys of the Gabriel Knight series. The tales, written by Jane Jensen, unfold with a well timed pace, turning the games into

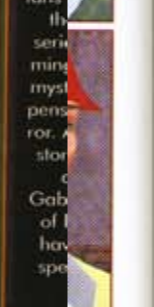
argument of all seems to be the decision to use Tim Curry as the voice actor for Gabriel Knight. Granted, the esteemed Mr Curry is something of a well known and accomplished actor, but he just doesn't seem to pull it off. I am a fan of Gabriel Knight, and I have been for some time. To see the hero of the game, vocally at least, represented as something of a redneck rube is quite, well, annoying. Curry, while talented, just doesn't pull this part off correctly. The accent is just too heavy, the laugh is too 'thick'. This seems to have got up the nose of a number of gamers around the globe, and the choice of Tim Curry is a hot topic on the notice boards. At least he manages to carry Gabriel's sharp wit across fairly well - otherwise he might have been a complete loss. Another bone of contention is the decision to move away from the very popular

real action video format of GK2 into the world of 3D animation. Here, I have to agree with the developers. Yes, the real video looked and sounded great, but the interactive nature of the 3D world represented in GK3 surpassed any-



thing The gples of ratione mys- that cShryke

indep greata allow hiding diffic just re challe given



### Gabriel Knight 3 (Continued)

thing I have encountered before, by a long shot. The gamer is totally unrestricted in the exploration of Gabriel's environment, with a camera that can pan, zoom, elevate, lower and swivel independently of the character. This allows for a greater scope in terms of investigation... it also allows the developers to get nasty in the form of hiding clues and making things generally more difficult for the gamer. This is not a bad thing; it just results in a more challenging game. And challenging it is. Don't expect anything to be given to you on a plate in any Gabriel Knight

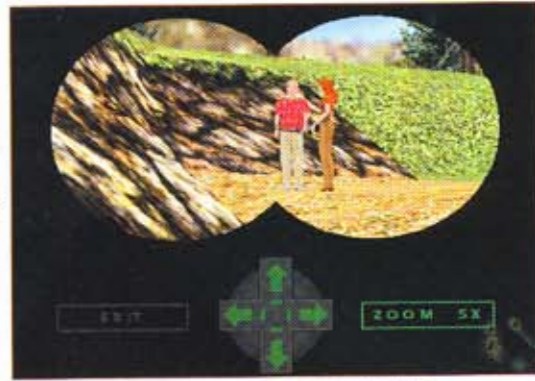


HEY, GET READY FOR A WEDDIE OF NOTE!

adventure, and especially not in GK3. These adventures are not there to spoon feed gamers a tale - they are there to be solved, and you will more than likely find yourself tearing your hair out in frustration more than once. The result of this, other than premature baldness, is an immense sense of victory over every obstacle in the game. A third problem that seems to crop up on message boards is the question of the technical stability of the game. It seems that a number of small problems have occurred within the game, resulting in crashes and other unfortunate mishaps. However, every problem that was encountered has a solution posted right after it on the message boards, so a little selective surfing will help out with any problems that players may encounter. Speaking of technicalities, let's pick this baby apart. As I said before, GK3 is graphically impressive. But it extends beyond a smooth, versatile camera and

nice, complex backgrounds. Quite simply, this game is very attractive. But it's the little touches that really make it unique - they come in the form of three things. Number one lies in the beautiful variety of faces that you run into in the game. Each character is a true individual - even at a distance, you can tell them apart. Number two also relates to the faces, but this time in the way that they are animated. The mouths match what is being said, and the rest of the face follows suit. This is no mean feat, to be sure, and the developers need to be congratulated for that little touch. The third, and least noticeable difference is actually quite a large one. I personally didn't notice it for some time, but the characters in GK3 actually have fingers. Their hands are animated - the first time I have encountered this in any 3D adventure game. I was starting to believe that the characters in computer land did not have fingers. But the developers at Sierra Studios have gone all out on this one, to make sure that the game is as believable as possible. Unfortunately, the clipping monster does rear its ugly head. On the sound side of things, Gabriel Knight 3 also impresses. The sound quality is crisp and clear, with no horrible hissing or incidental noises that interfere with game play. There is really no need for subtitles (although they are an available option) because - despite Tim Curry's accent - the speech is clear. And important, you have to pay attention to what people say in this one. Playing the game requires a thoroughness on the part of the gamer that is typical of the GK series. You have to explore every option, every nook and every cranny. Inventiveness is a plus, too, because Gabriel has a strange way of going about things. Also, you

need to enter a Private Eye frame of mind here, and know when it's important to use what tool, or take what action. The game can be unforgiving in that way, although some pretty heavy hints are dropped. At other times, though, the hints are sparse, and unless thorough investigation and lateral thought are applied, you won't be getting anywhere fast. Thankfully, Gabriel is easy to control, with the entire game being mouse driven. Everything comes down to a left click, with the occasional right click to enter the main interface for saving, etc. I was once asked why someone should purchase an adventure game over a strategy game - something that can be played for far longer. The answer is simple, and is easy to discover in the streets or Rennes-le-Chateau with Gabriel Knight as your guide. The wonderful nature of this story, along with the beauty and playability



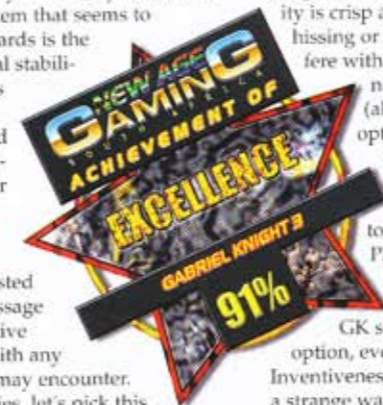
LEARNING ANYTHING INTERESTING?

be getting anywhere fast. Thankfully, Gabriel is easy to control, with the entire game being mouse driven. Everything comes down to a left click, with the occasional right click to enter the main interface for saving, etc. I was once asked why someone should purchase an adventure game over a strategy game - something that can be played for far longer. The answer is simple, and is easy to discover in the streets or Rennes-le-Chateau with Gabriel Knight as your guide. The wonderful nature of this story, along with the beauty and playability



TRAVELLING IN STYLE

of the game as a whole, make it a great investment. Very few games of this nature meet up to this calibre, and it is certainly one of the best adventure games I have ever come across. Sierra has carried the natural progression and evolution to a new level, and I can hardly wait to see what they are going to do with Gabriel Knight 4.



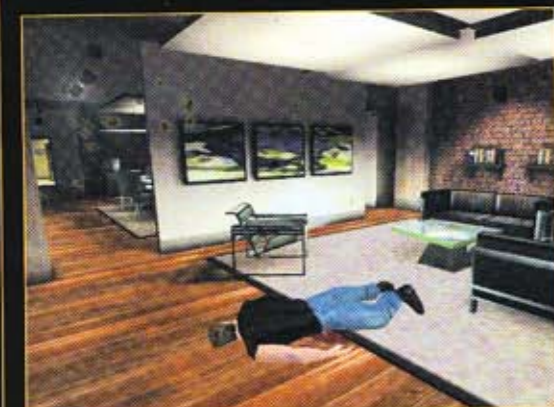
CREATIVE ALL GAMES REVIEWED ON CREATIVE LABS BLASTER PREMIUM SYSTEM

<b>GENRE</b> 3D Adventure  Here is a great title for fans and new comers to the Gabriel Knight series alike. It is brimming with intrigue and mystery, thick with suspense and chilling horror. Add to that a great story, easy playability and, of course, Gabriel's wicked sense of humour, and you have a great way to spend a good many hours.	<b>DEVELOPER</b> Sierra Studios	<b>PUBLISHER</b> Sierra	<b>SUPPLIER</b> Crew (011) 233-1111	<b>MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS</b> Pentium 166 MHz 16 MB Ram 4 X CD Rom 4 MB 3D Accelerator 300 MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6.1)	<b>RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS</b> Pentium II 233 MHz 32 MB Ram 8 X CD Rom 8 MB AGP Accelerator 300+ MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 7.0)	<b>PC CD ROM</b>  Shryke  Environmental Audio Ready No MULTIPLAYER? No		
<b>COMPARATIVES</b> Gabriel Knight 2 Nocturne	<b>PROS</b> Great Graphics Easy Control Excellent Story	<b>CONS</b> Technical Glitches Choice of Actors Clipping	http://www.sierra.com RRP R 299.00	<b>GRAPHICS</b> 94	<b>STORY</b> 94	<b>CONTROL</b> 95	<b>CONTINUITY</b> 90	<b>91</b>
<b>SOUND</b> 90	<b>ORIGINALITY</b> 85	<b>PLAYABILITY</b> 91	<b>JUDGEMENT</b> 92					

It's always exciting to watch a movie where the LAPD SWAT team is called in to restore chaos, to see the highly skilled professionals work as a team to complete their mission. Sierra Studios attempted to reproduce that experience for the PC with their SWAT series, which was plagued with weak gameplay that didn't add to the tension and stress of really being there. Not only did they do it right with SWAT 3, they also managed to create one of the most exciting tactical first person shooters to see the light in 1999...

Sierra Studios found out the hard way that neither an interactive movie adventure nor real-time strategy gaming engine can capture the dynamic feel of a modern day SWAT team. Games such as Rogue Spear and Delta Force showed the industry how to bring the feeling home of having a weapon in the hand and to move to a specific objective. The end product shows that Sierra observed the opposition and found ways to make it even better. SWAT 3 places the gamer in the boots of an element leader in the notorious LAPD SWAT team. As element leader, the gamer must command his/her team in real time from a first person perspective as an active participant. One has the choice to let your teams do all the work, but in sensitive scenarios it may be best to lead by way of example.

Los Angeles 2005 A.D. SWAT 3 plays out in Los Angeles of course, the year 2005. Representatives from every nation around the globe will converge on Los Angeles in the next seven days to witness the signing of the United Nations Nuclear Abolishment Treaty. It is the task of the LAPD SWAT to protect the dignitaries involved. This takes the player through mission types that range from hostage rescue and rapid deployment all the way to VIP protection.



THREE LIVING ROOMS AND A CORPSE

All the missions can be played as single missions, but for a more immersive experience the Career Mode weaves the missions together with strong storyline. At the start of a Career, the gamer gets to create a person and select a team that will hopefully survive the next seven days. In the manual and also in the Metro section is a library of information on the history and tactics

of SWAT, and these tactics and rules of engagement should be studied before a Career mode is started. Where Rainbow Six and Rogue Spear

# SWAT 3

focused on mission planning before the mission started. SWAT 3 uses an intuitive real time mode. Because of the nature of SWAT operations, blueprints of buildings aren't always available beforehand, so orders are given on the go. This is accomplished by using a menu system coupled with the crosshair of your weapon. To get Red Team to throw a flash grenade into a room, select Red



I'M NOT SURE BUT I THINK IT'S THIS WAY UP GUYS...

Team from the menu then select deploy Flashbang while aiming at the door. The system works very well, except for the fact that the menu selection keys cannot be remapped, and most of the time the player will have to lift his/her hands from their movement keys. This led to my death a few times till I tried

Mindmaker's Game Commander, a voice activation application that simulates keyboard presses on voice commands, problem solved! Although Game Commander is third-party software, a voice activation module should be built into a game like this (Jane's USAF).

Before a mission you can equip your team with some impressive hardware such as the 9mm MP5, the MP5SD that uses an integral silencer, the M4 Carbine and Benelli 12 gauge shotgun. The standard secondary weapon is the Colt 1911 .45 calibre pistol. Other items include flash grenades, gas

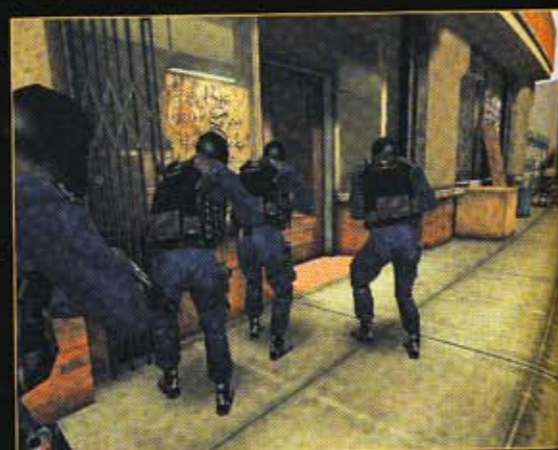
grenades, C2 explosives for opening doors, green light sticks, cuffs, Leatherman tool and mirroring camera equipment that can scan around corners. Some of the weapons such as the M4 Carbine have the option for non-lethal ammunition, and it's use is

reserved for the element leader, which is you. This comes in handy when an armed suspect is to be arrested for questioning, where a carefully placed shot in the shoulder or knee can bring the suspect down alive. SWAT 3 uses one of the most impressive ballistics models to date in a tactical shooter. Bullets will go through doors and walls, depending on type of ammo and the material, which also can be hazardous when civilians are being held hostage in the next room. I once fired a round through a wooden door, to find the entrance and exit holes, and the bullet lodged in the wall, mighty impressive.

The AI is brilliant at times, and stupid at others. Your team work well together and respond to your commands, but once in a while someone will get sloppy and move into a non-secure area without checking. I have lost many teammates this way, and they fall prey to the 'Lemming Effect' where they'll walk in a row into enemy fire and get killed, one by one. This doesn't happen often though, and works well most of the time. The enemy and civilian AI work on a very effective stress based system. The more stress you induce on a suspect, the more likely they are to surrender peacefully. This can be done by shouting, pointing a weapon in their faces and maybe firing off a round in their direction.

The graphics are brilliantly done, with the finest details, which makes SWAT 3 look more like an architectural demonstration program. Rooms are nicely furnished with great ambient lighting and sound, and portrays a very believable environment. A great feature are the mirrors in the buildings that work as they should, giving me time to admire my great outfit with matching weapons while my team provide cover.

SWAT 3 makes for a great gaming experience as a tactical first person shooter, and one cannot help but yell when a tango walks around the corner when least expected. Unfortunately no multiplayer is supported out of the box, but Sierra Studios promised that a multiplayer add-on should be available in Spring 2000. SWAT 3 provides enough replayability in single player mode as a random factor is built in, and ensure that one level could provide different challenge every time it is played. SWAT 3 is sure to become a classic and is a must for any fan of tactical shooters or the SWAT series.



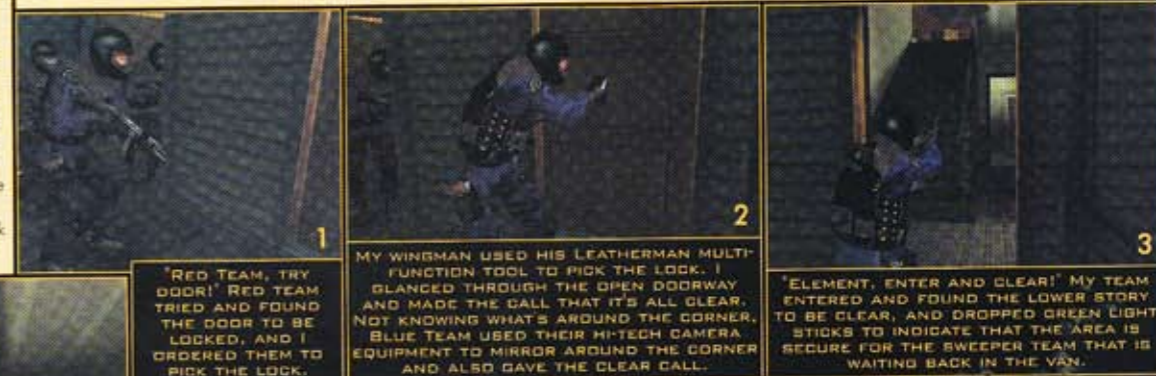
ME AND THE GUYS RETURNING CHRISTMAS GIFTS

## SWAT 3 (Continued)

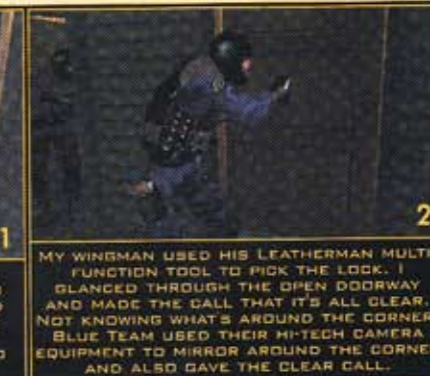
The LAPD SWAT team was rushed to the barricaded house of a suspected gunman that sniped three motorists on the adjacent highway. While my team geared up, I went through the available information and decided on a stealthy entry. Ten-David gave us the mission go call, and I ordered my element to stack in front of the front door.

### An afternoon in Suburbia...

Written & Illustrated by MemnocH



1  
"RED TEAM, TRY DOOR!" RED TEAM TRIED AND FOUND THE DOOR TO BE LOCKED, AND I ORDERED THEM TO PICK THE LOCK.



2  
MY WINGMAN USED HIS LEATHERMAN MULTI-FUNCTION TOOL TO PICK THE LOCK. I GLANCED THROUGH THE OPEN DOORWAY AND MADE THE CALL THAT IT'S ALL CLEAR. NOT KNOWING WHAT'S AROUND THE CORNER, BLUE TEAM USED THEIR HI-TECH CAMERA EQUIPMENT TO MIRROR AROUND THE CORNER AND ALSO GAVE THE CLEAR CALL.



3  
"ELEMENT, ENTER AND CLEAR!" MY TEAM ENTERED AND FOUND THE LOWER STORY TO BE CLEAR, AND DROPPED GREEN LIGHT STICKS TO INDICATE THAT THE AREA IS SECURE FOR THE SWEEPER TEAM THAT IS WAITING BACK IN THE VAN.



4  
WITH THE LOWER STORY SECURE, IT WAS TIME TO SWEEP THE STAIRCASE AND SEARCH THE ROOM AREAS. I ORDERED MY ELEMENT TO CONTINUE TO CLEAR UPSTAIRS.



5  
ONCE AT THE TOP, WE FOUND ALL THE DOORS TO BE SHUT, WHICH WAS A BIT SURPRISING. BLUE TEAM GOT THE ORDER TO COVER THE HALLWAY TO THE RIGHT WHILE RED TEAM AND MYSELF CLEAR THE ROOMS ONE BY ONE.



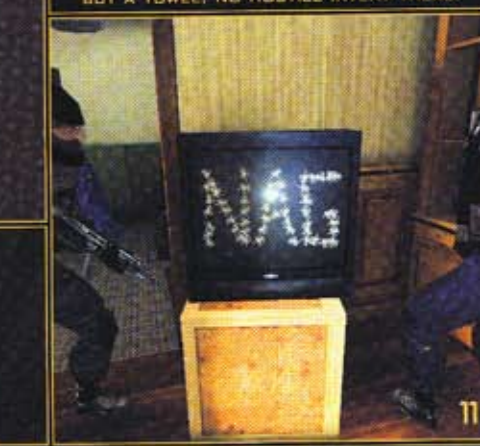
6  
RED TEAM STACKED IN FRONT OF THE DOOR WHILE I COVERED. MY TEAMMATE OPENED THE DOOR SWIFTLY AND I TRIED TO CHARGE IN...AND WAS PLEASANTLY SURPRISED TO FIND THE SUSPECT'S GIRLFRIEND WEARING NOTHING BUT A TOWEL. NO HOSTILE INTENT THERE.



7  
AFTER CUFFING THE HALF NAKED LADY (WE GET PAID TO DO IT OF COURSE), WE TORE OURSELVES AWAY FROM THE BATHROOM AND CLEARED THE NEXT ROOM.



8  
ANOTHER ROOM FILLED WITH BOXES FULL OF JUNK. THE GUY HAD TO BE IN THE MAIN BEDROOM OR IN THE ATTIC, AND MUST HAVE HEARD ME SHOUTING TO HIS GIRLFRIEND TO DROP THE TOWEL (HAD TO MAKE SURE SHE'S SAFE). I GOT MY TEAM TO STACK IN FRONT OF THE BEDROOM, AND ORDERED TO ENTER AND CLEAR.



9  
BLUE TEAM QUICKLY SCANNED THE ROOM AND FOUND IT TO BE CLEAR. ONCE THEY MOVED OUT I HEARD A SHUFFLING NOISE EMITTING FROM THE ROOM, AND FOUND MR. SUSPECT WAS HIDING UNDERNEATH THE BED, AND CLIMBED OUT FROM UNDERNEATH AND WAS NOW WAVING A GLOCK 9MM AT ME. DROP YOUR WEAPON!" I SHOUTED, BUT HE ONLY FASTENED HIS GRIP AND AIMED AT ME. I BRAZED HIS KNEE WITH A SNAP SHOT FROM MY MP5, AND HE COMPLIED WITHOUT FURTHER FOOLISHNESS.



10  
AFTER A SIGH OF RELIEF, I PERSONALLY CUFFED THE PUNK AND WE HEAD UPSTAIRS TO CHECK THE ATTIC. THE HOUSE WAS NOW CLEAR, AND WE FOUND MR. SUSPECT'S HUNTING RIFLE ON A BOX AT THE WINDOW FROM WHERE HE WAS TAKING SHOTS AT UNFORTUNATE MOTORISTS.

11  
I RADIOED TEN-DAVID STATING THAT THE SUSPECT AND CIVILIAN CAN BE SAFELY EXTRACTED AND THAT WE FOUND THE WEAPON. TIRED AND IN NEED OF A BREAK, WE HEAD DOWNSTAIRS TO SEE WHAT'S ON TV WHILE WAITING FOR THE SWEEPER TEAM TO CLEAN UP, AND MADE A STARTLING DISCOVERY AS TO MR. SUSPECT'S SUDDEN VIOLENT MOTIVES...

CREATIVE ALL GAMES REVIEWED ON CREATIVE LABS BLASTER PREMIUM SYSTEM

GENRE Tactical Simulation	DEVELOPER Sierra Studios	PUBLISHER Sierra	SUPPLIER Crew (011) 233-1111	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS Pentium 233 MHz 32 MB Ram 4 X CD Rom 4 MB Video Card 400 MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6.1) D3D	RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS Pentium II 300 MHz 64 MB Ram 24 X CD Rom 12 MB 3D Accelerator 400+ MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 7.0) D3D			
COMPARATIVES Rainbow Six Rogue Spear Delta Force 2	PROS Beautiful Scenery Atmospheric Real-time Planning Mode	CONS Placement of Menu Keys No Save In Game Wacky AI At Times	RRP R 299.00	GRAPHICS 90	STORY 80	CONTROL 78	CONTINUITY 79	PC CD ROM
http://www.sierra.com	ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLY READY	MULTIPLAYER? No	SOUND 70	ORIGINALITY 88	PLAYABILITY 90	JUDGEMENT 85	MEMNOC H	
Not being a very successful series until now, SWAT 3 finally realises the dream that Sierra Studios had years ago, and provides one of the most exciting first person tactical shooters to be released in 1999, a definitive must for tactical fans.							83	

Roughly described as a "Star Ship Simulator", this new release from Interplay converts a board game set in the Star Trek universe into an action-packed depiction of virtually all aspects of captaining a star ship (and, later, a group of star ships). In an ambitious move, developers 14° East have provided not one or two races, but six distinct ones, each with a campaign suited specifically to that race's nature and objectives. In light of the fact that each race has access to its own array of special weapons and equipment, each of the tutorials focuses on a race's specific weapons, tactics and mindset. Each of the six campaigns has its own distinct flavour, according to the race's prerogatives. So how does it look and play? One



Some have argued that our gaming market is becoming over saturated with new titles. Consequently, four new first-person shooters, or three new real-time strategy titles are released in the same quarter, and it becomes difficult to choose a game that all will enjoy and make an effort to play. Furthermore, original ideas seem to be getting scarcer and scarcer, and so almost every new title belongs to an established genre. Therefore, it is a refreshing change when a new game appears that pointedly refuses to be categorised.

