

# NAG

**NEW AGE GAMING MAGAZINE**

south africa's leading technology & computer entertainment magazine



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Jurassic Park: Operation Genesis | Star Trek: Elite Force II  
Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb | Vietcong

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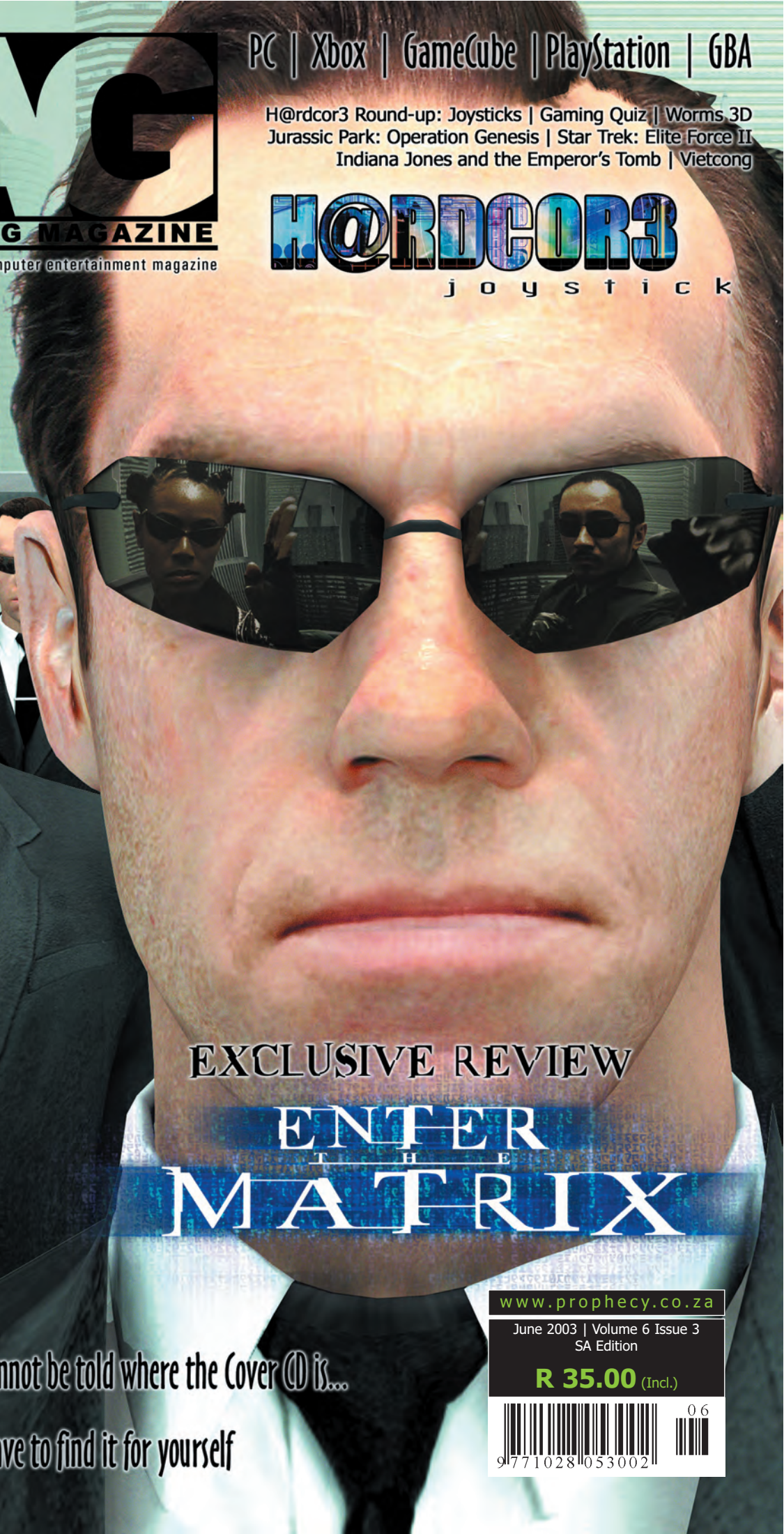
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# ENTER MATRIX™

THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY  
TO ENTER THE MATRIX

"The most anticipated videogame in history"

PSM2 Magazine

Written and Directed by the Wachowski Brothers, the creators of the Matrix™ trilogy

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Cover: Smith? Agent... Smith? That could only mean one thing... yes, Enter the Matrix is inside!

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# COVER CD

## DEMOS

Castle Wolfenstein Enemy Territory Test	101 MB
Star Trek - Elite Force II	119 MB
Vietcong	99.6 MB

## MOVIES

Breed Introduction Movie	34.4 MB
Homeworld 2 Trailer	63.3 MB
Nintendo GameCube Quest 2003 Finals	23.9 MB
The Cradle of Life Trailer [Tomb Raider]	18.7 MB
The Hulk International Trailer	19.3 MB
The Matrix Reloaded Second Trailer	97.4 MB

## PATCHES

Delta Force Black Hawk Down v1.2.1	10.2 MB
Rainbow Six Raven Shield v1.1	4.4 MB
TOCA Race Driver v11_120	1.8 MB
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell v1.2b	11.6 MB
Unreal Tournament 2003 v2225	12.3 MB

## MODIFICATIONS - ADD ONS

Age of Mythology Campaign The Golden Gift	10.4 MB
Splinter Cell Screensaver	2.7 MB
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Raven Shield Web Kit	12.4 MB
Unreal Editor Tutorial Map	3.3 MB
Zoo Tycoon Marine Mania Barracuda	0.3 MB

## UTILITIES

Motherboard Monitor v5.3.2.0	2.3 MB
QQ	8.6 MB

## CHEATS

Cheatbook Database	9.9 MB
May 2003 Update	1 MB

## ESTIMATED TOTAL

668 MB



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without them we are lost.



Phew...

**You know that** old story about locking a journalist in a room for a week and sliding a pizza under the door every 12 hours because he had a last minute exclusive review to bash out? Well it really happened this issue, no really - the game Enter the Matrix arrived at the MegaRom office on the Monday and by that Thursday [after holding up the entire magazine production cycle] we finally sent the four review pages down to our printer. The cover also changed at the last minute - it was supposed to be Indiana Jones swinging his whip around - [see picture below left]... what a rush! Thanks to everyone who helped make this possible [especially Walter, how was that pizza?]. Do enjoy the review - it's probably one of the first print publication reviews of this game in the whole world.

**Okay, we'll just have to go bigger then...**

Next month look out for our E3 Tribune - it's all about E3 - [E3 is a trade only annual expo in Los Angeles that takes place during May every year. It's the biggest gaming event on the calendar where publishers, developers and thousands of press get together to announce and report on the future of gaming.] For gamers, E3 represents the start of life for many new titles... games that will be eagerly followed, examined and drooled over until they are released (in some case years after they are announced). This year we sent James, our new Features Editor, formerly known as James, our webmaster. His new title will be official from the July issue onwards - he spent this issue @ E3 - so this is his punishment. James has

plans to add more useful content to the magazine in the form of features and from the July or August issue onwards he'll be adding 2 new permanent sections [I can't say what they are now, the competition ran out of good ideas about 8 months ago, snicker - no offence <censored>]. So, just buy the next two issues to find out.

**LANs**

Something that we cover in this issue is the warm topic of LANs and doing them right. I have a simple message to any organiser of any LAN no matter how big or small - you have a responsibility to get your event as close to perfect as possible and to, at the very least, make good on all your promises. We don't have an endless supply of gamers and sponsors in SA and if enough people get burnt, the whole community will end up back in the stone age...

Next month I'll continue my slating of companies that irritate me, and yes, even if they advertise with NAG they'll still get a written slap, because NAG readers need to know... besides we've got them all tied up in so much contractual legal paperwork they don't even know which time zone to use to contact our lawyers at our Seychelles office.

Michael James  
Editor

The July issue is something special as we will be featuring the incredible, amazing, humongous, but wait... that's not all... **E3 Tribune** for the terribly low price of nothing at all - **R 0.00**. It's a whole extra supplement to the magazine and will be packed with so much **E3** news you'll think you actually went yourself.

The July issue will be on sale: 26 June 2003

Alternative

This is the cover that never was [see Ed's Note]... or was it? Maybe you ended up with the wrong magazine... from another dimension...



**SPLINTER CELL COMPETITION:**

The person that e-mails us with the subject line: **Sam O Bent Quark™** as well as an acronym for Cell [the best one...] wins the following stuff:

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Entries to comp@nag.co.za



caption of the month



**Bee fun knee**

Each month we'll select a screenshot from one of the games in the issue and write a funny caption for it, well... we'll try and make it funny...

Your job is to see if you can come up with an even funnier caption and send it to: **ed@nag.co.za**  
Subject: **June Caption**

If you use the wrong subject in your e-mail it'll get deleted...

**Your prize:** Our sponsor for the screenshot of the month competition is Vivendi Universal Games. They said they'll give us something interesting each month... if we don't want it we'll be sure to send it along to the winner mentioned to the right of this... here...?



▲ 'Their mother's obsession with bleach caused problems for Bob and Hugo later in life' - **nag's best [63% lame] effort**



▲ 'Tom regretted letting Susan have a go...' - **Brett Pretorius**

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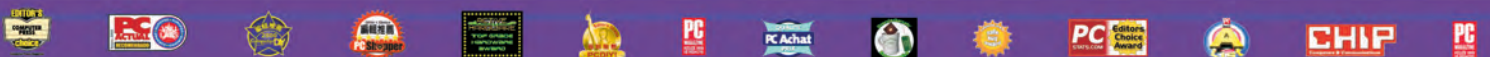
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# THE DOMAIN OF THE BASILISK

Never before have I arrived at a gaming event as a mere player, and left there afterwards as the impromptu organiser of an entire competition. The benefit of this situation is that I was able to get somewhat of an insider's perspective on what I consider to be the most poorly organised gaming event in South African history. Please note this article is based on personal experience, as well as information and impressions given freely to me by G8Keeper staff and other participants at the event. The event was not entirely without merit of course, although in the end it left far too much to be desired. For official responses to issues surrounding the 1000ManLAN, you will find an in-depth interview with the G8Keeper team in our Community.za section.

I arrived at the event on Saturday morning at 6:30am. After being given a press tour of the hangars, I decided to make one last check that everything was in order for the Unreal Tournament 2003 event. I had agreed to provide G8Keeper with the rules and tournament format, which I had already done via email, and on the day I thought I'd lend a hand with installing the game servers. Imagine my surprise when the servers promised by G8Keeper were all of a sudden non-existent. The "technical director" told me that they had just "died" and then proceeded to ignore my queries for the rest of the event. I later discovered that there were a grand total of four servers for the entire LAN. That, quite frankly, is moronic. Four servers for over a thousand people.

Along with that scintillating news, I was basically informed that unless I took it upon myself to find servers and take the position of Tournament Director for Unreal Tournament 2003, the competition would not happen. (Special thanks to Jonathan Lydall, Robin Harper, and the Mayhem crew who eventually provided servers). This was not an isolated incident, as the competitors themselves ended up running every single competition with the sole exception of Quake 3. This, of course, led to countless accusations of favouritism and tournament rigging. By the very principle of it, you cannot have officials playing in the tournaments they are supposed to be running. The communities were forced to step in, not wanting to see their games fail. In this respect, the event was rescued entirely by the players. There were no official referees watching over the games. There was no official planning whatsoever. There were a few hardworking exceptions, but the vast majority of blue-shirted "staff members" were running around like lost chickens with no idea of how to do their jobs, or any concept of what their jobs were. The entire event was apparently run by four people.

The ability of the venue to handle all possible power issues was boasted about on numerous occasions. However, at least two banks of players (by official word) had no power at all until 4:00pm on Saturday afternoon. There were erratic drops in power all through the weekend in most sections of the LAN. I am told there was a dedicated staff of 8-10 people looking after power, but I personally couldn't find them anywhere. Upon loss of power, the sole "electrician" just sat there staring at the electrics box with a stoned expression on his face, not realising there was even a problem. The registrations manager, and several community members ended up having to sort out the electricity for the UT2003 section. We eventually had to move the entire competition to another section, having to plead with the CS and Q3 players already there to move. It didn't help much that the seating arrangements were abandoned at the last minute and players just told to sit "where-ever". Security was almost non-existent as well. The VIP area was frequented by pretty much everyone, and was subsequently defiled. There were supposed to be staff checking tags at the entrance, but I saw many gamers walk through unchecked.

The network was my personal humour highlight of the event. While the switches,

sponsored by HP, were nothing short of godlike, the network was so poorly set up that players were getting initial pings of between 100 and 200, then frequent network drops and severe ping spikes all throughout the weekend. Several important matches had to be replayed because of this. It was blamed on too many open shares, viruses, denial of service attacks, and IP address allocation problems. However, the unshielded network cable running right over the unshielded power cables, as well as large rolled-up heaps of network cable would more readily explain the interference and therefore the packet loss. With the equipment available, every single player on the network should have been able to copy at once, and still get pings of under 50. Eventually, WarCraft III and UT2003 effectively isolated themselves from the rest of the network in order to get stable connections.

Now I don't know precisely what is happening with the sponsor issue, but the official word is that no sponsors pulled out, only that some failed to deliver due to distribution issues. As I mentioned in an article in the months before this, I am not happy with the way sponsorships are apparently handled. Delivery is crucial to sponsorship! What good is it if all the event can do is proclaim the sponsor's name? This resulted in prizes being nothing short of awful. However, I wonder if any decent prizes were planned in the first place. According to G8Keeper, the R50 000 cash mentioned in an email was due to a cut and paste error. We are talking about a professional undertaking here and as

such that is absolutely, unconditionally, unforgivable. Another issue that concerns me is the spending of money. G8Keeper have stated they worked on a budget of R250 000 for the event. Why then, could we not have had a venue like, say, the Sundome? The prizes given out were abysmal, I'll say it again. What on earth is a Quake 3 player going to do with a drawing of two Soldier of Fortune characters? What use will a WarCraft III player have for a Mechwarrior doll? How can a UT2003 player conceivably use a pair of 3D Glasses? How likely is it for

shoot-em-up players to enjoy strategy games? And those are the high finishers; down the list people were getting caps and T-shirts. I feel no thought whatsoever went into the prizes, and most competitors will think twice about attending any G8Keeper events in the future.

In the end, I must pay compliments where they are due. And in saying that, the event was not all bad. The marketing and publicity was done perfectly - after all there were, supposedly, 1152 players (although to me it looked about 800 at the most) and over a thousand spectators throughout the weekend. Certain sections in the Free For All area were problem-free throughout the event, and players lucky enough to sit there had a great time. Fun was indeed had, the competitions were extremely close, and perks like a designated sleeping area with mattresses provided certainly improved on things. I think the good news, though, is that G8Keeper have mostly taken an attitude of admitting their mistakes, and promising to learn for the future. I certainly hope things will follow that route.

## Impressions from 1KML (The Good, The Bad and The Basilisk)





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# SETTING THE SCENE

▶ One of the myriad of tasks set before the Game Master is the effective telling of a story. To this end, the person filling the role of GM only has one real tool at his or her disposal - the English language. However, it is a powerful, emotive and very versatile tool.

Take a look at the two following examples. They both describe the same scene, but one is charged with as much linguistic power as possible. It's easy to see which the better one is: "You walk into the tavern. It is quite deserted, with just a few people sitting at tables around the room. There is a long bar with a big guy standing behind it, polishing glasses."

Or "You walk into the smoky interior of the tavern. It is dimly lit, with a few surly faced individuals sitting around the room at the roughly made tables scattered about the room. One or two of them shoot you aggressive glances, but none seem to act. A long bar runs along the far edge of the room, its surface stained and pitted through years of use. A large man with an enormous gut stands behind the bar, polishing dirty glasses with a dirtier rag." Neither of these examples are particularly excellent, true, but the second does generate a better mental image of the scene.

The GM may want to work on this as much as possible. True, flowery and verbose descriptions don't always belong in a role playing session, but they certainly do help to set a scene in the way that you want it to be imagined

by the players. This helps in many ways, including cutting down on misunderstandings and ambiguity, which never hurts a game session. One place where description is rather important, and often overlooked, is within combat. This is most likely because combat is the most random element of the game, and descriptiveness on-the-fly is not always as easy as it seems. However, keep in mind that the more descriptive the combat scene, the more enjoyable it is for the players. It changes from a "roll the dice, hit and miss" situation to a swashbuckling, fun adventure full of excitement. This is important because, quite frankly, combat is integral to many role playing games and boring combat means boring gaming sessions. Another important time for description is when the players first bring their characters into the game. Try and encourage your players to describe their characters and their actions as thoroughly as possible (not to the point of irritating them, though... there are only so many ways to try a door handle, after all). Players will always have their own impressions of what is going on, with their own mental pictures developed during the game. This is a good thing, exactly what you want them to do, but sometimes you do need to guide their impressions more accurately than others. Knowing the difference is important, because you don't want vital scenes to go under-detailed or unimportant bits to be bogged down by too much verbosity. In the end, it's all about entertaining your players. Keep that in mind - without them, there would be no game!

## Lord of the Rings

Product Review

One thing that doesn't get seen often is rampant license hopping within the role playing community. Just because a movie or something similar is cool doesn't mean it would make a good role playing game. In fact, certain films would (due to their visual nature) make rather lousy role playing material.

However, there are some that seem to be made for gaming. One of them is the Lord of the Rings. Before I go on, though, I would like to point out that this not the first time that the works of JRR Tolkien have been committed to the pages of a RPG rulebook. A few years ago, Middle Earth Role Playing (MERP for short) was all the rage. But the unwieldy system and a few legal wrangles saw the game fall out of favour.

After the release of the first two LOTR films, and their rampant success, a new role playing game, based more on Tolkien's world than on the actual films, has been released. It seems that the films are merely a convenient tie-in for the marketing of this new version of MERP (not really a new version, just the same setting, actually).

The trend in newer RPG systems is towards simplicity in rules, and the new LOTR RPG is no different. A single, streamlined system runs through everything from skill resolution to combat, making the game easy to learn and play.

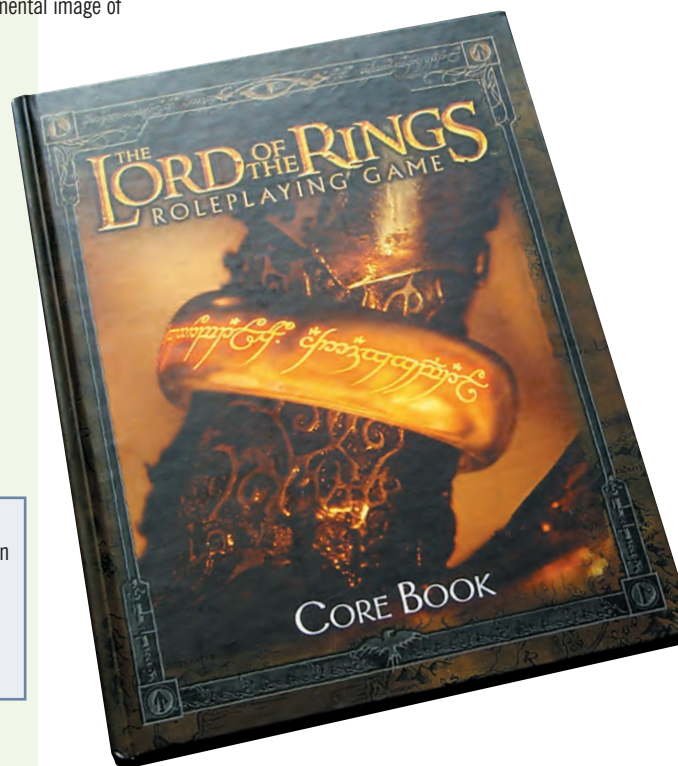
One thing I must note is the fact that this book is beautifully produced. Role players tend to be book lovers, and a well put together book is always appreciated. Full colour throughout, with a gorgeous matte cover and still photographs from all three movies are the order of the day in this tome, which is the first in a series of books (one assumes) about Tolkien's world. The fact that the game is set in a more rigid world than games like Dungeons and Dragons (which have settings limited only by the imagination of the GM) is this title's only downfall. The game already has societal strictures, countries, currencies and geography in place, and leaves little leeway for the GM.

This focus can be restrictive, but a resourceful game master can have just as much fun with this title as any other fantasy role playing system. Besides, the familiarity of the setting (particularly after the release of the films) will help players formulate a better mental image of events within the game.

This is a role playing system that I would highly recommend. It has enough substance to thrill experienced gamers, and is easy to pick up for the new-comers.

REVIEWED BY Walt "Shryke" Pretorius	
PLUS	MINUS
Well known setting Great system Beautiful book	Certain limitations

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South Africa's premier role playing convention, **ICON**, takes place next month. We will tell you more about the event in the July issue, but for now those that are interested can take note of the following relevant details.

**Venue:** Jabula Recreation Centre, Sandringham, Johannesburg  
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## further instruction in japanese (Part 3)

### Counting

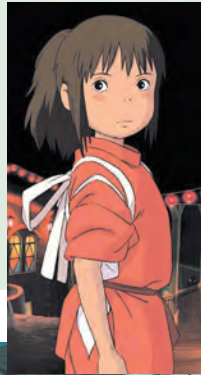
The Japanese number system is a simple and completely straightforward one. It conforms to the universal mathematical standard of a base 10 number system, and thus is only different from English in vocabulary and spoken word order.

Japanese Number:	English Meaning:
Rei	Zero
Ichi	One
Ni	Two
San	Three
Yon	Four
Go	Five
Roku	Six
Nana	Seven
Hachi	Eight
Kyuu	Nine
Juu	Ten
Hyaku	Hundred
Sen	Thousand

To say a Japanese number, you read the numbers in pairs of digits (1-9) and units (1, 10, 100, 1000, etc). For example, the number 682 (six hundred and eighty two) would be said as "roku hyaku hachi juu ni" ( $6 \times 100 + 8 \times 10 + 2$ ). If the digit is a zero, you don't need to include it or its unit when you say the number, and if the unit is a one (i.e., for numbers 1 to 9), you don't need to include the unit when you say it. 3045 would thus be said "san sen yon juu go".

### Grammar Introduction

The most important, and often most difficult part of learning any new language is getting a grasp of its grammar. This is difficult only because it is different from what we are used to, and could seem illogical to those who have not grown up with it. However, Japanese is a lot more logical than English. It has only two irregular verbs, it has no singular or plural, no gender and no agreement of verbs. You will rarely find exceptions to a rule, as I have stated before, while English is rife with oddities. For example, English is the only language in the world that uses a meaningless auxiliary verb when asking a question. The sentence, "He lived there" is changed to the question, "Did he live there?", and not to the more logical, "Lived he there?" Starting next month, I will be explaining how to form very basic Japanese sentences, and the vocabulary you will need to do so.



Spirited Away

## Spirited Away

**Genre:** Fantasy  
**Year:** 2001  
**Producer:** Studio Ghibli  
**Format:** Movie  
**Episodes:** 1  
**Language:** English / Japanese with English subtitles  
**Availability:** Common

Concept	8
Story	8
Soundtrack	9
Characters	10
Animation	8
Translation	10
<b>Total Score (out of 100)</b>	<b>91</b>

Since this is the first time I am reviewing a film by Miyazaki Hayao (reminder: surname first is the Japanese way), I think it is important to include a bit of background information on this anime legend. Miyazaki was born on the 5th of January, 1941 in the city of Tokyo. After starting his career as an animator for Toei Douga studio, he later formed Studio Ghibli with fellow director Takahata Isao. All of his films to date have received acclaim from both critics and audiences. Princess Mononoke won best film at the Japan Academy Awards and was the most successful local film of all time in Japan, until it was surpassed by Spirited Away, which won an Oscar this year for Best Animated Film.

To begin with, the animation is absolutely stunning. This is the kind of film that would leave good old Walt Disney drooling with envy. The techniques used are a combination of cell-shading, high-quality rendered environments and CGI (computer generated imagery). The use of CGI is so seamlessly integrated into the drawn elements that it is impossible to distinguish between them. Pixar wish they could achieve animation of this complexity! This is, above all, a visual masterpiece which will keep people entertained even if the story is not to their liking.

The story itself is simple and widely appealing, yet crafted with immense subtlety to keep all levels of audiences involved in it. We are brought into the world of Chihiro, a young girl who is moving with her parents to a new house. When they get lost in a forest on the way there, things start to get stranger and stranger. As for the characters, they are wonderfully imaginative (all the Miyazaki trademarks are present). Chihiro is the most normal of the lot, but she makes up for it in development and likeability.