R.A.V.E.N.

bers in RTS games. Up to four targets may also be tracked and assigned numbers, for ease of location. The object in the missions is to juggle the warp engine's power output among the various systems in order to accomplish the mission objectives, which are not always combat-related - for instance, some missions may require the scouting of an area, or even the settling of arguments among freighter pilots! Upon returning to space-dock after a mission, you are afforded the opportunity to repair your star ship, or effect an upgrade refit, if available for your type of ship. You can also top up on shuttles, missiles and spare parts (required to effect repairs while in space), as well as purchasing new

Another way to earn prestige is by allowing officers to gain experience in the line of duty, and then trading them in for less experienced ones, then perhaps repeat the process. Full support is provided for all major 3D accelerators, though one is not required in order to play. Visually, this game is very pleasant, if not spectacularly overbearing. The star ships are rendered in meticulous detail, as are asteroids, star-bases, planets and suns. The occasional nebulas are nothing short of beautiful (though they do interfere with most star ship systems!). Unfortunately, for some obscure reason, objects explode with a circular, not spherical, as one would expect in space, shockwave, which, coincidentally, is always along the same plane as all the star ships - i.e. while rendered in 3D, this is, after all, a conversion of a board game, and thus space is really depicted as 2D. However, another axis may well have made this game too complex - as it is, the intricacies are impressive. From an audio point-of-view, Starfleet Command offers all it needs to - deep, immer-

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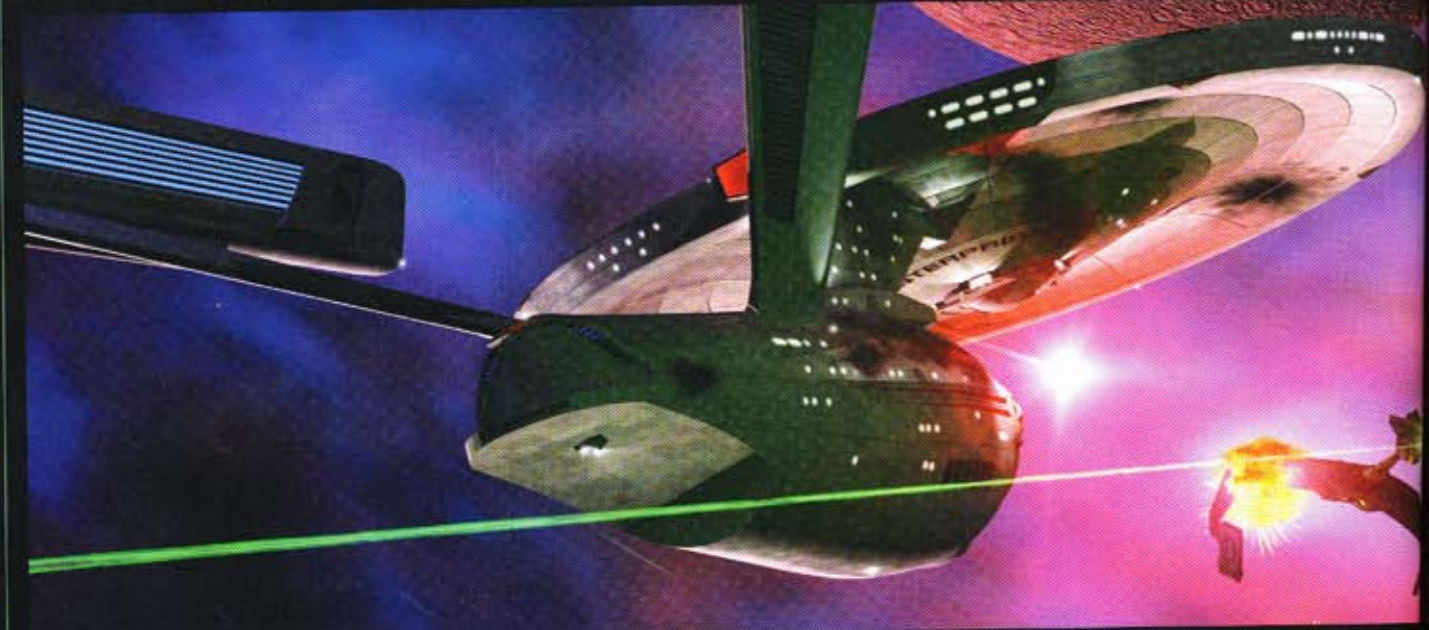
Incidentally, unusually enough, Starfleet Command does not feature full-motion video briefings, or even anything slightly more rudimentary. All briefings are presented purely as text, which is a pity, but taking into account the length and number of campaigns available, it would have been impossible to fit the entire game and a video briefing for each mission on a CD. Still, an unusual omission. The control interface is somewhat unusual too, in that it combines elements of real-time strategy interfaces with features normally found in action games of various types. The officers are controlled by means of buttons that activate various MFD's, from within which all actual orders are issued. This system affords control over shields, weapons (on an individual or group level), weapons for defence (e.g. setting phasers to target incoming missiles), tractor beams (including defensive anti-missile functionality), transporters (used for transporting out mines, for transporting marines aboard enemy vessels and for transporting spare parts among ships), helm controls (including various special manoeuvres), communications (for hailing other ships, planets, stations, etc.), sensors (used for jamming targeting systems, or to counter such jamming) and repairs to the ship. Furthermore, all major commands can be quickly executed by means of shortcut hot-keys, though these will not be learned in five minutes!

It is difficult to express or explain the playability of this particular game without actually demonstrating. Suffice it to say that, despite the rather complex-sounding control interface (which is actually very efficient once one is familiar with it) the pace of the game is usually hectic, the missions challenging and the ability to upgrade one's hardware and personnel result in a very "role-playing-style" addictiveness. Quite literally this game is hazardous to one's sleeping patterns!

The storyline is also not strictly linear, but depends rather heavily on the player's actions. Furthermore, one has some control over one's career, and so every game can be different - you may choose not to accept the invitation into the special forces, or at least turn it down temporarily. In either case, the type of missions you will be flying will differ accordingly. This adds immensely to the replayability value of the game. Starfleet Command also offers up to six-player multiplayer gaming. Players decide beforehand what ships and officers they will each play with. A surprising amount of control is given over the starting conditions - for example, it is quite possible to pit two very unmatched forces against each other (say, if you want to implement handicaps, or specific, challenging scenarios). Internet play is also supported, also up to six players.



The pace of multiplayer games tends to approach the insane! One of the most impressive aspects of Starfleet Command is the sheer originality of the game. As mentioned above, this game does not truly belong to any specific genre, but rather incorporates elements from flight simulators, role-playing games and real-time strategy, as well as some truly unique features. It also manages to impart a "genuine" feeling of captaining a star ship from the Star Trek universe, as far as a fictitious setting can be simulated. All in all, a very enjoyable title with a refreshingly new theme and surprisingly low system requirements, offering many hours of entertainment and tons of fast-paced action. Especially highly recommended for Trekkies, who will be impressed by the faithfulness with which all aspects of the universe have been recreated.



starts the game in the race selection screen, where each of the available races is offered. From there, one is taken to the race's main menu, where new campaigns may be started, or running ones continued. You are given the option to (and strongly recommended to) attend lessons at the Academy, where young officers

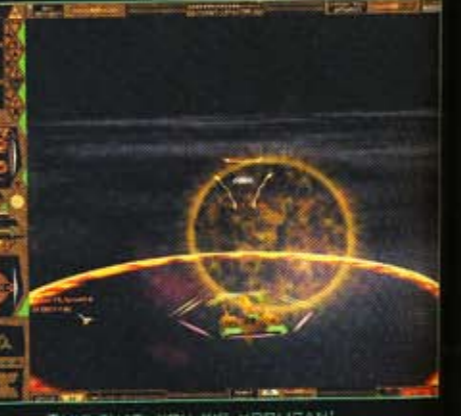
that one will need to travel around the galactic sectors and complete variable numbers of missions within them in order to capture these sectors for one's race. This sometimes involves choosing between enemies to attack, according to their styles, strengths and weaknesses. The political situation is also mutable, and today's enemy is not necessarily your foe tomorrow. Attacking forces that are currently at peace is not usually a good idea. One's actions during the course of one's career largely determine the directions that career will take. Once in the mission, you are faced with an external, 3D view of your star ship and the space around it. You can switch between the available camera views, and have some control over angle and zooming. An interface bar down the left-hand side features all of the currently selected star ship's controls. These include the various officers who form your crew. Orders are issued via these officers, who

ships, trading existing ones in, and commanding experienced officers. This is achieved by spending 'Prestige Points'. These are, essentially, a form of currency, but it is totally abstract - it represents the political influence you, as a star ship commander, can exert within the military organisation you belong to. Prestige is earned by



are shown the ropes with the relevant weapons and tactics. Completion of the tutorials does not add to rank, but does reflect in the medals screen as a series of patches denoting training missions successfully completed. Starfleet Command features an element of strategy, in

include the Helm Officer, the Engineer, the Security Officer and the Weapons Officer, among others. The quality of your officers determines the speed and accuracy with which your orders are carried out. Weapon systems can be assigned group numbers, much like tactical group num-



the successful completion of missions. The clearer the mission, the bigger the bonus too, and if any enemy vessels are captured (by means of transporting marines onto them) there is a bonus as well. Actions deemed inconsistent with your race's goals detract from the prestige earned.

l by sive souly, race's sit consistor soundry down a by tant not mission tor's voi by step

Star A f gc ap die-l a enth pla spac gi can go poli clim if mus ur

ive sound effects abound within the game, each race's star ship controls sound different - and consistent with the movies and TV series. A full soundtrack is featured, but be sure to turn it down a tad, otherwise you will not hear important notifications. All tutorial missions carry a full instructor's voiceover, taking you step by step through all the instruc-

**CREATIVE** ALL GAMES REVIEWED ON **BLASTER** **PC**

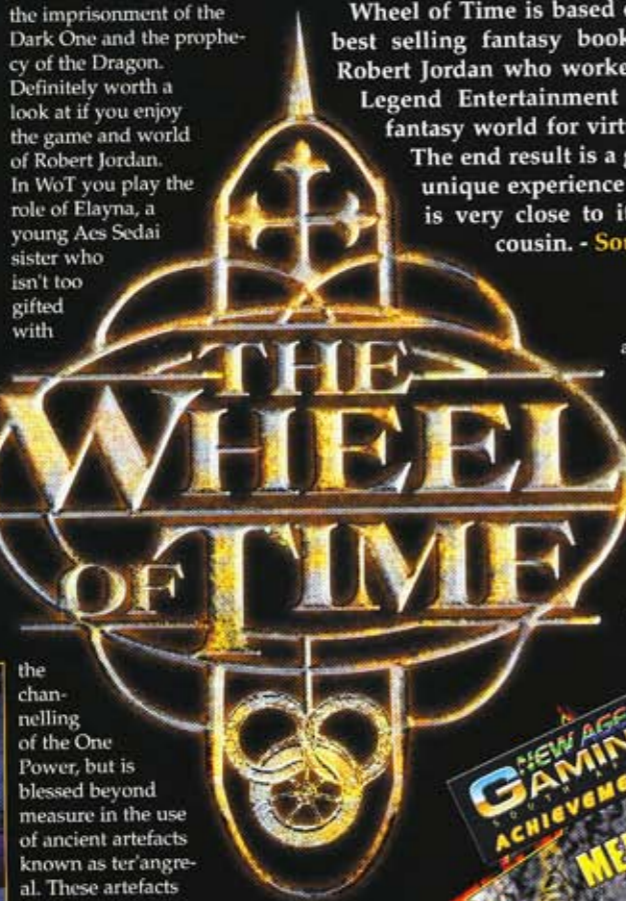
**CREATIVE LABS BLASTER PREMIUM SYSTEM**

<b>GENRE</b> Star Ship Simulator	<b>DEVELOPER</b> 14° East	<b>PUBLISHER</b> Interplay	<b>SUPPLIER</b> MMW / SDD (01) 315-1000	<b>MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS</b> Pentium 166 MHz 32 MB Ram 4 X CD Rom 1 MB Video Card 250 MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6.1)	<b>RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS</b> Pentium 200 MHz 64 MB Ram 8 X CD Rom 4 MB AGP Video Card 250+ MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 7.1)
<b>COMPARATIVES</b> Unique	<b>PROS</b> Original Fast Pace In-Depth Campaigns	<b>CONS</b> The 2D Representation of Space	<b>http://www.interplay.com</b> <b>RRP R 349.00</b>		
<b>GRAPHICS</b> <b>80</b>	<b>STORY</b> <b>75</b>	<b>CONTROL</b> <b>85</b>	<b>CONTINUITY</b> <b>80</b>	<b>NEW AGE GAMING</b>	
<b>SOUND</b> <b>80</b>	<b>ORIGINALITY</b> <b>95</b>	<b>PLAYABILITY</b> <b>85</b>	<b>JUDGEMENT</b> <b>85</b>	<b>83</b>	

**PC CD ROM**  
R.A.V.E.N.  
Environmental Audio Ready

Wheel of Time's story takes place before the actual book series, in a time known as the Age of Legends. This allowed Legend the freedom needed for the game while not interfering with the actual story of the novels themselves. Unfortunately this means that you can't play any of Jordan's famous characters such as Rand. This will disappoint a lot of fans, but on the other hand keeps novel characters mystique alive and also prevents the game from being played as a novel.

In the Age of Legends mankind unwittingly released the Dark One into the world but were fortunate enough to seal him away again. Before his imprisonment he however tainted one half of the One Power so that only women can channel magic. Afterwards chaos followed as the world order re-established itself and the seals to his prison were scattered to every corner of the world. Now four of the seal's locations have been discovered, and four opposing factions have their own agendas for recovering the lost seals. One of these factions, known as the Whitecloaks, have crossed the threshold and dared to invade the White Tower of the Aes Sedai and steal from them while searching for



the channelling of the One Power, but is blessed beyond measure in the use of ancient artefacts known as ter'angreal. These artefacts have enormous power and can be utilised as weapons. The easiest way to understand ter'angreal is to think of them as an item similar to magic wands. They have a certain amount of charges for casting a very specific spell. As such ter'angreal can be used to cast specific spells, but also spells that are more potent and complex in nature since the magic of ages gone past were so much more powerful and created before the tainting of the One Power.



THE FASTEST SPELL IN THE WEST

one of the seals. This cannot go unpunished and the Amyrlin Seat (Leader of the Aes Sedai) herself dispatches one of the sister hood to recover the stolen artefacts. So begins a journey and an epic adventure into the world of the Wheel of Time as you set out to recover the lost items of power. While it is not necessary to have read the novels in the Wheel of Time series, I would highly advise it since it adds so much more to the game. It helps in the understanding of the world and how the different factions relate to each other as well as cover the history behind



A GOOD REASON TO WEAR STURDY SHOES

decent number of weapons at your disposal and substantially more than you would expect to find in a FPS type game. It does take time to master the ter'angreal's and the sheer amount available adds an element of strategy to weapons selection and usage. Finding the right combination for a specific encounter can be a little tricky and requires exact knowledge of each ter'angreal's effect. Fortunately they have included a comprehensive in-game reference of the ter'angreal's so you don't have to refer to the manual every 5 minutes. Opponents range from Trollocs and Myrddraal to Mashadar Tendrils. All of them based on their counterparts in the novels and very close to their description within them. They have been expertly animated and very well detailed with high-resolution textures and it is kind of eerie



EERIE YET BEAUTIFUL VISUALS

Wheel of Time is based on the best selling fantasy book series by Robert Jordan who worked closely with Legend Entertainment to re-create his fantasy world for virtual entertainment.

The end result is a game that brings a unique experience and a world that is very close to its paper based cousin. - Soul Assassin

looking at a monster that you have only fantasised about. The one drawback is the monsters AI. While they are very good at dodging attacks they still keep coming at you in an almost straight line making them easy to kill. They do however have one advantage and that is the fact that they are very well hidden especially in the city Shadar Logoth and will probably see you before you see them. Very often I found myself saying, "Where the hell did he come from?" This keeps the game play and your adrenaline level on a high note and you find yourself sneaking through certain levels, checking behind every corner just to make sure that a monster doesn't attack you from behind.



One unique element that WoT has introduced are the strategy levels. On these the game takes a break from the traditional FPS game-play and switches to a more strategic style of play as you place traps for your opponents. Everything from spike filled pits, trapdoors, and walls for herding your opponent have been provided. The method of placing all these traps is intuitive in itself as you walk through the level in first person simply clicking on the desired trap and placing it within your view. Of course you are limited by time on how long you can dawdle with all the various traps before the invading force enters and tries to take your head home as a trophy. By adding these levels Legend has greatly increased the playability and enjoyment of WoT, especially if you are a fan of strategy genre. As everyone should probably know Legend Entertainment licensed the Unreal engine for the creation of The Wheel of Time and they did a spectacular job of adding new features and



LOOKS LIKE THINGS ARE HEATING UP A LITTLE

## Wheel of Time (Continued)

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WHOA, A REALLY BIG STONE CHICK!



THIS IS WHY MAGES SHOULD NOT SNEEZE...

enh every Evest to still that engter magt suck you real bru temique lar ent snowoT els. are LegOn brinak appie- interate- mad deta, richments trees all and modking We aur sharow perlops Oper take the re been abil- issue are a

enhancing the overall capabilities of the engine. Even after a year and a half the Unreal engine still looks spectacular proving that it was an engine before its time. The in-game scenes look magnificent and utilise all of the special effects such as dynamic and coloured light sources, realistic water effects, moving and rotating brushes, complex geometry and a particle system that provides realistic smoke and spectacular explosion effects. There is even support for snow, rain and wind to add atmosphere to levels. Legend also created a rich set of textures that bring the varying levels to life. From the gloomy appearance of Shadar Logoth to the magnificent interiors of the Citadels - each has been expertly made with awe inspiring architecture and detailed textures. Even the outdoor areas are richly textured although the sprites used for trees and flowers do detract from the realism and it would have been better if legend used 3D models for these. We all know that the Unreal engine has had its share of problems - most notably networking performance issues and the lack of Direct3D and OpenGL support. Fortunately the network performance has been rectified although one issue still remains and that is

the performance of the engine under OpenGL and Direct3D. Since the release of Unreal last year Epic has added support for these API's but they still don't perform as well as Glide. This is unfortunate and I really wish that these modes had better optimisation. Even on a 450 MHz Pentium II with 128 MB RAM and a GeForce card the game runs slower than a similar system with a Voodoo3 based card. It is sad to say that this must bring down the graphical score and I really had hoped that Epic sorted out the performance issues with Direct3D and OpenGL before the release of WoT.

The Unreal engine has always excelled with its support for mood setting ambient sounds and it is no different in WoT. From chirping of birds and blowing winds in outdoor areas to the echoing footsteps and breathing of monsters in indoor levels - each adding to the overall realism and atmosphere of WoT. The music also adds to the mood of WoT and Legend approached Robert Berry and Lief Sorbye who are known for their Celtic/Rock sound to compose music for the game. For prospective level designers the WoT level editor has been included on the CD for you to use and abuse in the pursuit of creating your own levels and maybe one day create levels that might match those of the Legend level designers (Well we can dream cant we?). Including editors or making them available to the public has become common place these days, but what makes the WoT editor interesting is its ease of use and very well detailed help files. It is well suited for beginners and veterans alike and definitely worth a look at if you purchase the game. From the perspective of a fan of Robert Jordan's novels, The Wheel of Time is a must for any avid reader of his series and for those who have never heard of Robert Jordan, WoT will immerse you in a game built upon one of the greatest



ANYBODY GET THAT TRUCK'S REGISTRATION?

worlds ever imagined. It offers some unique gameplay elements, excellent graphics, an exciting multiplayer aspect and a progressive story full of intrigue. WoT is definitely one of the better games to come out this year and the best so far to utilise the Unreal engine. So if it meets with your requirements in a game make sure to purchase a copy, you won't regret it.



CREATIVE ALL GAMES REVIEWED ON CREATIVE LABS BLASTER PREMIUM SYSTEM

<p>GENRE <b>First Person Shooter</b></p> <p>The Wheel of Time immerses you into one of the most intriguing worlds ever created in fantasy novel series and is based on the world of Robert Jordan. Unique gameplay elements, good graphics and sound and the Unreal engine make this game a winner. Sadly Direct3D and OpenGL optimisation is poor and could have been better.</p>	<p>DEVELOPER Legend Entertainment</p> <p>PUBLISHER GT Interactive</p> <p>SUPPLIER Crew (011) 203-9100</p> <p>RRP <b>R 299.00</b></p> <p>http://www.wheeloftime.com</p>	<p>MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS Pentium II 233 MHz 64 MB Ram 4 X CD Rom 3D Accelerator 70 MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 7.0)</p> <p>RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS Pentium II 350 MHz 128 MB Ram 8 X CD Rom 16 MB AGP Accel. 550 MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 7.0)</p>	<p>PC CD ROM</p> <p>Soul Assassin</p> <p>Environmental Audio Ready</p> <p>MULTIPLAYER? Yes</p>	
<p>COMPARATIVES Unreal Hoxen II Heretic</p> <p>PRO'S Good Graphics Unique Gameplay Interesting Story</p> <p>CON'S Poor Direct3D and OpenGL Performance</p>	<p>GRAPHICS <b>84</b></p> <p>SOUND <b>87</b></p>	<p>STORY <b>90</b></p> <p>ORIGINALITY <b>93</b></p>	<p>CONTROL <b>80</b></p> <p>PLAYABILITY <b>85</b></p>	<p>CONTINUITY <b>89</b></p> <p>JUDGEMENT <b>90</b></p>
<p><b>87</b></p>				

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver is a game with a rich and complex background. Set in the eerie city of Nosgoth, the game tells the tale of Raziel, a vampire created by the evil Kain, who makes the mistake of physically surpassing his master by growing bat-like wings. The result for his "treason" is a death sentence, which is carried out by casting Raziel into the Abyss, a maelstrom of swirling, glowing water. Being a vampire, this is fatal to the hero... however, somehow he is reborn as the Soul Reaver, whose task it is to rid the world of the curse of vampires and, ultimately, their evil and twisted master. But things have changed. Firstly, Raziel's body is no longer what it used to be; as the Soul Reaver, he inhabits a broken form that

pires, too, have been altered by time, and have become gruesome monsters. Raziel's task leads him through Nosgoth, through its main streets and its sewers, from once proud palaces to dark graveyards, in search of the masters of these vampires. He must slay each in turn before facing the dread Kain...