The soundtrack is about as fantastical as the visuals it supports. Composed by veteran Studio Ghibli musician Hisaishi Joe, one could call it a musical without lyrics. The melodies follow the story perfectly, blending into the ambience so that all becomes lost except the overall effect, which is mindblowing.

Walt Disney Pictures has signed a deal for distribution rights to all of the Studio Ghibli films, and their availability to western audiences is now assured. This also means the translation and the voice acting for the English dubbing is of top standard. Spirited Away is a film for all ages and all personality types. Thoroughly enjoyable.



Well by now everyone knows that The Matrix borrowed a few ideas from anime, but I bet you the otaku on the street don't know just how much. Sure the action scenes pulled straight from Ghost In The Shell (the lobby scene for example) are recognisable by just about anyone, but few people know of an old 80's anime called Megazone 23. In the first Megazone 23 OAV the main character Shogo Yahagi discovers that the world he lives in is in fact a computer generated and controlled world, and that he in fact lives on a spaceship. The computer's name is BAHUMADO and is the Ship's main computer, the sentient protection program (which also manifests itself as a TV pop idol) Eve Tokimatsuri serves as a guardian, making sure that the humans are kept happy and don't realise what is going on (i.e. they are constantly under attack by unknown forces outside the ship), they even go as far as to explain that when people go overseas what is actually happening is that the super-computer BAHUMADO puts the would be travelers into some sort of hypnosis and makes them believe that they have been on a journey, then finally waking them when they have

arrived back home. The computer has chosen the late 21st century (the 80's) as the time period in which the humans live even though it is far in the future, the reason being that according to computer records, humans were most happy during this time period. So the whole "the matrix is the world that has been pulled over your eyes" thing is not as new and revolutionary as many of us may have thought.

- Serpent



## Shiroi nikoGe <white featheRs>



Black Blade  
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Anime Entertainment

www.blackblade.za.net

### Serpent's Monthly Character Bio

**Name:** Straight Cougar

**Title:** Princess

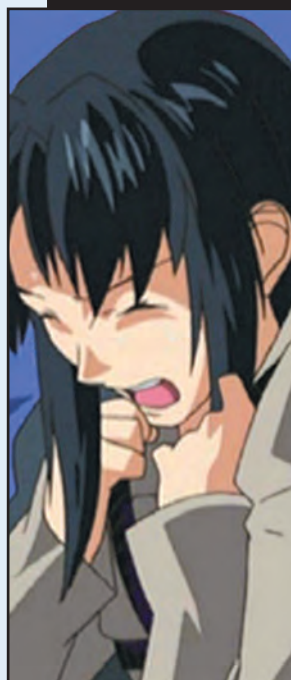
**Favorite colour:** Pink

**Favorite hobby:** Radical Good SPEEEDO!

**Famous quote:** Ah, sumimasen

I easily tire of single-mindedly determined heroes and anime pretty boys who can't shake the idea that the best thing to do is "to keep going my way no matter what!" That's why Straight Cougar, from the anime "Scryed", is such a refreshing change.

Unfortunately, he's not the main character, but he crops up often enough to be in the main cast. Like many of the characters in the series, he is an "alter user", basically one of a minority group born with special powers. With his ability he can make anything move at speeds beyond human comprehension, things like his car or even himself. What I really like about him is his ever-cheerful attitude, his tendency to speak peoples' names incorrectly and his really interesting way of speaking. He is also one of those guys who obviously know more about what's going on than anybody else - he can see the bigger picture where other characters can see no further than their ambitions. He's funny, he's cool, an awesome character all round.



## Not so right or wrong in anime

One of the things I love most about some of the better anime is the way the issue of morality is handled. The difference between right and wrong, the line between good and evil is often unclear and difficult to fathom.

In most anime where this applies, you get your good guys and your bad guys, and the good guys are almost always as irrevocably convinced of their righteousness as they are of the bad guys' wickedness. Through much trial and tribulation, the aims of the bad guys become known and suddenly we aren't too sure if they are entirely bad. Whether this uncertainty is brought about by a good argument from one of their more prominent members or the gleaning of a bit of previously unknown information, the result is always interesting. Unfortunately, a lot of anime screw this up by making the head bad dude a really evil stinker who craves power or something, and has misled all who followed and believed in him. Thankfully, though, a good many others don't. One good example is the Rurouni Kenshin OAV series, where, in the final battle, the hero and the villain both explain their views and it becomes clear that neither one is actually evil. They both had the happiness of the people in mind and they both had steadfast beliefs of how to achieve this - so steadfast in fact, that one of them was going to take his beliefs to the grave.

I particularly love it when anime turns out that way, showing us not so much a case of good versus evil, but more a case of two opposed views. Two antithetical beliefs taken to heart in such a way that their followers are willing to take drastic action, even the shedding of blood.

- KnightGainax



**What:** Cosmic Comics stock a large range of Manga products as well as comics, toys and DVDs. They are also prepared to order basically anything you require. They also stock comic books for all ages and will buy your unwanted comics and gaming (Magic) cards. They also have an interesting monthly catalogue of collectables.

**Where:** Shop 33 Heathway Square  
Corner Beyers Naude and Castle Hill Drive, Blackheath  
Phone Shane on (011) 476 9640 for more details  
Trading Hours: Mon - Fri 09h00 - 18h00.

Don't forget to catch Black Blade at the **July ICON gaming convention**. An Otaku's dream - close to 50 hours of anime watching all on a big screen! See the website for details: [www.blackblade.za.net](http://www.blackblade.za.net).

# the LAZY GAMER'S guide to ...

## the Samsung DVD-L100W

Ok, so what's up next? OK, here's a good one. Everyone seems to be building these huge home entertainment systems these days, which is weird seeing as we live in such a "portable" culture. So, for all you fans of movies who are on the move a lot, a nice, lightweight and slim portable DVD player...

### The remote

It may seem like a silly idea to provide a device that cannot be used from far away with a full function remote control. However, you can hook this baby up to virtually any TV and sound system... and at those times, not having a remote is an utter pain in the rear. So well done to Samsung for their forethought!

### The screen

It's an LCD device that delivers a rather crisp and clear image. At 22cm across and 13cm high, it's quite small, but is fine for personal viewing. The brightness of the screen is also adjustable, which helps...



### The disk hatch

CDs and DVDs go in this bit... the unit can play movies and music, according to your desires...

### The memory stick slot

You can load JPEG images and MP3s onto a memory stick (sold separately) and either view them or listen to them on this unit... depending on the file type, of course...

### Controls

Anything you can do on a big DVD player, you can do here too. Compact but complete controls are the order of the day.

### Output ports

From here you can run cables from the unit to your TV and sound system. Ergo, your portable unit can serve as the heart of your home theatre system too!

### Speakers

They're stereo, but not the best sound. Refer to the output ports...

# Limited Offer

[Offer Expires: 30 June 2003]



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WarCraft III Figurines



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For more information please contact us at: sales@tidemedia.co.za. | Offer expires: 30 June 2003

# FREELoader

ON THE CD

You've got a machine that can cook eggs just by looking at them. It's great to have the speed-demon amongst your gaming friends, but running a high-speed rig also requires careful monitoring, just in case something goes wrong. There just so happens to be a free program for that, useful for novices, serious gamers and even system admins.

With the recent advent of a new machine, the first problem that I encountered was heat. In fact, most people don't realize it, but today's PCs run at pretty high temperatures, since high performance has become the name of the game in all of this. Of course, each new motherboard comes (or should come) with software that allows you to measure the heat on some aspects of the board, usually limited to your CPU heat.

That's fine for normal concerns, but the software does not take advantage of the full scope of sensors available on your machine. Thankfully this program does that for you, and it won't cost you a cent.

Motherboard Monitor displays the speeds and temperatures of the various components on your motherboard that has sensors for it, and there are more than you might think. After installing the software, which usually detects your motherboard type automatically, you can go ahead and configure it to your needs. For a detailed list on which sensors do what on your board, you can contact your board manufacturer, get a detailed manual off their website or visit the MBM 5 website

(www.livewiredev.com) which has a section on known motherboard types it supports.

## Fans

Bring up the MBM dialogue by double-clicking on the icon in your system tray. Select Fans. This shows the fans section. Remember that the software will only detect fans directly powered by your motherboard (and on some boards the GPU fan). Odds are the first fan represents your CPU fan. So on the MBM Fan Sensor dropdown select Fan1. Then on the dropdown beneath that, select which sensor it should monitor. These sensors are the fan sensors found on the board. Select the first. The rest you can leave.

## CPU

MBM 5 has a special section for the CPU. Though you need to set the sensor for your actual CPU temperature in the Temperatures section, this allows you to enable other options, specifically your CPU speed and usage.

CPU usage is not something you need, unless you know what you can use it for. This area is more useful to see the clock speed your CPU is currently running at. Once again it's not the most useful feature for people on home machines, but if you are running multiple CPUs or if you are really interested at the speed your CPU is churning away, this is the sensor for you.

## Email, FTP and other perks

Other sections that should be given a look are the Tray, Email and Log areas. The first allows you to change how things appear in the system tray, as well as the OSD (On Screen Display) - more on that later. The first is quite self-explanatory - this allows you to say how things appear in the system tray (useful, since you can display multiple sensors as icons). To have an icon shown there though, you need to consult the Visual section of each sensor. The Tray options are few, but selecting Rotate Icons in System Tray is great if your taskbar is too cluttered. This will only display one icon and rotate the values at a set interval.

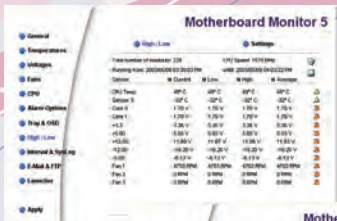
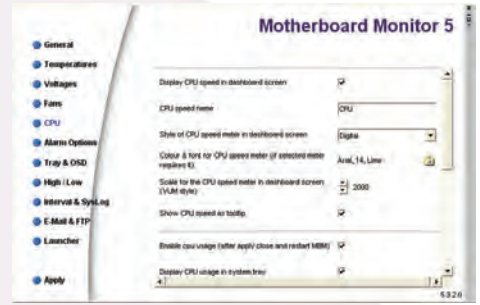
The Log section is self-explanatory.

You select which formats you'd want the data to be logged in, and the interval it needs to be recorded at. Note that for something to be logged you'd have to set it in the Visual section.

Lastly, FTP and Email section, which will upload logs to an FTP server or email you the log, pending on an alarm going off. You need to play with your alarm settings, though, and it's only really a feature useful to admins looking over multiple machines.

## The OSD

The on-screen display could be very useful for monitoring your machine settings, no matter what you are busy with (for instance, playing a game). To set it up



is easy. Go to the OSD section and select that you want the display on, no matter what. Lower down you can also set where the OSD should sit on the desktop and how long the update intervals should be. The real trick to making the OSD work for you, though, is the OSD script. For a full reference on commands you can use, refer to the help file (in the Help directory of MBM 5). This lets you select what should be shown.

## Highs/Lows

Apart from logging your system's performance, the program can also give you a diagram of the current boot's progress (aka, since you've last booted up). Go to the High/Low section and you get a breakdown of the sensors on the machine, their high, low and average scores, as well as their alarm settings. You can also browse the settings part of this area to enable logging of the high/low section.

## Odds & Ends

Motherboard Manager 5 is very useful, though it's not the most user-friendly program on the block. Still, don't be intimidated. In short, you can't break anything on your machine while configuring it. The software also has a large forum for help, as well as a fairly decent help file. There are also numerous third-party add-ons for it that you can learn about on the official site (mbm.livewiredev.com). If you find the software doesn't do anything, odds are your motherboard isn't supported.

# features

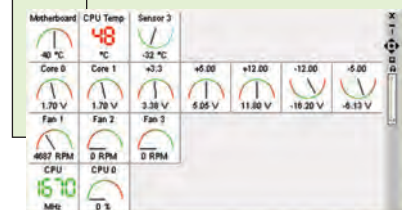
The dashboard

The dashboard is a useful way to see how your machine is doing. By using the visual section on each sensor, you can decide what shows on the dashboard. You get two visual styles - Digital and Gauge. The Digital shows the speed/temperature of a sensor in digital numbers, while the gauge shows a more traditional speed dial, obviously more suited for at-a-glance analysis

# features

Visual styles

The dashboard is a useful way to see how your machine is doing. By using the visual section on each sensor, you can decide what shows on the dashboard. You get two visual styles - Digital and Gauge. The Digital shows the speed/temperature of a sensor in digital numbers, while the gauge shows a more traditional speed dial, obviously more suited for at-a-glance analysis



www.thematrix.com

www.enterthematrixgame.com

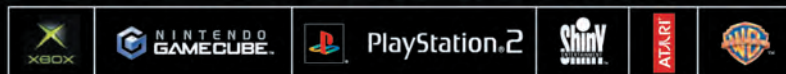
# ENTER THE MATRIX™



**"The most anticipated videogame in history"**  
PSM2 Magazine



Written and Directed by the Wachowski Brothers, the creators of the Matrix trilogy  
Exclusively distributed by World Web Entertainment (SA) (Pty) Ltd



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# www.

## Knowledge is power [www.spywareinfo.com](http://www.spywareinfo.com)

A reoccurring topic on this page is Spyware, and for good reason. In all the years I've spent online, there is no bigger annoyance. It's rather ironic how the mainstream press seems more concerned over hackers and the like than over Spyware, because the latter is a much bigger problem. In a nutshell, it's the name for programs that sit on your PC and cause pop-ups to appear as well as sending out information on your browsing habits, e-mail addresses, etc. And it's not going to some government department but instead to ad agencies who use the info to spam you with even more ads. Some Spyware go a step beyond and will try to hijack your browser. The effects of Spyware can range from annoying to downright invasive. Spyware Info is dedicated to the eradication of this problem. It contains info on the latest forms of Spyware, the ways to battle them, ways to prevent or disable Spyware as well as other happenings in the world of underground marketing. The design is a tad overwhelming and the focus is more on information than any form of design, and it's more useful to dig up information than to introduce novices to the world of Spyware. Still, that's enough reason to visit and give their articles a browse.

## The home of the Shadows <http://nwn.bioware.com/shadows>

Are you a Neverwinter Nights player? Then you must have heard of Shadows of Undrentide. And if you haven't, you are a filthy liar. You probably don't even own a PC. Honestly, some people... Shadows of Undrentide is the upcoming expansion for the NWN world, and it boasts 5 new classes, 16 new creatures and 3 new tilesets. I know this because I went to the official website and looked at the front page. The other reason to head there is because the site underwent a bit of an overhaul and now has much more information on the game than before, including new screenshots. And you can expect an even bigger surge of info after E3, which would have happened by the time you read this. Of course, as is Bioware's tradition, the site is very thorough because this is one of the few developers who have realized the absolute importance of Community. The site is very up to date and caters to a lot of your questions, not to mention that any blanks left can be

filled at the forums, which are frequented by the developers.

## Strange Flash r Us [www.mondominishows.com](http://www.mondominishows.com)

Mondo Mini Shows must be the unofficial leaders in online flash cartoons. Sure, there are places such as Shockwave and Marvel, but Mondo seem to cater to a wide variety of bizarre shows, which are always of the highest quality. Of course, it's not for everyone's taste, as those who have seen the likes of Happy Tree Friends and the God & Devil Show can tell you. The other downside is that these shows are quite big, so they aren't the best thing if you are on a 56k connection. Of course, you can always con a friend on a faster link to download the episodes for you... The site has expanded its collection to a range of new shows, though some shows still seem to be on the slow end of updating. If you have time to kill, have an open mind and you need a laugh, head over to the MMS site.

## Tierra Entertainment [www.tierraentertainment.com](http://www.tierraentertainment.com)

Remember King's Quest? What about Hero's Quest? Or the multitude of adventure games that made Sierra Online a household brand (at least in gamers' houses) long before their current range of games? These classics are actually still around, either in bundle packs to sell the rather lame later editions of the games or on the web at tons of Abandonware sites. But some folks are not happy with the lack of remakes of these classics, and they've taken it upon themselves to re-create the King's Quest series, with the help of AGS, a very powerful, free, adventure creation program. And they've done an impressive job so far. Okay, to date they've only completed two games, namely King's Quest VGA and King's Quest II VGA, complete with new music, speech packs and new art. It's technically a whole new game. The titles are still very

old-school, though, so there are no 3D graphics or even high-res sprites. It just looks better and is mainly for nostalgia on faster machines, or a chance to play a classic in a new jacket. Quest of Glory II is the next on their development schedule, and they also feature links to the engine they use as well as to other fan creations around the web. If you plan to download the games, though, be prepared for a reasonable wait, since they weigh in at around 60mb each. But it's worth it.

the new world order

## conspiracies...

**So, is it the dawn of a new age? Since we've covered the Apocalypse, Space Arks and other things, its only fair to give those people in the dark a bit of coverage as well. Actually, they demanded it and sent me a threatening letter to do this.**

**[www.bilderberg.org](http://www.bilderberg.org)**  
If you think the Illuminati or Freemasons should have you worried, these guys are even scarier. Well, that is if you read this site. It seems EVERYONE important belongs to the Bilderberg group. Except you and me, of course, because we're not important.

**[www.freemasonry.org](http://www.freemasonry.org)**  
Correct me on this one, but isn't the point of a secret society that nobody should know about it? Well, this site seems to give a ton of links on how to find Mason lodges, war memorials, t-shirts, wallpaper...

**[www.ctrl.org/boodleboys](http://www.ctrl.org/boodleboys)**  
Skull & Bones? Why, it's only a sorority group from Yale that had some impressive members, including George W. Bush and his dad. And they are in the center of all the political dealings of the US and the world.

**[www.conspiracyarchive.com](http://www.conspiracyarchive.com)**  
Mostly about the Illuminati, this site covers a lot of ground on this old group, the New World Order, UFOs and all other kinds of things that tell you that there's more out there than what CNN would have you believe.

**[www.majesticdocuments.com](http://www.majesticdocuments.com)**  
All you X-Files fans should be on this one. The smoking man (Marlboro man, Cancerman, etc) from the series supposedly belonged to Majestic 12, the uber-secret government organization who do things like hide aliens, kill conspiracy theorists and plan the New World Order.





# Professional: Professional:

Having or showing great skill ; expert

The tools you use should express who you are - lean, efficient, practical.

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small form factor (SFF) computer brand.

Say 'hello' to the future of the PC!

## The Small Form Factor Creator



Support AMD Socket 462 Processor with FSB 333 MHz  
nVIDIA nForce2 Chipset  
GeForce4 MX Graphic Built-in, AGP 8X, Dual VGA  
Dual Channel DDR 200/266/333/400\*2  
Integrated Cooling Engine(ICE Technology)



Support Intel Socket 478 Processor with FSB 533 MHz  
Intel 845GE Chipset, Support Hyper-Threading Technology  
IEEE 1394, USB 2.0, SPDIF in/out, 6 Channel Audio  
DDR 200/266/333\*2  
Integrated Cooling Engine(ICE Technology)



Support Intel socket 478 Pentium 4 / Celeron with 400/533/800MHz FSB  
Intel 865G Chipsets supports Hyper-Threading technology  
Support dual channel DDR 400 memory module up to 2GB  
Built in Intel Extreme Graphics 2 and six channel audio  
On board high speed connection: IEEE1394a, USB2.0, 10/100M LAN  
Integrated Cooling Engine (I.C.E. Technology)





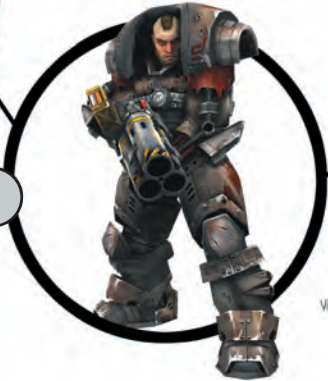
Think you know your gaming trivia?

Well then how about an easy test for you to see just how well-deserved your status as a gaming know-it-all is. All that stands between you and eternal gaming trivia infamy (for a minute at least) are 14 questions...

# GAMER IQ TEST



Final Fantasy VII Sephiroth



## rules

### How to play

In case you haven't figured it out yet, here's how you play:

Select the answer of a question and go to that number. If you score a point, write down a point. Then go to the number at the bottom of the paragraph for the next question. At the end, tally your score. No cheating! A pop quiz on how to do this quiz will be in the next issue!

**1** Samus is a female...  
Yes 41  
No 14

**2** No, we don't even know what a multi usage device would look like. Sounds like a Harddrive that can also make lunch. Go to 42

**3** Nope, though you have the company right - roughly. Go to 39

**4** Alexey Pazhitnov is best known for...  
Linux 33  
Tetris 36

**5** Tell your friends that we are impressed! One of the best expansions ever made for any game earns you a point. Go to 4



**6** Bingo! The first platform to see a Final Fantasy game was, in fact, the Nintendo Entertainment System, which went on to carry the first four. Notch up a point and head to 37

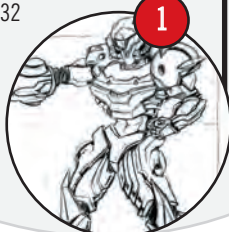
**7** Final Fantasy first appeared on the Atari 25 NES 6 PSX 24

**8** I hope your parents didn't have any more children. This genetic strain should end with you. Mortal Kombat wasn't even 3D. Go to 16

**9** Close, but no. The creepy resurrector of beasts was in Doom II. Go to 12

**10** In Fallout 2 you were looking for The Garden of Eden Creation Kit 47 The Genesis Seed 13 The Medusa Device 52

**11** No, they weren't even Russians. Head over to 32



**12** Yu Suzuki designed...  
Donkey Kong 48  
Sonic the Hedgehog 3  
Outrun 15

**13** Though maybe a better name, no, it's not that. Go to 28

**14** No, our beloved space-pirate-smacking bounty hunter is a girl. Go to 7

**15** On the money. The classic Outrun hit arcades in the mid 80s and was a major hit. Write up a point and go to 39

**16** A MUD is a Multi User Dungeon 40 Multi Usage Device 2

**17** No. You were guessing, right? Go to 4

**18** Clever gamer! Or a lucky guess. Either way, you get a point. Then go to 20

**19** Lucky guess? Either way, you are right. Malcom was the legendary villain from the Kyrandia series - Westwood's only adventure games. A point to you and then head to 10

**20** The company that helped on later versions of Counter-Strike also made...  
Homeworld Cataclysm 43  
Operation Flashpoint 11  
F.A.K.K. 2 23





**21** No, contrary to popular belief, Space Invaders was not the first video game. **Go to 20**

**22** Did you even play Quake? Ask someone to smack you and then **head over to 12**

**23** Well, you are on the right track, but backwards. That was Ritual and they went from making mods to making full games, not vice-versa. **Go to 32**

**24** You are either an idiot or just really naïve (or a hopeless example of a FF fanboy). **Go to 37**

**25** A nice guess, but no. The Atari never saw a Final Fantasy game at all. **Go to 37**

**26** It's a trick question. Theoretically Blizzard didn't develop this game, but they did complete and sell it. So no points. **Go to 51**

**27** Close. Sierra are known for their adventure games, but they did not create the Kyrandia series. **Go to 10**

**28** Which game wasn't by Chris Taylor?

**Dune 2 44**  
**Total Annihilation 49**  
**Dungeon Siege 34**

**29** Hellfire was an unofficial Diablo expansion that gave you an assassin and a monk, but it lacked the Blizzard touch. But you know this, so chalk up a point and **go to 51**

**30** You'd think that, right? But you are wrong. **Go to 20**

**31** It was a huge Quake TC, but it wasn't by Ritual (plus it was free). **Go to 4**

**32** Blizzard did not develop  
**Lost Vikings 50**  
**Black Thorn 26**  
**Diablo: Hellfire 29**



**33** No, no, no, no. **Go to 35**

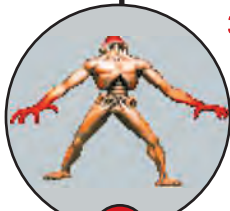


**35**

**Tekken 53**  
**Mortal Kombat 8**  
**Virtua Fighter 38**

**34** Anyone who kept their ear open in the past year would know that he made this game. Learn to read and add up your score.