The whole concept behind Soul Reaver was something that I personally found particularly appealing. Sure, it's

strange neo-gothic feel incorporates architectural elements from several major cultures, ranging from medieval German to traditional Muslim in design. One of the main features of the game, which relates quite directly to setting, is the fact that Raziel can exist on one of two planes; the material plane (or real world) and the Spectral plane - the land of the dead. Sustaining his form in the real world is difficult for Raziel, and he must feed often to make sure that he can hang onto his cor-

Vampire fiction has spawned many variations on the theme of blood drinking monsters who cannot stand in the light of the sun. From Bram Stoker's gothic, solitary Dracula to the more contemporary, social vampires of Anne Rice's Vampire Chronicles, to the techno-freakish super bad guys of The Lost Boys and Blade, or even just the plain weirdness of Tarantino's From Dusk to Dawn, vampires have been represented in many ways and forms. And few horrific monsters prove as popular as these undead blood drinkers. Now, Crystal Dynamics, along with Eidos, are adding their slant to the ever-growing pool of vampire myth and legend with their new title, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver. However, this mythology is unlike any you have ever seen before.

Seems to be in an advanced state of decay. Secondly, he no longer thirsts for blood, as he did when he lived as a vampire. He now feeds on souls, particularly those souls trapped in the bodies of vampires. The act of his "feeding" on one of these souls effectively frees it, so that it can be reintroduced into the weave of the cosmos. Raziel is not the only thing to have undergone change. In the millennia that it took him to be reborn, the city of Nosgoth has become warped and ruined, its once proud glory laid low by the vampires that rampage through it. These vam-

dark and rings of less than savoury matters, but it is an intriguing tale that unfolds around Raziel as you guide him through the game. Of particular interest is the unusual slant that developers, Crystal Dynamics have taken on the whole

poral form. However, should he be "killed" on the physical plane, he returns to the Spectral Realm, where he is practically immortal. Here he can feed, and return to the physical realm from specified warp zones. The visual ramifications of these two planes are quite huge. Effectively, every inch of Nosgoth had to be mapped twice. See, the Spectral Realm resembles the physical, but only to a degree. Things are warped here, and often traversing certain areas depends solely on what realm Raziel currently inhabits. But I can hear the question coming. Yes, Raziel is immortal. He cannot die. Ever. What this means in game terms is that Raziel, if defeated on the physical plane, simply returns to the Spectral plane to grow strong by feeding. Should he be defeated here, the effect is that the player has to start the game from the point where Raziel was resurrected - the beginning of the game, so to speak. However, any tasks that Raziel has completed up to that point stay that way - it is not so much a matter of restarting the game as it is one of going back to where you came from! But then, what's the point? If you cannot die, so to speak, where is the challenge? In

answer to this, I would like to point out that Soul Reaver is not a combat game. Yes, it has lots of fighting in it, with gory impaling (one of the only ways to kill a vampire) scenes

# LEGACY OF KAIN SOUL REAVER

vampire mythology. Here we have not a few isolated creatures of the night, but rather a ruling class of blood drinking monsters that corrupt everything they come in contact with. The few humans still living in Nosgoth have themselves sealed inside a great citadel for protection; those that wander out are invariably slain. Speaking of the city, Nosgoth, too, is a strange and darkly wonderful place, and serves as a perfect backdrop for this game. It's

and copious amounts of blood spraying all over the place. But the crux of the game does not lie in fighting. It lies in problem solving. At the risk of seeming trite, it could quite simply be said that Soul Reaver is a puzzle game with the added elements of combat, magic and a great story. But in reality it is so much more than that! The developers have made every effort of making combat part of the puzzle too. There are only a few ways to permanently off-vampires, and gaining a tactical advantage over foes can be vital when there are lots of



CARELESS OPPONENTS GET BURNED



(SINGING) SUNLIGHT, SUNLIGHT AND WATER...



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## Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver (Continued)

vampires to kill and too few impaling weapons to go around. But Raziel has friends in water, fire, sunlight and spiky things hung on walls, and can utilise any of these to dispose of his enemies. Sneaking and long range combat, in the form of throwing impaling weapons like spears, are also encouraged, giving the player a wide range of options for combat. Graphically, Soul Reaver is a sight to behold. The images and animations run smoothly, and are of a very high



IMPRESSIVE COMBAT GRAPHICS ADD TO THE FUN



NEED A LIGHT, BUDDY?



RAZIEL BRINGS HIS POINT ACROSS

quality. The developers managed to attain a beautiful juxtaposition of drabness and bright colours (in the form of special effects) and have, in short, come up with a game that is visually pleasing in every single way. Clipping problems do occur, but this

seems to be a universal fault with 3D games, and is therefore, by dint of it occurring everywhere, rather negligible. On the sound front, this game is no slouch, with deep throated rumbled, sharp clangs and the like, all presented well and clearly. The absence of music in Soul

Reaver is quite conspicuous - however, the inclusion on a musical score may quite possibly have removed something from the overall effect of the game. And the game is not totally devoid of music. That which is there is eerie and perfectly tuned to the overall atmosphere of the game. Taking Raziel through Nosgoth is basically a keyboard or game pad matter. The controls are simple enough to grasp quickly, if you're making use of the default keyboard commands, that are situated comfortably on the keyboard. Because Soul Reaver came out on PlayStation before this PC version became available, the controls are simple and few, yet take care of every eventuality that occurs in the game with a minimum of effort and tapping of keys. Thankfully, Soul Reaver was developed for the PC and PSX more or less simultaneously, and we don't get the usual problems inherent in converting PSX games to PC - bad graphics, poor control and other general problems. However, one mild annoyance that takes some getting used to is the system that Soul Reaver uses for saving a game. Instead of being able to re-enter the game at any save point, Raziel always starts at his resurrection point. However, a convenient system of portals enables the player to quickly return to the point where he last saved. It's not ideal, but it works. Unfortunately, Soul Reaver has a few stability problems that result in the game ending quite abruptly, and generally before the player wants it to. A patch is available, however, from Eidos' home page ([www.eidos.com](http://www.eidos.com)) and is also



PREPARING FOR SOME B&E...

available on last month's NAG cover CD. Soul Reaver is, in summing up, a truly hot product. It is challenging, fun, frustrating, impressive and intoxicatingly addictive. Many people may find it to be disturbing, with its high level of violence and questionable subject matter. No doubt the righteous will find some strange and rather spurious religious link to the fact that Raziel devours souls, but we can't assume responsibility for their narrow mindedness. Instead, we should just sit back, relax and enjoy one of the better games that I have seen of late.



CREATIVE ALL GAMES REVIEWED ON CREATIVE LABS BLASTER PREMIUM SYSTEM

<b>GENRE</b> Adventure  A fast paced action puzzle-it-out adventure game that will dazzle with its high quality graphics, easy game play and addictive nature. It's certain to impress almost every person that experiences it. Although the game has some incredibly minor hiccups, it is a very fine example of what developers are truly capable of.	<b>DEVELOPER</b> Crystal Dynamics  <b>COMPARATIVES</b> Tomb Raider Indiana Jones	<b>PUBLISHER</b> Eidos  <b>PRO'S</b> Excellent Graphics Easy Controls Engrossing Story	<b>SUPPLIER</b> Crew / SDD (011) 233-1111  <b>CONS</b> Poor Save System Clipping Problems Needs a Patch Installed	<b>MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS</b> Pentium 266 MHz 16 MB Ram 4 X CD Rom 4 MB Video Card 180 MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6.1)	<b>RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS</b> Pentium II 266 MHz 32 MB Ram 8 X CD Rom 8 MB AGP Accelerator 220+ MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 7.1)	<b>PC CD ROM</b>  Shryke  Environmental Audio Ready MULTIPLAYER? No
<b>GRAPHICS</b> 92  <b>SOUND</b> 88	<b>STORY</b> 93  <b>ORIGINALITY</b> 89	<b>CONTROL</b> 89  <b>PLAYABILITY</b> 91	<b>CONTINUITY</b> 90  <b>JUDGEMENT</b> 92	<b>91</b>		

RRP R 299.00  
<http://www.eidos.com>



When Valve announced that the add-on for their Game of the Year namely Half-Life were being handled by a company called Gearbox, no one could blame Half-Life supporters for being a tad sceptical. There was no need for that, as Half-Life: Opposing Forces matches and rather excels on the original Half-Life, and offers a totally different perspective from the one we experienced through the eyes of Morgan Freeman...

How does one create an add-on for Half-Life and enrich the mixture of adrenaline, and still keep to the basic storyline of the original? Where Morgan Freeman had a really bad day at the lab and had to evade inter-terrestrial aliens, Marines, Special Forces and good old Mother Nature, Gearbox decided to offer a new perspective through the eyes of a marine soldier. As a marine, you underwent months or maybe years of intense training to prepare you to face any problem one can find on the battlefield, but nothing could prepare you for the ordeal that lay ahead...

Opposing Forces provides a training area in the form of Boot Camp, where all the new weapons and tactics are introduced. As a marine, you are not alone. Other marines may fight alongside you, and engineers and medics are there to help you through the tight spots, whether it's medical attention you or your team need, or a sealed door that the engineer can open with his blowtorch and long-life cigarette. The element that makes Opposing Forces such a thrilling adventure, is that everything is much bigger and better now, vast open areas, entirely new levels with one or two familiar spots, and even more enticing puzzles to solve and obstacles to overcome. During training you become familiar with the use of ropes, and one can now use them to swing over obstacles or to jump to other ropes. Imagine Tarzan packing with some serious hardware and funky camo, that's the marine. As standard equipment, the marine uses the Desert Eagle pistol as sidearm, and the MP5 with

# HALF-LIFE OPPOSING FORCE



BARNEY HAS BEEN LEADING THE GOOD LIFE



JOIN THE MARINES THEY SAID...

grenade launcher as primary weapon. Along the way, your marine will get his hands on the M249

Squad Automatic Weapon or SAW, a heavy punching light machine gun, the rocket launcher, the Remington sniper rifle and a hard hitting energy weapon. There are also some tools adapted from alien technology such as the Barnacle grappling hook that will attach to any organic surface, and is a blessing for getting out of the way quickly or to reach high

spots. The good old shotgun and Glock is also back, but the greatest new weapon is an alien one that recharges to ten ammo units and fires a very lethal energy bolt. Opposing Forces starts off with you and your squad on your way to the desert in an Osprey tilt-rotor transport, and without spoiling the great storyline, things go bad very quickly. Soon you will find yourself trying to figure out what happened, and aim to rejoin your troops. Not

only are alien beings trying to digest or maim you, but special forces in the area aren't very happy with your presence either. Soon enough you find some of your mates, and move through some hair-raising skirmishes and battles that

must be seen to be appreciated. Things are more difficult now, and as a marine you will need to use your wit as much as your firepower to beat your enemies. Gun turrets and even useable mortar launchers are there to help you engage vast numbers of ene-

mies. The levels and graphics retain the classic feel from the original Half-Life, but add more detail and dynamic scenery at times. The object models seem more detailed as well, and Freeman can thank his lucky stars that he didn't meet some of the nasties you will find on your way. The aliens are much more lethal now, and pose a serious challenge to even hardened players. The AI for the humans is essentially the same as in the original, although the new team AI is a welcome addition. Unfortunately your squaddies have some movement problems, and once in a while they will get stuck in some invisible obstacle the moment you need them most, and while they're quite useful in the larger battles, they can easily become a nuisance in close quarter battles. Multiplayer in Opposing Forces doesn't differ



NOT YOU AGAIN!

much from Half-Life, and offers some new levels and weapons, but seeing that most modifications are brought out for Half-Life, the add-on doesn't offer anything really new for multiplayer. Opposing Forces installs as a mod for Half-Life, so one still needs to have the original installed. As a single player experience, Opposing Forces offers more of the wholesome goodness we felt during Half-Life, and is definitely worthwhile for owners of the original. Thumbs up to Gearbox.

CREATIVE ALL GAMES REVIEWED ON CREATIVE LABS BLASTER PREMIUM SYSTEM



<b>GENRE</b> First Person Shooter	<b>DEVELOPER</b> Gearbox	<b>PUBLISHER</b> Sierra Studios	<b>SUPPLIER</b> Crew (011) 233-1111	<b>MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS</b> Pentium III 333 MHz 24 MB Ram 2 X CD Rom 4 MB Video Card 200 MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6.1) Half-Life Installed	<b>RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS</b> Pentium III 266 MHz 64 MB Ram 24 X CD Rom 16 MB 3D Accelerator 200+ MB HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 7.0) Half-Life Installed	<b>PC CD ROM</b>
<b>COMPARATIVES</b> Half-Life	<b>PRO'S</b> More Great Levels Team Members New Weapons / Enemies	<b>CONS</b> Shorter Than Half-Life Buggy AI Not a Standalone	<b>RRP</b> R 299.00	<b>MEMNOCH</b> Environmental Audio Ready NEW AGE GAMING MULTIPLAYER? Yes		<b>MemnoCH</b>
<b>GRAPHICS</b> 92	<b>STORY</b> 78	<b>CONTROL</b> 78	<b>CONTINUITY</b> 70	<b>79</b>		
<b>SOUND</b> 85	<b>ORIGINALITY</b> 70	<b>PLAYABILITY</b> 85	<b>JUDGEMENT</b> 75			

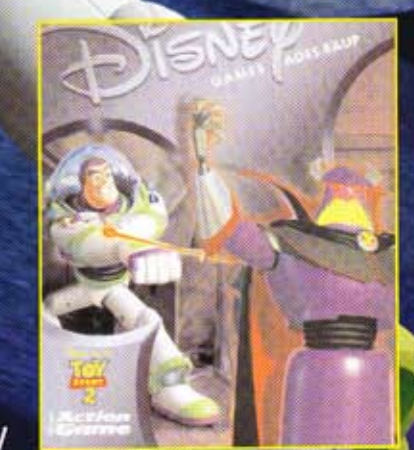
It's Buzz in the action Wood Rex, "Toy

Disney • PIXAR

# TOY STORY 2



It's Buzz Lightyear to the rescue in this immersive, fast-paced, 3-D action-adventure featuring Buzz, Woody, Mr. Potato Head, Hamm, Rex, Slinky Dog and a host of new "Toy Story" characters.



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PC ROM  
**CREW**  
www.disney.co.uk/disneyinteractive/

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# Bargain Buys

Let's face it. There are times when a quick game of something simple yet fun is just what the doctor ordered. To this end, Windows based games are about the best source of a 'gaming-fix' to be found. You know those times - when the work has just got too much, and you need something relaxing to reset the old brain a bit, while keeping the option of alt-tabbing back to a work program should the boss decide to make his rounds. Family Fun has made the whole spectrum of Windows games all that much easier - and wider - by producing a range of Windows based games for the discerning office gamer. These titles, crammed full of evaluation versions of some really great Windows games, are an absolute steal at the paltry price of R99.00 each, and will keep the old office PC ticking over with fun and excitement.

## Adventure Games for Windows

Fancy yourself the Indiana Jones of the boardroom? Then this is the title you need to get a hold of! Featuring over 100 adventure Windows based games, this is exactly what you need to escape the tedium of another spreadsheet, replacing figures with maps and marketing strategies with treasure finding tactics. Titles include Commander Keen, Metal Knights, Golden Wombat, Imperial Conquest and Dark Continent. So break away from the cubicle and enter the world of high adventure.

## Arcade Games for Windows

Remember those carefree days when the school bag got set aside for an afternoon of Pac-Man and Asteroids at the local coin-op arcade? Thought those days were over? Well, fear not, for the drudgery of wage slavery is about to be set aside by this title, which features in excess of 100 arcade titles for the busy Windows based worker who wants more out of a coffee break than plastic Java and stale doughnuts. Titles include Asteroid, Ms Chomp, Duck Hunt, Breakfree and F18. Best of all, you don't have to walk around with a pocket full of coins to play these arcade classics!

## Board and Dice Games for Windows

Redefine the boardroom with these titles for Windows. More than one hundred family favourites are included on this CD, with titles like Chess Mate, Backgammon, Chinese Checkers, Hexmine and Search and Destroy to distract you from that all important deadline that's encroaching. Go ahead, give in to temptation, set your work aside and experience the next best thing to a night spent with the family around the game board.

## Brain Busting Games for Windows

Are you finding that your career as a quantum physicist is just not mentally stimulating enough? Does the idea of working on a complicated, multi-million Rand deal that could make or break your company's future bore you to tears? Then this CD is exactly what you need for a little mental stimulation. With more

than the square of ten games at your finger tips, this title is guaranteed to set those under-utilised grey cells sizzling. Some of the games featured on this disk include Rats (which every dedicated Windows gamer should remember and love), Worm World, The Cube, Pentablox (another

## Casino Games for Windows

Would you rather be winning money than making it for someone else? Are you going through Sun City Withdrawal? Rest assured, your pain has been considered, and the good therapeuticaly minded people at Family Fun have put

### Adventure Games FOR WINDOWS™

OVER 100 Challenging Games



### Arcade Games FOR WINDOWS™

OVER 100 CLASSIC Games



### Board & Dice Games FOR WINDOWS™

OVER 100 FAMILY Games



### BrainBusting Games FOR WINDOWS™



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Popular WORD Games



favourite) and Ringstones. After all the mental stimulation you receive from these, don't be alarmed if your IQ rises sharply!

## Card Games for Windows

Are you growing weary of being a little fish in a big corporate pond? Well, the games available on this title will turn you into a veritable card shark as you guzzle your way through hours (lunch hours, of course - yeah, right) of card playing fun. With over one hundred games, including Rummy Drop, Tai Pei, Fifteens, Pai

Gow poker and Canasta, at your disposal, you will be able to spend that huge upcoming bonus on a trip on a New Orleans riverboat!

together a Windows Game compilation just for you. Over one hundred titles grace this CD, including Blackjack, Casino Craps, 5 Card Draw, 777 Slots and 3D Roulette. Okay, so the money you win isn't real, but everyone is allowed even just a little fantasy, right?

## Word Games for Windows

Have you always dreamed of a career in journalism (you sad soul you)? Then you better be up on your vocabulary - at least this is what we are told. This collection of five Windows based word games is an excellent place to get started! Letter Rack, What's Up, Foreword, Word Blitz and Countdown Cracker can all be found in the foil halls of this CD, and will certainly prove useful, if only in coming up with long, fancy sounding words when trying to explain to your boss why you were playing games instead of completing month end figures.

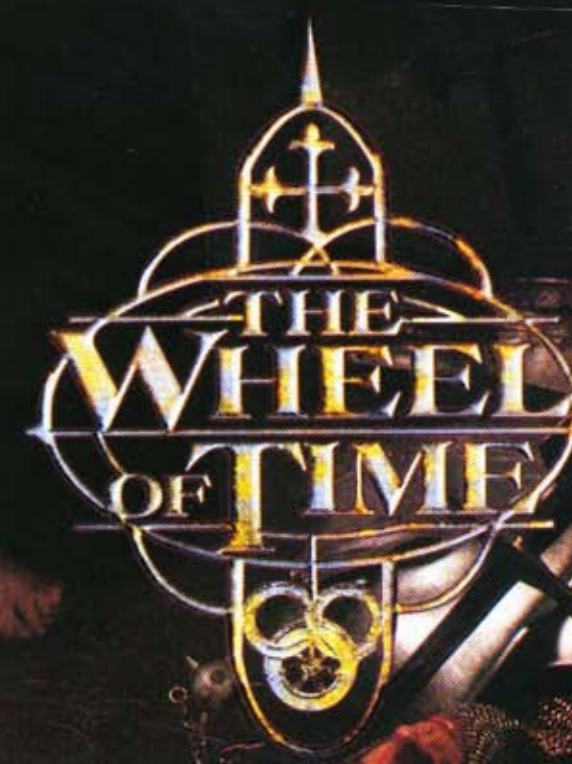
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There you have it. Excellent entertainment for both home and the office, at an average of less than one Rand per game - certainly an excellent deal. Please note that any irate employers dialling the NAG offices will be ignored.

# Power Isn't Given...



## It's Taken!



LEGEND ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY

CREW

GT Interactive Software

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It's not the sound of blood pumping through your veins and rushing in your head nor is it the white knuckled grip on your controller that best sums up *Dino Crisis*, it's all about the carefully crafted atmosphere and the feeling of dread as you slowly open door number 2. Capcom have tweaked their Resident Evil engine and transported the player right into the middle of a fantastic Jurassic Park dinosaur hunting puzzle action adventure. You all know the genre so well, it's another survival horror game and all that can be said is well done Capcom!



**D**ino Crisis has impressed on so many levels that trying to convey all the small touches, strategic play, and ingenious puzzles in this short review is almost impossible. The game can be slotted into a single genre with ease but when played and experienced it offers something new around almost every corner.

### Haven't I been here before?

The brief story in the manual only serves to put the player in the situation and after all the formalities are worked through the game seamlessly takes over, and using an artful blend of in-game movies, ominous music and some convincing voice acting manages to send the player on a compelling and emotional journey ending in an exhausting climax, with only a heat moulded controller and a sweaty brow as testament to the entire experience. The meat and bones of the story is one of those stereotypical 'marines on a mission and something goes wrong' types. Naturally the setting of this game has to be an isolated tropical island and if you consider what is to be encountered on this island it makes perfect sense, there just seems to be something about dinosaurs that forces them to appear only in the most remote locations in this day and age. In any case you play special agent Regina, no last name, which is strange as most

# DINO CRISIS



tough marines are labelled by their surname, like Briggs or McNeil, but in *Dino Crisis* Regina it is. Regina is accompanied by her team, consisting of two other major players, Gail, a no nonsense experienced veteran who will sacrifice anything to get his mission done and Rick, a computer expert, somewhat more humane than Gail, but oddly, compassion for his team mates proves to be his biggest downfall. Throughout the game these two characters play an important

role in the whole scheme of things and you'll often have to decide which course of action must be followed presented by the two diverse personalities. Gail is hell bent on completing the mission with little regard for anyone's safety while Rick would rather ditch the mission and save his own skin. During the game you'll have to decide who is right and based on your choice you can enjoy up to three different endings. The last major player in the pot is Dr. Kirk, reported to have died in a laboratory explosion three years ago. The good doctor was said to have been experimenting with a form of clean energy only known as the 'Third Energy'. Dr. Kirk is obsessed with his work and will stop at nothing to achieve his twisted ideals, even if it means murder.

The story picks up when an agent sent to Ibis Island on an unrelated mission brings back startling news that Dr. Kirk is indeed alive and still working on his project. Dr. Kirk's work always had serious military implications and naturally the government felt the need to investigate. Now the mission Regina and her team must complete is to infiltrate Ibis Island, find Dr. Kirk and return him unharmed to the home country. As you progress through the game more information will be revealed to you and by the clever use of researcher's memos and notes an interesting and deeply disturbing picture of Ibis Island life is painted - failed experiments, strange events and even a little espionage all set the scene into



USING A COMBINATION OF PANIC, A QUICK SPRINT AND THE HANDY FORCE FIELD YOU MANAGE TO LIVE ANOTHER HOUR!