**35** The first 3D fighter was...



**37**

**Doom 9**  
**Doom II 46**  
**Quake 22**

**36** Easy one - you should have guessed it. He created Tetris, still one of the most created games to date. Write up a point and **go to 35**

**37** The Archvile first appeared in...

**38** Correct! Of course, you could argue 4D fighting was first, but that's apples vs. pears. Get a point and **head over to 16**

**39** The first video game was  
**Pong 30**  
**Space Wars 18**  
**Space Invaders 21**

**40** The granddaddy of the MMORPG, MUDs were all the rage in the 80s and early 90s. But we since got graphics up and running. Take a point and **go to 42**

**41** Easy one, eh? Anyway, grab yourself a point and **head over to 7**

**42** Le Chuck is to LucasArts what Malcolm is to...

**Westwood 19**  
**Sierra 27**  
**Interplay 45**



**28**

**43** Space ahoy! Yes, Barking Dog got known for making the pseudo sequel to the excellent Homeworld. Take a point and **head to 32**

**44** You don't need to eat any Spice to foresee this answer. Yes, he had nothing to do with the Westwood classic. One point added, and count up your score.

**45** Did Interplay even make adventure games? **Go to 10**

**46** On the money. Of course, if you've played the game, you'll know this creepy demon with a flame attack and the ability to resurrect monsters. Take a point and **head to 12**

**47** Sounds like something from an Infomercial, but yes, that was what you were looking for. One point and **go to 28**

**48** No, that was Shigeru Miyamoto. You are now on the Nintendo Fanboy hit list. **Go to 39**



**51**

**49** No, he became known for creating one of the most underrated RTS titles out there. Add up your score

**50** If you had the recently released GBA version, you'd not have chosen this one. **Go to 51**

**51** Before SIN, what was Ritual known for?

**Quake Scourge of Armagon 5**  
**Quake Bloodkeep 17**  
**Quake Future Fantasy 31**



**42**

**52** Nah, we made that one up. Just save yourself further embarrassment and **go to 28**

**53** Nice try, but Tekken came a few years after the first 3D fighter. **Head over to 16**

## scores

check to see if you cheated...

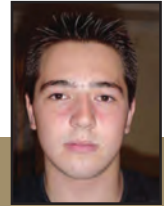
**14 Points** - Oh, you are a gaming trivia god. Or we just asked all the right questions. Or you cheated. Yup, that's probably it - you cheated. Either way, you have our permission to brag.

**9 - 13 Points** - Impressive. And we'd probably agree with you. Of course, you probably scored higher than most of the NAG staff. Send us your CV.

**5 - 8 Points** - Not bad. You probably read something every so often. Of course, you probably think you know it all anyway. We recommend writing gaming columns as a career.

**1 - 4 Points** - Well, reading this mag is a start to get some of that gaming Trivia. Stop playing Counter-Strike so much - there are other games. On the up side, the Editor got the same score and you probably have a girlfriend.

**0 Points** - You picked this up at the dentist. Your idea of a game is Monopoly when the neighbours are visiting. Put down the magazine and back away. You still have a life to go to.



profile

**Name:** James Cloete  
**Occupation:** System Administrator / E-mail Marketing & Devel.  
**Nick:** ShadowlorD  
**Games:** Quake | Quake 3 | StarCraft | WarCraft III | FIFA2001  
**Age:** 20  
**Clan:** T6 ` K-Sports  
**Quote:** "Ride my rocket."

# Player of the Month

- Achievements:**
- " 1st place at 1000manlan 2003 2v2 (Team: T6 ` K-Sports)
  - " 2nd place at 1000manlan 2003 1v1
  - " 3rd place at Shuttle Xtreme George LAN 2003
  - " 4th place at Worfaire 2002 Finals
  - " 2nd place at Gamers Gate Carousel Team Competition (Team: Liquid)
  - " Represented South Africa at the World Cyber Games 2001
  - " 1st place at Worfaire 2001 Cape Town Preliminary
  - " 2nd place at Worfaire 2001 Finals
  - " 1st place at Worfaire 2000 Cape Town Preliminary
  - " 2nd place at Worfaire 2000 Finals Team Competition (Team: NDC)
  - " 7th place at Worfaire 2000 Finals
  - " 1st place in Quake1 Online Tournament

<The\_Basilisk> What is it like always coming second to your brother, Ph4ntom?  
 <ShadowlorD> It used to result in tension, until I realized after a while that it's something he really excels in, and who am I to take that away and cause problems? So now I just live with it. It's about time he's good at something :P

<The\_Basilisk> Do you consider yourself to be a "professional" gamer?  
 <ShadowlorD> In some aspects I do, in others I don't. Perhaps I am locally... well, I would like to think I am. But when it comes down to the nitty gritty, I'm too far away from the international kind of "professional gamer". Until I'm invited to a 16 player internationally selected tournament, I won't regard myself as one of them.

<The\_Basilisk> Tell us about your previous relationship with Russian clan c58.  
 <ShadowlorD> Well, knowing c58 from being online and going to Korea, we all got along very well and they were quite impressed with us South Africans. A relationship slowly developed to a point where they wanted to expand all over the world and, knowing Stephen (Ph4ntom) and I from SA, they were more than happy to ask us to

join their very elite group of gamers.

<The\_Basilisk> What is the most important aspect of your life?  
 <ShadowlorD> The most important part of my life is to make my partner in crime as happy as she can be, then of course the rest comes in.

<The\_Basilisk> What do you do for fun aside from gaming?  
 <ShadowlorD> Well, I usually attempt to ice skate \*haha\* and I love my clubs! I play sports too, not pro anymore, but for fun. Cricket, soccer and tennis (when I get time).

<The\_Basilisk> What do you think about the current state of SA gaming?  
 <ShadowlorD> I think it's improved and gotten worse over the last few years. It's improved by having a lot more gamers and various types of gaming, slowly bringing professionalism into it, but there are politics involved and that always screws things up.

## Formalizing Competitive Gaming

The South African government is currently in the process of drafting a new bill. As things stand it is likely to be passed, and will prevent anyone from representing South Africa at any official international event unless they are affiliated with a government-recognised body. The penalty for not complying with this bill will be a hefty fine and/or jail sentence.

How does this affect the gaming community? We send players over to compete in international events such as the World Cyber Games, the Electronic Sports World Cup, and others. When the South African Wargames Union (SAWU) was formed in 1985 as an official body to represent board and figure gaming, they included in their mandate the possibility of handling computer gaming as well. And as such, they have offered their involvement. SAWU has been involved in talks with Mayhem, Gamers Gate, and other institutions in the gaming community. On the 8th of May, the first open meeting to discuss the possibility of this "merge" was held. What does this mean for the gamer? What are the facts?

Firstly, many people are under the impression that the government bill will definitely be affecting us. However, the "official" overseas tournaments are actually just commercial ventures, exactly like our own Gamers Gate events for example. The only difference is that they are working on a much bigger budget. WCG, for example, is owned by Samsung. This means that no-one at these events is representing their country in an "official" capacity. The players are merely invited by means of a berthing system from qualifiers that are held in participating countries. The team we send over is not representing South Africa. It is merely a team from South Africa. This being said, why would we need an organisation like SAWU? Do we really want to have to deal with issues like national selection (look at the problems in Cricket and Rugby), and the government breathing down our backs?

The issue goes far further than simple issues regarding the representation of our country. Sooner or later in the development of competitive gaming, the gamers will need to be protected by a national body that looks after their interests. There is nothing at the moment to ensure that gamers will not be taken advantage of by tournament organisations. The failure to deliver on prize money at last year's Worfaire and the recent 1000manLAN are prime examples. For whatever reason, the gamers were given the short end of the stick with no-one to champion their cause. Because of incidents like this, competitive gaming is going to need a representative body. And of course, the time will come when we will actually be playing games for our country and will need to comply with the law. Whether us, as gamers, become part of SAWU or choose to form our own independent body is a choice we will have to make. As things stand, the SAWU constitution is far too inflexible to accommodate gaming, and the direct benefits of belonging to this union are not clear. Their rules and structure would also conflict with the trends set for us by the overseas gaming organisations.

This doesn't mean the possibility of joining with SAWU is completely ruled out. Everything is still at the concept stage, and since this is a democratic process, several more meetings and discussions are being planned. If you have an interest in the future of gaming as a sport, it would be advisable to attend these meetings. Alternatively go to [www.whywait.co.za/sawu/](http://www.whywait.co.za/sawu/) and decide for yourself what all the fuss is about. NAG will keep you up to speed on any further developments on this matter.

# ENTER THE MATRIX COMPETITION

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Name the two lead characters  
that feature in Enter the Matrix

Entries to reach us by the end of June 2003  
Send your answers and personal information to:  
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Postal Entries can be sent to:  
**P O Box 237, Olivedale, 2158**  
**NOTE:** Only 1 [one] entry per person – any  
more and we delete your whole batch...

These excellent prizes courtesy of Nu Metro Film Distribution, Gallo Records and MegaRom Interactive



# Addressing the issues

Despite the 1000manLAN receiving the required support and attendance from the gaming community, many gamers were nonetheless unhappy with logistical problems that arose at the event. The irritation and annoyance of regular forum goers on Prophecy and SGS led to heated discussions amongst the gamers. The gamers were demanding an explanation, so we set out to get some answers. The\_Basilisk spoke with the G8Keeper team of Rocco Strauss, Lauryan de Jongh, Tinus du Plooy and Stephan Steenkamp, about some of the issues surrounding the 1000manLAN.

<The\_Basilisk> What was the reason for the frequent power-outages?

<G8Keeper> We had many gamers plugging in multiple plugs into each other's as well as pulling leads from one bank to another. Next time we will ensure that there is a supplied multiplug per gamer.

<The\_Basilisk> The network was poorly set up, resulting in high pings. Network drops occurred throughout the weekend, and there were severe ping spikes which resulted in matches having to be replayed. What happened?

<G8Keeper> The only issue we can spot that has added to the network confusion was the IP addressing configuration. We would prefer next time to use block allocations as opposed to random allocation. DoS (Denial of Service attacks) and several viruses doing the rounds in the early mornings didn't help the situation. With all the open shares, this could not be controlled as we had hoped.

<The\_Basilisk> The aforementioned hassles have been present at every large LAN. I don't feel the blame can be laid on the users.

<G8Keeper> We are working with HP and Millenium 2 to ensure that the network will only be continuously improved from event to event.

<The\_Basilisk> With the exception of Quake 3, the competitions were run at the last minute by community members. Where were the tournament directors and referees?

<G8Keeper> Every gaming community took it upon themselves to run their events as they know better than we do what they need.

<The\_Basilisk> These people did so only so that there would be competitions at all. They were forced into the job, and were not informed of it beforehand. WarCraft III, specifically, was another. It was eventually run by the community since the designated facilitator had no idea what he was doing.

<G8Keeper> Yes CS and UT2K3... as for WarCraft III, this is the first time we have heard that it was an issue. Once again we found ourselves missing staff at critical moments.

<The\_Basilisk> What happened to the servers that were supposed to be provided?

<G8Keeper> The main issue with the lack of servers was miscommunication between event management staff. Too few people trying to do too many things. This led to a general confusion as to exactly how the available servers were to be utilised. There were four servers available. Two were used for Counter-Strike, one was used for Quake 3, the other one was used for Free For All Battlefield 1942 and some other games. One quad processor, 2 dual processors and a workstation, that's it. We have realised we need to ensure high-end servers for large scale comps. We are in the process of finalising future available servers that will be dedicated to specific games.

<The\_Basilisk> The actual prizes for the competition

fell far short of what was promised in a G8Keeper email sent out before the event. What was the reason for this?

<G8Keeper> The only "prize" specifically mentioned on the list which was not actually included was the R50 000 cash. Unfortunately, due to extremely erroneous "copy and paste" issues, that was not meant for the prize list and that list should never have gone out. We would have liked to have arranged more prizes. However, due to previous track records, many potential sponsors were reluctant to get involved. Considering nothing was published before the time, what expectations could have been raised? Our events are based on creating a fun environment for new gamers in both free for all and competitive arenas.


<The\_Basilisk> Other major organisers were left out of the 1000manlan - surely with an undertaking of this size, their involvement would have been a benefit?

<G8Keeper> Everyone was invited to participate on the 1000manlan website. Each party who approached us either wanted hefty sums of cash upfront for their "expertise" or refused to get involved.

<The\_Basilisk> An event of this size and complexity needed the attention of professionals, and professionals cost money.

<G8Keeper> What gaming now needs is a lot of smaller, more public gaming events throughout the country. This would mean less people to run events, with more exposure and more training for the staff. This would in turn lead to staff being more professional at the larger events.

## Cape Town LAN update

 The end of April saw the first roving Organised Chaos LAN take place in Paarl at the Paarl Boys High Old Boys Club. The event was attended by around 40 people, many of whom had driven out from Cape Town for the long weekend.

The aim behind the roving OC LAN's is to bring large, organised LANing to those areas where events such as OC have been few and far between in the past. To this end the OC in Paarl could be considered a success as a third of the participants were from the Paarl area, the majority of whom had never been to an organised LAN before.

The venue itself was fantastic and perfectly suited to this smaller kind of LAN. It had everything that any gamer could want. A braai/fireplace, a fully outfitted kitchen, which Liza made excellent use of, and a fully stocked bar which was made accessible to the gamers. Only one tournament was held over the weekend and that was a MOHAA FFA tourney. This was won by

RuneFire who walked away with 256Mb 333 DDR ram. As with each OC event a raffle was held and various prizes were handed out which included CPU copper based heat sink and fan combos, and case fans. Aside from the MOHAA tourney the most popular game at the event turned out to be Delta Force Black Hawk Down. Many hours were spent camping on Mogadishu buildings introducing lead to head. While DFBHD dominated the majority of the weekend, a large part of Sunday afternoon was taken up by a Counter-Strike game that lasted several hours. When the CS was replaced by BF1942 as the game of choice it resulted in what those that were at the LAN are referring to as one of the best games of BF1942 ever, with the winning side having only three tickets left at the end of the match.

Thanks to the OC organisers for a LAN where the only problems were {2DG}Equinox deciding that the big box with all the plugs in would be a good thing to kick and MellowedMonkey and his friends hijacking the

mattresses. Dietmar would also like to thank all those gamers that stayed to the end to help clean up. Even Eyesuc joined in and handled a broom excellently, though it was under the supervision of his mom. Thanks must also go to Gas Clan for bringing all the troops out to Paarl for an excellent weekend. Judging from the responses on the LanGames.co.za forum a great time was had by all and everyone is looking forward to the next few months' events.

June's events are two OC events and one Storm event. At the time of going to press only one event date was confirmed and that is the OC at Theo Marais Park from 20th to 22nd June. The date of the Storm LAN is dependant on the available venue dates for June's roving LAN, so as not to double up on events. For more info on upcoming events go to [www.oc.co.za](http://www.oc.co.za)

Sean "KiLRoY" Beamish  
[skbeamish@imagnet.co.za](mailto:skbeamish@imagnet.co.za)



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Ok well its time again to find out what new games are online at SGS and what we "t3h 3v0l admins" have in store for you bandwidth freaks.

Day of Defeat has gone retail and with the download available online this is the next top game to play online. The SGS DOD community has been around for a long time and you might have read about DOD-WAR last month. This has really just fallen into place so amazingly and it seems that www.dodza.net will be launched on or around the time the game hits stores. [Sru]Infidel has created what has to be the best gaming website of the year so make sure to visit it.

The best news is that Intel has sponsored SGS a rack mounted server for the DOD community. Who supports gaming? Intel that's who :P MegaRom has also come to the party in a nice way supporting SGS and the dodza developers. All we need now is a day of defeat league at the LANs and online. Beware if you are thinking of playing this game online there are a few clans the likes of TBC, LBK, SRU, LEGION that have been playing this game for years - prepare to be owned.

All the Raven Shield junkies out there please be aware that your server will be back up as soon as the software fixes are released, until then sorry. The Vietcong server is up and seems to have a growing community, get the game I hear it's a hit. The Freelancer community has taken one whole month to get bored while killing Nomads and it seems the Babylon 5 mod is on the way. Plus if all goes well SGS might get a bigger server for it too, hopefully allowing the game to support 64 maybe even 128 players.

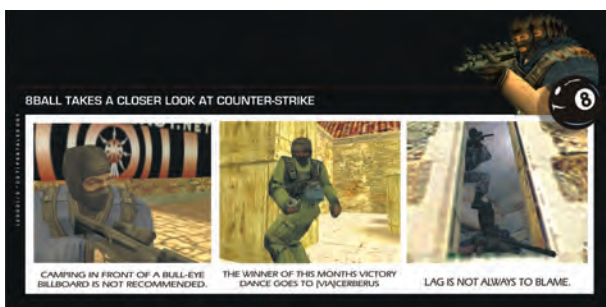
Official Maps League for Counter-Strike is almost over; results will be in next months NAG.

Cheating Death the client side anti cheat is back in use on almost all SGS Counter-Strike servers. I had a look at the list of cheats it blocks and I see OGC is on version 10b or something AHAH!!!! They just will not stop coding that kek. I personally do not like client side anti-cheats and I know the SGS anti-cheat guru [\*\*]Reboot will only use them when there is no other option, keep up the good work Reboot. A Counter-Strike 1.6 beta server is up and running so if you cannot wait for the official release get the beta and join the server.

There is a new server up for Return To Castle Wolfenstein Enemy Territory map testing. RTCW is available in your local pc/game store and playable online... The game is available in stores but the Enemy Territory version will not require a copy of RTCW to play, that's sure to get the servers full, I know I'm going to play it till me fingers bleed. America's Army is on version 1.7 and you can get the download and play the game at SGS - it's free so you have no excuse not to download it and get in the server. You will not see me playing however, I just can't bring myself to download and install a game commissioned by the Pentagon and designed for the sole reason of brainwashing American children into thinking that killing and guns are cool. Last time I checked that was the job of crack dealers and rap stars. Next thing Dr. Dre will be president of the U.S.A and McDonalds will be selling Avocado and cheese on whole-wheat or rye. YEA!! RIGHT!!!!

PS Check out our new monthly 8BALL comic below.

Snakestyles  
<http://games.saix.net>



## Shuttle X-treme Lan A trip to George and back

Well after 12 hours of driving we finally made it to George for what was to be a memorable weekend in gaming and K-Sports history. Mayhem had already arrived the day before and the network was humming with packets of games, there were a few electrical problems but what would any event be without the AWWWWW's generated by the lack of power.

On Saturday the competition got going in earnest, Michael our dear friend from Wentek had done his utmost to ensure that the LAN was full and there was not a single spot open. K-Sports had expected roughly 6-8 Counter-Strike teams but we ended up with 16 teams competing, unfortunately we were a little understaffed but the CS team leaders stepped in and helped out with finding the teams to play and asking for server restarts. Fortunately this worked out because poor old BadBoy from Mayhem gave up trying to get people in servers very quickly - thanks to Andrew "DrWeez" who saved the day with his CS server manager tool.

Quake 3 ran smoothly - thanks to James "ShadowlorD" Cloete for organizing and running the Quake 3 event. The games were played late into Saturday night with the final four CS teams chosen based on points. Evolve and H2O E0 were tied on points and a coin toss decided who would go through to the No. 1 spot, while K-Sports T6 and NDC-A filled the other two spots.

On Sunday everyone looked and felt tired but they didn't know what an exciting day they were in for. The final four teams fought it out for top honors, and boy these matches were exciting, especially the H2O E0 game vs. K-Sports T6 to play Evolve in the finals. This game had everyone holding their breath including our awesome sponsors from Shuttle and Wentek. The game went down to sudden death and H2O managed to pip K-Sports by one round to meet Evolve to decide who would be champion. Meanwhile back in the Quake 3 competition things were getting mighty heated; ShadowlorD had narrowly lost to Ph4ntom (Stephen Cloete No7 WCG 2002) 4-3 and had to face De\_Stroyer (Clayton Nieuwenhuizen) in the losers final. Amazingly after being 0-4 down De\_Stroyer (normally a Counter-Strike player) managed to win 5-4 in sudden death which led to ShadowlorD frightening the hell out of everyone within 10 feet when he lost. Ph4ntom won easily in the final, maintaining his unprecedented run of 3 years as the undisputed king of Quake3 and securing a 1, 2, 3 for K-Sports.

The Counter-Strike and Quake 3 final were played on X-PC's supplied by Shuttle. The CS final was not without some controversy (this always seems to happen when H2O play) and was dominated by Evolve after a bit of confusion on pausing the game. It was now well after 6.00pm and everyone was exhausted and wanted to go home.

The prize giving was amazing - Shuttle and Wentek made sure every player got a Shuttle tog bag (handed out by some yummy models). Shuttle also handed out many giveaways from caps to cooler bags. K-Sports would also like to thank AMD and Saitek who gave away an Xp2400 Cpu and Saitek mice. EA gave away copies of their latest title making a few gamers really happy.

After all the excitement it was time to bid a sad farewell to George, I'd like to thank Michael and Eric from Wentek for making this event possible and contributing to its success.

Brett "KnightMarE" Hamilton  
[brett@k-sports.co.za](mailto:brett@k-sports.co.za)  
[www.ksports.co.za](http://www.ksports.co.za)

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# Gaming... SA style!

▶ This month I felt it necessary to show all of you what I discovered when I recently visited I-Imagine, the software development company based in Sunninghill, North of Johannesburg. This will serve one purpose... Jealousy :)

Yes, this is how the cream of game development companies looks after their staff. Now, aren't you glad that you are a gamer? Aren't you glad that part of the money you spend on purchasing your new game goes towards making sure the game developers can afford some deserved time off?

Ok, onto matters at hand...

I often get the following question, "I would like to get more involved in gaming by going to LAN events and joining or starting a clan, can you help me?"

The answer to this question is actually quite simple, but I would like to pose a question to all three of you currently reading this article...

Would you prefer having a registered database where all clans actually register a clan name, or are you happy with the way things are at the moment? As it stands, any person may call up a few of his or her friends, decide on a name and simply add the clan tag to their nic. The clan enters competitions, social LAN's or simply plays on-line using the name decided upon by the founder or all of the members. Wouldn't it be better if there was a website for example, where newly formed clans may register the new name and thereby secure ownership of that particular name? I am not trying to think of a new business venture nor am I trying to complicate matters, I simply feel that it would be a great idea. Why has this not happened yet? What's to stop a group of guys getting together and deciding on a name that is already in use? Nothing... That's my point!!

So, here's what I suggest... If someone is in a position to start up a community based website similar to LanGames.co.za where gamers can formally and simply register their name, please let me know? If it is set up properly and the community accepts it, we as Gamers Gate will support it and strongly urge clans to register their names. It must be well thought out and you will get the support it deserves.

Next on my agenda of blurp...

A case modification competition, but this will only happen if we have enough entries. Let me know if you guys would like to see a specific competition for this at the next Gamers Gate event? What would happen is each entrant will have to apply for entry prior to the event; you will be informed beforehand as to the prize allocation and rules of entry. It will be permissible for you to enter the game competition as well as the case mod competition.

If you haven't entered yet for the Gamers Gate Carousel event from 13 - 15 June 2003 then head over to [www.langames.co.za](http://www.langames.co.za) and register quickly! You only have a few days left to hone those gaming skills for the France Electronic Sports World Cup qualifier. For more information on this event go to [www.gamersgate.co.za](http://www.gamersgate.co.za).

Looking back at the events Gamers Gate have hosted thus far, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all our sponsors and you the gamer for attending and being a part of each event. We have big plans for this year and would like to point out that we will continue to bring you the best we possibly can whilst maintaining regular and personal contact with anyone wanting to speak to us about ideas, feed back or questions. No matter how trivial or spaced out your question or suggestion may seem to you, it might just help steer the entire community onto something really cool. Remember this... dreamers started Gamers Gate!

Keep checking the Gamers Gate website for news on upcoming events, newly formed partnerships and competitions.

Till next month, C-ya!

Len 'Fr33' Nery  
[Len@gamersgate.co.za](mailto:Len@gamersgate.co.za)  
[www.gamersgate.co.za](http://www.gamersgate.co.za)

▼ I-Imagine programmers hard at work on their next game



## EVENT NEWS:

July is the beginning of a time of joy for those who don't play CS and who felt left out. Starting July, once a month Mayhem will be hosting a series of VIP/Private LANs and small competition events. Mayhem will focus on UT2003, Tribes 2, Worms, Starcraft, WarCraft and C & C Generals. For more news on these events you can mail us, or check the website. While we are on that topic, we have also been looking at fixing up the Mayhem website as well as adding a HTML only page. We also have a new email addy [staff@mayhem.co.za](mailto:staff@mayhem.co.za). So if you need to get hold of us that is the one to use.

## LEAGUE NEWS:

This month sees 24 Counter-Strike teams battle it out in the last event of the Mayhem off-line league. From here some might decide to throw in the towel and disappear off into history. Others will go home and work at it in the hopes of returning next year, better, stronger and faster. (No we have not picked up Standard Bank as a sponsor!) Others will go to compete in the Gamers Gate Carousel LAN, hosted by Mayhem, and a select few will continue on a winning streak through the year, which might see them compete in new countries and tournaments.