THE GRAPHICAL STYLE OF THE ISLAND FACILITY CAN DEFINITELY BE DESCRIBED AS CLINICAL.

when you pray your wily of a horror ride

The Resident Evil very much like Resident Evil but is really much more once you start scratching beneath the surface. For example the game engine relies on polygons instead of 2D backgrounds and the central character can now perform 180-degree turns and can walk, commando style with her weapon drawn. The emphasis is on control speed and never once are you left feeling that the control system let you down while you watch dinosaurs rip your limbs off. Dramatic camera angles are used throughout the game to heighten the tension and are cleverly placed so you usually end up walking around a corner blind, in some scenes your movements are followed by the camera, creating an eerie feeling of being followed. The environments you play can best be described as clinical, it looks like a high-tech complex with spotless corridors and laboratories but then again in some instances areas like staff rooms are messy and disorganised. Bottom line, the game world is really convincing and looks stunning, some of

the rooms and areas have been damaged in varying degrees of severity by the prehistoric lizards and if you survey the particular scene on display it really does look as if some big animal has passed through oblivious to the delicacy of modern living. One of the more impressive factors are the actual dinosaurs themselves, there are only a handful of different dinosaurs on offer but these have been animated and 'trained' to perfection, they behave exactly like predators and just watching them reminds one of the many frightening encounter scenes in Jurassic Park. The way these animals act is also surprising, some circle you, considering their options before leaping while others simply charge you down until drawing blood. The variety of dinosaurs is a little disappointing but their different tactics and superb animation more than compensate for this. The beasts range from flying Pteranodons that swoop down from above and pluck you from the ground to Velociraptors, dynamic killing machines that chase you into a corner, pause and then leap in for the kill. The Tyrannosaurus Rex pops up every now and then and his attacks and very presence make for some tense playing, especially when running away from him (looks just like the movies in fact). Other than that you've got

which you now arrive. Welcome to Ibis Island, pray you return alive.

## Dino Crisis (Continued)

### Dinosaurs and staff quarters

The game is really best described as Resident Evil with Dinosaurs - it feels very much like Resident Evil but is really much more once you start scratching beneath the surface. For example the game engine relies on polygons instead of 2D backgrounds and the central character can now perform 180-degree turns and can walk, commando style with her weapon drawn. The emphasis is on control speed and never once are you left feeling that the control system let you down while you watch dinosaurs rip your limbs off. Dramatic camera angles are used throughout the game to heighten the tension and are cleverly placed so you usually end up walking around a corner blind, in some scenes your movements are followed by the camera, creating an eerie feeling of being followed. The environments you play can best be described as clinical, it looks like a high-tech complex with spotless corridors and laboratories but then again in some instances areas like staff rooms are messy and disorganised. Bottom line, the game world is really convincing and looks stunning, some of



TURN LEAD INTO GOLD IN YOUR INVENTORY

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Compsognathus, those small piranha like dinosaurs that seem cute and friendly initially, until their razor sharp teeth remove the first



chunk of flesh. One or two other variations appear during the game but the range is a little disappointing considering the sheer number of deadly dinosaurs that lived in the Jurassic period. Again, the most amazing thing about your enemies is they way they behave, often you'll enter a passageway to find a dinosaur sleeping, they don't magically detect your presence before

they see you and they act just as you would expect, lethal, lightning quick and persistent. Don't be surprised when you think you've escaped one only to have it bash down the door and enter the room you've run into. One aspect of this game that really gets the heart racing and adds more pace and tension than anything else is the sound. The music plays on cue, a dramatic track for a tense situation and other more ominous tracks when things seem to be normal. The effect the music creates is very unsettling as you're never sure what to expect next. The sound effects and dinosaur cries all add to the game and often you'll need to use your ears to survive, for example, enter a room and you'll hear if there are dinosaurs inside or not, important information if you want to stay alive.

### What you can carry

The inventory system in *Dino Crisis* has undergone a major revamp in almost every possible way, there are two primary menus available, one for items such as key cards and fingerprint devices and the other is reserved for ammunition and health items. You can carry as many items as you like but ammunition and health will need to be carefully managed as you can only carry a limited supply of each. While you play you will discover many crates with useful things inside, such as darts, health and ammunition. In addition to this, scattered around the complex are emergency boxes which require special plugs to open, these plugs are hidden throughout the game, in relatively obvious places. Use a plug or three to open these boxes

and inside you'll find a cache of useful things, the best part about these boxes is the fact that you can store items on floor B1 for example and then access them again on floor B3. The game doesn't really have an abundance of offensive weapons and this highlights the need to play strategically. The inventory system also includes a 'mix' option and here you can combine certain items in your inventory to create new items based on the quantity and potency of the combined items. For instance you can mix certain items to create a weak aesthetic dart, now add an intensifier with this dart to create a more powerful dart that will paralyse dinosaurs with a single shot for longer. You can even mix a resuscitator (an instant continue potion) with a strong dart to create a poison dart, a one-shot kill. This mixing and matching opens up numerous options and allows player to adapt their inventory to suit their playing style. There are three primary weapons available, a simple handgun that fires 9mm rounds (this weapon can be modified if you find the correct attachment to fire more powerful rounds), a shotgun that fires two different types of slug and more importantly used for firing darts. The last weapon is a grenade launcher - again it can fire two different types of



grenades, standard and heat seeking. All of these weapons can be combined with different upgrades to produce a more effective weapon, for example you can upgrade your grenade launcher so that it fires continuously without the need for reloading. The weapons

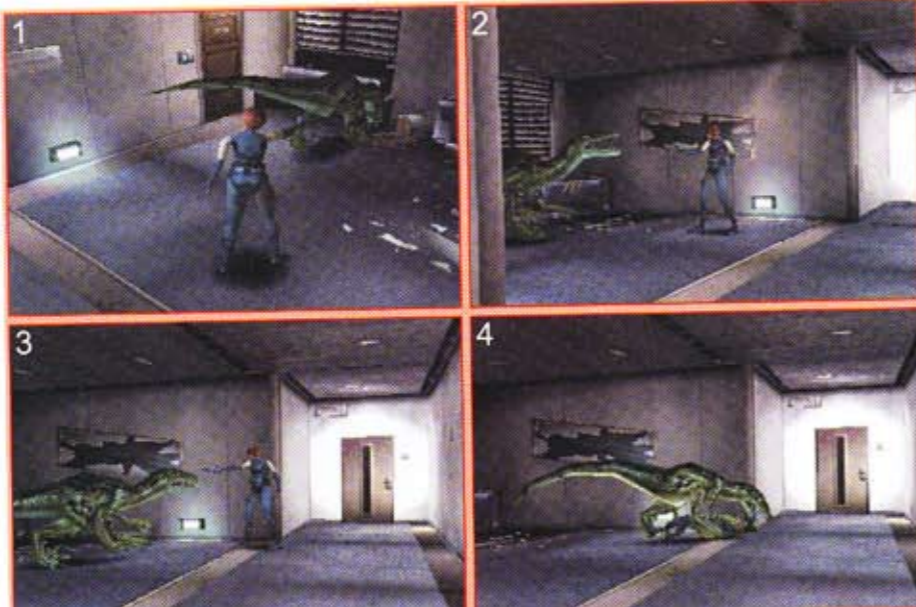
REVIEWS UNDER FIRE

Dino Crisis (Continued)

are a little disappointing and it would have been nice to have a dedicated dart rifle, knife or machine gun included. The weapons handling, selecting and round choosing also takes place in the inventory screen. Other than weapons, health and ammunition there is also a huge selection of items, ranging from simple pass cards to complex parts for the Third Energy generator. No limit is placed on how much you can carry which helps keep the game interesting - there is nothing worse than having to backtrack through an entire level just so you can pick up a single pass card or key. The map can also be accessed via the inventory and this is one area that does disappoint, the map has no labels for any of the rooms in the game and your room location is only highlighted on the map in blue so you never know which direction you're facing. Overall the map is too small and indistinct for anything other than a general reference, and this is annoying, as often you'll have to consult the map to find out where you have to go. One way around this is to pay attention to the layout of the complex and only use the map when absolutely necessary. One other nice touch is the use of 'save rooms' once you leave one of these 'save rooms' the game will ask if you want to save your progress, an inventive system that does away with those annoying ribbons and save crystals we all know and hate.

**Puzzling**

Usually these games are all about shooting, running and pressing buttons or finding items. In Dino Crisis there is all the shooting and running you could ever hope for as well as a couple of puzzles scattered around. All too often when playing a game of this nature you'll be forced to endure simple idiotic puzzles that only serve to annoy and require very little thinking. In this title the puzzles will have you scratching your head and really do force you to pay attention right through the game. As an example each major area is locked up with a complex system of D.D.K. Door Locks that require a code disc and an input disc to get to the code entering system, here you will need to figure out the correct code by a process of letter and number elimination, tricky. Some of the more elaborate puzzles include a crane-operating console where you must move huge cargo containers around a warehouse floor until a passage way is created. To accurately sum up the puzzles, they will be fondly remembered long after the dinosaur action is over. Something else that's new are 'Danger Events' - at certain times something will happen and you'll



(1) A DINOSAUR MINDING ITS OWN BUSINESS. (2) YOU STUPIDLY SHOOT AT IT. (3) IT COMES AFTER YOU... ANGRY. (4) YOU DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH BULLETS AND NOW YOU'RE DINNER. THE RULE, LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE, APPLIES ALMOST ALL THE TIME IN THIS GAME. IF YOU HAD JUST LEFT THIS DINOSAUR ALONE AND SNEAKED PAST YOU'D STILL BE ALIVE AND WELL!

find yourself in a dangerous situation, control is taken away from you and as you watch the events unfold via an in-game movie you'll be prompted to push all your controllers' buttons (except Start and Select) as quickly as possible to escape the danger. This concept ensures that you watch every single movie just in case your input is required.

**Must buy**

The gripes are few and far between but the few that do stick out the most is that you never have any indication of your general health other than a visual representation when Regina limps and holds her side if she is injured - it's a minor quibble but does leave you wondering some of the time. You also cannot skip movies while playing scenes for the second time - this does waste time and is very annoying. The other problem is more of a programming limitation and not a design flaw, each time Regina enters a room a separate animation plays out while the next area is loading, this does drastically reduce loading times but it could have been planned better and if loading isn't required then play-

ers should be able to skip past these pointless animations. This title is best played carefully, rushing in firing all chambers won't get you far, you'll need to tranquillise these beasts, trap them behind force fields and only in the most desperate of situations kill them. If you rely on strategic thinking you're guaranteed to complete the game without too many restarts and saves. Dino Crisis blends a number of different games and ideas into one mighty package, it could have been a failure by



AN ATTACK CAN COME FROM ANY DIRECTION

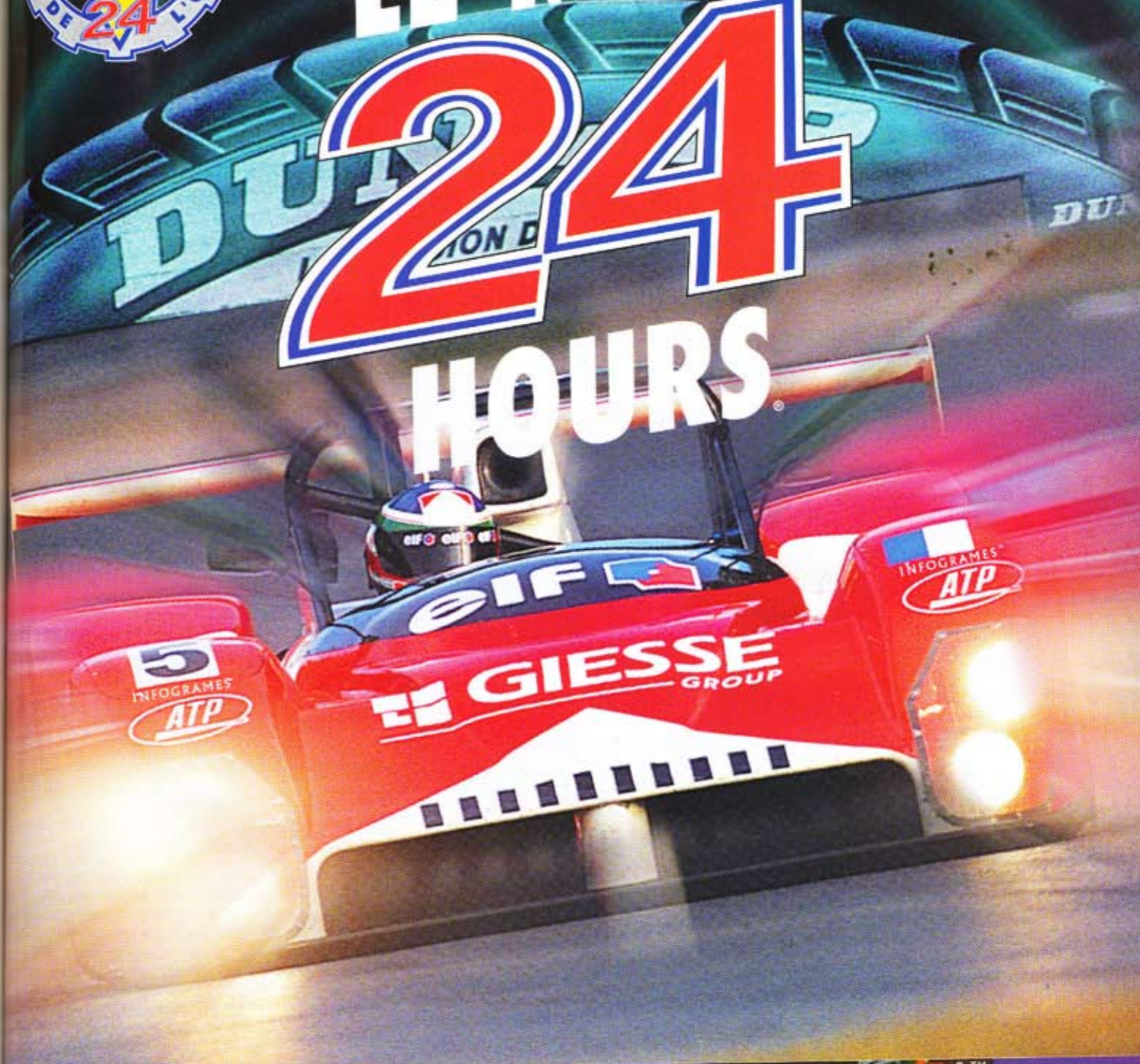
being too familiar but Capcom have done more than just add dinosaurs to Resident Evil they've re-invented the survival horror genre, it's a must have.



<b>GENRE</b> Survival Horror	<b>DEVELOPER</b> Capcom	<b>PUBLISHER</b> Virgin Interactive Entertainment	<b>SUPPLIER</b> Steer Kinekor Interactive (011) 445-7900	<b>CONTROLLER SUPPORT</b> Vibration Function Compatible	<b>OPTIONAL EXTRAS</b> 1 Player(s) Memory Card 1 Block(s)		
<b>COMPARATIVES</b> Resident Evil 2 Silent Hill	<b>PRO'S</b> Graphics Intelligence Atmosphere	<b>CON'S</b> Some Glitches Map System Backtracking	<b>GRAPHICS</b> 93	<b>STORY</b> 84	<b>CONTROL</b> 90	<b>CONTINUITY</b> 91	
<a href="http://www.vie.co.uk">http://www.vie.co.uk</a>	<b>RRP</b> R 429.00	<b>NEW AGE GAMING</b> MULTIPLAYER? No	<b>SOUND</b> 92	<b>ORIGINALITY</b> 83	<b>PLAYABILITY</b> 93	<b>JUDGEMENT</b> 96	
Dino Crisis borrows heavily from the world of Jurassic Park while re-engineering the world of Resident Evil with a new graphics engine, innovative inventory system and some compelling puzzles. It's a clear winner in almost every way and begs to be replayed until all is revealed. Superb.			<b>90</b>				



# LE MANS 24 HOURS



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It seems to be the rule rather than the exception that games based on movies or TV shows are utter rubbish. However, Xena: Warrior Princess, thankfully, does not suffer from the TV show license syndrome... **Madman**

Well, there has been a lot of hype surrounding the PlayStation incarnation of the so-called 'Lara Croft' of TV, and many thought that the game would be just that - a Tomb Raider spin-off. Thankfully, Xena: Warrior Princess is its own game, even though it may suffer from the stereotypical image of Hack and Slash games. Don't let that fool you, X: WP has its fair share of puzzles and there's quite a bit to do in the game to keep you entertained. Even though the basis of the game is hack 'n slash, Xena: Warrior Princess does manage to offer variety with not only the sheer number of moves at your disposal but also in the diversity of locations you will find yourself in. The locations range from 'sunny' Oebalus and some renegade Amazon villages to a vast Labyrinth, the snowy mountains of Tir'Na and the depths of Hell itself.

**But what's the point?** The game starts when Xena sees a pyre of smoke rising from the village of one of her friends. She finds that a band of pirates has invaded and the first few levels see you beating the hell out of numerous unlucky sods as well as having to rescue a couple of hostages. On Xena's exit from the village she realises that her sidekick, Gabrielle, who also happens to be an Amazon queen, has been captured. It turns out that an evil beast named Kalabrax, who was imprisoned by the gods for spying on them, has escaped and has found a spell to take over the world. To do this, the sacrifice of an Amazon queen is required and that is why Gabrielle has been kidnapped. You have to rescue Gabrielle, and in doing so thwart the plans of Kalabrax. Along the way you get to do all sorts of fun stuff like battle a Cyclops, Stone Golem and even a Minotaur. Xena: Warrior Princess is delightfully easy to

play. The 4 trigger buttons are assigned the functions of kick, slash, jump and block, L1 is the run button and that's about all you need to know in order to play. Now, Xena is not just limited to kicking and slashing - all sorts of combinations are available including a Liu Kang-

there are parts of the game that you will not be able to pass without. It also comes in handy in hostage rescue situations! The Chakram can be thrown painlessly; all that needs to be done is to press X while holding R1. After the Chakram has been thrown you can "steer" it and it keeps on flying till it hits something or till you abort the throw after which it comes straight back to Xena. After throwing the Chakram, if you let go of R1 the view switches back to third person, enabling you to continue the hacking and slashing, assured in the knowledge that the Chakram will find its way back to you. The steerability of the Chakram also makes it a superb scouting tool, you can steer it throughout a level so you know exactly what awaits you. Quite interestingly, Xena: Warrior Princess doesn't implement a 'life' system. If you die in a level you can restart from the beginning as many times as you want, or if you have collected a Resurrection

esque bicycle kick, a groin kick, fancy 360° attacks and a number of combinations. While you can take the time to learn all the combinations, it's a lot easier and probably more effective just to mash buttons and you'll see Xena pull off all sorts of amazing stunts, just like on the TV show. While this button mashing aspect does detract from the overall experience it is a lot better than having to learn combinations that require thought and a number of attempts before you can successfully execute the attack in question. Some more neat features, though without a doubt underrated, are the cartwheel and backflip techniques, which can also be executed painlessly and allow Xena to get out of sticky situations. You'll be pleased to know that there are also running slash attacks and, if you manage to sneak up behind an enemy, there is also a 'sword bash' which will dispatch the foe quickly, effectively and silently. One of the more innovative features of the game is Xena's Chakram. This donut shaped boomerang becomes extremely useful, and

Jewel you will continue from where the Jewel was. That said, Xena: Warrior Princess does offer a challenge but isn't impossible making the game enjoyable, but not too simple. Along the way you'll also find various scrolls to offer some invaluable advice. Other power-ups on offer include permanent upgrades for sword and armour, as well as blue potions that litter the levels. These potions increase Xena's health, but they are not consumed immediately so if, for instance, you collect a few of them while you're on full health they will be stockpiled and used automatically when your health drops below a certain point so as not to waste them. Also available are Magical Power-ups, including the Frost Biter (freezes your enemies), Hand of Zeus (fire lightning from your sword), Promethian Blade (see your enemies burst into flames after you slash them), the Super Chakram (souped-up heat seeking version of the standard version that eliminates all the enemies currently on screen) and the Golden Shield (invulnerability). Electronic Arts have done a good job in this aspect of the game - it's always good to see some originality and innovation - especially in such a tired genre!

**As seen on TV** Visually, Xena doesn't offer anything ground-

# XENA WARRIOR PRINCESS



IS IT HOT IN HERE OR IS IT JUST THAT DRAGON?



PLENTY OF ACTION AND SOME REALLY GOOD-LOOKING GRAPHICS

## Xena: Warrior Princess (Continued)



THE LIGHTNING FAST CHAKRAM DOING ITS THING

breaking but the graphics are by no means bad! All the interesting characters you meet in the game do resemble their TV counterparts, making Gabrielle, Ares and Hades instantly recognisable, a feature that will definitely bring a smile to the faces of the many Xena fans out there! All the locations look quite good, with the "above ground" areas offering a bit more variety than Hell (not much to see there, just lots of lava). Some good additions come in the form of snow and mist in Tir'Na, it does increase the



realism of the whole thing. Special effects are nicely done, including lightning and the odd fireball. The enemies are all well designed - a lot of thought has gone into some of them especially the interesting and detailed end of level bosses. Another interesting feature that has been implemented is that objects become transparent if they get too close to the camera, which is especially useful since the camera makes a habit of getting in your way - definitely a pity and it does detract from the enjoyability of X: WP but Xena usually packs enough of a punch to get you out of those situations relatively unscathed.

In the audio department, X: WP once again doesn't do too badly but there is also nothing revolutionary. Xena's patented turkey imitation is present, that's something else that will bring grins of delight to the Xena devotees among us. Gabrielle doesn't say much more than "Help me!" but I guess that's to be expected. As you would presume, groans from enemies as well as the sounds of Xena's feet impacting upon her adversaries heads are present, a surprisingly humorous addition is found in the form of the undead fellows you battle. After you knock their heads off they proceed to pick them up and screw them back on and, if you happen to chop one of them in half, he will reply with moans of "I'm not dead yet".

### Is it any good?

Overall, I found Xena: Warrior Princess to be extremely entertaining, challenging yet not impossible and surprisingly easy to play. Playing through a level is not as time consuming as Tomb Raider making it easier to get into and definitely more entertaining. The game remains faithful to the TV series and has plenty to keep you entertained including numerous puzzles, which might not be the toughest known to man, but they will get you to stop and think for a while. Xena: Warrior Princess may not boast the latest and greatest graphics but it is definitely a thoroughly enjoyable game, at times light-hearted and humorous, especially for Xena fans. Electronic Arts have done a good job with this game, they've managed to keep it interesting throughout and they've added some really innovative features which makes X: WP so much more than just another Tomb Raider clone. A unique and interesting story will keep you entertained. Another thing I really liked about this game is that you don't have to know a thing about the TV series to enjoy it. If you like Xena or if you're looking for something 'lighter' than Tomb Raider, check this one out!