To all the teams who have competed in the Mayhem off-line league, well done, you played your best and we the staff of Mayhem wish you the best of luck for the future. May your grenades fly straight, and may your team mates kill the enemy and not you. Well unless you are a CHKNHD member.

For those of you who are new to Counter-Strike or did not make it into the Mayhem off-line league, you will be pleased to know that Mayhem are planning a one day Counter-Strike event for you. Please note that teams which took part in the off-line league will not be able to take part in this event.

## DATES TO LOOK OUT FOR

- 7 June - Mayhem Off-line Counter-Strike League
- 7 June - Funky Cow LAN PTA
- 7 June - Monthly Link Day PTA
- 12 - 14 June - Gamers Gate Carousel LAN (Hosted by Mayhem)
- 21 June - Mayhem open LAN

## Vapour[SOD]

Mayhem, We might be nerds, but we know more than just stuff.  
[staff@mayhem.co.za](mailto:staff@mayhem.co.za)  
[www.mayhem.co.za](http://www.mayhem.co.za)



Maybe he'll grow up to be  
an architect?



# RISE OF NATIONS

Dominate 6 000 years of history from the Ancient Age to the Information Age. Which route will you follow to lead your nation to global prominence? Trade, espionage, diplomacy or war — whichever path you choose, you'll experience the pulse pounding thrill and speed of real-time gaming combined with the scope and depth of turn-based strategy games — brought together for the first time ever in Rise of Nations from Microsoft.

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I know it. I can feel it in my bones.

Somewhere out there, in a distant corner of another hemisphere, that has only known sleet and drizzle, the morning sun is shining.

All I can see, behind the threads of softly soaking rain, are swirls of mist moving slowly against a field of deepest grey. And behind that, I believe, lies ..... the solution to my power problems.

No, not the struggle for power that reigns on battlefields littered with corpses, nor the never-ending struggle for power between the sexes. The power that I am talking about, is the power that is required to wind your new G-Force graphics card to a somewhat disappointing performance. The power required to enable the gamer nerds with bulbous eyes to cling to their keyboards, waving their mice furiously, their puffy noses pressed up against the monitor.

Power has always plagued LAN's, whether small or large. The latest victim of this almost sacred cow, has been the 1000manLAN. So why do we keep on missing the point? Why do we keep on failing on the cornerstone of any successful LAN? I am not knowledgeable enough to enlighten you on the reason for failure, but I might be able to give a few pointers on how to try and avoid this most common problem.

I can already see a few grins and a couple of sneers. "So what qualifies you as an expert in this field?" This might be a good time to indicate that Wolvenoid asked me to do this article since it is not her field of knowledge. Without supplying you with my CV, I will just say that I successfully started up four 2.5 Megawatt fans during December. If they ran off 220V, they would each consume 11 363 Ampere. Since a normal household is supplied with 65 Ampere, I consider myself knowledgeable enough to supply pointers to the less educated in this field. **[It should be made clear that this knowledge is intended to empower you to such an extent that you can plan with knowledge. You should however never attempt to modify or work on electrical circuits if you are not qualified.]**

First I will have to explain the terms Power, Voltage and Current.

**Power** is measured in Watts (W) and is an indication of the energy that is consumed. (Power = Voltage \* Current)

**Voltage**, also called electromotive force (EMF), is an expression for electric potential or potential difference. If a conductive or semi conductive path is provided between the two points having a relative potential difference, an electric current flows. The common symbol for voltage is the uppercase letter V or E. The standard unit is the volt, symbolized by V. One volt is the EMF required to drive one coulomb of electrical charge (6.24 x 10<sup>18</sup> charge carriers) past a specific point in one second.

We use 220 Volts Alternating Current (VAC) to power most of our household items. Some smallholdings and larger business complexes utilize 380VAC. For the sake of our gaming addiction, this should be seen as three different 220VAC sources, which are out of phase with each.

**Current** is a flow of electrical charge carriers, usually electrons or electron-deficient atoms. The common



## Power is king at a LAN

*"The power you need exists in the noble blood in your veins"*  
**Mustafa Kemal Atatürk**



symbol for current is the uppercase letter I. The standard unit is the ampere, symbolized by A. One ampere of current represents one coulomb of electrical charge (6.24 x 10<sup>18</sup> charge carriers) moving past a specific point in one second. Physicists consider current to flow from relatively positive points to relatively negative points; this is called conventional current or Franklin current. Electrons, the most common charge carriers, are negatively charged. They flow from relatively negative points to relatively positive points.

If we now want to consider hosting a LAN, we cannot assume that the power supply in a PC is 300 Watt, the screen 200 Watt and thus we need to supply (500/220) 2.3 Amps per PC. Although this is a very safe value, it implies that only 6 PCs can run off a normal wall plug. Through experience, I have come to a figure of about 1.2 Amps per PC that is required. Thus you could run 12 PC's from a single wall socket. Since most commercial plugs and multi-plug adaptors are rated at 15 Amps, 12 is a good value to work on per power lead and should generally not be exceeded.

As with any successful venture, planning is the key to success. The common misconception on power is that if you put 10 PC's on a plug, and you have 5 plugs, you can accommodate 50 PCs. Don't spoil your LANing experience by falling for this misconception. Plugs in a building are normally planned according to a formula, which tries to forecast the most probable usage in a room. In other words, several plugs, and even some lights may share a common breaker. Look in your house, count the number of plugs, multiply it by 15 Amps, and you should easily exceed 50-65 Amps, which is the normal supply for a house. Now take into account the geyser, the stove and lights, and you should start to understand that plugs usually share a breaker.

Always try and get an idea of which plugs are fed from which breakers, this will be truly useful at the LAN. Plugging in a light or electrical appliance, and switching the breakers off till you get the right breaker can accomplish this. It stands to reason that you should consider other people feeding from the same distribution board. They might smack you if you switch off their power while they are busy working. Now make a note of which plugs feed from which breakers. Allow 15Amp per breaker, that's the normal rating of the wiring that is used. I always allow for 12 PCs per circuit breaker. That leaves me with 3Amps spare for those 19 inch monsters. Also remember that the extension cable you use can either be 15Amps, or 10Amps. If your extensions are only 10 Amp, do not put more than 8 PCs per extension.

By now you should have an idea of how many plugs and

breakers you have. Look at the incoming breaker. In normal households it is 50-65Amps. A lot depends on what other devices you run from the same board. If there is a geyser, see if you can switch it off for the party, because it is quite power hungry. Lights should also be taken into account. 10Amps for lights should be ample, providing that you do not have huge spotlights etc on that circuit. If the building is shared by different shops, make sure what power they consume, and where they feed from.

To get back to the point, deduct all the additional power required for other electrical devices from the incoming rating. Say 65-10Amps for the lights (as an example where only lights are to be considered). Now take the number of breakers for plugs, allowing 15 amp per breaker, and divide that into the remainder of the power. Thus if we had 3 circuit breakers for plugs, that would leave us with (65-10)-(3\*15) = 10 amps spare. This means that there is enough power to supply the three circuit breakers, and thus 3\*12 = 36 PCs. Remember to count all the PCs, including servers and your own. If we had 5 Circuit Breakers (CB from now on), the amount of PCs would be (65-10)-(5\*15) = negative 20Amps. This indicates that although we have many CBs, the incoming supply is not enough. We have 55Amps to divide between 5 CBs, which gives us 11 Amps. Thus we can use all the CB and have 8 PCs per CB (8 Amps with 3Amps spare) relating to a maximum of 40 PCs. We could use only 4 CB and have 13.75Amp per CB, relating to 10 PCs with 3.75 Amp spare for a maximum of 40 PC's.

If you have three-phase power, call in a professional, since this will require you to split the load among the phases. Three phase is like having three 220V supplies at your house, the big secret here is to keep the load balanced between the phases due to all the phases sharing one neutral. Failure to do this may cause damage to your circuits!

### **Oh my word, the earth leakage tripped!!**

This is quite a common occurrence. Try and find out what the last electrical device was that was added to your circuit. Maybe somebody plugged in a faulty kettle. Switch off all the CBs, and switch them back on one at a time. This should help you find in which circuit the problem is. When you identify the circuit, switch on one device at a time until you find the faulty device. Isolate it from the circuit, and switch all the CBs on. Test to see whether this was the problem before starting your next game. You could ask the person to leave, or you may transgress the law by disconnecting the earth. Not recommended.

### **The power has failed!!**

Follow the same procedure as with the earth leakage.

When you get the CB that is being overloaded, check if someone plugged into the wrong circuit thus overloading the system (remember, TRUST NO ONE), or whether the circuit has a fault overloading it. If all is as you planned, and the circuit is not overloaded by too many devices, switch on one device at a time. It is possible that a

faulty power supply is tripping your power. If this turns out to be your fault, either replace the PSU or ask the person to spectate or return to your next LAN. Remember if you are kind to this one poor soul, you will take away a good experience for everybody. Let him fix his problem, or return another time with working

equipment.

As you stare into the misty rains during your next power failure, remember that your life should not be a passing presence in the blink of history, so go out and make a noise :D



## Professional LANs

Last month you were witness to one of the biggest LANs in South Africa, and whatever your opinion was about it, it is now a proven fact that we (South Africans) do actually have the ability to get more than 1000 LANners in one area, at the same time. This marks a record in many ways for South Africa but as gamers usually are, they always complain without any useful criticism. You could have the worst LAN on planet earth, and you would get people saying it was great, while the other half say it sucked, and you would get the same ratio of people complaining if there was absolutely nothing wrong (but someone will always find something wrong - those are one of the definites of life, together with death). The next big one is at the Carousel on 13th of June 2003, and considering the close to perfect LAN that happened there last time under the guiding wing of the Mayhem crew, its time to put in some leave in advance, and bribe the parents to take off school. If you have any suggestions for the LAN organizers, feel free to pop it on the Prophecy Forum under the General Rants section, or go to LanGames.co.za and click on Forum, I know some organizers take notes on what everyone wants. See you at the next LAN.

TadMadLad  
[www.langames.co.za](http://www.langames.co.za)

## The way forward ...



**One of G8Keeper's goals with the Electronic Arts, G8Keeper 1000manLAN was to make sure that there was "new blood" drawn into the gaming scene, and we know we achieved that. We saw more smiling faces and more happy parents than at any event we have ever attended, assisted with or managed. The number of people who attended a LAN for the very first time and the amount of spectators (including parents wanting to see what a LAN was all about) was significant in our eyes. And, oh, yes, we got the record - its set at 1152 PC's :)**

We do admit that the event was not all happiness and smiles for some, and thanks to everyone who so freely gave constructive criticism to us in person, we can promise that lessons have been learned, and plans are in motion to make sure that the next one is smoother, and better managed.

A number of people have asked why we did not ask the usual crews to assist

with the event, but even though we did (and there are long stories around that), we just do not believe that the same people must run every event in South Africa. That was one of the primary reasons for our creation of G8Keeper. We believe that there are different ways to do things, and some better ways too.

Following in the footsteps of those that have run large LAN events before is easy, but the end result would not be an original, new concept G8Keeper event. One of the biggest points from that perspective is that the event would not have been possible without the assistance of the numerous volunteers who assisted on the set-up days and during the event itself. Yes, most were not prepared for the magnitude of the event and the demands that would be placed on them, ... some even left early on Saturday, but many rose to the occasion and delivered far beyond expectations, to help make the event the overall success that it was.

In keeping with our aim to do things differently, G8Keeper chose to invest in the staff (time, food, money, friendship), by giving them the opportunity to learn with us, and should they choose, to continue working with us. This way we share the knowledge and experience of learning about large LAN's and event management, so that they individually could become a new G8Keeper and try doing things their own way, perhaps even better. For the future events of G8Keeper, we are aiming to invest time in creating a core staff who will be available for every event, so we can be better armed to handle the logistics of future events.

G8Keeper's addition of "new blood" can be extended to our many first time sponsors such as ERS - providing entertainment for the gamers and immense assistance around the event, and CableLink - who provided and assisted with network cabling, as well as HP who provided the Network Switches. Another exciting addition was the

creation of the Shuttle VIP area, who displayed their incredible new XPC and made them available for other sponsors and VIP's to try out. Shuttle also assisted in various other ways - including having necessary items available on hand such as headphones and speakers. Electronic Arts once again have shown their dedication to the gaming community of South Africa, by not only lending their name to the event, but through real support and friendship too. We believe that gaming here in South Africa is set for big things. And with partners such as these - things can only get bigger and better!

Keep an eye on our websites [1000manLAN.co.za](http://1000manLAN.co.za) and [G8Keeper.co.za](http://G8Keeper.co.za) for more G8Keeper announcements, events and promotions.

**Rocco Strauss**  
- | G8 | -RandoM  
Keep the Faith  
[RandoM@g8keeper.co.za](mailto:RandoM@g8keeper.co.za)



## The return of the king

Electronic Arts have stated that they are busy developing The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King, based on the upcoming film. The game will feature multiple decision paths, and

will feature a multiplayer mode that will allow several players to explore Middle Earth together. As yet, no release details have been announced.



## Metal arms

Metal Arms: Glitch in the System is an upcoming "robotic shooter" from Vivendi Universal and Swingin' Ape. The humorously toned story, which is being written by a team of former television cartoonists and writers, has a robot by the name of Glitch on a quest to thwart the insidious plans of General Corrosive. The game should be available on Xbox and GameCube late this year.



## Need for speed: underground

A new instalment in the Need For Speed franchise is under development at Electronic Arts' Black Box, the team responsible for Hot Pursuit 2. The new title will focus on underground street racing, which seems to be the latest fad with Hollywood and game developers alike. The game will feature a wide selection of licensed vehicles and parts, and players will engage in a career mode that will require racing victories in order to procure parts and modifications. Given the game's focus, most races will take place at night in urban settings. Need For Speed: Underground will be released for Xbox, PlayStation 2, GameCube and Game Boy Advance early next year.



## Metal shell

Tantalus Interactive, of Australia, are currently developing an arcade title called Metal Shell, for PlayStation 2 and Xbox. The game will let players assume command of high-speed combat tanks. The game's most significant feature is the fact that all objects and environment elements will be subject to damage, and so it will be possible for players to drastically influence their combat environment. Online play is planned, with the possibility of tournaments and leagues. The game is still in early development stages, and so no publication details are available at present. [www.metal-shell.com](http://www.metal-shell.com)



## Rogue ops

Kemco's upcoming Rogue Ops will be an action adventure game set in the world of anti-terrorist agents. The game's story deals with a female former Green Beret who has a score to settle with a sinister global terrorist organisation. Rogue Ops will feature some refinements to the stealth theme such as the ability to pick-pocket computer-controlled characters when conditions are right. Of course, the game will include a host of available weapons, including some fairly exotic items. Rogue Ops is planned for release late this year, and will appear on Xbox, PlayStation 2 and GameCube. The Xbox version will boast Xbox Live functionality.



PlayStation 2  
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Eyetoys is a totally new concept for PlayStation 2. No longer do you have to depend on the Analog Controller to control the game - interaction is accomplished simply by moving your body! The Eye Toy registers the motion of your body transforming it instantly to on-screen action.



## The treason of isengard

Another Lord of the Rings game in the works is The Treason of Isengard, from Black Label Games and Surreal Software. Expected to ship before the year-end holidays, this third-person action adventure will allow playable characters to earn experience and other upgrades.



## SSX 3

A new version of Electronic Arts' SSX snowboarding game is on its way and should be complete within a couple of months. The game will feature new courses, events, tricks and customisable characters. SSX 3 will be available on Xbox, PlayStation 2 and GameCube.



## Colin mcrac rally 04

Colin McRae Rally 04, from Codemasters, will be released in November on PS2 and Xbox. The game will feature a number of new play modes, both single- and multi-player. It will include enhanced graphics, and will offer specialist events for both four-wheel and two-wheel-drive vehicles.



## The sims bustin' out

EA announced the development of The Sims Bustin' Out for the Xbox, PS2 and GC. Sim players can now get their Sims out of the house and into new locations to play, work, and meet a cast of 40 new characters. The game is scheduled to be released in early 2004.



## EA nabs two more movie licenses

### EA gets Superman

EA has entered into a licensing agreement with Warner Bros. and DC Comics to develop, publish and distribute games titles based on the latest Superman movie, scheduled for release next year. EA has also acquired rights to produce games based on Superman comics and animated TV shows.

### Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup

Harry Potter fans will be happy to know that a quidditch simulator is on its way from Electronic Arts later this year. Quidditch is the game that Hogwarts students in the films play while mounted on broomsticks. Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup will allow players to begin in a Hogwarts league and to progress to an international league upon winning the campus event. The game will be released for PC, Xbox, PS2, GC and GBA.



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# International Release Dates

TITLE	PLATFORM	GENRE	RELEASE
Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge	Xbox	Action	June 3
Dakar 2	Xbox	Driving	June 3
Jacked	Xbox	Driving	June 3
Midnight Club II	Xbox	Driving	June 3
Street Racing Syndicate	Xbox	Driving	June 3
Ultimate Muscle	GBA	Action	June 3
Ultimate Muscle: Legends vs. New Generation	GC	Sports	June 3
Wakeboarding Unleashed Featuring Shaun Murray	PS2   Xbox	Sports	June 3
Warship Gunner	PS2	Simulation	June 3
A Sound of Thunder	PS2   GC	Action	June 10
F1 Career Challenge	PS2	Driving	June 10
Fishing Live Online	Xbox	Sports	June 10
Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb	PS2	Action	June 10
IndyCar Series	Xbox	Driving	June 10
Sonic Adventure DX	GC	Action	June 10
Space Channel 5	GBA   PS2	Puzzle	June 17
Dungeons & Dragons Heroes	GC   PS2	Role-Playing	June 17
Freestyle MetalX	Xbox   GC	Driving	June 17
Ice Nine	PS2	Action	June 17
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure	PS2	Action	June 17
Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter	Xbox   GC	Action	June 17
Midtown Madness 3	Xbox	Driving	June 17
Operation Flashpoint: Cold War Crisis	Xbox	Action	June 17
Soldier of Fortune II: Double Helix	Xbox	Action	June 17
Tales of Phantasia	GBA	Role-Playing	June 17
Advance Wars 2: Black Hole Rising	GBA	Strategy	June 23
Big Mutha Truckers	Xbox   PS2	Driving	June 23
Freestyle MetalX	PS2	Driving	June 23
Jacked	PS2   GC	Driving	June 23
Jet Grind Radio	GBA	Action	June 23
Outlaw Volleyball	Xbox	Sports	June 23
Rock N' Roll Racing	GBA	Driving	June 23
Street Racing Syndicate	GC   PS2	Driving	June 23
The Simpsons Road Rage	GBA	Driving	June 23
Wario World	GC	Action	June 23
Breed	Xbox	Action	July 1

## Nintendo Unveils Two Zelda Titles

Shigeru Miyamoto unveiled two new Zelda titles at the Nintendo E3 Press Conference in May. Both games are set to make full use of the connectivity between the GBA and the GC.

### The Legend of Zelda : Tetras Trackers

The Legend of Zelda : Tetras Trackers will be played via 4 GBAs connected to the GameCube, using the Game Boy Advance as a game screen and a controller to race against up to three friends. Exclusive information appears on each player's screen, while Tetra, the leader of the pirates, guides the group along the way with cues that appear on the GameCube.

### The Legend of Zelda : Four Swords

This is the full standalone version of Four Swords, the multiplayer title which was included on Link to the Past for GBA. A massive new world has been created for GBA and GC owners to explore, and with GBAs hooked up, enemies disappear from one screen onto the next as players battle for survival and ultimate supremacy (with no additional GBA cart required). Enemies on GC can also be controlled by GBA players hitting relevant switches with secret messages appearing on the GBA screen, giving players a tactical advantage over their foes.



## Star Fox Armada

Nintendo have confirmed that Star Fox Armada, the successor to Starfox Adventures, is on its way to GameCube. Classic team members, Fox McCloud, Slippy Toad, Peppy Hare and Falco Lombardi, join forces in an arcade adventure style game which will include four-player multiplayer action.

## Web Scores

How NAG reviews compare to internet site reviews

	Turok Evolution [PS2]	Rayman 3 [PS2]	BMX XXX [PS2]	Dr Muto [PS2]	Vexx [PS2]	War of the Monsters [PS2]
NAG /100	66	80	62	80	66	90
www.ign.com /10	6.3	8.9	6	8.5	7.4	8.9
www.gamespot.com /10	7	7.9	5.4	6.5	6.3	7.4
www.gamespy.com /100	65	66	n/r	n/r	61	88

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## Middle Earth Online

Vivendi Universal and Turbine Entertainment are teaming up to bring us Middle Earth Online. Players of this massively multiplayer online role-playing game will assume the personas of characters in Tolkien's world, Middle Earth. This title will be launched next year.



## The Sims 2

The Sims 2 will feature DNA as a game element - some characteristics will be inherited by sims' offspring. The new 3D engine will allow subtleties such as aging, weight gain and loss, facial expressions and gestures to be depicted. The game will ship next year.



## Lords of EverQuest

The online Everquest phenomenon has spawned a spin-off - an upcoming real-time strategy called Lords of EverQuest. The game will boast superior graphics, and will feature an experience system that includes every unit in the game. Up to twelve players will be able to duke it out in multiplayer games.



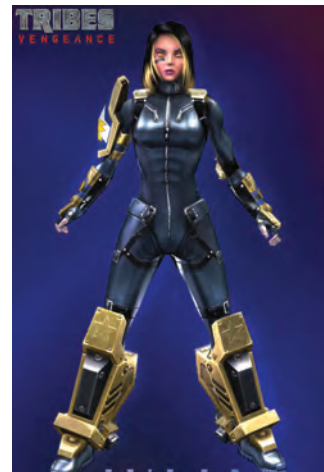
## Mythica

Microsoft are currently engaged in an ambitious project entitled Mythica. This upcoming game will be a massively multiplayer online role-playing game with some very innovative differences. The setting is Norse mythology, and players will assume the roles of immortals, mighty warriors who fell heroically and honorably in battle and have ascended to Valhalla. Here they embark on a quest to prevent Rangnarok, the end of the world. In order to achieve this, players will need to become gods, and so will initially curry favour with mortals in order to gain their worship. The game will reflect the symbiosis between deity and worshiper, how the god gains power from his followers' devotions and in turn fortifies them with his power. Furthermore, this symbiosis will result in characters gradually assuming characteristics of the races that worship them. Of course, given that players play immortal characters, this will lead to interesting ways to handle the eventuality of "death". Mythica's most innovative aspect is the fact that the world will contain "pockets", referred to as PlayScapes, which will contain adventure modules that can be played privately - this is to say, several parties may be in the same PlayScape simultaneously, but only party-mates will be able to perceive each other or each other's actions and circumstances. This device will allow players to enjoy experiences similar to those that can be had on a LAN playing, say, Neverwinter Nights. Microsoft are aiming at promoting co-operative play. This game will be launched next year. [www.mythica.com](http://www.mythica.com)



## Tribes: Vengeance

The next game in the Tribes franchise is on its way from Irrational Games and Vivendi Universal. To be titled Tribes: Vengeance, the upcoming title will make use of Epic's latest Unreal technology, and will feature multiplayer content designed by Michael "KineticPoet" Johnston, a leading figure in the modification ("mod") community. The game's single-player aspect will focus heavily on an engrossing story and character development through plot and the use of a sophisticated facial expression rendering system. Work has only just begun, and no release date has been hinted at.



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## Knights Over Europe

Knights Over Europe from Aspect Simulations will be a World War I combat flight simulator. The developers intend to accurately model the materials that the old aircraft were made of. The game will calculate each bullet and other particle individually, including shrapnel fragments and the like. The game is tentatively scheduled for release toward the middle of next year.



## Armed & Dangerous

Armed & Dangerous is a current project underway at LucasArts. This is an action title wherein the player assumes the role of a leader of a gang future-day Merry Men of sorts. The other members of the group possess unique and diverse skills that will be required in order for them to complete their quest for the Book of Rule. Armed & Dangerous will be available for the PC and Xbox sometime this year.



## Crown of the North

A descendent of the Europa Universalis strategy series, Paradox's Crown of the North will be set in the Nordic territories in the late Middle Ages. It will feature fewer but more detailed factions. It will also feature the political powers of the church and the nobility, and will add economic pressures to the existing military threats. As yet, no release details have been announced.