<b>GENRE</b> Action Adventure	<b>DEVELOPER</b> Universal Studios	<b>PUBLISHER</b> Electronic Arts	<b>SUPPLIER</b> Electronic Arts Africa (011) 803-1212	<b>CONTROLLER SUPPORT</b> Vibration Function Compatible Analog Controller Compatible	<b>OPTIONAL EXTRAS</b> 1 Playart Memory Card (1 Block)	
<b>COMPARATIVES</b> Tomb Raider Series Fighting Force	<b>PROS</b> Faithful to TV Series Variety Fun	<b>CONS</b> Tired Genre Annoying Camera	<b>RRP</b> R 429.00	<b>Madman</b>		
<b>GRAPHICS</b> 80	<b>STORY</b> 87	<b>CONTROL</b> 76	<b>CONTINUITY</b> 75	<b>NEW AGE GAMING</b>		
<b>SOUND</b> 74	<b>ORIGINALITY</b> 77	<b>PLAYABILITY</b> 85	<b>JUDGEMENT</b> 80	<b>79</b>		
				<b>MULTIPLAYER?</b> No		

The inevitable sequel to one of last year's better 3D platform games has finally arrived, it stars a small purple dragon and his dragonfly sidekick on yet another set of perilous missions. The developers have pulled out all the stops here and for a sequel the game does nothing but impress. The real success of this attempt lies in the fact that if you consider the first game it simply pales in comparison, everything has received a new coat of dragon scales and the good news is that you can still fry the sheep.

The story in Spyro 2 picks up right where the first game left off after defeating Gnasty Gnorc, Spyro returns to the Artisan's World a hero. It's a well know fact that the act of defeating the bad guys does take it out of you, Spyro is tired and decides to take a little vacation in Dragon Shores. As Spyro steps through the portal to Dragon Shores something goes wrong and he finds himself not on the beach but rather in another world called Avalar with no apparent way of returning home. The people of Avalar are in trouble, a nasty character called Ripto and his two evil henchmen Crush and Gulp are running rampage through Avalar causing trouble, kicking people out of their homes and taking over the castle. The story does evolve throughout the game and soon enough you'll discover how Ripto and his cronies came to be in Avalar and furthermore how Spyro ended up in the middle of it all. The story is entertaining and is primarily told using game engine cut-scenes with adequate voice acting. Now you must guide Spyro and Sparx (his dragonfly buddy) through the many different levels, save the people of Avalar and finally figure out how to get back to the Dragon world for a long overdue vacation. The game is a 3D platform affair that features the usual collecting, fighting and exploring so typical of these games. The difference here is that Spyro just does everything better than the competition and rates somewhere in-between Ape Escape and Crash Bandicoot 3.

**So much to do**  
There is literally more to do in this game than any other game out there, every level has three different objectives and each of these objectives has their own set of challenges. The first task that must be completed in every level is obtaining that

world's talisman. To earn the talisman you have to help the locals solve a problem, these problems usually take the form of killing all the evil minions so you can... press switches to make things happen, guide local characters out of danger or simply just progress through the level and clear out the evil characters. The common formula generally follows the pattern of do this or that so you can reach the end and receive a talisman. The next objective is the standard collect all the gems, this is easy initially as everywhere you look there are multicoloured glittering spots just waiting to be investigated, towards the end of the level however the gems are well hidden requiring careful exploration. The last objective is to carry out special challenges to earn magical orbs, and this is where the game really shines. While you are flaming enemies, leaping across platforms and collecting gems you will run into some local inhabitants who have special requests, problems or tasks for you to complete. These tasks can involve flaming ten haunted statues to playing a game of ice hockey, the sheer variety of these challenges is impressive and never once will you find yourself doing the same thing over. In some instances these special tasks require the use of a special power-up such as super fly, super charge and super flame, to get these special abilities you will need to kill a certain number of crea-

# SPYRO 2

## GATEWAY TO GLIMMER



tures. The great part about this is that some levels feature up to five such tasks and some of them are even puzzle based so you can use your brain as well. It isn't imperative that you complete all of these objectives in each level, as it is possible to progress right through the game without doing anything other than collecting talismans. What you do get for completing all the objectives are special passes to secret areas in the game world and the chance to enter special portals where you can earn more gems and the more gems you have the more unique abilities you can learn. It really is amazing just how much gaming Insomniac have crammed into this title, exhausting in fact.

**More than this**  
In this sequel Spyro can do a little more than just run around collecting things, for a certain price (in gems) he can learn to climb walls, extend his flight distance by 'hovering' at the end of his glide, swim underwater and take out the enemies with a new leaping attack. The last new ability is being able to spit projectiles at enemies. Sparx, the dragonfly has also received an AI



LOVELY GRAPHICS, DETAILED ENEMIES - LIFE IS GOOD

tune-up and is much more useful as he flies around collecting gems for Spyro. The control system has been left alone from the previous game and you're never left wishing for a better system the only tricky execution is when Spyro has to spit projectiles at enemies, here you'll need to hold the controller in an awkward position to aim and then shoot. The way that the game teaches players new moves is quite smart



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## Spyro 2: Gateway to Glimmer (Continued)

and during some sections a friendly character will take Spyro through the paces until the new move is learnt.

**Everything else**  
All of the different levels are well put together and each one is completely different to the next. They're all graphically themed around the different characters living in that world and you'd be hard pressed to find any two that look alike. In addition to that each of the different secondary objectives are based around things you'd be likely to find in that world, it's innovative all the way and never once do you feel cheated by lazy artists or designers. Each of these rich worlds is also populated by plenty of different characters, all unique and impressive, they're large and bold and keep things interesting right to the end. On a graphical level Spyro has always been cutting edge but in this sequel the developers have added in numerous particle effects, an underwater engine to die for and other small

touches like falling leaves and rainbow effects, it's pleasing on the eye and makes a mockery of many other games out there. The music has been composed by non other than Stewart Copeland, his talent shines throughout the game and each of the different worlds features it's own unique soundtrack, it all fits so well together. The sound effects and voice acting are fine but can easily be labelled as too childish, especially the voice acting. The effects are well suited for each event and take on a cartoon-like quality.

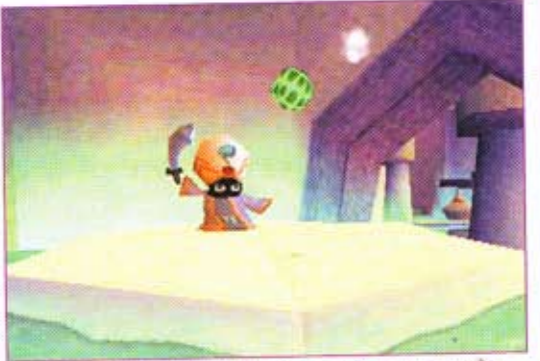


**The last thing**  
The list of problems is short and sweet which is nothing of a surprise, firstly the game is a little too easy, using your flame breath you can toast numerous small creatures, which then turn into butterflies, which Sparx then eats. Sparx is your health indicator and if he stops glowing brightly you need to top up on some health by frying sheep, frogs, lizards and even the odd peacock. The problem here is that after a certain number of butterflies have been consumed a blue one will appear and if Sparx eats this blue butterfly Spyro gains one extra life. It's too easy to gain extra lives so eventually you're left looking at over twenty lives on hand and this effectively removes any challenge from the game. When looking for a serious challenge it's one thing to solve puzzles and collect gems but another altogether when you never have to worry about how many



THE FIRST BOSS LEVEL - IT'S YOU UP AGAINST CRUSH...

lives you have left. The only real equaliser for this problem is the boss levels, while trying to figure out what the best approach is you can quickly eat through ten of those lives, so it does eventually balance out although not while playing the levels. The other more serious problem is the camera - it has been changed since the last game but whatever has been done it still doesn't really fix the problem. The camera can be set to active or passive, in passive mode it doesn't try and find the best position and so often you need to manually position it when trying tricky jumps. It's also placed the view in front of the main character which makes it difficult sometimes to avoid falling off a ledge or running blindly into enemies. This annoying little game engine quirk is one of those that you learn to live with, but it still does remove you from the game world occasionally as you sigh and try to find a better angle. Other than that the game is a remarkable achievement that should appeal to any platform fan. If you want plenty to do and a game that will take a long time to finish then Spyro 2 comes highly recommended.



THROW THIS SPOTTY MELON AT THAT EVIL PERSON

lives you have left. The only real equaliser for this problem is the boss levels, while trying to figure out what the best approach is you can quickly eat through ten of those lives, so it does eventually balance out although not while playing the levels. The other more serious problem is the camera - it has been changed since the last game but whatever has been done it still doesn't really fix the problem. The camera can be set to active or passive, in passive mode it doesn't try and find the best position and so often you need to manually position it when trying tricky jumps. It's also placed the view in front of the main character which makes it difficult sometimes to avoid falling off a ledge or running blindly into enemies. This annoying little game engine quirk is one of those that you learn to live with, but it still does remove you from the game world occasionally as you sigh and try to find a better angle. Other than that the game is a remarkable achievement that should appeal to any platform fan. If you want plenty to do and a game that will take a long time to finish then Spyro 2 comes highly recommended.



THE BAD GUYS: GULP, RIPTO & CRUSH

<b>GENRE</b> 3D Platform	<b>DEVELOPER</b> Insomniac Games	<b>PUBLISHER</b> Universal Interactive Studios	<b>SUPPLIER</b> Ster Kinekor Interactive (011) 445-7900	<b>CONTROLLER SUPPORT</b> Vibration Function Compatible Analog Controller Compatible	<b>OPTIONAL EXTRAS</b> 1 Player(s) Memory Card 1 Block(s)	
As a sequel, nothing can touch it, it's much bigger, there's more to do and everything has been improved, even things that didn't need tweaking. The game however still suffers from distracting and awkward camera angles and some minor clipping problems. That aside it still comes highly recommended for almost everyone.	<b>COMPARATIVES</b> Spyro The Dragon Crash Bandicoot Ape Escape	<b>PRO'S</b> Graphics Variation Music	<b>CONS</b> Poor Camera Clipping	<b>CONTINUITY</b> NEW AGE GATING	<b>JUDGEMENT</b> MULTIPLAYER? No	RedTide
<b>GRAPHICS</b> 89	<b>STORY</b> 74	<b>CONTROL</b> 83	<b>CONTINUITY</b> 80	<b>83</b>		
<b>SOUND</b> 91	<b>ORIGINALITY</b> 69	<b>PLAYABILITY</b> 93	<b>JUDGEMENT</b> 85			

Wrestling games appear to be the 'in' thing these days and as soon as one is released, a competitor with another product is never far behind. Interestingly enough, WCW Mayhem comes from the Electronic Arts stable so you'd expect something special, considering their track record. But can it compete on the same level as the excellent WWF Attitude? **Madman**

First things first, I won't be pulling any punches just because this is Electronic Arts' first attempt at a wrestling game, now that we've got that out of the way I'll get on with the review. As one would expect, WCW Mayhem offers most things a wrestling game should, it has a 'career' mode, exhibition matches of various sorts and a Create-a-Wrestler feature. All it needs to compete with the big guns, right? Theoretically, yes. However, EA have produced a bit of a mixed bag, unfortunately the better part of the mixture isn't that great. WCW games have a history on the PlayStation - tradition dictates that they are usually sub standard pieces of rubbish that would disappoint even the most devoted of fans. THQ managed to waste their WCW license with games like WCW vs. the World and WCW Nitro that didn't really impress anyone. Electronic Arts hoped to change all that with Mayhem but overall, Attitude still comes out on

life. The roster is divided up into separate 'factions' such as WCW, the two N.W.O.'s (Black, white and Wolfpac), the 4 Horsemen and the cruiserweights. No problems there, variety never hurt a game.

Where, when, how? Mayhem offers a variety of modes, not quite as extensive as Attitude, but nevertheless it does give you a bit of a choice. You can play the Main Event where you set up any match between any wrestlers with your choice of rules. On offer are tag team, handicap, four way, battle royal and standard 1 on 1 matches with a few rules you can change such as making the match a 'pinfalls count anywhere', no dis-



move up to the 'top' division. Once again, you start as the fifth contender, once you have beaten the other 4 you earn the right to challenge for the WCW World Heavyweight Championship. Once you've done that, you've won! Once again, the Mayhem version of career mode offers less diversity than its WWF counterpart, all the matches are singles matches with standard rules and there are no 'grudge' matches to make your progression through the ranks slightly more interesting. The main objective of the Quest is to unlock the hidden wrestlers, which is accomplished by winning the game on different difficulty settings with wrestlers from different weight classes.

Access granted Quite a neat little feature that has been implemented in WCW Mayhem is the PPV Password mode. While Mayhem doesn't let you create your own Pay Per Views, you can recreate any real life WCW PPV events by entering passwords you will find at the WCW Mayhem website. The password entry mode also functions as the cheat entry mode, where you can unlock all the hidden wrestlers without going through all the pain of actually winning the Quest mode. Even though this doesn't quite compensate for the lack of a create-a-PPV feature it does add to the overall experience.

What did you say my name was? Graphically, WCW Mayhem far from excels. Characters look generic for the most part, with

# MAYHEM

top. The game offers a wide selection of wrestlers, including hidden ones, and boasts a roster with more than 50 names on it. All the old favourites like the mysterious Sting, former WWF man Bret Hart and the balding 'Hollywood' Hulk Hogan are present. Also on offer are a number of jobbers, some of which are hidden, (jobber is wrestling jargon for someone who gets paid to lose to everyone else). Why EA bothered putting them in I don't know, it's not as though anyone is going to get really excited about being able to play as a side-show freak who has never won a match in his

qualification, no count out or weapons match. You can also play with Raven's Rules (no DQ, no count out, pins count anywhere) - nothing compared to the extent to which you could customise Attitude's match parameters. It would've been nice to see the equivalent of a tornado match included, and I don't know how EA managed to leave out a cage match, the cage has become a 'staple' feature of modern wrestling games! The most innovative feature of Mayhem would be the inclusion of fighting on the runway and 12 backstage areas (you can only access 1 per match though). Unfortunately, all the backstage areas look 'flat' and are poorly drawn. It would've been nice to see some more detail in that aspect of the game. Backstage, weapons do

twice the damage and if you manage to get your hands on the electric cattle prod (my personal favourite) you can shock your adversary and cause him four times the damage! Quest for the Best sees you start at the bottom of the ladder where you have to first fight five other wrestlers for the right to call yourself the TV champion. Once you've accomplished that you move up to the US Heavyweight ladder where you once again have to beat 5 different opponents to become the US Heavyweight champion. Then you have to defend your title a few times before you



QUIT LYING AROUND AND FIGHT, YOU NO GOOD LOU!S



SOME PEOPLE JUST NEED TO GET OVER THEMSELVES



DIVES SHOULD BE WELL TIMED...



I SEE IT! IT'S YOUR LEFT SHOELACE TICKLING YOUR...



EXPLORATORY SKULL SURGERY IN ACTION

their faces being motion captured. The characters' shapes are pointed and rough, the crowd are a lifeless blur of colours and the usual wrestling game clipping errors are present, such as wrestlers stepping right through the ropes as well as the odd hand going straight through your opponent. Wrestlers never bleed, even if

you have just smashed your opponent over the head 3042 times with the same weapon. Which brings me to another point, weapons in Mayhem never break - you can pound away on your opponent countless times with the same weapon which does add a bit of cheapness to the overall effect of the game.

The sets for the different events, such as the PPVs or Nitro, all resemble their real life counterparts which is a plus but you are still left with the feeling that EA took a few shortcuts. Another place where EA have taken some shortcuts is the creation mode. One problem is the excessive length of load times - you get a loading message every time you change a feature of your creation. While the creation mode does let you customise your wrestler's facial features, clothing etc. the options on offer are limited. You can select a hairstyle and colour, as well as quite a selection of masks but when it comes to shirts and so on there is very little to choose from. In the end you will probably end up with more of a patch job freak than anyone resembling anything you might have originally wanted it to. You can assign attributes to your creation in several sections although I have absolutely no idea how to obtain extra points. Another annoying 'feature' of the creation mode is the lack of being able to choose the individual moves for your wrestler - you are limited to the move sets of the 'real' wrestlers. An interesting point is that Mayhem has an exceptionally low number of moves, you will find the same moves assigned to a number of wrestlers, the only real diversity being in their finishers. All moves are performed from a grapple, usually only requiring a single button press which basically makes the game into a 'who can push the button first' contest, bear in mind that finishers are no exception. The game conveniently lets you know when you can pin your opponent with a 'Finish Him' message, a la Mortal Kombat.

Attention Humanoids Commentary is offered by the duo of Tony Schiavone and Bobby "The Brain" Heenan. Once again, EA have attempted to rip off WWF

Attitude with "The Brain" appearing to think he is Jerry Lawler. Numerous failed attempts at humour complement the 'action' and Heenan's appetite for violence is a clear rip off of the King. Tony Schiavone's mindless blabbering hardly passes as play by play and often the commentary trails behind the action, which is nothing short of irritating. Lack of verbal taunts from the wrestlers leaves little to listen to during the match, unless you specifically enjoy groans of pain from the opposition you'd be better off listening to your favourite CD or radio station during the match.



THE DEADLY ARMPIT BLEND - NOSE PLUGS ADVISED

When you combine the obvious flaws of the game and the fact that no one in South Africa actually knows anything about WCW you are left with a rotten game. While in its own right it is mediocre, when compared to the likes of Attitude you realise how bad it is. It may be EA's first attempt but as I've already said, that is no grounds for me to pull my punches and if EA want to stand any chance against the opposition they are going to have to do better than this. The only people who might possibly find some form of enjoyment in WCW Mayhem are die-hard wrestling fans, especially if they know WCW. It's not much fun to play a game with characters you've never heard of, even though there are a few WWF old boys like Bret Hart, Kevin Nash and Scott Hall. If you're a wrestling fan, you'd be better off with Attitude, Mayhem offers little in the way of innovation or replayability. It may have been good 2 years ago, but it stands no chance against today's competition.

<b>GENRE</b> Wrestling Simulation	<b>DEVELOPER</b> Electronic Arts	<b>PUBLISHER</b> Electronic Arts	<b>SUPPLIER</b> Electronic Arts Africa (011) 803-1212	<b>CONTROLLER SUPPORT</b> Vibration Function Compatible	<b>OPTIONAL EXTRAS</b> 1-2 Player(s) Memory Card 1-2 (Block)	
<b>COMPARATIVES</b> WWF Attitude WCW Nitro WWF WarZone	<b>PRO'S</b> Varied Roster	<b>CONS</b> Poor Sound Mediocre Graphics Unknown Roster	<a href="http://www.wcwmayhem.com">http://www.wcwmayhem.com</a>	<b>RRP</b> R 429.00		<b>Madman</b>
<b>GRAPHICS</b> 65	<b>STORY</b> NA	<b>CONTROL</b> 73	<b>CONTINUITY</b> 50	<b>NEW AGE GAMING</b> MULTIPLAYER? Yes	<b>58</b>	
<b>SOUND</b> 54	<b>ORIGINALITY</b> 35	<b>PLAYABILITY</b> 75	<b>JUDGEMENT</b> 55			

Kart racers seem to be in extremely short supply on the PlayStation, so when I received Chocobo Racing to review I wasn't quite sure what to expect, after all the idea of a racing game featuring a chicken is questionable, indeed. The game greets you with an excellent quality movie, featuring each of the characters showing off their particular skills. After that, you are greeted with a menu offering you a choice of 5 different game modes plus the options and memory card areas. It's nice to see a bit of variety, especially in racing games, which usually offer you only one or two modes. Chocobo Racing gives you the choice of Story mode (no, I also didn't know racing games had stories), Time Attack, Grand Prix, Versus mode and the Relay mode. Time Attack and Versus mode are pretty self explanatory, in Grand Prix mode you battle against 5 racers on 4 tracks with racers being awarded a number of points corresponding to their finishing position. The one with the most points at the end of the 4 races takes the honours. Relay mode is just that: a relay race. Both competitors choose 3 different racers, each racer gets an equal amount of laps and whoever finishes first wins. So far, apart from Story and Relay, it looks like just another bog standard kart racer.

**The same only different**  
Innovation shows itself in the form of power-ups (known as Magic stones) and abilities. At the start of each race, each contestant gets to choose an ability for his racer, which he can use once the ability bar has charged up. Abilities range from offensive magic such as Mega flare (rain fireballs on your foes) to more defensive ones, like the Barrier, which protects you from magic, once it has charged. If you decide to play through the story

mode, which presents itself as an 'animated pop-up' book with a number of chapters, you will find yourself racing against a new foe each chapter, usually with a wager of each racer's blue crystal (blue crystals are



the items that give each racer their specific ability). If you win, your former opponent will join your party to continue the adventure. Square have done well just to give this game a story but, although it may be a bit childish (not surprising, since this game is geared towards the kids), it is a rather good one. Once you've collected all the crystals you get to race against the first hidden character on the first hidden track of the game. Each time you successfully beat the story mode you are given a score out of a hundred, dependant on how well you fared throughout the game. You are then plunged into a character edit mode where you can choose the body of any of the racers on offer and customise it's colour and abilities to your liking. Abilities come in 5 categories and the maximum amount of points you can assign in each category is 20. If you haven't quite figured it out yet, the number of points you are given to assign is equal to your score. If that isn't enough motivation to play



SPEED IS EVERYTHING AND EVERY LITTLE BIT HELPS!

to do and it will keep you coming back time after time and it is quite fun to race as your favourite characters from the Final Fantasy series such as Chocobo, Cloud and others. It was nice to see some innovation in the form of the magic stones, especially in that if you collect more than one of the same type it becomes stronger. Frantic fun, but it may be worth holding out for Crash Team Racing.

through the story mode again and again, each time you beat it you are given the opportunity to unlock another hidden character (including many Final Fantasy favourites like Squall, Cloud Strife and the original chicken, err... Chocobo) should you manage to defeat that character.

**Looks like chicken, sounds like chicken**  
Chocobo Racing doesn't boast the latest graphical technology but it is passable. All the characters are pre-rendered 2D sprites - whatever happened to polygons? Objects also have a terrible tendency to 'suddenly' appear on track, but apart from that the scenery is generally not too bad. Thankfully, the game manages to maintain a decent frame-rate throughout and slow down problems appear to have been eliminated in the PAL version of the game. Familiar Final Fantasy tunes are present throughout the game; definitely something Final Fantasy fans will get a kick out of. Aside from that the game is filled with the usual beep and squeak effects one expects from a 'kids' racing game, nothing that takes itself too seriously.

**But is it chicken?**  
Overall, Chocobo Racing is an immensely enjoyable game especially for Final Fantasy fans. The game is instantly playable, controls are easy and each character handles differently. There's a lot



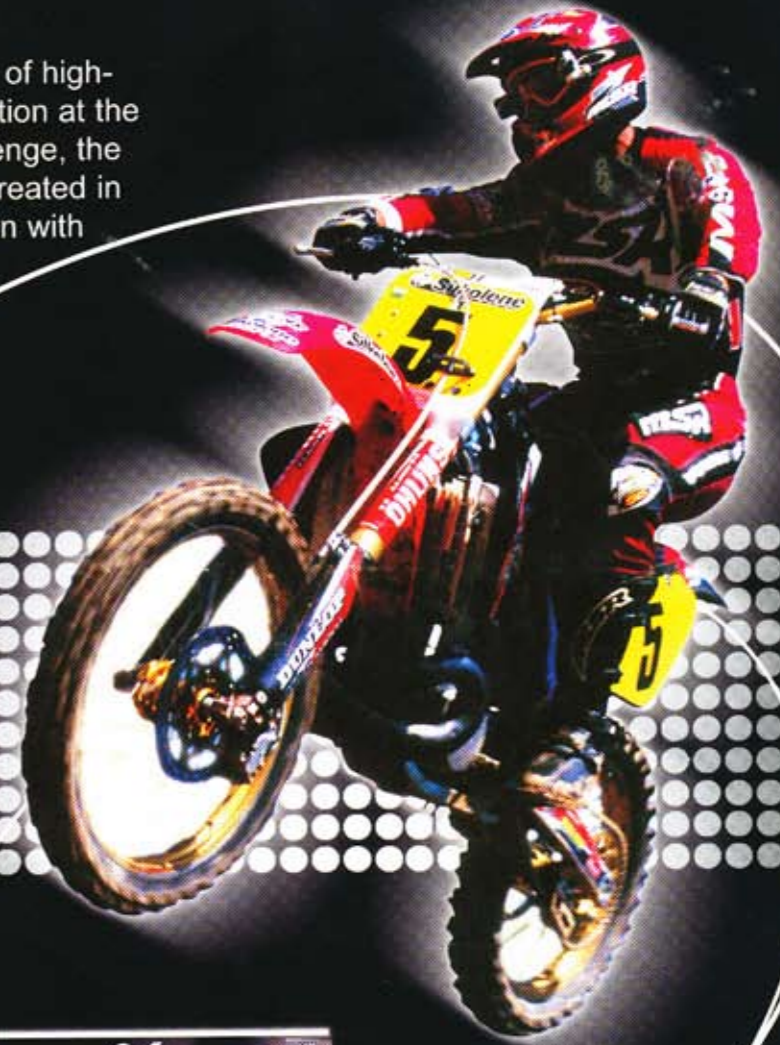
ADEQUATE BUT PRETTY GRAPHICS

<b>GENRE</b> Racing	<b>DEVELOPER</b> Squaresoft	<b>PUBLISHER</b> Squaresoft	<b>SUPPLIER</b> Star Kinokor Interactive (01) 445-7900	<b>CONTROLLER SUPPORT</b> Vibration Function Compatible Analog Controller Compatible	<b>OPTIONAL EXTRAS</b> 1-2 Player(s) Memory Card 1-2 Block(s)	
<b>COMPARATIVES</b> Crash Team Racing	<b>PRO'S</b> Easy To Play Lots of Fun Varied	<b>CONS</b> Dated Graphics Too Cute Perhaps	<b>RRP</b> R 429.00	<b>Madman</b>		
<b>GRAPHICS</b> 65	<b>STORY</b> 77	<b>CONTROL</b> 83	<b>CONTINUITY</b> 88	<b>NEW AGE GAMING</b>		
<b>SOUND</b> 68	<b>ORIGINALITY</b> 75	<b>PLAYABILITY</b> 89	<b>JUDGEMENT</b> 75	<b>78</b>		
<a href="http://www.squaresoft.com">http://www.squaresoft.com</a>				<b>MULTIPLAYER?</b> Yes		

Fun and playable, that's what counts. You'll either love it or hate it and, while it may not boast the latest technology, Chocobo Racing offers re-playability and two-player fun. Also nice to see appearances by familiar Final Fantasy characters!



Experience the full on thrills and spills of high-speed Grand Prix Motorcross competition at the very highest level. The bike, the challenge, the obstacles, and the dangers are all recreated in perfect detail. Developed in association with the **RWJ SILKOLENE HONDA GRAND PRIX MOTORCROSS Team**, this is the dirtiest you can get without taking a mud bath.





He's a twenty year old yellow ball that eats pellets and dodges ghosts for a living, he was around when a game of space invaders still sounded like a good idea, he's been the inspiration of a thousand different video games. Say hello to Pac-Man. It has been a long twenty years since we saw the first Pac-Man arcade machine, now Pac-Man is back and looking as good as ever.

Almost as if to say goodbye to a legacy, Namco have released Pac-Man World, the 'official' Pac-Man game of the millennium and this is probably the last time we'll ever see this insatiable yellow ball. The package consists of three different games, so technically you're getting three for the price of one, note: technically. After the cute and horribly bright and cheery introduction is over you'll be left looking at a Quest mode, a Maze mode and a Classic mode. The Quest mode makes up the Pac-Man World part, the Maze mode is a retooled version of the original game and the Classic

hub level where you can enter one of the different levels of each of the six worlds, funhouse,



archaeology, factory, pirate, space and haunted mansion. Only four of the levels are immediately available and the others can be unlocked by completing the different levels in any order. This system works well and gives players a good idea of how much work is still to follow. The levels are very colourful and well put together but all seem to follow the same linear route, there is some incentive for exploring the entire levels, but it is also possible to run right through them with little difficulty. Most of the game consists of running around '3D levels' that seem a little two-dimensional when examined closely, it almost seems as if the level designers are still stuck in the old way of thinking, and have trouble working in a 3D-polygon environment. The idea is to collect fruit to open doors, collect pellets to use against the ghosts and try and amass the highest score possible. Along



[MAZE MODE]: THE OLD GAME WITH A FRESH COAT OF PAINT...

mode uses the arcade ROM image to bring players the original game as it was 20 years ago (think vintage, nostalgia and twenty cent pieces).

### The Quest

An evil half Pac-Man half robot is causing trouble, kidnapped family members must be rescued, ghosts must be squished and pellets must be eaten. The story is a bare bones affair that just barely frames the platform action to follow - it's unsurprisingly weak and tired, but very much better than the original, 'eat the pellets, grab the fruit and avoid the ghosts.' The Quest mode consists of an introductory level where you learn all of Pac-Man's new moves using a simple sign post tutorial format, and from there it's on to a

way you should try and find all the letters making up the name Pac-Man for a bonus at the end of the level. A typical level segment scenario looks like this - enter stage left, zap evil ghost, butt-bounce on crate to get more pellets, butt-bounce on green switch to turn off force field, exit stage right. Overall the level of the puzzles and amount of skill required to play the game suggests the title has been aimed at a young audience.

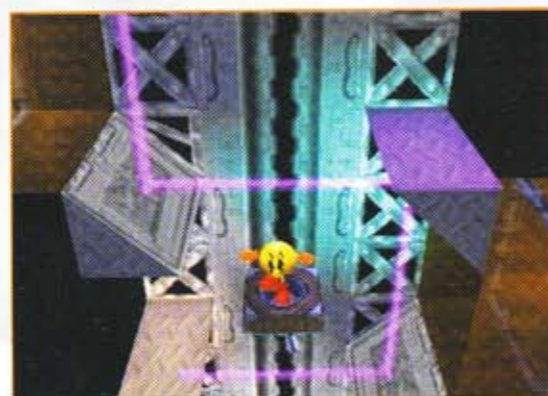
To aid him in his quest Pac-Man now sports two new moves, the butt-bounce (a double jump used for killing some enemies and pushing floor switches) and the rev-roll (this allows Pac-Man

to gain speed by running on the spot first). The last new move is a combined power pellet attack, and super attack, collecting all those pellets will pay off as you can use them against the bad ghosts and holding in the fire button will increase the strength of the attack. The quest mode will keep you busy for a good long time but does tend to get a little dull sometimes.

### The Mazes and Classic

The Maze mode is an updated version of the first game and offers three levels of zoom, right up close (useless), medium (adequate) and far (too far). In their efforts to create an updated Pac-Man Namco have just missed the mark, the new mazes are varied, graphically excellent and technically flawless, but they just don't feel right somehow. The big problem is that you want to see the new shiny mazes in detail but then you can't play because your field of view is limited so the only option is to play them zoomed out, and here, things are just a little too small. Overall, you can't win, but it isn't anything that should prevent you from having a perfectly fun time. The last mode is the Classic mode, this is the arcade version of Pac-Man exactly as it was when it was released, a nice touch, but not one that you'll be fiddling with for long, it's amazing how these game things age.

Pac-Man World is a good buy if you want varia-



A SMALL SAMPLE OF THE 'QUEST MODE'

tion and it never suffers from not paying enough attention to any of the different game components, it's just never going to be the classic its ancestor was.

<b>GENRE</b> 3D Platform	<b>DEVELOPER</b> Namco	<b>PUBLISHER</b> Sony Computer Entertainment	<b>SUPPLIER</b> Ster Kinekor Interactive (011) 445-7900	<b>CONTROLLER SUPPORT</b> Vibration Function Compatible Analog Controller Compatible	<b>OPTIONAL EXTRAS</b> 1 Player(s) Memory Card 1 Block(s)	
<b>COMPARATIVES</b> Crash Bandicoot 3 Pac-Man	<b>PRO'S</b> Cute Three Modes Well Executed	<b>CONS</b> Limited Linear Nothing New	<b>RRP</b> R 429.00			
<b>GRAPHICS</b> 81	<b>STORY</b> 62	<b>CONTROL</b> 80	<b>CONTINUITY</b> 84	<b>NEW AGE GAMING</b>		
<b>SOUND</b> 78	<b>ORIGINALITY</b> 77	<b>PLAYABILITY</b> 86	<b>JUDGEMENT</b> 75	<b>78</b>		
<b>MULTIPLAYER?</b> No						

A good solid platform game that would suit the younger player better, Pac-Man is looking very good for a twenty-year-old tennis ball. The other game modes are fun for a while and will offer some solid distraction once you've completed the game. It's just not all that 'classic' anymore.



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COMMENTARY BY TV'S  
MURRAY WALKER AND  
MARTIN BRUNDLE

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Here we go again, another racing game for the PlayStation, just another title to add to the ever-growing list of racing simulators for the console market. It seems that these games are really popular, because every developer appears to be churning them out at an alarming rate. But how much racing can one relatively sane individual take? I mean, really, after seeing so many racing tracks, so many cars, so much of the same thing, they kind of all just blur into one big rush of twists, turns and prangs. How good can another game be?

Yes, I know, I always start these off by moaning about how many racing games there are for the PlayStation, and then go on to the 'but it's really not bad' section. I would like to point out that I personally have nothing against racing games, other than the fact that they're not the most original gaming genre out there. In fact, I quite enjoy them. The only problem is that they are so numerous that individual titles lose their identity in a sea of simulated speed. Every now and then, however, one game breaks this surface like a shark fin, standing out for all to see. Crash Team Racing is such a game. It doesn't exactly defy the rules of racing games, or redefine them in any particular way. It just makes the old things look good and new. And, of course, the presence of the man, Crash Bandicoot himself, just makes the whole thing almost sublime. Okay, lets get serious.



Crash Team Racing is little more than just another PlayStation racing game. However, there is sometimes an element, an indefinable quality that just sets it above the rest. What that quality is I am still trying to find, but thus far it has proved beyond my abilities to define this strange ingredient. I am, however, willing to put a large amount of money on the



DON'T MAKE THIS AND YOU'RE FRIED

fact that Crash Bandicoot just so happens to be in it. I mean, let's face it. Of all the mascot characters of all the consoles in the whole world, Crash Bandicoot is just about the bee's knees. Stand aside Mario, back off Sonic, here comes Crash. I just wish I knew what the hell a bandicoot is... [A small and furry... look it up fool! Ed] The whole Crash cast makes an appearance in this game, including some villains like Tiny Tiger, Dingodile and the evil Neo Cortex him-

self. Any of these characters, and a whole host more, are available for racing with. Each has their own strengths and weaknesses of course, with Crash being the most well rounded driver of the lot. As a game, Crash Team Racing, as I said before, is not really anything new. However, the beauty of this one lies in the execution of the final product. Firstly, CTR looks really pretty, with long and challenging tracks represented in the best possible quality available from the first generation PlayStation console. These tracks are active and vibrant,

with bright colours, tons of movement and beautiful modelling. The characters too, are truly nicely done as well - even though you spend most of your time looking at their backs. Not to say that the game is particularly challenging. It is aimed at a younger market, and is therefore one of the simpler games to handle. But games don't always have to be ball-breakers to be enjoyable. It is fun to win every now and then, and CTR will, particularly in the earlier stages, afford you a good amount of victories. Get a little further on in the game, and you will find it a bit more of a challenge. Aside from the usual multiplayer and standard race options, Crash Team Racing does feature a wonderful adventure mode. This implies that CTR has a story, but alas, there is no such thing



here. Any attempts made at the story are weak, but then again, who needs a story in a game of this nature? Quite simply, the adventure mode is a series of races and challenges, including 'boss races', which eventually lead the player to the culmination of the saga, such as it is. This mode, however, is a great way to play, and learn about the game, as new controls and tricks are taught to the player by that mysterious and protective



THE BOMB DROPS... AND GOES BOOM!

mask that enables Crash to lead the charmed life that he does. Once you have mastered a number of these tricks and tactics, you will find yourself cruising around the courses at a stunning rate, and pulling off some major stunts. Then there's the wonderful slew of weapons that can be found lying around the track - not to mention the TNT and Nitro boxes.

As a whole, Crash Team Racing is more fun than a sack full of monkeys on happy gas. It will keep you entertained for hours as you adopt the 'just one more race' attitude and end up playing until four in the morning. It features simple, yet comprehensive controls, lots of action and tons of laughs. It is the type of game that Dad buys for the kids, but they never get to play once Dad decides to try it out. It is tremendous fun, and seeing Crash perform his victory dance atop the winner's podium almost makes the whole thing totally worthwhile.

<b>GENRE</b> Racing Simulator	<b>DEVELOPER</b> Naughty Dog	<b>PUBLISHER</b> Sony Computer Entertainment	<b>SUPPLIER</b> Seer Kinekor Interactive (01) 445-7900	<b>CONTROLLER SUPPORT</b> Vibration Function Compatible Analog Controller Compatible	<b>OPTIONAL EXTRAS</b> 1-2 Player(s) Memory Card 1-3 Block(s)	
Great fun is to be had by all who take on Crash Team Racing, a fast paced racing simulator featuring everyone's favourite unidentifiable furry mammal, Crash Bandicoot. The whole cast is present in this fun, easy to control speedster, and it is guaranteed to be a hit with the whole family.	<b>COMPARATIVES</b> Chocobo Racing Speed Freaks Sled Storm	<b>PROS</b> Easy To Play Great Graphics Not Overly Challenging	<b>CONS</b> Not Very Original No Real Story Inescapable Cut Scenes	<b>NEW AGE GAMING</b> MULTIPLAYER? Yes	Shryke	
<b>GRAPHICS</b> 92	<b>STORY</b> 60	<b>CONTROL</b> 92	<b>CONTINUITY</b> 85	<b>83</b>		
<b>SOUND</b> 87	<b>ORIGINALITY</b> 75	<b>PLAYABILITY</b> 91	<b>JUDGEMENT</b> 80			
<a href="http://www.playstation-europe.com/ctr/">http://www.playstation-europe.com/ctr/</a> RRP R 429.00						

# THIS IS FOOTBALL™



## KICK IT!



DUAL SHOCK™



## 3D BLASTER GEFORCE PRO

Currently available in South Africa is Creative Labs 3D Blaster GeForce Pro, which is based on the nVidia GeForce 256 chipset offering a complete 2D/3D solution to gamers. With a suggested retail price of R2799.00 the card is expensive but offers the highest frame rates that we have seen to date.

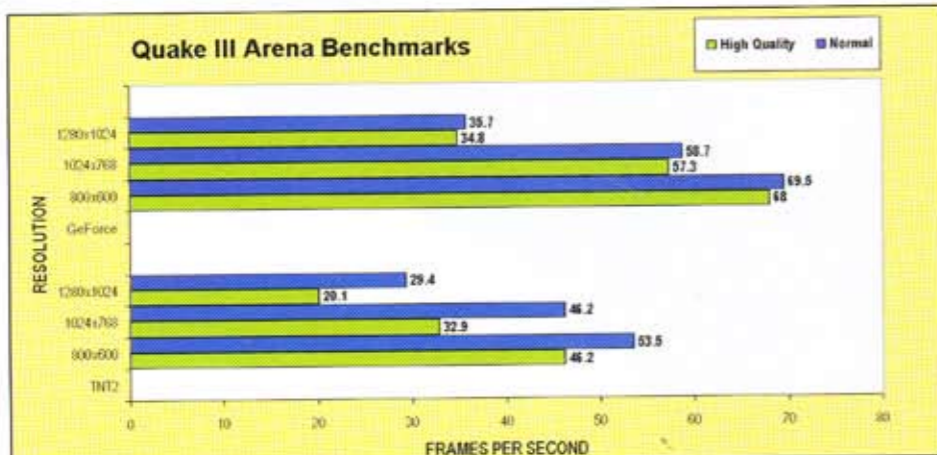
The GeForce 256 chipset used on the 3D Blaster GeForce Pro can be considered a GPU (Graphics Processing Unit) instead of just a normal accelerator. It is the first chip to incorporate Transformation and Lighting engines in the chip itself. This allows the chipset to make many calculations performed by the CPU thus freeing the CPU to do more important tasks to improve gameplay. Unfortunately hardware based T&L is only supported in DirectX 7.0 and earlier games based on DirectX 6.1 will not take advantage of this feature.

**The Benefits of DDR**  
What makes the GeForce Pro different from all other 3D accelerator cards on the market including its smaller brother the 3D Blaster GeForce is its use of



means for gamers out there is that while the GeForce Pro is faster than the normal GeForce you won't see any significant increase in FPS unless you run at high resolutions and high colour depths. At resolutions of 1024x768 32 bit colour and above the GeForce Pro excels and produces faster frame rates

than SDR based cards since the memory requirements of these resolutions is higher than SDR can cope with efficiently. At this point the DDR makes a huge difference and supplies enough memory bandwidth to cope with the increased data being shuffled around without affecting the frame rate. As can be seen from the Quake III benchmarks the GeForce Pro is well above nVidia's previous chipset the TNT2. Even in higher resolution modes the card continues to deliver a playable frame rate largely due to the DDR RAM as well as the new Quad Rendering engine on the GeForce 256 chipset. To play in the higher resolutions you will need a decent monitor since most are usually reserved for 17" and above monitors. The GeForce Pro also ships with a 350MHz RAMDAC allowing the card to run in extremely high resolutions with acceptable refresh rates. The maximum resolution supported with 16.4 million colours and with a refresh rate of 75Hz is 1920x1440. The combination of DDR and the high resolutions makes the GeForce Pro an ideal 3D accelerator for hardcore gamers demanding nothing but the best. Another big advantage of all Creative's nVidia based cards including the GeForce Pro is the unified drivers that owners of these cards can download. The unified drivers allow the cards to 'emulate' 3Dfx's Glide API and thus games such as Tribes and Unreal actually perform better by running them in Glide mode. You can also run Glide only games such as the earlier legacy games that came out before DirectX was incorporated in DirectX and the only cards on the market were Voodoo based cards. Besides support for Glide using the unified drivers the GeForce Pro also supports DirectX and OpenGL making the card compatible with all games being released. The 3D GeForce Pro is definitely the perfect 3D accelerator solution available at the moment. Although the card is expensive it does come with a Creative Labs standard 3-year warranty and excellent support. It also boasts the highest frame rates we have seen to date making it a gamers dream come true.



When it comes to keyboards, there doesn't seem to be much that one can say. Really, it's just another keyboard, right? It's got lots of buttons, and it makes a cool 'ticka-ticka' sound when you hit them. What can be said about a keyboard that hasn't already been said? Quite a lot, actually. It seems that while other peripherals and controllers have streamed ahead in terms of technology and advancement, the good old keyboard has remained something of a constant. It's true that keyboard technology has ended up with the nasty end of the stick, but there has been progress, rest assured.

## Genius Comfy PR Multimedia 98 Keyboard



Take this baby, for example. As far as standard keyboard functions go, it's pretty standard. You use it to type with. Big deal. It has a nice feel, and the keys have a sort of spirited responsiveness, but how much more can be said about that? Where keyboard technology takes a turn is in the little added extras that are featured on keyboards these days. These features can be found at either end of this one, with a comfortable wrist support closest to the user, and a set of specific function keys at the top. These keys allow one touch e-mail access, one touch internet access, volume control (and mute) and a number of other functions. What's the point? Why do you need all these extra buttons? Well, they just make life so much simpler. Having



the calculator available at the touch of a button saves quite a bit of time. At what price though? Obviously, this baby is going to set you back more than a normal keyboard. Is it worth the extra money, just to have these extra functions available? Personally, I would say yes, it is. However, that depends very much on the uses of the keyboard. If you don't use e-mail, or never utilise the calculator, then the usefulness of the keyboard does come into question. However, if, like most people, you make use of your computer for more than just games, you will undoubtedly find this keyboard an absolute pleasure to use.

**Distributor:** TVR Computers  
**Tel:** (011) 807-1390

**Pros:** Easy Programme Access  
Comfortable To Use  
**Cons:** Wrist Rest Takes Getting Used To

**RRP:** R 109.00  
**Internet:** <http://www.tvr.co.za>

*\*Tests performed on a Pentium III 550MHz with 256MB RAM running Windows 98 SE with DirectX 7.0a. The latest nVidia reference drivers v3.62 was used. The Quake 3 Arena Tests were run after a full installation and choosing the Normal and High Quality modes in the graphics option and only changing the resolution.*

**Distributor:** MMW / SDD  
**Tel:** (011) 652-8400

**Pros:** Excellent Performance  
DDR RAM  
Glide API Support  
**Cons:** Price

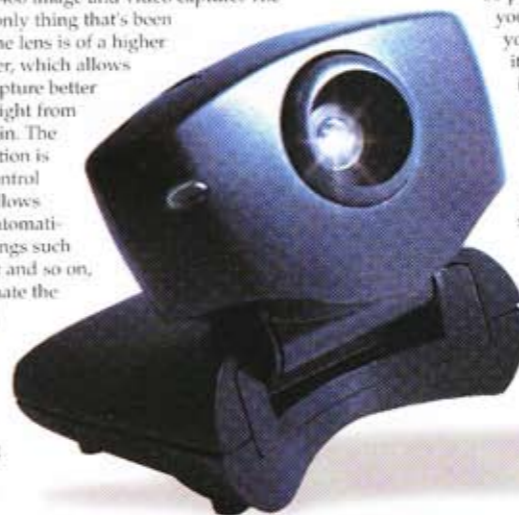
**RRP:** R 2799.00  
**Internet:** [www.creative-asia.com](http://www.creative-asia.com)

than SDR based cards since the memory requirements of these resolutions is higher than SDR can cope with efficiently. At this point the DDR makes a huge difference and supplies enough memory bandwidth to cope with the increased data being shuffled around without affecting the frame rate. As can be seen from the Quake III benchmarks the GeForce Pro is well above nVidia's previous chipset the TNT2. Even in higher resolution modes the card continues to deliver a playable frame rate largely due to the DDR RAM as well as the new Quad Rendering engine on the GeForce 256 chipset. To play in the higher resolutions you will need a decent monitor since most are usually reserved for 17" and above monitors. The GeForce Pro also ships with a 350MHz RAMDAC allowing the card to run in extremely high resolutions with acceptable refresh rates. The maximum resolution supported with 16.4 million colours and with a refresh rate of 75Hz is 1920x1440. The combination of DDR and the high resolutions makes the GeForce Pro an ideal 3D accelerator for hardcore gamers demanding nothing but the best. Another big advantage of all Creative's nVidia based cards including the GeForce Pro is the unified drivers that owners of these cards can download. The unified drivers allow the cards to 'emulate' 3Dfx's Glide API and thus games such as Tribes and Unreal actually perform better by running them in Glide mode. You can also run Glide only games such as the earlier legacy games that came out before DirectX was incorporated in DirectX and the only cards on the market were Voodoo based cards. Besides support for Glide using the unified drivers the GeForce Pro also supports DirectX and OpenGL making the card compatible with all games being released. The 3D GeForce Pro is definitely the perfect 3D accelerator solution available at the moment. Although the card is expensive it does come with a Creative Labs standard 3-year warranty and excellent support. It also boasts the highest frame rates we have seen to date making it a gamers dream come true.