## Halo

Halo on PC will be an exact recreation of Halo as it was released on the Xbox, level for level, mission for mission, except for the fact that it will include mouse control. The game will also ship with full multiplayer

supported over the Internet, six new multiplayer maps, a new plasma weapon, a modified Warthog with a missile launcher in the rear and editing tools. Look out for it around the end of September.



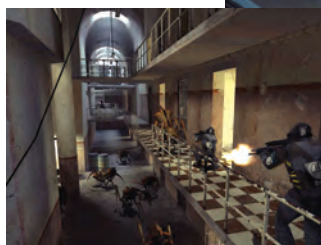
## Impossible Creatures: Insect Invasion

Relic Entertainment has announced that it is working on a free add-on to Impossible Creatures, called Insect Invasion. Scheduled for release online in the next couple of months, Insect Invasion will add 15 new creatures, 9 new abilities and other game enhancements. Relic also plans to release updated tools and the IC SDK to the mod community shortly after the release of Insect Invasion.



## Half-Life 2

Apparently, Half Life 2 has been in development right since the release of Valve Software's original. The sequel's plot resumes the story not long after the events of the original title, and continuity is being maintained by the presence of certain familiar characters. The game's new engine, called Source, will deliver unprecedented levels of environmental detail, facial and character animation and physical realism. The new AI, which will make no use of scripting, will feature enhanced threat evaluation, and will also allow enemies to use terrain to their advantage. Many old enemies will be present once again, along with a host of new ones. The single-player campaign will offer around 40 hours of play. Valve have, naturally, taken the "mod" factor into account, and the game's design will reflect this. Half Life 2 is scheduled for release on 13 September.





## Fair Strike

A new combat helicopter simulator is in development at Buka Entertainment of Moscow. Fair Strike will place players in the cockpit and pit them against terrorists, while requiring players to protect innocent civilians. It will be set in a slightly speculative near-future, and will include several of the world's finest military helicopters, as well as the Ka-58 Black Ghost, a concept helicopter not yet in production. Players will be able to command wingmen and request assistance from other military assets, such as artillery. The control interface will be scalable, allowing hardcore flight simulator fans to enjoy a fairly realistic experience while also providing a more accessible, arcade-style game to more casual players. A single-player campaign will be available, as well as several multiplayer modes, and players will be able to personalise their craft with custom skins. Fair Strike will become available in Europe late this year.



## SimCity 4: Rush Hour

Maxis have begun work on an add-on for SimCity 4, titled Rush Hour, which will focus primarily on the transportation elements of a city. An interesting departure from SimCity precedent is the fact that players will now be able to assume control of vehicles in order to fulfil mission objectives. In addition to the usual types of disasters that can be expected in a city, players will now have the option to control a UFO and spark an alien invasion - bizarre and gimmicky, but sounds like fun!



## Unreal Tournament 2004

Atari will be bringing Unreal Tournament 2004 to a computer near you at the end of this year. Gamers can look forward to new modes, mods and maps (20 never-before seen) as well as controllable land, air and space-based vehicles. Other features include a re-designed user interface, UnrealTV match broadcast system for viewing of matches, Assault mode (single player oriented), Onslaught mode (multi-player oriented), live voice chat, end-user voting system plus all the content from Unreal Tournament 2003 as well as the two free bonus packs released by Digital Extremes and Epic Games.

## International Release Dates

TITLE	GENRE	RELEASE DATE
Call Sign: Charlie	Tactical	June 1
Echelon: Wind Warriors	Simulator	June 13
Dragon's Lair 3D	Action	June 13
Will Rock	FPS	June 13
Gothic II	RPG	June 13
Neverwinter Nights: Shadows of Undrentide	RPG	June 13
Cycling Manager 3	Simulator	June 13
The Hulk	Action	June 13
F1 Challenge 99-02	Racing	June 13
Starsky and Hutch	Action	June 20
Star Trek: Elite Force II	FPS	June 20
Halo	FPS	June 27
Chaser	FPS	June 27
Harbinger	RPG	June 27
Spells of Gold	RPG	June 27
Colin McRae Rally 3	Racing	June 27
Spellforce: The Order of Dawn	Strategy	June 27
Wildlife Park	Strategy	June 27
They Came From Hollywood	Strategy	June 27
Soldner: Secret Wars	Strategy	June 27
World Racing	Racing	June 27
Virtual Chess 3	Strategy	June 27
RC Cars	Racing	June 27
Midnight Club II	Racing	June 27
WarCraft III: The Frozen Throne	Strategy	June 27
Horse Racing Manager	Simulator	June 27
W.A.T.E.R. Online	Strategy	July 1
Darkened Skye	RPG	July 1
Lock On: Modern Air Combat	Simulator	July 1
Northland	Strategy	July 1
Heath: The Unchosen Path	RPG	July 1
No Man's Land	Strategy	July 17
Anarchy Online: Shadowlands	MMORPG	July 17
Flight Simulator 2004: A Century of Flight	Simulator	July 18
Sabotage	Action	July 25
Napoleon	Strategy	July 25

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## Max Payne 2



Rockstar Games have announced the development of Max Payne 2: The Fall Of Max Payne, scheduled for release towards the end of this year. News of a console version will be announced at a later date.  
www.maxpayne2.com

## Dark Age of Camelot: Trials of Atlantis

An expansion to Mythic Entertainment's online role-playing game Dark Age of Camelot is on its way and should arrive by the end of the year. Titled Trials of Atlantis, it adds an underwater realm for high-level characters, with an emphasis on team play. An additional experience progression, Master Levels, has been added for such high-level characters that complete the various tests. Naturally, the expansion will also add new monsters, weapons, items and so forth.

## Age of Wonders: Shadow Magic

Age of Wonders: Shadow Magic, coming to the PC in July, will revolve around the emergence of a new empire that challenges the ancient races. The title's action will unfold the new Shadow World dimension and will feature new races. The game will ship with comprehensive editing and creation tools. Shadow Magic is being created by Triumph Studios, and will be published by Gathering of Developers.

## Trinity

Activision have contracted Gray Matter Studios and Vicarious Visions to develop PC and Xbox versions, respectively, of their upcoming first-person shooter, Trinity. The game will be set in an alternate, near-future New Orleans that is threatened with extinction by a viral plague. As the Nightstalker, players will set out to get to the bottom of the situation and save the day. As is to be expected, the Nightstalker has a wide array of weapons and gadgets to help defeat the enemy. Additionally, the Nightstalker, being a bio-technically enhanced being, can use "Flash Time", allowing the hero to perform superhuman feats of acrobatics and speed. Production of Trinity is expected to be complete next year.



## Vampire: The Masquerade - Bloodlines

Troika Games are currently working on Vampire: The Masquerade - Bloodlines, a game that will combine elements of first-person shooter and role-playing titles. Starting players will have a choice of seven clans to belong to, each of which offers various supernatural abilities and characteristics. From then on, players will be

able to expend earned experience points on specializing their skills, with the result that any two given powerful player vampires are likely to be as different as chalk and cheese. In addition to their vampiric abilities, players will have ample weapons available to them. Bloodlines will be distributed next year by Activision.



## Uru: Ages Beyond Myst

Ubi Soft's upcoming Uru: Ages Beyond Myst is being developed by Cyan Worlds, the creators of Myst and Riven. This new game will immerse players in a whole new story and require a blend of puzzle-solving, exploration and success at mini-games. It will also feature an online option, Uru Live, which will allow groups of players to form adventuring bands, facilitating interaction with the provision of voice chat functionality. Uru: Ages Beyond Myst should be out by Christmas.



## Victoria

A new strategy game, titled Victoria, is under development at Paradox Entertainment. This title will challenge players, as rulers of 19th century nations, to successfully lead their countries into the 20th century. The game will require players to master diplomacy, warfare, colonization, technological development, politics and economy. Victoria will be distributed by Strategy First, and is expected before the end of the year.



## Top Gun: Combat Zones

Titus Interactive's Digital Integration are at work on the PC version of Top Gun: Combat Zones. The game makes no reference to the film of similar title, plot- or character-wise, but places the player at the controls of any of a number of American military aircraft. The game's missions include engagements ranging from the '70s through to the present day. Top Gun: Combat Zones may be available as you read this.



### STAR WARS: REPUBLIC COMMANDO

LucasArts has announced Star Wars: Republic Commando, a first-person shooter with strategic leanings that utilises the Unreal Engine, for the PC and Xbox. Using an enhanced version of the Unreal engine technology, the game is expected to be released in mid 2004.

### OPERATION FLASHPOINT 2

Codemasters and Bohemia Interactive Studios are teaming up to create a PC sequel to Operation Flashpoint. It will feature three Theatres of War - a Southeast Asia Theatre, Central European Theatre and an African Theatre, which will all be based around the 1970's.

### INFOGRAMES RENAMED ATARI

With immediate effect, Infogrames Entertainment is now renamed to Atari Interactive. The company has been publishing games under this brand for some time now, but the change is now globally official. All games in the company's extensive catalogue will now be published under the Atari brand.

### UPCOMING UBI SOFT TITLES

Ubi Soft will be going ahead with two new projects - Splinter Cell: Shadow Strike and Ghost Recon 2. Currently, that is all that has been revealed.

### DUNGEON SIEGE II

Dungeon Siege II is currently in development for a 2004 release.

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## Wafer-Thin CD System

The Brookstone Wafer-Thin CD Player uses NXT flat-panel speaker technology and an omni-directional subwoofer. The design allows for this compact unit to deliver high-quality three-dimensional sound. It is fully compatible with all CDs, CD-R and CD-RW. [www.brookstone.com](http://www.brookstone.com)



## QuietComfort 2

Bose have released the QuietComfort 2 noise-cancelling headphones. An unusual feature is the fact that all the noise-cancelling circuitry and the battery compartment are integrated into the headphones themselves. One battery lasts around 35 hours. The QuietComfort 2 headphones are said to be very comfortable.



## Matsushita Toughbook

Matsushita Electric has announced a more compact B4 Toughbook 18. The new laptop includes a rotating 10.4" display and some Tablet features such as hand-written input. It uses the 855GM chipset, has 256MB of RAM and a 40GB hard disk. The battery lasts eight hours under Windows XP, a little less under Windows 2000. The units will be available early next month. RRP \$2500



## Philips release new audio products

Philips have revealed their external PSC805 Aurilium sound card, which connects to the PC via USB2.0, supports 24-bit audio, and has built-in Dolby Digital and DTS decoders. Two new speaker systems have also been introduced, the 2.1-channel Acoustic Fusion A3.310 and the 5.1-channel A3.610.



## Datasurfer PC workstation

The innovative Datasurfer PC workstation is ergonomically designed to allow comfortable use of a computer while sitting, standing or lying down. Everything tilts accordingly, to provide optimal viewing and operating angles. The design of the unit is such that, while providing comfort, it encourages some movement, thus preventing cramping and tension. RRP \$699 at [www.thinkgeek.com](http://www.thinkgeek.com)



## Dell Dimension XPS

Dell have released a system aimed at the gaming market. The Dimension XPS ships with a 3GHz Intel Pentium 4 CPU, Intel's new 875P chipset, 128MB Radeon 9800 Pro graphics card, a pair of 120GB Seagate Barracuda Serial ATA hard drives in a RAID 0 configuration, SoundBlaster Audigy 2 sound card, a 16X DVD-ROM drive, a combo DVD-RW/CD-RW drive and Logitech Z-680 5.1 speakers. The included display is the Dell 1800FP 18-inch LCD monitor. [www.dell.com](http://www.dell.com)



## RTR-720 Mark II Mod 2 USB gaming mouse

Good Work System's Rotokiller RTR-720 Mark II Mod 2 - quite a mouthful! This gaming mouse combines elements of ergonomic controller design with programmability features heretofore only seen in console controllers and expensive joysticks. This mouse uses a processor and a game database to determine what game is being played, thereafter allowing on-the-fly reprogramming of functions. The manufacturers will be making available custom designs of the mouse, with variation in the colouring of elements such as the back-light, the optical laser itself and other cosmetic details. It remains to be seen whether this will be readily accessible locally.



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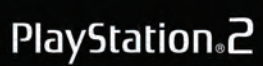


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## DISCover PC game console

Digital Interactive Systems Corporation have designed a gaming console that runs PC games. This is quite a natural development, as this unit allows access to the huge selection of PC games out there with the convenience and reduced hassle of a console. Numerous manufacturers will soon be marketing versions of the DISCover gaming console, with varying specifications, which seems something of a contradiction in the context of a console system. PC-to-DISCover transformation kits will also become available with time. [www.gameconsole.tv](http://www.gameconsole.tv)



## iMP-550 portable player

iRiver's iMP-550 is a new portable CD/MP3 player. Weighing in at 145g, it boasts a battery life of 55 hours, carries analogue and optical outputs and ships with a remote control.



## Logitech Driving Force Pro

The next-generation Logitech force feedback wheel for PlayStation 2 has been announced. The Driving Force Pro (specifically designed for use with Polyphony Digital's upcoming Gran Turismo 4 racing simulation) mimics the turning radius of a real streetcar, with the degree of rotation being a full 900 degrees (or 2.5 turns). It also has a right-side shift knob with sequential shifting and a design inspired by Italian performance cars. The wheel features paddle shifters on the backside of the wheel for Formula-style racing; eight wheel-mounted action buttons occupy the wheel hub along with an analog D-pad that controls car functions. Two other buttons - "start" and "select" - are placed toward the bottom of the wheel. A dual clamping system locks to prevent the base of the wheel from coming loose during gameplay and allows it to be secured to different surfaces. The weighted pedal base features large pedals. The wheel also uses Logitech's carpet grip system to ensure that almost any amount of pressure on the gas or brake cannot push the pedals out of reach. The bottom of the pedal base also has non-slip pads to prevent slippage on hard surfaces.



## Nintendo Hardware

Nintendo have announced some new items which can be plugged into your GameCube. The Secure Digital (SD) Memory Card reader is an adapter that allows GameCube games to access the SD cards. SD cards vary in size up to 512MB, and are more spacious than your standard Nintendo Memory Card. You can't however plug and play a SD card to store regular game saves as games must be specially coded to recognise the adapter. There is also a special link-up adapter for the GameCube and GBA called the eCard Reader Plus, which is the same as the original eCard Reader, but



with an expansion port that allows you to connect the GameCube to GBA and transfer eCard info between them.

Both items will be released in July in Japan.



### NEW INTEL PERFORMANCE CHIPSET

Intel's new 875P chipset supports dual-channel DDR400 memory, serial ATA, AGP 8X, Gigabit Ethernet and Hyper-Threading. It is built using a .13-micron process and boasts an 800MHz front-side bus. To accompany this chipset, Intel have also released a 3GHz Pentium 4 that can take advantage of the 800MHz FSB.

### ATI'S UPCOMING PENTIUM 4 CHIPSETS

ATI will soon show off the RS300, their new integrated Pentium 4 chipset. RS300 will support 800MHz FSB, dual-channel DDR400 and HyperThreading. The Radeon 9000 chip will make up the integrated graphics. The RS300VE version of the chipset will only support single-channel DDR400, but is otherwise similar.

### SONY'S ALL-IN-ONE PS2 CHIP

Sony Computer Entertainment have revealed their new 90nm chip that carries the EmotionEngine processor, Graphics Synthesizer and DRAM memory. These new integrated chips are being manufactured as you read this.

### LATEST IPODS

Apple have unveiled their latest iPod portable music players. Three models will be available: 10GB, 15GB and 30GB. The units have a playtime of around eight hours, and their batteries are automatically charged while the unit is connected to a Mac or PC. The iPod also features a line-out, so it can connect to a hi-fi or set of speakers.

### NEW INTEL MOBILE CPUs

Intel have introduced three new CPUs

for laptops. The mobile P4M processor has a clock speed of 2.5GHz, while the mobile Celerons clock in at 2.2GHz and 1.26GHz.

### HELIK PORTABLE GAMING DEVICE

Tapwave have unveiled a very promising-looking hand-held gaming device named Helix. Aimed at an older market than the Game Boy Advance, it is based on Palm technology, is powered by a Motorola MX1 ARM9 processor, carries a graphics processor from ATI and audio from Yamaha. It supports Bluetooth, embedded speakers, headphone support, USB and a 6.97-square-inch screen that can render 64000 colours. The system can deliver 3D graphics of a quality at least comparable to PlayStation's graphics, can play MP3s and various video

formats, can be used for image browsing and can run Palm applications. Helix will be released later this year, and is expected to cost around the same as a PlayStation 2 or Xbox.

### PLAYSTATION 2 MEDIA PLAYER

The GameShark Media Player 2.0 for PlayStation 2, from Mad Catz, to be released within a month or two, is a media player that enables users to stream music and video from their computer to their television or entertainment system through their PS2 network adapter. It features complete VCR functions, can play back MP3 music, MPEG and DivX video, can allow viewing of digital images and includes parental controls. [www.madcatz.com](http://www.madcatz.com).

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# STAR TREK: ELITE FORCE II [preview code]

▶ If I was a crewmember on the spaceship Voyager I'd have trouble concentrating on the job at hand with seven of nine wandering the corridors and leaning over my control panel... "Commander, is something wrong... why are you staring at me like that?" I wonder if I could set something up on Holodeck 6 with her in the lead role and to hell with exploring space and going boldly...

Recently Paramount, the movie studio responsible for all things Star Trek, commented on the Next Generation as suffering from franchise fatigue, this after the not so great job the latest ST: TNG movie (Nemesis) did at the box office - this franchise fatigue is also sometimes referred to as, 'dismal failure' - pity, I like Star Trek. After this poor showing you have to wonder how well this title will be received amongst Star Trek gamers and considering it blends neatly from the Voyager universe into the Next Generation universe without asking for permission, you also have to ask yourself if players are really getting what they're paying for... or are the big shots at the top trying to manipulate us all... again?

## Set your philosophy to assimilate

Elite Force II is put together using a modified Quake III: Team Arena engine and the team responsible for the art and direction are Ritual Entertainment, most remembered for Heavy Metal F.A.K.K. 2, most respected for the first official Quake Add-on: Scourge of Armagon and most embarrassed for Sin. Ritual are competent

and although have dropped from sight recently are more than capable when it comes to putting a game together. I approached this preview code warily mainly thanks to the Borg; no, I'm not afraid of them, I'm just plain tired of the Borg in Star Trek computer games, they make for dull enemies and their interior ship design is just so depressingly dull I find it hard to imagine how a race like this managed to survive for so long without an imagination or a dash of colour.

But let me not bore you with my personal preferences, things went well through the lame but necessary 'jump over this box and crawl under that pipe' training mission. I don't know why I even bother anymore - there's nothing I don't know about kicking butt in a first person shooter except however for the fact that alternate fire while using the Enhanced Tricorder allows one to see structural faults. Without it those obvious crack-textured-planks nailed across that doorway over there would be completely invisible to the naked eye. Once the Holodeck training missions are over the playable part of the preview starts... on a damn Borg ship. I almost wrote Elite Force II off right then and there - the last thing we need is more Borg, did I mention I'm tired of the Borg? Thankfully Borg encounters are limited, but... as if to make up for the lack of Borg the developers have produced another dull play dynamic distraction, or as a colleague commented, 'take this conduit to that location, do a little puzzle on your Tricorder and go back through the same conduit, repeat.' Besides being unimaginative the actual puzzle

"...it's got everything you need for a fun time, except seven of nine in a wet t-shirt."





distractions are so embarrassingly simple you feel the urge to check over your shoulder in case someone is watching you play these puzzles so obviously designed with an 8 year-old in mind. This type of play dynamic

infests what little exposure I had with the preview code and while it's all very praiseworthy to try and offer gamers something other than dishing out laser beams and dodging bad guys - elaborate door opening just isn't

that exciting. Rather give us coloured key-cards - we all know what to do with coloured key-cards. Another worrying aspect of the game, a trend that will hopefully stop soon, are the in-between mission missions; these time wasting distractions involve traipsing around the Enterprise engaging in trite conversations and tasks designed to drive a reluctant and predictable story along. It could have been fun but half the time you

shooting aliens on the good old Enterprise, confused? You're not alone. In the game you're in charge of said Hazard Team and must face increasingly difficult missions as the game progresses. From my limited time with the game there was never any real sense that you were taking an active part in an actual episode of Star Trek: The Next Generation. Something I felt they could have easily achieved instead of wasting time in pointless discussions about alien propulsion systems and who forgot to flush in the gym bogs - where's the danger and excitement in that?

### Me and you and all these guns

An initial look at the multiplayer menu is disappointing until you realise that there are a number of modifiers you can apply to most of the three traditional game types on offer. Some of these modifiers include instant kill where players are armed with a single weapon that instantly disintegrates you or your enemies with one shot, another interesting modifier is Destruction where you must destroy the other teams object while protecting your own. Specialities is another fun modifier where players must collect runes scattered about the level, each rune will give you a specific character class with unique abilities such as Sniper, Heavy Weapons, etc. There are 3 main multiplayer modes with ten different modifiers making this game one of the more complete multiplayer experiences in a long time.

So that's about all we have time for as far as quick summaries go, there are a few goods things promised in the final version including a much larger game with 11 missions in total and a more open level design, something I didn't experience playing through the first few missions - but it was a preview after all. There will be new and exotic weapons to fiddle with which is something we



▼ Hmm, this is definitely where the source of the smell is coming from - Ensign Hamster here farted in 10 Forward, took a turbo-lift to sick bay, dropped another one there and is now on his way to the captains briefing room - it must be a mutiny!



spend examining deck maps and tapping the action key irritably in-front of doors that'll never open because you didn't turn left into the last corridor - it's like dungeon crawling with the lights on. This might be fun for anorak fan boys but there are other people out there to consider. Said story details the return of Voyager to the Alpha quadrant and then follows the rise and fall and rise again of the Hazard Team, Voyager's elite security detail, now exploring space and

all love. The exploring of the Enterprise and interacting with the series' characters is listed as a highlight but this will depend on your point of view and there is promise of detailed and diverse alien cultures to discover and then eradicate. In this particular preview the different aliens I encountered were nice to look at but all unfortunately come out of a box labelled: Arachnids from planet W3B.

As mentioned earlier, the developers are using older technology to push and squeeze the polygons around and from actually playing the game the bad news is that the Quake III engine is now looking just a tad yellow around the gills, especially when compared to the dead sexy Unreal II engine. It certainly doesn't look old, but when playing the game you can't help feeling that things could have been that much better to look at; on the upside the Quake III engine performs so well on newer technology that you can ramp up all the different settings to high, full, complete, total and max - yippee. So in the end, the good news for Activision and Ritual is that no matter how good or bad this game gets I for one am definitely going to play it from beginning to end, from the preview code I played it's got everything you need for a fun time, except seven of nine in a wet t-shirt. Keep an eye open for the full review - it should be soon, this one is close to done on both sides.



developer: team 17 publisher: tba distributor: tba  
 release date: Q4 genre: strategy internet: www.worms3.com  
 platforms: pc | xbox | ps2 | gc | gba

writer: Derek de la Fuente



# WORMS 3D

▶ Has it really been 10 years since we first saw Worms? In the 1990s everything that Team 17 did was a success and they were seen as one of the most progressively talented developers of that time. Thankfully they are still with us and more or less at the forefront of modern game development.

Worms, a turn based strategy game that anyone can understand and more importantly play, is still full of

inventive ideas with an imaginative cast and eye-catching graphics. Martin Brown, one of the people behind not only the success of this company but also the 'Worms' franchise, was on hand to speak to Derek de la Fuente about Worms 3. It might look a fun and simple gaming idea but it is also a game of complexity and rock solid strategy!

The Worms 3D core development team is very large (around 35, without including the QA team). This is approximately 2 to 3 times the size of the personnel who created the 2D games, which were hugely successful. Along with new people there is still a fair number of the staff that worked on the 2D series and who know the game very well. "Most people who have seen Worms 3 have been very pleasantly surprised and the way the game plays, looks and feels, surpasses their expectations since many consider how some 2D games have translated poorly to 3D."

With the passage of time, more powerful machines have become available, which in turn presents new opportunities for a development team. "We couldn't have developed Worms 3D on any other generation of hardware before this - absolutely not. We've maintained for some time that we needed quite considerable polygon throughput to do the game properly in 3D. We have developed a whole new technology hybrid

for the game, which suits the game absolutely perfectly, and as a result we see totally free-form destructible environments (without limit) in a way that plays identically to the 2D series. The 3D environments have enabled our designers to run a little wild, and that's a good thing! Our focus is more on making sure we have a great game on our hands rather than a desire to be cutting edge. We want our game to look great, look appealing, feel good and play as Worms fans know. The

"Worms 3D is the ultimate action-strategy game for single players, friends, parties or even your worst enemy..."

fact that we've developed an entirely new technology (unique as far as we can tell right now) is not the most important thing."

Although Worms 3 has the console market as a focus, the PC is still very important, which must be welcomed. Worms 3 is a refreshing change to the constant diet of deep strategy games that all look alike. Traditionally Worms has been a strong PC game, along with strong online support!

One may consider that Worms 3 can offer nothing that hasn't been done before but you could not be further from the truth. The 3D platform, along with the latest technology, is such a quantum leap forward for the game that this alone would satisfy most gamers. The fact is, as

Martin explained that this is a completely new generation of Worms, far more impressive and visually rewarding than ever before. They also have plenty of nice surprises to ensure it'll get the attention it deserves! "The fact that it's in 3D means that it plays a little differently - even if the game feels similar. I think there's a slight leaning towards more action than drawn-out strategy, which suits the console side a little more. In terms of themes, there are some great looking levels (all of which can be randomly generated) and some stunning single player missions that look very different to most games!"

Many levels are still in design, many of which have



outline designs complete and are being textured and special effects added. The design of the game missions is very different to the 2D series - even if a lot of the old content is there. There will be a full single player menu, with skirmish battles, mission campaigns, tutorials and challenges. The PC version has a very comprehensive 3D environment editor that will ship with the game, as well as a great random level generator.

One of the most important focuses, aside from actual play, which many will understand, is the game's look and presentation.

"The main focus for the engine has been four-fold: An effective free-form 3D mesh destruction system that would work on all platforms - giving us the ability to deform and destroy the mesh in any way, with an automatic system to handle this fairly dynamically. An intuitive camera system that handles the complex occlusion problems caused by environments that are constantly changing. To automate the rendering process, with the engine handling lighting, shadowing, details, etc. without the need for artists to do this, thus speeding up level design and opening it up to our community. To support many special particle effects. Explosions need effects! We've gone out to make the game visually appealing (in a cartoon environment) and if it's in there, it's to facilitate the play dynamic."

Up until now it is a fair comment to say that the CPU AI has probably been the weakest point of the 2D series since it was pretty much always an afterthought, with more thought going on the multiplayer and online play. However with Worms 3D the team has taken a close

look at this and believes the AI will be much improved in terms of its use of weapons, strategies and added personality. Martin added, "Combining this with interesting mission design and some great challenge modes, it's by far the best single player Worms experience to date - if anything it means the single player can certainly enjoy repeated CPU battles on random levels and feel like they're playing a human-style player."

There are not many 'puzzles' as such in the missions this time, and they are more objective and skilful than the 2D series. The levels are obviously bigger and vary greatly in style and goals. Needless to say the Worms have more traits/skills and there are, of course, more weapons to use and complex solving to undertake.

Control of the worms and undertaking the tasks you confront has been made a lot easier than before! "We have refined the controls and added new functions for the 3D game. The game is generally played in the third person, with auto/manual camera control. Other cameras such as 1st person (for some weapons), 'blimp' (overhead, again for some weapons) and orbital (with rotation/yaw) allow the player to have a good look around. The game will track action with cool camerawork too." Sound and music are not overlooked



as the team has decided to re-do all speech banks and pretty much all the sound effects. For the first time there will also be independent music and ambience on the background audio, so the user can set the kind of atmosphere they want.

Martin ended with a request for us to come back in around 5 months to see and get a final take on all the inspirational ideas created but parted with a final few words, "Worms 3D is the ultimate action-strategy game for single players, friends, parties or even your worst enemy... It's Worms how it was meant to be, it's Worms re-born."

▼ After suffering the ridicule of his peers for years, Percy the turkey bird decided that today he wasn't going to miss the shot



▲ "Okay! I'll bring your CDs back, I promise!" [This is a NAG in-joke between Skryke and Priest, and no, I didn't laugh either, Ed]



# SILENT HILL 3



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### NAG Editors Choice

This game or product is the pick of the bunch for the month as it has that special something which makes it stand out from the rest.



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### NAG Award of Merit

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- Enter the Matrix [pc]**

*"...fighting, shooting, driving and flying my way through its compelling story without even a glance at anything belonging to the real world."*

*Walt Pretorius*

**92%**
- IL-2 Sturmovik: Forgotten Battles [pc]**

*"...this is the closest one will currently get to experience WWII flying on a personal computer."*

*Fred Mulder*

**90%**
- War of the Monsters [ps2]**

*"War of the Monsters is unique, entertaining and close to being totally off the wall..."*

*Adam Liebman*

**90%**
- Jurassic Park: Operation Genesis [pc]**

*"It's a management game with so much added, it's close on revolutionary."*

*Walt Pretorius*

**89%**
- Rainbow Six 3: Raven Shield [pc]**

*"In a nutshell, it looks great, plays well, and may well reinstate the series as the top tactical shooter."*

*James Francis*

**86%**



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### SPECIFICATION

Intel P 2.0 GHz 512KB  
 Gigabyte P4 845PE ATX Motherboard  
 Leadtek MYVIVO TI 4600  
 ViewSonic P90f 19" Monitor  
 TwinMOS 1 GHz RAM DDR 266  
 Maxtor 60 GB ATA133 7200 HDD  
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# RAINBOW SIX 3: RAVEN SHIELD

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Nothing really gives you the thrill of flash-banging your own team, accidentally shooting your sniper off the roof and blowing up the hostages with a badly-aimed frag grenade. That's probably why they haven't accepted my application to the special tactics school yet.

Go back a few years to the mid to late nineties, and the idea of a tactical shooter was absurd. That was, at least, until Delta Force came out, and proved that you can have huge terrains to run around in and shoot people. Gone were those confined spaces. Not long after that, though, appeared Rainbow Six, loosely based on a Tom Clancy novel. Basically, Rainbow Six is an elite anti-terrorist squad that were trained for one thing - seek and destroy missions where no terrorists, all the hostages and, if you are good enough, all of your team survives. The game placed Red Storm on the map, though sadly they seemed to have decided to stick to the genre, to the ridiculous point of using the second Rainbow Six engine to power the terrible Freedom, not to mention the lacklustre game that was Sum Of All Fears. But those aside, at least when they make a tactical shooter, they do a good job (okay, forget about Sum of All Fears, just for this review).

There have been several additions to the genre, though,

in the forms of SWAT 3, Battlefield 1942, Counter-Strike quarter, team-based combat.

Raven Shield thus arrives in quite a crowded market place, but it brings along enough changes to make it worth the effort of playing. The game itself has been afforded a nice overhaul, sporting Unreal technology, an updated interface and a host of new play elements that really bring a lot to the genre that fans were looking for. In a nutshell, it looks great, plays well, and may well reinstate the series as the top tactical shooter.

### Grenade!

The first, and perhaps smallest change, is the ability to throw grenades under-arm. The result - not much, unless you are really looking for complexity with grenades. Throwing a grenade underarm gives it less distance but more height, so it's more accurate through windows. But most of the time you'll opt for a flashbang chugged through the crack of the door. This is made easy thanks to another addition to the game - fluid motion. Fluid motion comes in two forms, but in essence it means being able to ease doors open. For a tactical shooter this is a vital addition, for three reasons. Scenario one is where you kick open a door, surprising the guy on the other side, who lets off a volley of shots into you. Scenario 2 has you opening the door, peeking around the corner and getting shot in the head, because

Mr. Bad Guy on the other side was alerted to the opening door. And my personal favourite - Scenario 3, where you kick open a door, throw in a flashbang, and blind yourself in the process. You can always turn away, but this takes up valuable reaction seconds that you need if there are hostages inside. The alternative is slamming the door closed again, but this is more annoying than tactical.

When you ease open a door, using the mouse wheel, the door opens in small intervals, allowing you to not alert enemy units inside, making peeking around the corner safer. It's also ideal for dropping in grenades without damaging yourself or team members. It's not perfect, though, and the game is pretty picky over where you stand when you do this. Plus the AI characters can't seem to do this at all. But it's a great idea.

Fluid motion also arrives in the face of being able to move your character side to side and up and down vertically, which means you can peek over edges and around corners as you like, though the traditional means of side leaning, crouching and crawling are also there.

### Gear up

The gear has also been afforded an upgrade. You still get automatic rifles with firing rate settings, silencers and the works, but elements such as breach charges and heartbeat sensors have been improved. Changed from the previous version which showed your units on a



▼ Bob the Janitor was in the wrong place at the wrong time...



# mission pack

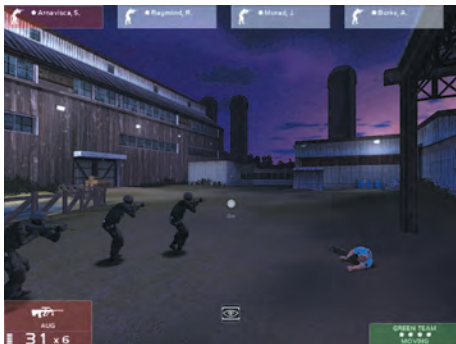
The first mission pack of Rainbow Six 3: Raven Shield has been announced. The eight-mission campaign will take place in locations including Italy, Croatia and Greece and will include 8 new multiplayer levels, 5 new multiplayer game modes, and 7 additional real-world weapons.



▲ The second time someone stole his car's wheels, Raymond just gave up



▲ Either an illicit drug deal, or a dumb enemy...



radar, the sensor is now a scope that indicates the pulses through any surface. Of course, it indicates all the heartbeats in a limited distance, including other teams. In multiplayer you can also equip fake heartbeat generators and heartbeat blockers.

Sniper rifles also have infra-red scopes, allowing you to see people through certain surfaces. The bullet and material physics have been improved, and most weapons can shoot through some doors, while some of the rifles can shoot through pretty much anything. As per usual, you can set exactly what each team member carries, including flashbangs (which blur and distort vision as well as leave your ears whistling), breach charges (perfect for blowing a door when you storm a room), demo kits (to enable/disable charges), smoke grenades, frag grenades and so on. Remote Charges, claymores, high capacity magazines - these are all on the shopping list. Tear gas also arrives, but be sure to add gas masks to your team's gear!

### Team sports

The AI in the single player is not that great, though they are accurate and effective when being led. Raven Shield really shines when you kick in the multiplayer action. Hopefully a local server will be up by the time you read this because it's definitely worth playing. If not, head to a local LAN or start your own. With all the toys on offer for gear, as well as the teamwork aspect it's a great game, but it requires disciplined games (and a tolerance for being ambushed). There are several game modes, but they fall in either the deathmatch or co-op categories. Team Survival is probably the best, where two teams go head on head. You also get a free-for-all Survival as well as Terrorists vs. Squad and Hostage Recovery. Co-op allows you to clean a map with teammates or play the single-player missions with other players. In the end, though, the team or player that uses the game's mechanics to their advantage will win.

### Plan, Test, Execute!

Of course, the single player side isn't a total waste. In fact, apart from some AI shortcomings it's actually very good. But the cherry on top is the planning screen. This allows you to plan an assault, setting waypoints and waiting points for up to three teams to follow. It's not a must, though, since every map can be played without a plan or with the default plan provided. The enemy locations also keep changing in places (though hostages don't) so there is always an element of the unknown. A plan might be flawless once but can result in the loss of team members in the next try.

The planning interface is really easy to use once you get the hang of it, and you can play through it using the camera window to see how your team will move. You

can then opt to play the map, or spectate as the AI runs through it. Either way, if you win, the mission is a success. Call it a Management Sim for anti-terrorism teams. It's not the main focus of the game, but it is a nice perk for control freaks like me.

Paint me impressed, because I am. I expected a bit more from the game overall, but that was a lot I was asking. At the very least Red Storm placed in elements that will affect future games in this genre, and they do it stylishly. If tactical shooters are your games of choice, get Raven Shield.



▲ "Okay, Corporal Francis... let's talk about those CDs..."



▲ Special Forces obviously earn more than NAG staff

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**Minimum Specification**  
Pentium III 800 MHz | 128 MB RAM | 16 x CD ROM | 32 MB D3D Video Accelerator | 2 GB HDD

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Great multiplayer</li> <li>⊗ Varied maps</li> <li>⊗ Internal mission planner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Linear AI</li> <li>⊗ Unpolished new features</li> </ul>
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**Summary**  
The AI lacks a bit, and the game's new features aren't as smoothly implemented, but it adds a lot to the genre, it looks great and the multiplayer is excellent. A jewel for the genre.

86



developer: max design □ publisher: electronic arts □ distributor: ea africa [011] 516-8300  
 price: R 249.00 □ genre: strategy management □ internet: www.1503AD.com  
 platforms: pc

reviewer: Walt "Shryke" Pretorius



PC

review

June 2003

# 1503AD: A NEW WORLD

Explorers made their way across countless kilometres of uncharted waters in search of the fame and glory of finding New Worlds, places where "civilised" people had never set foot. And then they set about enslaving the local populace, killing those they couldn't control, and pillaging natural resource treasure troves for their benefit. And now you get to join in on all the action...

Okay, so it isn't actually all that bad. In fact, compared

to the real history of the world, 1503AD: The New World presents the player with a rather sanitised version of what really went on.

Pegged as a strategy come management game, 1503AD basically works like this: find an island, develop it and advance your populace. Trade with others. If they don't play nice, wipe them out. It's all simple enough, at first glance, but those that give this title a go will soon learn that appearances can be very deceiving indeed.

The first thing that should strike any player used to this kind of game as unusual is the sheer volume of resources required by the game. They don't all come into play initially, and some of them are manufactured by the player, but the amount of stuff you need to keep your colony going and growing is quite extraordinary. From basics like lumber and food right through to fine silks and similar luxury items, the player needs to (eventually, at least) provide these for his people.

The next thing that leaps out and strikes the player firmly between the eyes is the difficulty of the game. This is no plain supply and demand title - in fact, the balancing act that needs to be performed by the player is so viciously precarious that making a successful run of a new island seems, at first, to be impossible.

However, once you have your head wrapped around the way the game develops, you should be more than okay. While it might be called a "sometimes-strategy" title, I personally found the need for violence against other players within the game to be very small indeed - restricted mainly to aggressive expansion, rather than defence or anything like that. At more difficult levels the computer does get a bit ornery, but initially the player will find little use for an army of thousands and ships with more cannons than cargo.


1503AD: The New World is a game that, while fun to play, does not really grab the player in the way that some other titles might. Perhaps it is the lack of in-game variation, or the sheer volume of time needed to get anywhere within the game. Maybe the lacklustre graphics or repetitive sound track (which is very good, but does get too much after while) have something to do with it. I just can't seem to get past the feeling that, while it is solid and enjoyable, 1503AD does not perform any better than a mediocre title. The difficulty level is too high, in my opinion, and the time needed to get things done seems excessive.

However, others may disagree with that. It is a good game, despite my griping, and is worth a try, at the very

least. Even if all you want to do is see if you can actually manage to build up a supply of all the resources on offer...



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**Minimum Specification**  
 Pentium III 500 MHz | 128 MB RAM | 8 x CD ROM | 16 MB D3D Video Accelerator  
 930 HDD

- ⊗ Low specification
- ⊗ Time consuming
- ⊗ Lots to do
- ⊗ Overly difficult

**Summary**  
 1503AD: The New World is a game that could have been great, but never quite met that mark. It is a management-slash-strategy title that gets the player to establish new colonies on uninhabited islands and then trade, fight or other wise interact with other players (human or computer). Any game with this many resources cannot be all bad, though...

70



10 x  
the speed,  
1/2  
the price

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# INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB

► This man can use a whip better than a hill billy on a Sunday, he visits all kinds of exotic locations, and his back-up job is flying the Millennium Falcon or being a Tom Clancy character. Some guys just have it all...

Indiana Jones games will always have a level of nostalgia for me. I remember the first game I played from the series, which was *The Temple of Doom*. It was also the first Indiana Jones movie I saw (and then

subsequently *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *The Last Crusade*). So it was quite something climbing around the Thugee mines, freeing prisoners and eventually racing along the railroad tracks and finding the missing stones. The game that still remains fondest to me, though, is the excellent *Fate of Atlantis*, the first non-movie episode in Indiana's elaborate career. It was the unofficial sequel to the *Last Crusade* game, and made

for adventure gaming at its best. In fact, I'm tempted to play it again now...

At some point, though, LucasArts decided to generally abandon their excellent line of adventure games, but obviously not the movie license, though Dr. Jones pales in comparison to the hordes of Star Wars games churned out every year. Good thing, though, since LAE



▲ Indiana Jones, furniture thief [whoever wrote this caption is fired, Ed]



tend to produce rubbish at the best of times. Sadly, the same legacy carried over with *The Infernal Machine*, the last Indiana Jones game before the release of *Emperor's Tomb*. It was a paltry effort marred by bad controls and a pretty annoying camera. It's rather odd that in the age of post-*Tomb Raider* and *Soul Reaver* most developers can't seem to get the platforming formula right.

Thankfully, *The Emperor's Tomb* is a major improvement in the game series, and bar the adventure games, which are irrefutable classics, it's the best Indy game to date. Dr. Jones is approached to find three pieces that will open the first Chinese emperor's tomb, which contains the Black Pearl, a jewel of supposed mystic power that will allow someone to control the minds of men. Mysticism aside, you know our beloved Doctor can't resist the chance and he's off to Prague to find the first piece.

Of course, before the actual game begins, you first have to finish a jungle level, representing the traditional pre-quest story at the beginning of each movie, usually where you meet the villain and get things rolling. The jungle level is quite impressive, since it contains a lot of green - something that starts going amiss later in the game. Your enemy units are also rather rudimentary, and you get introduced to crocodiles, the second most-hated unit (personally) in the game. The first has to be the Nazi flame trooper.

Yes, the Nazis are back too (would it be Indy otherwise?) as well as a rival explorer and some sort of philanthropist with ulterior motives. You quickly discover the Nazi involvement with the Prague level, which will remind you a lot of *Wolfenstein*. There are also settings in the desert city of Budapest, a lost underground city full of water and sharks, Hong Kong, a mountain top Chinese fortress and finally the tombs themselves. It's nice and varied, and the biggest significant difference to the levels is the enemy units, which actually rotate pending on where you play. Sadly, each level seems to have two types of enemy - at most - and ones such as the Prague level only had one. But to give an example, in Budapest you tend to fight cloaked warriors, who are very skilled



at using their swords. In China you encounter kung-fu artists, in the Lagoon level Nazis with machine guns are common and so on. Each reacts differently to combat. For instance, shoot Nazis and don't take on an Arab with a sword.

LucasArts' best move in making *Emperor's Tomb* was to give the development honours to *The Collective*, the team behind the underdog title *DS-9*, upcoming Xbox brawler *Wrath* and the brilliant *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. In fact, I'd wager that the engine used in Indy is the same as *Buffy*. It uses a similar brawling system, though not as polished as *Buffy*. In the latter, if you were surrounded, you'd give kicks to guys on the sides and behind you while fighting. Not so with Indy - you'll spend a lot of time running in circles to thin out the pockets of thugs attacking you.

The other problem is that some sections are unbelievably precise, which means that if you release your ship just too early or time your release from a chain just at the wrong time, you'll be tumbling to the ground instead of grabbing the ledge/chain/ladder. This is complimented (?) by a non-save system. A level saves once you've completed it, and though each level is mercifully short and intense, it's still tough (and it gets tougher). Nothing is quite as frustrating as dying near the end and having to start all over again. Thankfully enemy movements are predictable and once you've fought against someone once, odds are he'll be an easy pick when you get there again.

I have a pet annoyance though, with *Emperor's Tomb* - it's once again another console port, and one of the poorer ones. Thankfully we're not talking *Wolverine's Revenge* levels of stupidity here (that game does not even have mouse support), but it is still painfully obvious that this game was intended for consoles. More annoyingly, the developers seem to have made the PlayStation 2 their primary platform, instead of porting the Xbox version. I

haven't seen that, yet, but I'll assume that it has proper bump-mapping and texture support. See, the PC has the memory and power that is capable of handling high-res textures and bump-mapping, but instead we are left with grimy, blocky textures and generally uninspiring environments. The levels are nice-looking, though, with a lot of detail, transparent areas

(the water levels are very impressive) and the enemy units are nicely animated.

As per usual (and I can rarely fault LucasArts here) the music is great, and it appears that the original John Williams score has been used. The music morphs from event to event, and this makes the game very edgy, especially if you are running around a clock tower on a Prague castle, knowing that at any moment you might slip...

It's a nice game, but it's painfully obvious that *Emperor's Tomb* is a port. Its saving graces, though, are that it's Indiana Jones and that *The Collective* seem to have given some thought to a varied play dynamic.



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#### Minimum Specification

Pentium II 733 MHz | 128 MB RAM | 4 x CD ROM | GeForce 1 Video Accelerator  
1.25 GB HDD

- ⊕ Varied levels
- ⊕ It's Indy!
- ⊕ Fun to play
- ⊖ Flawed fighting system
- ⊖ Nit-picky acrobatics
- ⊖ PS2 graphics

#### Summary

This is much better than *Infernal Machine*, but it still remains a lacklustre PS2 port. The fighting system isn't as good as *Buffy's* and some sections are pointlessly tough. But it remains Indiana Jones and it's a fun game to battle through.

# 75



developer: 1c: maddox games  publisher: ubisoft  distributor: megarom [011] 805-7303  
 price: R 299.00  genre: WWII flight simulator  internet: www.il2sturmovik.com  
 platforms: pc

reviewer: Fred "Hotdog" Müller



# IL2 STURMOVIK: FORGOTTEN BATTLES

**Oleg Maddox is a name that has become legendary in the flight simulator community in recent years since the release of IL-2 Sturmovik. Featuring aerial warfare on the Eastern front of World War II, IL-2 was a technical masterpiece, and became the benchmark for WWII simulators. Forgotten Battles was originally planned to be an expansion for IL-2, but due to immense feature creep it became a standalone sequel. Being an absolute crowd pleaser, Oleg produced a title that might even teach the mighty Microsoft a lesson or two...**

IL-2 Sturmovik managed to assemble quite a cult following since its original release due to the accuracy of the simulation, and partly due to Oleg Maddox's ongoing commitment to keep on improving the simulation by constantly upgrading features and adding new aircraft. All the earlier upgrades are present in Forgotten Battles, and the total number of planes currently is 129, of which 80 are flyable. Many of these planes are variations of a specific plane such as the Messerschmitt BF-109, but each with distinctive changes inside and outside the plane, as was found in real life.

What really sets Forgotten Battles apart from its predecessor is the dynamic campaign, enhanced graphics, higher resolution textures, re-written AI, better flight modeling, realistic engine management and improved damage modeling. Except for the addition of the 30 new flyable and 23 AI-controlled planes, Forgotten Battles also includes new highly detailed maps, single player missions and multiplayer missions. Forgotten Battles opted to take a shortcut with the dynamic campaign as most other simulations have done for this era in aviation history by implementing a dynamic battle generator. Instead of having a real-time campaign, missions are generated based on past mission performances. The war will follow its historic path meaning that the Germans will lose, but that the rate that this happens will vary based on your mission



performance. Squadron member abilities will grow with experience, and they will probably be replaced with rookies when they are killed or lost in action. AI pilots will use horizontal and vertical maneuvers to try and outsmart you. Coupled with the enhanced flight modeling, one might easily push your plane over the outside of the flight envelope and be bitten hard in return. Fly low and too hard in a low altitude dogfight, and you will become one with a burning heap of scrap metal on the ground. These high performance planes will spin and stall as their real-life counterparts did. Damage modeling has been revamped. Bullets and explosions are now represented as vectors, and each bullet and fragment from a blast acts as an individual object on top of the obvious blast damage. In a very unlucky situation, a shard of shrapnel from a nearby bomb blast may penetrate your canopy and kill your pilot instantaneously. Damage to your plane can be seen as holes exactly where enemy bullets struck home, and damage will have an effect on your aircraft's performance.

Oleg also introduced engine management in Forgotten Battles. This includes fuel/air mixture, propeller pitch, magneto control, supercharger settings, radiator control, feathering of propellers, and multi-engine control. Engine management can be set to automatic if it is not quite your cup of tea, but will certainly put a grin on the faces of hardcore purists. The German planes were blessed with automatic supercharger mechanisms, whereas some of the Russian

aircraft require manual intervention. Settings thus apply for individual planes, and it may take a while for someone to master a specific aircraft with engine management selected.