WHAT EXACTLY DO CAMERAS HAVE TO DO WITH GAMERS? THE ANSWER TO THAT RATHER FOOLISH QUESTION LIES IN NEWS OF BIG PLANS IN THE FUTURE TO INCLUDE LIVE INTERNET VIDEO FEED BUILT INTO GAMES LIKE QUAKE 3 ARENA. EVENTUALLY IT'LL BE POSSIBLE TO SEE THE FACES OF THOSE YOU MOST HATE WHILE RUNNING AND BURNING YOUR WAY THROUGH A MULTIPLAYER KILLING FRENZY.

Creative have really outdone themselves with this new video camera, it's bigger and better in almost every way and even has a couple of tricks up its sleeve that cookie-jar raiders might not like. Thanks to an all-new high resolution CMOS sensor the WebCam3 now boasts an impressive 640x480 image and video capture. The sensor isn't the only thing that's been improved on - the lens is of a higher quality, it's bigger, which allows the camera to capture better quality images right from the point of origin. The last little innovation is the improved control hardware that allows the camera to automatically adjust settings such as light, contrast and so on, this helps eliminate the various manual settings required if working in different environments such as fluorescent light at night and sunshine in the day. The unit comes supplied

## Creative Video Blaster WebCam3



so people can hear you while they see you. The camera itself looks sleek in its black coat of paint and has a 'flip up' lens mount with manual focusing ring. There are four rubber feet attached to the bottom of the camera so it will stay where you put it, a truly rare feat. There is a single button on the camera, which can be used for taking a shot or activating the supplied software. Again the USB device installation was simple from beginning to end and within a few minutes the camera and software were ready to start using. The first piece of software is the WebCam Control and is



used for capturing full-motion video, taking stills or adjusting the numerous settings. The next item of software is the rather brilliant WebCam Monitor, this program sets the camera up for a little undercover surveillance work on your behalf. After setting up a number of parameters you can leave your home or office safe in the knowledge that if motion is detected in front of the camera it'll automatically take a quick picture. The image can then even be sent to you via e-mail. There are a large number of different settings in the Monitor program starting at the top with detection sensitivity options right down to image format. Included in the deal is image manipulation software, Microsoft NetMeeting and Internet Explorer. All the software is easy to use and is well designed, offering more options than anything else on the market in this price range. The all-important image quality is exceptional in all resolutions and considering that the camera can run at a high frame rate this is an impressive achievement. If you are planning to send streaming video across the Internet then it's a better idea to reduce the resolution if you have any hope of seeing more than a single frame every two minutes. This isn't a fault of the camera but is rather determined by the speed of your Internet connection. In summary the WebCam3 has raised the standard by which all others will be judged. The best part about the whole deal is the price, this Internet Video Camera is quite possibly the best on the market at this time.

**Distributor:** MMW / SDD  
**Tel:** (011) 652-8400

**Pros:** Inexpensive  
Amazing Image  
Good Software  
**Cons:** Slightly Blurred Video

**RRP:** R 799.00  
**Internet:** <http://www.creative.com>

## Logitech Quickcam Express

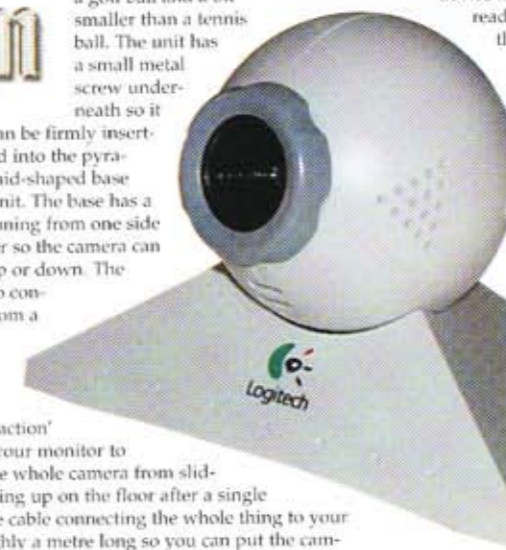
**Distributor:** Crew / SDD  
**Tel:** (011) 233-1111

**Pros:** Inexpensive  
Easy To Use  
Robust Design  
**Cons:** Limited Movement  
Low Resolutions  
Blurred Images

**RRP:** R 699.00  
**Internet:** <http://www.logitech.com>

Logitech bought out the camera from Connectix. The QuickCam Express is a free standing USB Internet Video Camera in the shape of a ball, a bit bigger than a golf ball and a bit smaller than a tennis ball. The unit has a small metal screw underneath so it can be firmly inserted into the pyramid-shaped base unit. The base has a groove running from one side to the other so the camera can be tilted up or down. The base is also constructed from a rubbery material that provides enough 'traction' on top of your monitor to prevent the whole camera from sliding or ending up on the floor after a single bump. The cable connecting the whole thing to your PC is roughly a metre long so you can put the camera on top of your monitor with plenty of room to spare. The camera has a manually adjustable lens that can be focused in or out by turning the focus dial, it's not a very scientific process but is easy to

use and does work without any problems. Overall the construction is sturdy, simple and functional, which results in prolonged life and ease of use. Setting the camera up is as easy as plugging it into any spare USB port you have, Windows detects the device and after a simple installation you're ready to start broadcasting your face to the world. The drivers and software included on the CD are adequate and as a bonus you get Microsoft NetMeeting software and Internet Explorer. The QuickCam express software is easy to use and doesn't have hundreds of menus and settings, which always tend to overcomplicate the relatively simple task of using a video camera. Literally minutes after installing the software and camera you can start taking images and recording movies. The image is clear at the highest resolution setting of 352 X 288 and 30 frames a second but any erratic movement causes the image to blur significantly, like almost any other low-end video camera solution. Overall the camera delivers a reasonable image for its size and technology (the QuickCam express uses a CMOS Sensor) and for the price it's a good purchase. The QuickCam Express is a good camera if you're just starting out and are looking to experiment with the technology.



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We have all heard of the cordless desktop, but few have actually experienced it. Finally Logitech have come up with a solution to all our needs with its keyboard and mouse bundle that utilises advanced digital radio technology. We have already reviewed the Logitech Cordless Mouseman Wheel in a previous issue and thought quite highly of it. The bundle also includes Logitech's Cordless Pro Keyboard, which is of the same high quality and performance. The 105 keyboard is ergonomic in design and is built around comfort and ease of use. The design is curvy and simplistic making for one of the most attractive keyboards on the market. It also features an eleven-button set-up for quick access to your favourite websites, search facilities, music players, and also includes buttons for snooze and muting sound. All CD music and MP3 functions can be controlled from the keyboard

## Logitech Cordless Desktop Pro



including next track, play and pause functions. Other features include fully configurable one-button access to e-mail and Internet sites as well as a handy sleep function that powers down the system. The Cordless Mouseman Wheel is one of the best mice on the market at the moment (though not altogether a gamers choice)



with an award winning design that is both comfortable and attractive.

It features a two-button and wheel configuration as well as a handy button positioned above the grip area of the thumb.

The two cordless products from Logitech are together the most comprehensive cordless solutions to date and all this within an affordable price range. Packaged with Logitech's iTouch software, which includes a database application for your music and MP3 files called Virtuosa that logs and organises your favourite songs. The 5-year warranty is a definite plus factor especially for the fairly unknown cordless market, showing that Logitech's backing of this products staying power is strong. The downside is that both the keyboard and mouse use batteries (which are included in the package) but after almost a month of non-stop use there are no signs of them giving up. If you are looking for a solution to your wire tangling problems then NAG recommends the Logitech Cordless Desktop Pro as the best possible solution out in the market at the moment.

**Distributor:** Crew / SDD  
**Tel:** (011) 233-1111

**Pros:** Advanced Radio Technology  
Both Mouse and Keyboard Solution  
Everything at the Touch of a Button

**Cons:** Batteries Needed

**RRP:** R 1099.00  
**Internet:** <http://www.logitech.com>

Not many people know that the Dexxa range of peripherals is actually Logitech's 'el cheapo' range of products. It's a well known fact that most Logitech peripherals are relatively more expensive than most other suppliers, so Logitech started their budget range called Dexxa to compete on both the entry level and hardcore arena's. To say that the Dexxa Gamepad is entry level is an understatement in today's terms. It offers extremely

## Dexxa Gamepad

limited features to the gamer but is backed up by an extremely affordable price. The controller offers 6-buttons and 2 index flipper buttons combined with an 8-way directional D-pad. Nothing more can be added to that because that's exactly what the Dexxa Gamepad is about, cheap and affordable basics. Quite frankly we feel that even at this wonderful price its still a little too bare for a controller that is going to be a partner in crime against archenemies.



Programmability and proportional movement to name a few could've made this one of the best gamepads on the market at the price. The ergonomics of the gamepad is rather good, with a 'batman' style shape bringing comfort to the hand positions. The buttons are positioned in the standard manner and the D-pad is strong and responsive. The drivers are none existent because they utilise the 4-axis, 4-button configuration within the controller set-up, showing that the gamepad is nothing more than bare bone essentials. As an entry-level device the Dexxa Gamepad is perfect for beginners but won't make the medium to hardcore gamers grade, but at the price you cannot falter the intentions that Logitech and Dexxa have in mind.

**Distributor:** Crew / SDD  
**Tel:** (011) 233-1111

**Pros:** Extremely Affordable  
8-buttons  
Entry Level Status

**Cons:** No Dedicated Drivers  
Old Design  
Not for the Dedicated

**RRP:** R 79.00  
**Internet:** <http://www.dexxaweb.com>

## Logitech Soundman X2

Finally one of the world's best peripheral developers has decided to make the transition into the speaker market - they being Logitech. Logitech has never been afraid of competition and it shows with their top of the range Soundman X2 that we were able to get our hands on. When it comes to design and concept Logitech is the leader in this department and have not disappointed with the Soundman X2. The 2 satellites are considerably smaller than anything out on the market and fit snugly next to your monitor. The subwoofer is one of the few that is able to fit on a desk and look the part.

As far as the technology and performance go, the Soundman X2 uses the new patented LIMAD technology from soundmatters. The concept around LIMAD is that it makes use of special neodymium magnets that are more or less 100 times stronger than traditional iron magnets. From that they position the magnets strategically that results in increased performance of the magnetics at both ends of the spectrum. Because the number of wire turns inside the magnetic field is higher, the efficiency at low frequencies is increased. In layman's terms they offer a 40-watt subwoofer system featuring 25 watts on the subwoofer itself and 8 watts per channel on the two satellites. It has a 30Hz to 20kHz frequency response that is pretty much the entire spectrum of the human ear. This means you'll hear all but the very lowest notes and get a superb listening experience. But once cranked up to over 75% on the volume scale we enter the no zone of distortion. Yes, a little disappointing considering the technology. The speakers are however magnetically shielded so monitor interference is non-existent and they have an integrated power supply that eliminates a need for an adapter. Other features include headphone jacks for private listening, volume and bass control. Somehow Logitech decided against an on/off switch but rather decided to opt for a sound detection system that conveniently powers down the speakers. Not had considering the quick power up time once it detects sound from the system.



Overall we found the Soundman X2 to be a wonderful addition to any desktop but the R1199.00 price point is something that does not sit well with us. It is only a three speaker system and even though it does perform very well at less than 60%, it falls a little short of expectations considering the choice of the Creative Cambridge and Altec Lansing competitors in the market at the moment. Speakers are becoming such an integral part of the PC system and Logitech are certainly driving that impression, but Logitech also know that price point makes all the difference especially in today's South African market.

**Distributor:** Crew / SDD  
**Tel:** (011) 233-1111

**Pros:** Wonderful Design and Size  
High Performance Specs and Technology  
Excellent Sound Definition

**Cons:** Expensive for 3 Speaker System  
Lacks Performance over 60% Max Volume  
No Digital Support

**RRP:** R 1199.00  
**Internet:** <http://www.logitech.com>

# The perfect Valentine gift to keep in touch, from Logitech.



## QuickCam Express

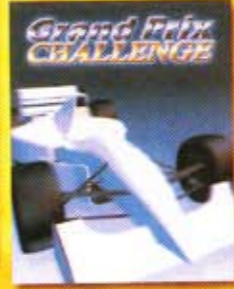
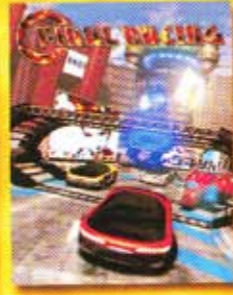
Combining affordability with a simple design, QuickCam Express lets you send video images and photos over the Internet as easily as you now send text. Simply plug in the camera, install the easy-to-use software, and push a button to record a video or snap a photo.



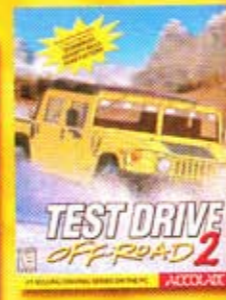
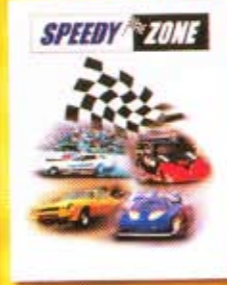
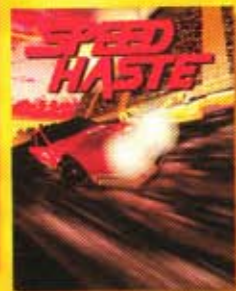
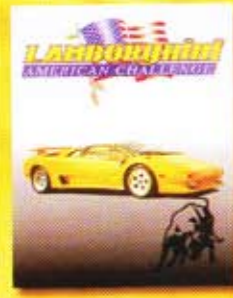
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**Image Size:** Up to 352x288 pixels (Common Interchange Format)  
**Number of Colours:** Thousands or Millions  
**Camera Focus Range:** 0' to infinity  
**Frame Rate:** Up to 30 frames per second

**CREW**

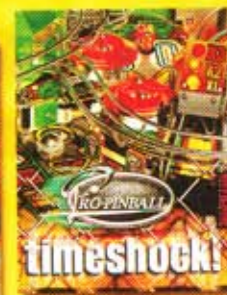
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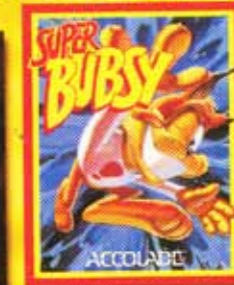
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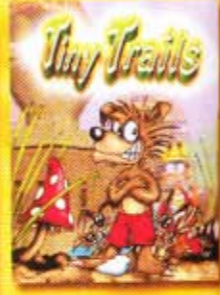
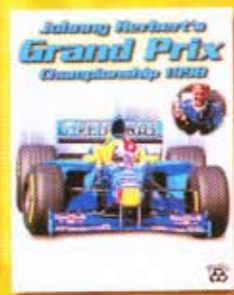
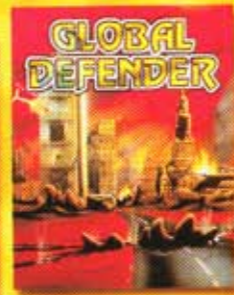
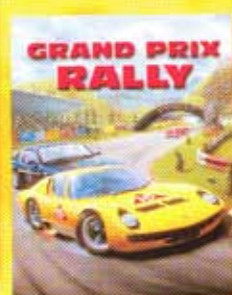


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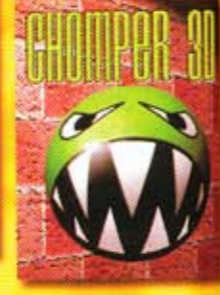
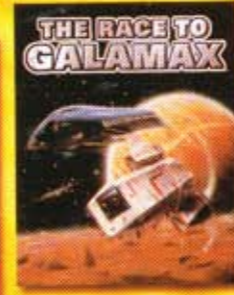
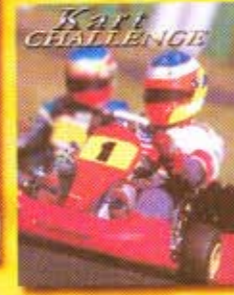
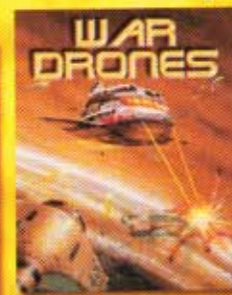


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# MULTIPLAYER MAYHEM

Ever since Doom graced our humble VGA screens we have been steadily stumbling towards global playing arenas filled with body counts and rankings. The art of fragging has become an obsession to those of us trapped in the Deathmatch void, so much so that the body has become immune to caffeine and the effects of fatigue. What does this all mean for the future? Quite simply that the multiplayer playing fields are the sports grounds of the future.

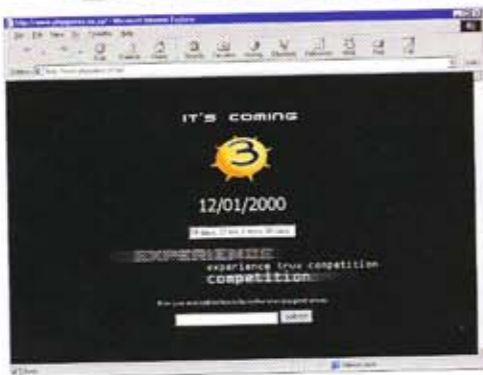
Let's step through the NAG portal into the future and try and predict what it would be like to go and watch a rugby game in the year 2005.

Overpopulation and poverty will restrict access to the wealthy, while crime and arbitrary transportation will keep people in their homes. Becoming a superstar is also restricted to the gifted few that have the ability and stamina to play such a sport. Are we fearful of this occurrence? No, the 'Cyber Athlete' will save the day and offer live viewing to the masses by transmitting internet broadcasting into the virtual arenas. People from all walks of life will compete from the safety of their homes in daily multiplayer events. Cyber Superstars will be born and a new breed of heroes will be looked up to by the kids of the era. All boundaries will be transgressed as we transverse all borders and open the world up to the splendour and adrenaline pumping world of multiplayer gaming...

(Wake up, wake up, Ed) Oops, dozed off for a while there. Ah, yes, we can expect the PC (and console) and Internet technologies to improve so quickly that these visions are not just pipe dreams in my head. The visionaries of id Software and Epic Games seem to think that the world is ready for these far reaching environments that will entertain groups of competing gamers for hours on end. These prophets are slowly moulding and shaping the world into their vast arenas of portals and power ups. But even though electronic entertainment overtook Hollywood's turnover in 1998, it is

still considered to be an escapist route for the rejects of society, or not. As time passes more and more average everyday Joe Soap's are being welcomed into the world of cyber competition, with overwhelming results. What we have is a phenomenon that is similar to a volcano in many ways, while it is brimming with gaming servers and stressing the world networks to the limit, it needs to

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find a crevice or opening to free it. The multiplayer crevice in my opinion is publicity, yes the good old fashioned journalistic gravy train is the salvation for our sport. How many of you readers have actually seen a live or even taped broadcast of any of

the CPL or PGL events over the last few years? Internet coverage is rife but is still restricted to those with the knowledge and ambition to look for the information. What we need is a dedicated TV channel aimed at our cultural needs, something that feeds our hunger and gives us the mechanism to promote and hype our demands for recognition, that should shake 'em up. Somehow over

these few growth years we have scared the old school away by firstly racking up the hours in front of our systems (and not on the sports ground), and secondly scared the hell out of them with the expensive bills and the never ending desire to upgrade, and lets not forget Y2K. But as time passes they are being roped into the technological revolution, in their jobs and casual lives. Once the transition is made we can expect the boom of the volcano to occur with such force that few will be able to ignore it.

Even now we are readying ourselves for the onslaught of competitive gaming and South Africa is not immune to its eruption. The ISP's have only tested the waters, only MWEB's [www.gamezone.co.za](http://www.gamezone.co.za) is investing the necessary time, effort and money into satisfying our demands. In the past we had been subjected to the odd server placed on some arbitrary backbone somewhere in the basement of a corporate headquarters. Now fellow SA gamers we are about to enter the world of pay-for-play with a new investment from a company called Magenta. Its virtual arenas can be accessed at [www.playgames.co.za](http://www.playgames.co.za), whether or not you will be tempted away from the hallow grounds of free service, we are still about to take the next big step into widening the crevice of our local gaming volcano. The single player only game is slowly becoming an endangered species as our needs for frags and tactical empowerment grows. We have finally entered the next thousand years and if our growth curve is anything to gauge by, then the Cyber Athlete will dominate the world by 2010. Not bad considering it all began in a garage somewhere in Texas 1992.

On Saturday the 20th of November 1999 all of South Africa's aircraft-enthusiasts gathered at the Swartkops Airbase to witness a bit of the old and the new of the flying era. What they did not expect to see was a virtual flight arena filled with dog-fights and flight paths.

In conjunction with Electronic Arts Africa, Logitech and Pinnacle Micro Computers, the

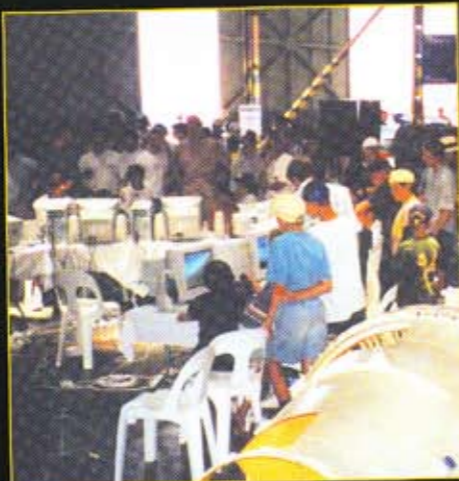


### Gamer's League of South Africa Goes Airborne

GLSA was able to put on a show stopper of note. People from all walks of life, young and old, were able to

fly some of the latest flight sims available and also managed to get a sneak peek at Janes latest USAF.

As the World War 2 Spitfires and Mustangs took flight we



OVERALL WINNERS: ROGER CLARK (AGE 15), MURRAY MCMAHON (AGE 18), ROSS PARKER (AGE 17), RENALDO VAN DER MERWE (AGE 16)

slowly eliminated squadron after squadron of pilots until we had only one. Congratulations go to our first virtual squadron winners who each walked away with EA games and caps. Many thanks from the GLSA goes out to the sponsors on the day for making it an overwhelming success, so much so that we have been given a permanent invitation for the shows to come. See you there again next year.

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# The Demo Scene

id software gave the Quake community a nice present just before Christmas last year - the complete source to Quake 1, GL Quake, QuakeWorld and WinQuake. The source is licensed under the GNU General Public License which is the same license most of the Linux operating system code is released under.