Forgotten Battles has matured into a simulation that may be seen by some as the best WWII flight simulation to date, and has taken all the good and solid points of IL-2 and improved on them. Players that will be daunted by the complexity of this simulation will be relieved to know that the simulation is very much scalable, and

accessible even those new to flight simulations, but requires a steeper learning curve than other simulations. Forgotten Battles is a definitive must for those serious about their combat flight simulations, as this is the closest one will currently get to experience WWII flying on a personal computer.

## comparison

IL-2 Sturmovik: Forgotten Battles vs. Microsoft Combat Flight Simulator 3

Seeing that both these simulations offer dynamic campaigns, the only basic differences are that Forgotten Battles simulates the war on the Eastern front, whereas CFS 3 covers the war over Europe. Although CFS 3 is a good product, Forgotten Battles has the edge on most of the features such as aircraft visuals, special effects, flight dynamics, damage modeling, AI, quality of missions and other technical issues. Forgotten Battles also now features multi-engine aircraft such as the Heinkel He-111 but the execution exceeds that of CFS 3 when it comes to gunner stations, realistic bombing sights and engine management. Forgotten Battles has become the combat flight simulator leader, has great performance out of the box, and is a complete and solid product. Oleg Maddox certainly deserves a medal for not claiming the CFS 3 slogan "As real as it gets", and rather offers a product that speaks for itself whilst beating the competition hands down.



all games reviewed on rectron machines

### Minimum Specification

Pentium III 800 MHz | 256 MB RAM | 4 x CD ROM | 32 MB D3D Video Accelerator  
1.1 GB HDD

- ⊕ Brilliant AI
- ⊕ Large variety of planes
- ⊕ Realistic damage modelling
- ⊕ Difficult to master
- ⊕ Bland Russian countryside
- ⊕ Long mission times

### Summary

IL-2 Sturmovik: Forgotten Battles is a worthy sequel to the original, and improves on so many features that it is truly a remarkable combat flight simulation. It simply blows everything else out of sky, and is the new benchmark in WWII simulations.

# 90



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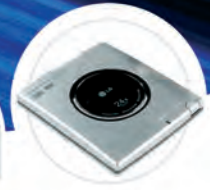
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\*Some awards are not listed due to page limitations





developer: blue tongue [] publisher: universal interactive [] distributor: comztek (0800) 600-557  
 price: R 299.00 [] genre: management [] internet: http://jpthegame.com  
 platforms: pc | ps2 | xbox

reviewer: Walt "Shryke" Pretorius



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# JURASSIC PARK: OPERATION GENESIS

When novelist Michael Crichton's book *Jurassic Park* was turned into a film by Steven Spielberg, the imagination of the world (often inspired by thoughts of ages long past) got fuelled into a blazing frenzy. Everyone went dinosaur mad and it wasn't long before titles bearing the same name appeared on the PC. But these games were always the "get out alive, fight to survive" kind of games. Now, for the first time ever, we get to see the Jurassic Park setting from a different angle... You are INGEN's newest employee. Welcome to the world of really playing god.

Management games have, up until recently, become rather jaded. They're all the same essentially, aren't they? Its supply and demand, balancing budgets and making sure that things tick over relatively smoothly, all in different settings. In a word - boring. That was until Universal Interactive released the Blue Tongue title, *Jurassic Park: Operation Genesis*. This new game is set to give the management game genre a real shot in the arm.

Sure, you've heard that line before. We all have. But, in all honesty, it's the truth.

See, *Jurassic Park: Operation Genesis* is more than just your average management title. But let me not get ahead of myself. Let me tell you about the game first.

Basically, you take the part of a theme park manager in the employ of INGEN, the company responsible for creating dinosaurs after extracting their DNA from prehistoric mosquitoes trapped in tree sap (which later became amber).

As manager, you have to build the park, research the attractions and other elements, get visitors in and make sure that the animals are well taken care of. You have to track down new specimens and improve your genetic database. You have to make sure that any disasters that take place are dealt with promptly and with the minimum risk to your park visitors. Thus far it sounds a bit like *Zoo Tycoon*, I know, but bear with me here... I am going to try



▲ And we thought Gauteng had traffic problems



▲ "What are you looking at, you evolved nerd?"



## Species

There are twenty five species of dinosaurs available to the player in this game. Nine are carnivores, and sixteen are herbivores. Of these, certain species, like T-Rex and Triceratops, are more popular, while others, like *Pachycephalosaurus*, are less popular.

**The ten carnivore species are:**  
 Acrocanthosaurus  
 Albertosaurus

The gang's all here

Allosaurus  
 Carcharadontosaurus  
 Ceratosaurus  
 Dilophosaurus  
 Spinosaurus  
 Tyrannosaurus  
 Velociraptor  
**While the herbivores are:**  
 Ankylosaurus  
 Brachiosaurus

Camarasaurus  
 Corythosaurus  
 Dryosaurus  
 Edmontosaurus  
 Gallimimus  
 Homalocephale  
 Kentrosaurus  
 Ouranosaurus  
 Pachycephalosaurus  
 Parasauropholus  
 Stegosaurus  
 Styracosaurus  
 Torosaurus  
 Triceratops

explain it by telling you about an average day in the life of a Jurassic Park manager.

### Dinosaurs on display

Obviously the major draw card for your park are the dinosaurs themselves.

These cuddly little creatures are what bring the droves of high paying visitors streaming into your park. What you need to do to make sure that the visitors keep coming is twofold. Firstly, you have to enhance your existing stock. Secondly, you need to increase your number of species. To this end, you have several teams of palaeontologists, under the leadership of Dr Allan Grant (the guy who didn't get eaten in the film) digging at one of nine sites around the world.

These sites, categorised as Jurassic or Cretaceous sites, yield DNA in the form of amber deposits or actual fossils. These are then sent to the lab, where Dr Henry Wu performs DNA extractions on the samples. The better the sample quality, the more of the animal's genome is unlocked.

Once fifty per cent of a dinosaur's genome is decoded, that animal can be bred in the special hatcheries you



build around the park. However, these animals will be weak and short lived. You have to decode more of their genetic makeup for them to live longer.

And don't think that you will be able to discover

and decode the DNA of all of the twenty-five species in the game. No way. The game will restrict you to only a limited number of species (which you have the choice of, to a degree) until you have unlocked Site B. But more about that later.

### Health and Safety

This is a large category, really, but it covers the health of the animals, and the safety of the visitors. Safety features are researched, and include better fences and bunkers for visitors to take refuge in. Health of the animals is a far more interesting feature, because it brings in the idea of the park ranger.

The head ranger (Robert Muldoon, remember him, the 'Raptors got him') is in charge of a team that has a number of (researchable) vaccines and weapons at their disposal. And a chopper. And you get to fly it. Yes, like

an action chopper sim. And then, from the chopper, you get to use the special sniper rifle to vaccinate, sedate, revive or even "retire" dinosaurs. Like a fps, almost...

### And a whole lot more

I begged the ed, but he said I must keep this to two pages. But there is so much more! Driving a tour jeep, taking photographs, flying hot air balloons, fighting with the INGEN board... all so that, as your grand prize, you can unlock SITE B, a free build area where you can watch your dinosaurs frolic and kill each other with gay abandon.

### The Nutshell review

Jurassic Park: Genesis Project. Good game. Great graphics. User friendly interface. Great sounds. Excellent animal behaviour (the dinosaurs act like

they are "supposed" to.) Great didactic section. Perhaps a bit easy in places, but very difficult in others. It's a management game with so much added, it's close on revolutionary. Is it worth playing? Without a shadow of a doubt - this is the most fun I have had in front of a PC in a long time!



▼ He's either howling in pain or laughing because you missed... again...



## Ages past

What's in a name?

The two main ages of dinosaur activity were the Cretaceous and the Jurassic ages. These were times where the saurians (believed to be the forerunners of modern birds, not reptiles) were at their peak. Strangely, though, it is the Cretaceous period that produced a wider variety of dinosaur species than the Jurassic period, including the Brachiosaurus, the Triceratops, the

Velociraptor and, of course, T-Rex. These ages are well represented within the game. As a player, you will find more advantage in sticking to the Cretaceous era, rather than going all out for the more "boring" Jurassic dinosaurs. It's quite ironic, really... most of the creatures we come across in the book (and movie) Jurassic Park were Cretaceous. Then again, Cretaceous Park would have been a stupid name for a book.



all games reviewed on rectron machines

### Minimum Specification

Pentium III 400 MHz | 128 MB RAM | 8 x CD ROM | 16 MB D3D Video Accelerator | 1 GB HDD

- ⊕ Original
- ⊕ Lots to do
- ⊕ Enthraling
- ⊕ A bit easy at times
- ⊕ Can't have all dinosaurs at once

### Summary

This is the most original management title in years, because it allows a level of interaction never seen before. Get your hands dirty as you care for INGEN's latest pet project, Jurassic Park. Research, manage, fly, drive, shoot (guns and cameras) through this enthralling theme park simulator. Fantastic! Most fun I've had in ages!

# 89



developer: illusion softWorks [] publisher: take 2 interactive [] distributor: megarom [011] 805-7303  
 price: R 299.00 [] genre: first person shooter [] internet: www.vietcong-game.com  
 platforms: pc

reviewer: Brett "Sn1p3r" Hamilton



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# VIETCONG

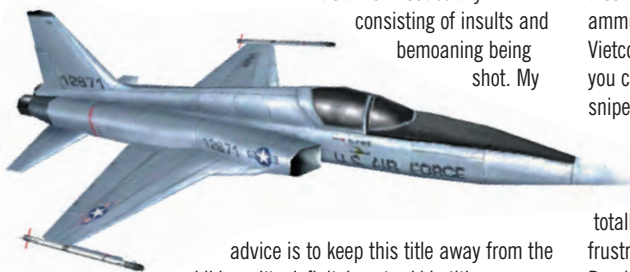
**Jimi Hendrix plays Hey Joe while you come sweeping into your base in the remote hills of Vietnam, the sound of distant gunfire reminds you why you are here. You are Steve Hawkins a man caught up in a S.N.A.F.U waiting to get F.U.B.A.R. Vietcong brings the Vietnamese conflict to life, unfortunately some of it should have stayed buried.**

Maybe Vietcong would have been a lot better if Illusion Softworks had just concentrated on delivering an awesome single player experience, ok there are some really hectic moments in the game that really take you into the hell that was Vietnam. Vietcong ships with a reasonable single player campaign, a quick mission launcher that puts you in a hot seat of your design and a multiplayer mode that features many of the normal types of game play, with multiplayer missions being the pick of the bunch.

In the single player mode you get to play Sergeant First Class Steve Hawkins who gets transferred to a special ops unit based at Nui Pek Camp. You team up with a unit that is essential to help you out with each mission, although they seem to like letting you take the brunt of the action, for example the pointman will tell you to go disable traps and fight off six hidden soldiers while they watch. In other missions they are more helpful but your best friend is the medic, he can pretty much heal you to full health so he became the friendly that I looked after the most.

Vietcong is inspired by actual events but the dialogue seems to have been taken directly out of Full Metal Jacket or Platoon; during the training mission I lost count of how many times I was sworn at and had my mother insulted by the drill instructor, although

this adds to the realism of the title it was a little overboard - during combat you will find that everyone has a rich vocabulary consisting of insults and bemoaning being shot. My



advice is to keep this title away from the children, it's definitely not a kids title.

My biggest gripe is that it didn't look and feel like Vietnam [so, how many tours did you do there? Ed], ok it looks like a jungle but the textures seems a little washed out, the night missions are truly scary and hunting for Vietnamese soldiers in a labyrinth of tunnels is not that much fun either. Model animation is fair to good, sometimes the death animations are a little weird and clipping problems are ever present. Vietcong straight out the box experiences some major

slowdown on certain levels, fortunately this is fixed somewhat with the new patch (only 8mb), making Vietcong relatively playable on lower specified machines, although I recommend a Ti4600 and above to enjoy what is quite a remarkable outdoor engine.

Enemy AI is a pain in the butt (that's a compliment), I don't know how many times I died where I didn't have the foggiest notion of where I was being shot from. The AI rarely stand in the open and retreat if injured, they also seem to always have more soldiers than you and always seem to be reading Ambush 101 A Practical Guide To Killing

Yankees. Your teammates are no slackers either, as they gesture their way ahead or offer covering fire, they can also lead the way, heal you and supply you with ammunition.

Vietcong is nicely balanced (except in Vietnam mode), you can get shot a few times, but a direct hit from a sniper always seems fatal, our Medic friend can heal you but you lose a part of your maximum health.

Vietcong saves your progress at certain intervals making sure that the game isn't totally easy to get through but it doesn't make it totally frustrating either. So if you don't go running in like Rambo you should make it through alive.

Sound and music is one of the games strong points, it has a classic 60's and 70's soundtrack and the weapons fire is realistic, from the whine of bullets to the rat-tat-tat of an AK47. Voice acting is too forced for my liking but overall is quite good; the Vietcong speak Vietnamese or English with a Vietnamese accent, your unit all need their mouths washed out with soap but do make for some entertaining banter.

If you are looking for a decent trip to the Vietnamese conflict then Vietcong has a lot of strong points, besides a few technical issues which you need to resolve by yourself (a main problem seems to be an over aggressive copy protection system) to make Vietcong more playable and look better - Illusion Softworks have a winner for those who enjoyed games like Operation Flashpoint.



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**Minimum Specification**  
 Pentium 700 MHz | 256 MB RAM | 16 x CD ROM | 32 MB D3D Video Accelerator  
 1800 MB HDD

- ⊕ Soundtrack
- ⊕ Balanced realism
- ⊕ Terrain engine
- ⊕ Clipping bugs
- ⊕ Resource hog
- ⊕ Washed out texturing

**Summary**  
 Vietcong brings Vietnam to life and shows the hell that a soldier went through just to survive in this pointless conflict. Vietcong has a well thought out single player campaign and spices things up with a lot of multiplayer elements. Pity that a few minor flaws have put a damper on what is a really good game.

82



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# REEVES RELOADED

**W**ith *The Matrix* being a really hot topic this year (two movies and a game) we thought it may be quite something to get as behind the scenes as we could. Strings were pulled, palms greased and butts kissed... the result: an exclusive chat with Keanu Reeves, who plays the part of Neo in the *Matrix* trilogy. And this is what The One had to say...

**Q:** What was it like shooting "Reloaded" and "Revolutions" at the same time?

**KR:** The films take place over a short amount of time, so it really felt like one film and one story. There wasn't really a distinction between the two. It wasn't like doing a Chekhov play where it says, "Four years later, and now its winter." There wasn't that jumping back and forth in the pieces. The timeline of the piece is very short. I believe it takes place over 72 hours for both films, so you're always very close to where you are. You don't have to think that you used to be fifteen and now you're sixty-two.

**Q:** The production notes for "Reloaded" talk about your martial arts style; is it your style, or by this point is it Neo's?

**KR:** It's "The Matrix" style. I wanted to have a certain style of fighting in "The Matrix." I wanted to have it feel physical and visceral but at the same time to have a style to it because it really isn't physically happening. I wanted to have a feeling of otherness to it but still have it feel physical. There is still physical effort on Neo's face and there's physical impact. But I also wanted to have a certain elegance to it. Sometimes there was an effort but there is also effortlessness to it at the same time. So that was the kind of style that I was trying to create in my depiction of the choreography that was developed by the directors and Yuen Wo Ping, the fight choreographer.

**Q:** Carrie-Anne Moss talked about the sense of completion, having gone through the whole process up to the third film. In this case, all of you have created iconic characters that are going to be with us for a long time...

**KR:** We didn't create them. We performed them...

**Q:** Was there a particular moment when you realized that Neo had become an icon?

**KR:** I didn't feel that. It's about "The Matrix." It's always the film. We're all characters who are really just part of this world of "The Matrix" that Larry and Andrew Wachowski have brought to us with their vision, their sensibilities and what they hoped to create in this collaborative art form. But "The Matrix" is it and we're just a part of it.

**Q:** In person, you're very soft-spoken and polite, but in the film your character is a tough guy. How do you get into character? You have this image that is larger-than-life. Does it bother you or is there something special that you do to get into character?

**KR:** As an actor, you have the role to play. Acting as Neo, who is an ass-kicking kind of guy, it's just about finding that part of yourself and meeting it with the character and trying to play the role. It's pretend. But it's also coming from a source in myself. He's a fun guy to play. In terms of playing in the fake fights, the Kung Fu sequences, I got to do some cool things. He's kicking ass and it's fun to play it.

**Q:** Do you sense that this chapter of your life is over now, because from now on you'll always be Neo? Is there a certain satisfaction about that?

**KR:** Well, all of us were just hoping. The scripts were so fantastic and we all came to the project loving the first one and the experience of making it. We were all excited performing these characters, making these films and being together again. Hopefully people will enjoy them as much as we do.

**Q:** At the University of California, Santa Barbara, there was a class on your films, literally all the work of Keanu Reeves over the course of ten weeks, your artistic expression through many different forms. People very easily recall "The Matrix," but maybe not "Dangerous Liaisons." Is your choice in roles a conscious decision to express yourself artistically or do you think, "This would be fun?"

**KR:** I can't control, for the most part, who hires me. It's always been my hope as an actor to work in different genres and to play different characters. So gratefully, I've had the chance to perform different roles and different genres.

**Q:** Do you have a favourite movie that inspired you?

**KR:** I don't actually. I don't have one that I constantly refer back to.

**Q:** Is there anyone as a kid who inspired you to act?

**KR:** Peter O'Toole's performances. In "The Ruling Class" I love that character he plays. I remember seeing that film and thinking, "Yes." I love that.

**Q:** What's the status of your band "Dogstar"? Why is your music important to you?

**KR:** We did some shows when I first got back from Australia and we had a great time. We went to Japan and played a show in Bangkok and that was great. We came back and right now, we're taking a little break. We tried to write but we've been away from each other for so long. We're right now getting back together. We all had different things that we wanted to play so we've got to have a band meeting and see what we want to do here. It's important to me because I love the friends that I've made. It's fun to create. The fraternity, the chance to play live shows, to hang out, to write and play music, is just a great experience.

**Q:** Where do you see yourself next year?

**KR:** I want to go do a play. I'm trying to find a new play. I've got to get back on the stage for a little bit. I really want to just go through the process of doing a play as an actor. It's not short segments of acting; it's the whole experience. It's an actor's medium to a certain extent. It's just fun. It's great to be able to act on stage. The continuity aspect of it, the live aspect, for me feels like home. I love it.





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# ENTER THE MATRIX


 The path of the many determines the path of the one. Or more correctly, The One. That's what the Oracle said, sitting in that linoleum wrapped sixties-throwback of a kitchen. Neo may be all powerful, but he isn't God... and he needs help. Your help. If you fail, Neo fails. And if Neo fails, it will be the end. No ifs, ands or buts. So, there really is only one question to ask. Are you red or blue on this?

It's not often that, when starting a game review, I feel intimidated. However on this particular occasion I must admit that I did. Let's face it - this Shiny developed, Atari distributed title is possibly one of the biggest games to hit our PCs, ever. It's not just some movie spin off, either. Enter the Matrix is a game created by the self same people that created the film, and has been made to be as important a part of the Matrix universe as any other entertainment product bearing The Matrix name. So, yeah, I was a little intimidated. But there is one thing that is far more daunting, how do I, in the few words allowed me, describe what I



## The Matrix Online Game

The Matrix as a computer gaming entity does not begin and end with Enter the Matrix. There are big plans ahead (who would expect anything less from the Wachowski Borthers?). Plans so big, in fact, that we can't quite comprehend their scope. Suffice to say that there is a Matrix MMO game on the way, The Matrix Online, in which thousands of players will be able to experience more of the Matrix on-line. Tons of cityscapes, new weapons and a bag-full of martial arts moves will await the player in this all new Matrix environment. Picking up where the trilogy leaves off, you get to play as either the Zionists or the machines, with Agents being present in the same way as dragons are in fantasy based games - the advice given here about the agents by Travis Williams a developer of the game at Monolith is "Until you have built up your stats to an unbelievable level, my advice is the same as Morpheus' - 'Run!'"

"The Wachowski Brothers' vision for The Matrix is one that extends far beyond the theatrical trilogy, and the world they have created is so rich that we've chosen to tell inter-connected Matrix-related stories in multiple mediums. Our goal in collaborating with Ubi Soft is to create a multiplayer online game that reflects the trilogy's highly stylised storytelling and innovative action, taking fans beyond the boundaries of the movie screen and into a 'persistent world' where they can fully explore the vast realm of the Matrix." So says Joel Schumacher, producer of The Matrix movies. There are still a number of issues surrounding the title - mostly relating to the nature of on-line play - but, for now, it sounds like a grand idea. Guess we'll just have to wait until mid 2004...

## The Matrix on the Web

The Internet is full of Matrix stuff, so we trawled a bit and found a few sites for you Matrix fanatics to check out.

- [www.matrix.com](http://www.matrix.com)
- [www.theanimatrix.com](http://www.theanimatrix.com)
- [www.whatisthematrix.com](http://www.whatisthematrix.com)
- [www.enterthematrixgame.com](http://www.enterthematrixgame.com)
- <http://intothematrixmusic.com>
- [www.samsung.com/matrix](http://www.samsung.com/matrix)
- <http://keanuweb.com>
- <http://hackthematrix.warnerbros.com>
- <http://thematrixonline.warnerbros.com>



experienced with this game?

I guess there's only one way to find out.

Enter the Matrix is, as a package, one of the finest PC titles I have ever played. No, nobody bribed me. It's just the truth. And while the game may not be the best in any particular field, as a whole it certainly packs oodles of gaming punch. But there is something far more important than that. This title is revolutionary, because it is part of a greater whole. It's not a spin off, but an addition to an already existing mythos that is growing steadily by the day. And one thing is for sure... It may not be the perfect game but it is the perfect gaming addition to the Matrix mythology.

This one, boys and girls, is all about feel. It's all about capturing the essence of what makes The Matrix all that. It's about taking one medium and converting it to another without losing any of the subtle nuances that

made the original so great. And for doing that right, Shiny deserves a warm and heart felt round of applause.

In the game, the player controls either Niobe or Ghost, the captain and first mate of the ship Logos respectively. However, playing the game once through with one character is ill-advised. Do it twice. Use both. Because then your experience of the game is maximised. Not that there are vast differences between the paths that the two characters tread, but there are subtle ones that make all the difference.

At first glance, Enter the Matrix appears to be a fast paced and innovative adventure title. And, for all intents and purposes, it is. However, there is something about this title, an indefinable quality that makes it so much more than just another Tomb Raider clone. There are other, more obvious elements too. Take, for example,

### Trivia

- Actress/Singer Aaliyah was originally cast in the role of Zee but was killed in a plane crash on 25 August 2001.
- This film and the sequel, The Matrix Revolutions, took four years to make, and were filmed back to back.
- A 17-minute battle sequence alone cost over \$40 million.
- The 2-mile loop highway was built specifically for this film for a chase scene on the decommissioned Alameda Point Navy Base at a cost of over \$2.4 million.
- The sequels took so long to finish because several CGI firms went bankrupt while working on rendering the effects for both movies.
- It was reported that Keanu Reeves volunteered to give up a claim to a share of ticket sales amounting to around \$38 million when producers feared that the film would never recoup the cost of the special effects.
- The special effects alone cost \$100 million U.S.
- The script for the movie, The Matrix Reloaded (while in production) was code-named "The Burly Man". This came from an epic fight that the developers code named "The Burly Brawl".
- GM donated 300 cars for use in the production of the movie. All 300 were wrecked by the end.
- There were several injuries on the set: Carrie-Anne Moss broke her leg training for a wire stunt, Laurence Fishburne fractured an arm in another training incident and Hugo Weaving put out a disc in his neck while being pulled back on a wire.
- The film's concluding highway chase sequence took 45 days to shoot (longer than many films' entire shooting schedule).
- Gloria Foster, AKA "The Oracle", died on September 29th, 2001 of diabetes, before starting work on any of her Matrix Revolutions filming (most of her Matrix Reloaded work was already done).





▼ Do the Hustle! Dun-dun-dun-dun duntudun duh duh...

the "focus" element. Using focus - a limited resource each character possesses - the character can perform stunning "bullet-time" feats. Yes, Max Payne was the first game to use this concept, but Enter the Matrix has refined it (and besides, Max Payne stole the idea from The Matrix movie anyway.) Where in Max Payne bullet-time allowed you to aim a bit better, focus turns your character into a super-human fighting machine. Another brilliant aspect of the game is the story line, which plays out like a movie. In fact, around an hour of FMV footage, made especially for the game and starring original cast members is included to make it more entertaining and engrossing. It's a complex tale that takes as much concentration as watching a Matrix movie. With graphics that are above average, exceptional character animations, good physics, a simple yet comprehensive control system and sound that really rocks (and is true to the sound of the film, both

musically and in terms of voice acting and sound effects), Enter the Matrix is a top title. As I said before, it is not perfect - no title could ever be - but one of the main factors that made me sit up and take notice was that even a jaded old game reviewer like me could become totally lost within the folds of this virtual world - fighting, shooting, driving and flying my way through its compelling story without even a glance at anything belonging to the real world. As a package, this game is almost as good as it gets. So... what are you waiting for? Enter the Matrix. See how far down the rabbit hole goes...