Legalese aside, it means the code is free for use in both commercial and non-commercial environments, provided any changes you make are also released under the same license. So for instance you can't make a commercial game and sell it using the Quake engine without making all the source code available.

Also the data files (maps, sounds, music) are copyrighted by id, so should you want to make a game, you'll have to make your own. Quake is possibly one of the most popular games ever, given its following on the Net. The Guinness Book of Records lists it as the game

## Big News: Free 3D Engine!

BY PAUL FURBER

INTERNET: [HTTP://WWW.SURF.TO/DEMOS](http://www.surf.to/demos)

E-MAIL: [SADEMOD@EGROUPS.COM](mailto:sademod@egroups.com)

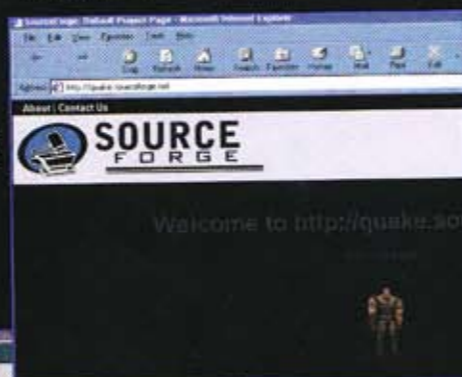
E-MAIL: [M@VERICK.CO.ZA](mailto:m@verick.co.za)

# QUAKE SOURCE!

Programmers of all ilk should be happy. Before the source release, plenty of scope was available to change aspects of Quake since the game logic was available in source form. But the actual rendering engine was hidden in binary form only. You were stuck with any limitations it had. This didn't stop hackers across the world from making

all kinds of innovative additions to the game, but they were limited by what they could do. No longer. The whole source is available for free, including the OpenGL code, the QuakeWorld client prediction and server code and the core game engine

over 100 000 lines of code, the source to Quake is decidedly non-trivial. Remember it took a group



of the finest minds in game programming history over two years to put together, and that's not counting the GL code or the networking improvements introduced in the multiplayer-only QuakeWorld that were added later. There are also no indexes, no hints of where to start looking and no overall map of how it fits together. But those won't take long to spring up on the Net - look at

<http://quake.sourceforge.net> for an early

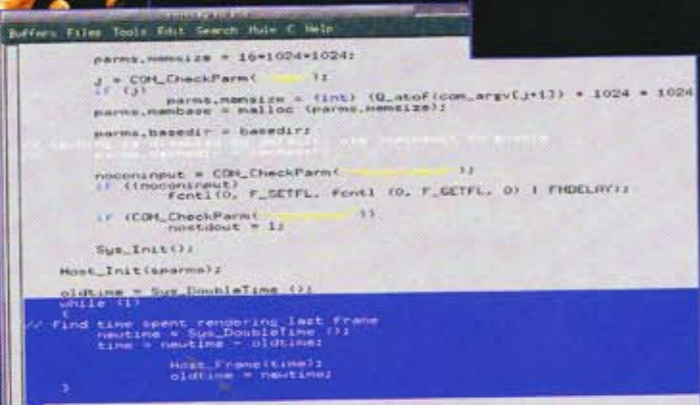
example. I reckon it will take six months or less for someone to come out with a free game based on the source. But if you're a beginner games or demo programmer, it's not a good place to start looking for hints. Sure, there are plenty of gems - pipelined polygon drawing code in assembler, clever optimisations for level drawing, a brilliant Z-buffer implementation and all the networking code you could ever need for your own game. But there are still no short-cuts to being the next Carmack.

(Mail [m@verick.co.za](mailto:m@verick.co.za) if you violently disagree with the above, want to chat or want some more pointers on how to get started).

/MAVERICK



with the largest following. This is thanks mainly to the huge number of web sites devoted to all aspects of the game - playing it, playing against others on the Net, or making your own modifications to it, but could also be because it really 'is' one of the best games ever written.



unless you already know how the game's supplementary programs work. These were released just after the game itself and include the tools for creating, lighting and saving maps and characters. The code for drawing levels is pretty incomprehensible unless you know that Quake levels are compressed BSP trees with some additional information stored at each tree node for speed purposes. The reason software Quake was so fast on a P-75 was mainly due to the clever design of the levels. Assembler junkies will be happy; there's also about 10 000

lines of optimised assembly language in At&T format included. At a total of

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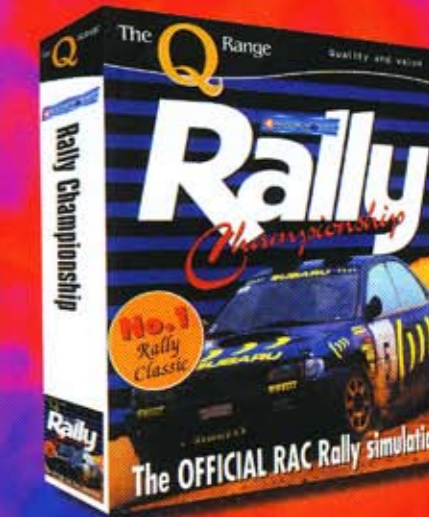
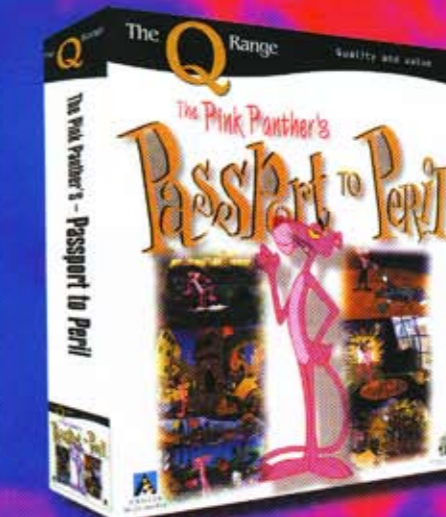
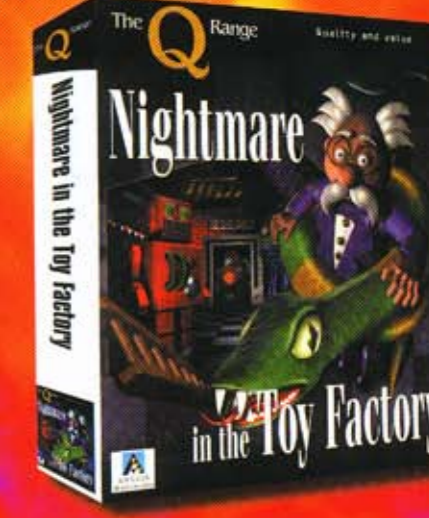
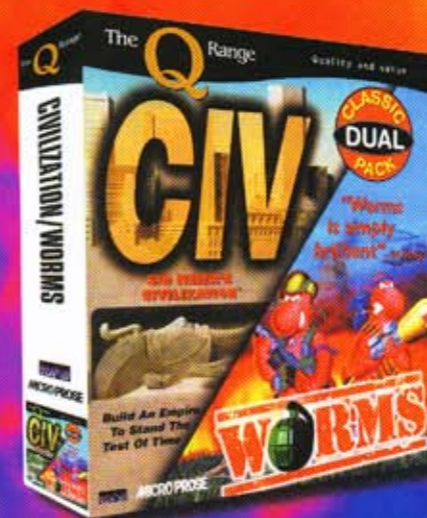
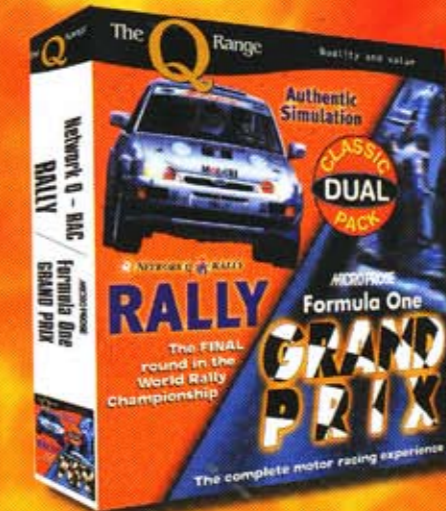
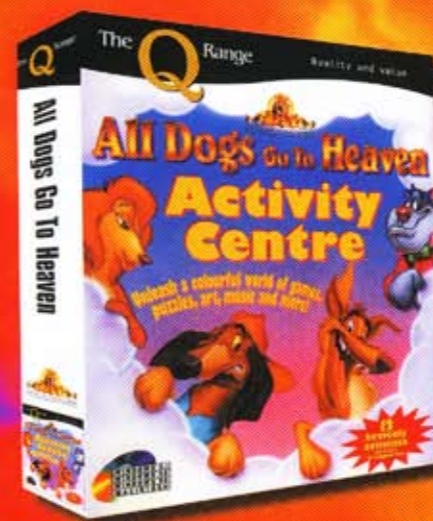
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### Important Information

This section is for PlayStation exclusively, PC gamers please see the cover CD where we place any new cheats for PC games. The archive on the CD is ongoing and contains all PC cheats to date. In the future we may consider placing a PlayStation cheat archive on the CD.

### Spyro 2: Gateway to Glimmer

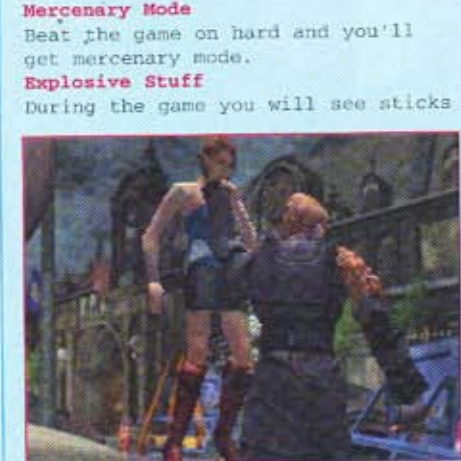
See the Crash Team Racing Demo  
At the intro menu screen, hold L1, R2, and press Square.



### Resident Evil 3: Nemesis

**Killing Nemesis**  
If you can, try and kill (disable) Nemesis at every opportunity you get. Every time you manage to kill him, he will drop an item for you. The items he drops are as follows.  
1st time: Eagle part A  
2nd time: Eagle part B  
3rd time: First Aid Kit  
4th time: M37 part A  
5th time: M37 part B  
6th time: First Aid Kit  
7th time: Unlimited Ammunition Kit  
The Eagle parts combine to form the Eagle 6.0 handgun. It fires 9mm bullets and has a chance of causing a 'critical' hit. This 'critical' hit will kill any non-boss opponent with one shot, but it happens randomly.  
The M37 parts combine to form the M37 Western Custom Shotgun. This is a shotgun a little bigger than a pistol and has a very good rate of fire. It only stores 6 shots of 12 gauge, but is still a very good gun.  
The Unlimited Ammo Kit can be combined with any weapon in your arsenal to give it unlimited ammunition. Combining it with the Magnum is the best option.

**Mercenary Mode**  
Beat the game on hard and you'll get mercenary mode.  
**Explosive Stuff**  
During the game you will see sticks



of dynamite strapped to the walls, or oil drums lying around. Usually there are a lot of monsters by them. When you see them, press L2 and X and it will aim to the objects and blow it and all of the monsters around it into bits. Just don't get too close to the explosive, or you will blow up.

**Boutique Key**  
Beat the game once on either difficulty and after the credits, you will get a key for the boutique in the first street in the beginning of the game. When you go inside you can change your clothes to Regina's from Dino Crisis, or Jill's blue clothes from the first game.

**Saving Ammo**  
In the beginning Brad will get attacked by a zombie in the bar. He will throw him and the zombie will come back at him. Jill will run over, you will take control. Don't help Brad kill the zombie. You will save 5 to 7 shots if you don't shoot.

**Hints**  
The shotgun can be your best friend against normal zombies. When they come in small numbers or single file, aim and wait until they are



almost on you and fire once for an instant, brain-exploding head shot, or aim straight at a group to hit a wide spread of targets. Don't be afraid to run away very fast, especially when you're low on ammo or when you're facing Nemesis in the earlier parts of the game. Hand-to-hand combat with the knife against these enemies is never a good idea.  
The Magnum almost always unleashes an instant-death head shot on zombies, but the ammunition for it is scarce most of the way, so it pays to save it for later.  
Because you get branching choices for certain events, always pay attention to your environment for clues to how the choices might lead - they inevitably trigger an FMV sequence that shows Jill escaping in the fashion you selected. Most of the time, the outcomes are predictable, and usually your choice doesn't particularly matter to the rest of the game.  
**Get the STARS Card**  
When you first encounter Nemesis

## PLAYSTATION CHEATS

outside the police station, choose to fight the monster. Then run to Brad's body and search him for the card case. Check the item and you will get a STARS card. You can use that in the computer in the main hallway for the safe code.

**Get the Rocket Launcher**  
To get the rocket launcher, you must first defeat Nemesis in the garbage disposal area to get the card key, and then take the facility key to the machine that is next to the place where you put in the water sample. Use the facility key in the ultraviolet ray machine and it will put codes on it. You can then return to the room with the steam coming out of the pipes and go on the elevator. Use the facility key at the door at the end and you will get the Rocket Launcher.

**Find Hostages**  
In the mini-game mercenaries you must save 6 hostages.  
1 - Dario Russo - He's in the gas station.  
2 - Woman - She is in the upstairs room of the press office.  
3 - Brad - In the basement of the restaurant.  
4 - Officer Branaugh - He's in the area where you find the fuse.  
5 - Umbrella team member - In the area where you find the oil additive.  
6 - Umbrella team member - In the bar.

### Tomb Raider 4: The Last Revelation

**Atomic Lara**  
Turns Lara's pistol into a nuclear missile launcher. During the title screen loader enter L1, L1, L1, Triangle, Circle, Circle, X, X, X, X, R1, R1, R2, L2, Square. After that you have to get to the second level and pick up the shotgun ammo in the tomb when you don't have a shotgun then go to your inventory and click on the shotgun ammo and it will be your pistol and then press L1, L1, L1, L2, L2, L2, L2, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R2, R2, R2 then put it away and take it out again. It will then shoot nuclear missiles.

**Gold Skulls in the Training Level**  
In the very beginning walk to your



left go a little up and you should find a golden skull. When he is teaching you the running jump automatically fall to the back and you should get another skull.

**Level Skip**  
Turn Lara exactly North according to her compass, then enter the inventory screen. Highlight the 'Load Game' selection, hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 + Up and press Triangle. Note: A good way to have Lara face exactly North is to have her hang from a ledge that is facing North. Then while continuing to hang from the ledge, press Select to enter the inventory screen.

**All Weapons, Infinite Ammunition, Medipacks**  
Turn Lara exactly North according to her compass, then enter the inventory screen. Highlight the 'Small Medipack' selection, hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 + Up and press Triangle.

**All Items**  
Turn Lara exactly North according to her compass, then enter the inventory screen. Highlight the 'Large Medipack' selection, hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 + Down and press Triangle.

### Tomorrow Never Dies

**Cheat Mode**  
At pause screen press Select, Select, Circle, Circle to get cheat mode. Then enter these codes to activate the following:  
**Full Health**  
Triangle, Select



**All Weapons & 50 Medkits**  
L1, L1, R1, R1  
**Beat Current Mission**  
Select, Circle  
**Ethereal Mode (become invincible and pass through objects)**  
Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle

**View all FMV Sequences**  
L1, L1, L1, L1, L1, L1, L1, L1  
**Debug Mode**  
L2, R2, L2 (Note: To disable, press R2, L2, R2)  
**HUD Toggle**  
Left, Right, Select  
**Toggle Light Source**  
Select, Select, Circle, Circle  
**Toggle Spy Camera**  
R2, R2  
**Level Select**  
L1, L1, Circle, L1, L1  
**Minimum Health**  
Down, Down, Up

**Freeze all Objects**  
Select, Select, R1, R1  
**Another Bond**  
When in the Carver Media Centre, after escaping from the cell return to where you met Paris. You should see another James Bond standing in the place of where Paris was standing.

### Warpath: Jurassic Park

**Single and Survivor Modes**  
Successfully complete arcade mode on any difficulty setting with any character to unlock single and survivor modes.

**Exhibition Mode**  
Successfully complete arcade mode on any difficulty setting with eight regular and five bonus characters to unlock exhibition mode.  
**Bonus FMV Sequence**  
Successfully complete arcade mode on any difficulty setting with all fourteen characters to view a FMV sequence featuring dinosaurs.

### Test Drive 6

To enable the corresponding cheats type in following as name:

Name	Code
OPIOP	All challenges
DFGY	All cars
ERDRTH	All tracks
CVCVEM	All quick tracks
QTFFHY	Short tracks
PFOEMIT	Disable checkpoints
AKJGO	Get \$6 000 000
RPGTR	Stop The Bomber mode

### WCW Mayhem

**Cheat Codes**  
Enter these codes as a password at the PPV password screen:  
All backrooms - CBCRMS  
Play as same wrestlers - DPLGNRS  
Classic TNT Nitro set - PLYNTRCLSC  
Super created wrestlers - MKSPRCWS  
All wrestlers - PLYHDNGYS  
Quest For The Best mode - CHT4DBST  
Transform Billy Kidman - NGGDYNLN  
Stamina meter - PRNTSTMN  
Momentum meter - PRNTMNTM



**Throw a Weapon into the Ring**  
Press L2 quickly followed by Square while weapon is in your hand, your wrestler is close to the ring, and your opponent is in the ring.  
**Flush 'em**  
In the Bathroom backstage area, Irish Whip an opponent into a urinal to trigger the sound of it

flushing. To perform the Irish Whip, press Square to grapple with an opponent. While grappling press the D-pad + R1.  
**World War III PPV**  
Enter 'yKh#JS=JQLmPs' as a PPV password.

**Halloween Havoc PPV**  
Enter 'td\*pkRmZ-cyL' as a PPV password. Matches include Disco Inferno vs. Lash LeRoux for the Cruiserweight title, Bret 'Hitman' Hart vs. 'Total Package' Lex Luger, DDP vs. 'Nature Boy' Ric Flair, and Sting vs. Hollywood Hogan for the World title.

**Play as Arn Anderson**  
Complete Quest For The Best mode with a Cruiserweight wrestler on hard difficulty setting.  
**Play as Bobby Eaton**  
Complete Quest For The Best mode with a Cruiserweight wrestler on easy difficulty setting.



**Play as Lash LeRoux**  
Complete Quest For The Best mode with a Cruiserweight wrestler on medium difficulty setting.

**Play as Rick Steiner**  
Complete Quest For The Best mode at hard difficulty setting.

**Play as Scott Hall**  
Complete Quest For The Best mode at hard difficulty setting.

**Wrestle as Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker**  
Complete Quest For The Best mode with any wrestler on the easy difficulty setting.

**Wrestle as Sonny Onoo**  
Complete Quest For The Best mode with any wrestler on the easy difficulty setting.

**Wrestle as Bobby Blayze**  
Complete Quest For The Best mode with a non-cruiserweight on the easy difficulty setting.

**Wrestle as Bam Bam Bigelow**  
Complete Quest For The Best mode with a non-cruiserweight on the medium difficulty setting.

**Wrestle as Barry Windham**  
Complete Quest For The Best mode with a non-cruiserweight on the medium difficulty setting.

**Wrestle as Jimmy Hart**  
Complete Quest For The Best mode with any wrestler on the hard difficulty setting.

**Wrestle as Chris Jericho**  
Wrestle in all thirteen backstage areas during Quest For The Best mode.

Please send any cheat requests to assassin@nag.co.za.

Happy New Year to everyone! New Age Gaming is back in the new millennium and we kick the year off with a foiled Quake 3 Cover and a bumper Quake 3 Arena Cover CD filled with all the goodies any Quaker could ever wish for. There are maps, models, and skins, editing utilities and of course the official demo - and this is only the beginning. Throughout the year I will be putting on modifications, skins, maps and utilities so everyone can start practising their skills for our GLSA events. Of course our action game for these events will be Quake 3 and we are currently researching better methods of logging statistics and different methods to implement a GLSA ranking system. We will be announcing particulars of our upcoming events soon so make sure to watch the GLSA website and our magazine closely if you think you've got what it takes to become number one in South Africa. We currently would appreciate some input from the public about LAN events being held, other multiplayer competitions, and just general get-togethers for multiplayer gaming happening around the country. If you have anything to report send an email to [assassin@nag.co.za](mailto:assassin@nag.co.za) including the type of network running, which



DIABLO II LOOKING GOOD!

games are being played and how many people will be attending. Y2K has come and gone and funny enough my PC is still running fine, I hope that everyone out there can say the same. If you ask me it was just one big bag full of air, assuming you have a more recent motherboard of course. Now that the New Year has arrived all the outstanding and probably some of the most anticipated games that should have been released last year will be arriving. The whole company is looking forward to the release of Diablo II and personally I look forward to the release of Final Fantasy VIII for the PC. Windows 2000 will make its appearance as well and is being launched on the 17th of February. At last an operating system that doesn't require any reboots when you install new drivers and will hopefully be more stable than Windows 98. If most of these ship on schedule it is going to be a Happy New Year indeed. Well time again for the Editor to do his predictions while I go chuckle in the corner. Are we ever going to get these release dates correct? Not that it's our fault. I think all developers should have a New Years resolution - 'We will ship our games on schedule and stop messing up NAG's release predictions.'

Just for once we'd like to see these predictions come true. We're all holding thumbs...



**TOMB RAIDER**  
THE LAST REVELATION

Lara Croft has returned, for the last time... or so we think. Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation is perfectly positioned to wrap up the series and show us a little more about who Lara Croft really is - she even gets to save the whole world. This last game has made many promises and next month we'll find out if any of them are true. Get ready for some serious tomb raiding.



**Ultima**  
ASCENSION IX

Would you like to explore an enormous virtual world, talk to people who don't really exist and fight a thousand hairy monsters with only a small short sword? If this sounds like the kind of fun you live for then make sure you read our in-depth review of Ultima Ascension IX next month. They say this is the last game in the long-standing series, so we're expecting something special.



**Unreal**  
TOURNAMENT

Is this the next big first person shooter - is it better than the rest? The debate still rages on over which is better, Quake 3 Arena or Unreal Tournament - the lines have been drawn and first blood has been spilt. Next month we put this high-speed run and gun shooter under the microscope, and decide which game comes out on top - we're guessing you already know the answer to that one.

## a NAGging suspicion

tales of desperate self improvement from the NAG offices, as told by SHRYKE

Soul Assassin will single-handedly solve Johannesburg's air pollution problems... by cutting down on smoking.



**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:**

**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:**



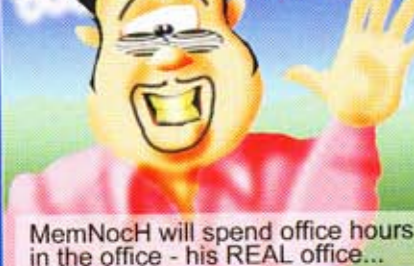
RedTide will secure his place in the afterlife by developing a conscience.

Shryke will not get depressed about being useless at Quake.



**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:**

**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:**



MemNoCH will spend office hours in the office - his REAL office...

**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:**



Flogger will set his monitor resolution to greater than 64 x 48...

**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:**

Storm will let us know as soon as he gets back from the golf course...

# ONLY IN YOUR DREAMS...

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