### Famous Faces

This story is not just something with a Matrix feel and some Matrix style effects. The tale told in Enter the Matrix is an integral part of the Matrix mythology and to this end, a number of very recognisable characters can be seen within the game. These include Neo, Morpheus, Trinity, Agent Smith and a number of other characters we will be introduced to in the upcoming movies. All are, of course, played by their respective actors within the game - a rather nice touch, considering how many titles just replace actors with "placebos."



### The Matrix Revolutions

The third movie in the Matrix trilogy will be released worldwide on 5 November 2003. Filming for The Matrix Revolutions took place in Australia, Chicago and San Francisco and includes a cast of Keanu Reeves (Neo), Carrie-Anne Moss (Trinity), Laurence Fishburne (Morpheus), Hugo Weaving (Agent Smith), Jada Pinkett-Smith (Niobe), Anthony Wong (Ghost), Monica Bellucci, Collin Chou, Nona Gaye (Zee), Harry Lennix (Lock), Rupert Reid and Clayton Watson (The Kid) among others. The Matrix Revolutions, as well as the two sequels were written and directed by Larry Wachowski and Andy Wachowski. The trailer for this movie will be shown at the end of The Matrix Reloaded on big screen. You can also catch it on next months cover CD.



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**Minimum Specification**  
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- ⊕ Perfect Matrix feel
- ⊕ Brilliant story
- ⊕ Overall presentation

⊕ 4.3 GB install!

**Summary**  
 One of the most anticipated games of all time, Enter the Matrix allows the player to become one of the few who can "bend" the rules and fight for humanity's freedom. A great title full of fun and action, Enter the Matrix captures the spirit of the Matrix mythology perfectly. This is a must have for Matrix fans, and a highly recommended for everyone else - even if you hated the movies.

92

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developer: ubisoft  publisher: ubisoft  distributor: ster kinekor [011] 445-7900  
 price: R 399.00  genre: platform  internet: www.ubisoft.com  
 platforms: ps2 | PC | Xbox | GC

reviewer: Walt "Shryke" Pretorius

# RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC



▶ **So many lums, so little time. Rayman is back with yet another platform adventure.**

However, the series has always been a little lacklustre when compared to other "iconic" platformers. It does seem, though, that the developers at Ubi Soft have noticed this problem and, with this latest instalment, have pulled a little finger...

We all know Rayman, that loveable legless, armless crusader for all that is good and just and decidedly

strange. Well, folks, he is back, and it looks like this time around he may actually give other gaming icons a run for their money.

With a more complete control system (allowing a lot more versatility in the game) and a bunch of new toys and abilities, Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc offers tons more than previous instalments. The game requires the player to be a little more crafty than before, and is far more thought provoking than just a basic run and grab platform style game. And a whole bunch of new musket

toting bad guys await the player as well, making the game even more interesting than before. As far as the series, this one certainly raises the whole Rayman bar. Where other titles have been disappointing at best in the past, this new Rayman game is exciting, challenging and extremely funny (a big thumbs up to the vocal script writers on that one). Also, among the "unlockable" items in the game are some of the funniest bonus movies I have ever seen in a game of this kind. Overall, a good job by Ubi Soft. It is not perfect (no game is, really) but it is a huge leap in the right direction for both the developer and the Rayman series.



- ⊕ Fun
- ⊕ Great extras
- ⊖ Poor camera
- ⊖ Another platform title

# 79



developer: z-axis  publisher: acclaim  distributor: ster kinekor [011] 445-7900  
 price: R 529.00  genre: extreme sports  internet: www.bmxxx.com  
 platforms: ps2

reviewer: Adam "Madman" Liebman

# BMX XXX

▶ **Extreme sports games, such as the excellent Tony Hawks Pro Skater series, are becoming ever more popular on the console gaming scene, and, if done correctly, can provide loads of entertainment. BMX XXX tries to take this concept even further, by adding scantily clad women and foul language into the equation. Unfortunately, it seems like they lost the plot...**

BMX XXX is, undoubtedly, going to become one of the most controversial titles available, but, contrary to what Acclaim's PR department would have you believe, there's very little to get excited about. The game is supposed to be an evolution of the Dave Mirra BMX series, but it seems that the developers have split their focus between making an extremely lewd game, and an extremely playable game, and the result is something in the grey area between the two. Personally, I feel that the game's attempt at pushing the boundaries of decency is merely a tacky sales ploy, and it shows in the final product. The control system is fairly intuitive, and most tricks can be pulled off with ease, however learning the intricacies of the control set-up will provide you with the

know-how to use modifiers to earn more points from the tricks. Unfortunately, the majority of the single-player mode is based on completing tasks rather than pulling off outrageous stunts, and often the objectives are far too vague, resulting in a lot of frustration when trying to unlock new levels. Graphically, the locales are well detailed, but the character models are exceedingly disappointing, however most of the trick animations are convincingly done. On the whole, however, BMX XXX doesn't have the visual feel of a PS2 title, and Z-Axis certainly should have done better. The soundtrack, as one might expect, is in a heavy rock/punk style, and does complement the concept of the game quite well. The sound effects, however, are at best disappointing, but a good job has been done on the often humorous and always profane voice acting, bringing the seedy characters you're sure to meet to life. Although BMX XXX isn't a "bad" game, it's far from being a good game - those who are looking for a BMX game and haven't played anything from the Dave Mirra series may enjoy it, as well as anyone pathetic enough to get excited over short FMV stripper snippets, but ultimately, the game feels rough and unpolished, and is certainly nowhere

near as good as the likes of other extreme sports games, particularly the Tony Hawk's Pro Skater series.



- ⊕ Good voice acting
- ⊖ Could be worse
- ⊖ Feels tacky
- ⊖ Poor graphics
- ⊖ Not suitable for younger players

# 62

NOW AVAILABLE





# VEXX

Platform games have been hitting the PS2 left, right and centre in recent months, and with such revolutionary games as Sly

Raccoon and Ratchet & Clank making up the bulk of the genre, any platform newcomer looking to make a splash needs some serious innovation to succeed, and unfortunately, Vexx falls short of the mark.

Vexx, Acclaim's latest offering, received a rather large amount of publicity leading up to its release, and one expected it to be more than just an average platform game. The story revolves around a furry critter (for a change!) by the name of Vexx, whose home world, Astara, has been invaded by evil forces led by an even more evil bloke by the name of Dark Yabu. Vexx managed to escape slavery,

but his grandfather had to sacrifice his life in the process, and so Vexx begins a quest to free his homeland, with a side order of revenge. The setting and



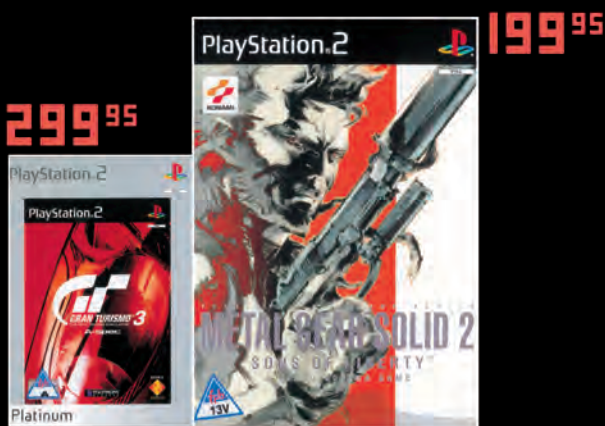
story is somewhat darker than the usual platform fare, but other than that, Vexx is pretty standard stuff. The controls are intuitive and responsive, with most of the action revolving around leaping from Precariously Small Platform A to Precariously Small Platform B, with a

few scattered (not to mention unintelligent) enemies in between. One of the main differences between Vexx and its competition in the genre is the combat system - Vexx is capable of pulling off several combos, as well as juggling his enemies, in the tradition of a fighting game.

Unfortunately, there is no visible advantage to learning the intricacies of the combat system, and simple button-mashing often seems to provide the best results. Graphically, the huge levels are well detailed, and the action flows smoothly, but in comparison to other recent titles in the genre, it becomes evident that Vexx hasn't even nudged the envelope of PS2 graphics, let alone shoved it, and one is left with the feeling that the graphics could have been far, far better. The sound, though not awful, is uninspiring and offers no memorable moments. On the whole, Vexx is a decent platform game, but nothing more - the basic play dynamic just doesn't have the freshness and innovation needed, and anyone looking for a PS2 platform game would be far better off with some of the more polished offerings currently available.

- ⊖ Large levels
- ⊖ Average graphics
- ⊖ Lack of innovation

# 66



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developer: 7-studios [] publisher: midway [] distributor: ster kinekor [011] 445-7900  
price: R 549.00 [] genre: arcade action [] internet: www.sevenstudios.com | www.midway.com  
platforms: ps2 | gc | xbox

reviewer: Michael "RedTide" James



# DEFENDER

► This is a game that goes back a long way, a game that rightfully bears the stamp 'classic' - it paved the way, it laid the foundations, it even spoke to Elvis [not really]. The question at hand: why are today's game developers resurrecting these wholesome fond memories and then ruining them with unoriginal and dull updated versions?

Defender is the modern recreation of the original game (a rudimentary side-scrolling arcade action game where the player had to protect and rescue humans from an alien race called the Manti); in this new version you play the game in 3D, from a behind-the-spaceship perspective and must rescue stranded colonists and take them to a drop zone before the invading



alien Manti Landers steal them. If an alien Lander picks up a colonist before you do and manages, after a few moments, to mutate the colonist you'll end up facing a much more menacing threat in the form of a nastier alien and colonist mutant combination.

Overall the game ends up being a cross between chasing and collecting colonists and protecting and defending this location or that vessel as you're constantly under attack. This style of play certainly doesn't suite everyone as most players would rather attack and destroy some alien bases then defend and baby-sit colonists.

The game features different ships (not all available initially) and weapon upgrades that you can purchase with credits earned based on your mission performance; each ship handles differently and while some perform well in firepower battles, sacrificing speed and manoeuvrability, others zip and

turn in an instant while carrying weaker armaments - it's all down to your particular style of play and preference.

Technically the game is hard to fault, it looks lovely and performs equally well, the sound isn't amazing but adequate and the control system is responsive and easy to master. The inclusion of a split screen multiplayer option is an inspired addition to the game and you and a buddy can take on the bad guys together or simply shoot each other down in a head-to-head multiplayer game. Defender in the year 2003 is a great action game that unfortunately throws too many hand-holding missions into the mix and ends up being more frustrating than the fun and mindless blast it should have been - give it a try before you commit your cash.

- ⊕ Great control system
- ⊕ Responsive
- ⊕ Split screen multiplayer
- ⊖ Too many defensive missions
- ⊖ Nothing like the original
- ⊖ No replay value

# 68

developer: scee [] publisher: scee [] distributor: ster kinekor [011] 445-7900  
price: R 519.00 [] genre: action adventure [] internet: www.scee.com  
platforms: ps2

reviewer: Adam "Out Saving the World" Liebman



# THE MARK OF KRI

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► The Mark of Kri is a cross between a fast-paced, action packed beat 'em up, and a stealth adventure title, all held together by an intriguing story line, and blood by the bucket loads. Spectacular attention to detail and virtually seamless genre-blending make this one of the better adventure titles around.

In The Mark of Kri, you control a barbarian warrior by the name of Rau, who initially sets out from his village on a bandit hunt, but eventually becomes entangled in a story revolving around 6 symbols which, when combined, will open a portal to the nether realms that will most certainly spell the end for most of the world's inhabitants, and as you might have guessed, it's up to you to stop that. The story line is complex and well thought-out, and to give much more of it away would be criminal. The Mark of Kri also employs a revolutionary new fighting and targeting system, whereby you "lock on" to foes by pressing the right analog stick in the direction of the enemy, who is then assigned to either the

X, square or circle button. You can lock onto 3 enemies at once, and by pressing the relevant button, you can attack any of them, regardless of which direction you're facing - particularly helpful, since the game suffers from the typical camera problems of most games in this genre. To make things more interesting, should some of the buttons be unassigned to enemies, you can use them as modifiers to make longer and more devastating



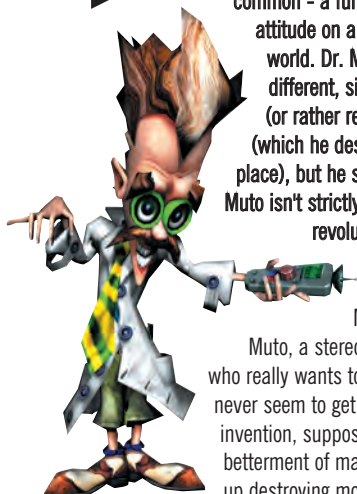
combination attacks. Aurally, the sound track is moody and tribal, perfectly complementing the setting of the game, and the voice acting is well done. The visuals too are stunning - although you are confined to a linear path throughout the game, the settings are beautifully detailed, and the animations (and believe me, there are plenty) are excellently done. The whole game has a cartoon-like feel to it, probably because certain of the artists have prior Disney experience, and although the idea of coupling such a style with tremendous amounts of gore seems like a disaster waiting to happen, it fits together surprisingly well. The Mark of Kri is a game that dares to be different, and although it takes a little while to truly get into, once you've got the hang of it, you'll appreciate how good a game it truly is - certainly worth a look!

- ⊕ Innovative controls
- ⊕ Wonderful graphics
- ⊕ Gripping story
- ⊖ Takes time to get used to

# 85

# DR MUTO

The abundance of platform games currently available all seem to have one thing in common - a furry hero with an attitude on a quest to save the world. Dr. Muto isn't entirely different, since he is out to save (or rather rebuild) the world (which he destroyed in the first place), but he sure isn't furry. Dr. Muto isn't strictly speaking revolutionary, but it's good fun nonetheless.



Meet our hero, Dr.

Muto, a stereotypical mad scientist, who really wants to do good, but can never seem to get it right, and his latest invention, supposedly designed for the betterment of mankind, actually ended up destroying most of it, and now Dr.

Muto has to set out to reverse the damage. Before you think Dr. Muto is merely a geeky scientist (which he is, for the record), there are a few

things that set him apart from your average platform game character. Firstly, he has the ability to morph into several forms of animal, which can be unlocked by (you guessed it) collecting things. Secondly, as any mad scientist worth his salt, Dr. Muto has blueprints for several neat gadgets, such as rocket boots, which he can build by (you guessed it) collecting things. But, what would a platform game be without collecting things? Also, in each level, you're presented with a list of objectives in the form of a "master plan", not all of which are required to progress, but they do extend the longevity of the game. Not to mention that the levels are absolutely huge. Graphically, Dr. Muto's world is rendered in a beautifully wacky, cartoon-like way, that is, thankfully, not reminiscent of any other game I've seen recently. The animation of all the characters is also quite spectacular. In terms of sound, the sound effects are excellent, and the score fits the game to a tee. The voice acting too, is of an excellent standard, with Dr. Muto's voice perfectly suited to his character, and his wise-cracking and often cruel computer AI's timing is impeccable, and sure to be the cause of some laughter. Ultimately, Dr. Muto isn't the most innovative platform

game around, but it does have a fresh, unique and, most importantly, very entertaining feel to it, and is definitely worth checking out.



- ⊕ Fresh ideas
- ⊕ Wonderful voice acting
- ⊕ Lots of fun
- ⊕ It's still a platform game

# 80

PS 2

review



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# X-MEN 2: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

 **We all have a past. To most, it's just a series of events that lead us to where we currently find ourselves. To others, it is something that should be hidden away and avoided at all costs. And to others, it is something that demands retribution, fact and faces that require a price to be paid... things upon which vengeance must be wreaked.**

It seems that movies about comic books tend to become




games before long. Like X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge, for example. Marvel comics have yet again entered the console game fray (like when they produced Spiderman) in the apparent hope that the movie will generate enough interest in the game for it to have record sales. Not, of course, that the title has very much to do with the movie at all. Hell, even the voice is done by someone other than Hugh Jackman (although the voice actor is the rather famous Mark Hamill... Luke Skywalker, stupid.) What the game does deal with is the history of Wolverine - how he came into being, as it were - and what he plans to do about it. At least one of the characters in the film is present... Despite the obvious intent to ride the movie's undoubted crest of success, this is a rather good title - full of brawling action and challenges for the player to overcome. It feels very much like an arcade title, which is great and never takes itself too seriously. As an exploration of the Wolverine character, this title is great. It allows the player to perform a number of actions and moves that are so distinctly "wolvie" it smacks more of the comic series than the movie. The



action is fast and furious, and the challenges (while all movement based) tend to be varied in their difficulty. The game itself almost feels like a strange hybrid of action adventure and platform at times, with your character having to jump duck and fight his way through the numerous levels. Smart players will get far - after all, Wolverine has an increased healing factor at his disposal. No boss can be beaten by brute force alone, so the player will need to think a bit more and hit the punch button a bit less. It doesn't have the greatest graphics, nor the best sound or control system. However, X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge is a title that will be greatly enjoyed by those giving it a try. So go on, give it a whirl. And a slice...

**bad...**

 There are some things that people just shouldn't do. One of those is take a good game from one platform and port it onto another. Sure, there are times when ports work out pretty well (Oni springs to mind as a good example) but a game like this should never have gone anywhere near a PC. I had a look at the PC version before the PS2 version, and I was horrified at how bad the title was on computer. Poor controls, iffy graphics and a generally mediocre feel were the order of the day. Having seen the PS2 version and (I must add) having been more than pleasantly surprised by it, I would have to say that when developers want to start porting things around, they should either leave well enough alone, or start writing new code.

**Requirements**  
 1 Player | Vibration compatible | Analog

Fun  Dated graphics  
 It's Wolverine!  No original voices  
 Nice character exploration

**Summary**  
 It may not be the greatest title to hit the PS2, but X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge is still one of the great fun titles for the console to come out this year.  
 It's an action packed romp through the life of Wolverine, featuring all the faces you would expect to encounter. Avoid the PC version, though...

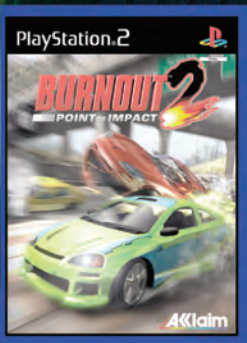
78

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developer: acclaim studios austin [] publisher: acclaim [] distributor: ster kinekor (011) 445-7900  
 price: R 549.00 [] genre: first person shooter [] internet: www.turok.com/evolution  
 platforms: ps2 | Xbox | GC

reviewer: Adam "Madman" Liebman

PS 2

review preview hardware regular feature

# TUROK: EVOLUTION

▶ The Turok series, formerly a Nintendo exclusive, has made its breakthrough onto all of the next-generation consoles, but, unfortunately, it appears that Acclaim Studios Austin have done somewhat of a shoddy job this time around.

In Turok: Evolution, you take on the role of Tal'Set, in a dinosaur and lizard-man infested world known as the Lost Lands. This time around, the focus has shifted closer to that of the original title, namely dinosaur



hunting, but your main opposition still comes in the form of the lizard men (Slegs), who have a collective IQ lower than London's average annual temperature, for the most part. The play dynamic is comprised of precarious platform jumping, as well as traditional first person combat, stealth segments, and a few levels that see you flying on a pterradon. Unfortunately, the flight sequences are more frustrating than entertaining, thanks to a poor control system, requiring precise steering of the creature, if you wish to avoid dying a fiery, and needless to say, unpleasant death. Graphically, the locales are all rendered convincingly, and the enemies are well animated, however the graphics are certainly far from being some of the best seen on the PS2, and the game suffers from draw-in problems, not to mention instances of severe framerate drops (one could easily grow old, thanks to the obscenely long load times). Aurally, the sound track and effects are both very well done, and help to immerse the player in Tal'Set's world. Also worth a mention is the multiplayer mode, which is indeed very solid and enjoyable. Unfortunately, despite the depth of Tal'Set's arsenal, and the mandatory bucket loads of blood, the single player mode does become repetitive



quickly - it's large, but it often feels as if you're doing the same things as every other FPS in recent memory has asked of you. Turok: Evolution is by no means a bad game, but thanks to poor graphics, and a lack of innovation in the game dynamic, it is merely an average title, and far from being something exceptional.

- ⊖ Loads of BIG weapons
- ⊖ Gory
- ⊖ Poor graphics
- ⊖ Frustrating
- ⊖ Repetitive

66

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# WAR OF THE MONSTERS

▶ **Giant monsters and huge cities being destroyed, in typical B-movie style - what's not to like? War of the Monsters is unique, entertaining and close to being totally off the wall, bringing to the PS2 the sort of excitement it needs.**

The story line in War of the Monsters is standard monster movie fare - aliens attack Earth, they're eventually defeated, but manage to leak some sludge across the planet in the process, resulting in the creation of 10 maniacal, not to mention large, creatures, all out to destroy each other, and anything that gets in the way. Although it is, at its heart, a fighting game, War of the Monsters is definitely not a Tekken clone. Each battle takes place in a large locale, be it a city, airfield, or even a nuclear power facility, and the characters have the ability to scale skyscrapers, pick up (and throw, needless to say) boulders and other large objects, as well as destroying most of the

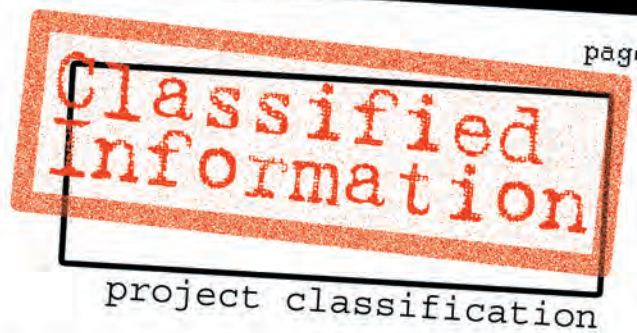
environment, all the while trying to defeat one, two, or sometimes three equally destructive opponents. Scattered across the landscape are also energy power-ups, for fuelling devastating special attacks, as well as health boosts, meaning that when run and hide tactics are used, battles can last a good 15 minutes each. The control system is simplistic, with each character having



only 2 forms of attack, making War of the Monsters easy to pick up for the novice, but with a hard-to-master combo system to reward those willing to take the time to figure it out. The characters are also all unique, each having different strengths and speeds, adding to the longevity of the game. Graphically, each monster is beautifully rendered, including imitations of King Kong and Godzilla, and the different levels are also lovingly created with plenty of detail; the feeling of chaos one would expect from a crowded city under siege by monsters is certainly convincing, and slowdown never occurs. An excellent soundtrack and sound effects also add to the experience. Ultimately, War of the Monsters is a fresh idea, that doesn't take itself too seriously, but is incredibly entertaining, and well worth checking out.

- ⊕ Unique concept
- ⊕ Wonderful graphics
- ⊕ Lots of fun
- ⊖ Single player mode can be repetitive

# 90



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Western Digital 80GB HDD 7200rpm  
LG DVD/CD-RW combo drive



writer: Tom "Fr00tC@k3" Taylor

# joysticks

## Benchmarking

I just love my job! Where else do you get to play games and test some of the latest hardware while getting paid to do so? In testing this month's products I played games, and a lot of them. In the week leading up to my deadline I only had about 10 hours worth of sleep but it was all for a good cause, of course - to bring you the best roundup feature around and to crown this month's Editor's Choice. In this month's H@rdcor3 roundup I looked at various factors when rating each product.

Something which is very important to me is the comfort level and ergonomics of the joystick I am using and whether I can access all of the buttons on it with ease. In order to be fair to the wide spectrum of gamers out there, I played a variety of games which enabled me to get a general feel for what the joystick can achieve and how it performs. The games I played that were compatible with the force feedback joysticks were Microsoft Combat Flight Simulator 3 and Mafia. I also used these games when looking at the non-force feedback joysticks. Other games I played were Battlefield: 1942, IL2 Sturmovik, and Colin McRae Rally 2. Apart from the other scoring areas (Features, Ergonomics, and Value for Money) I scored each joystick according to how I felt when playing games with it, under Game Playability.

▶ Joysticks have been around for a long time and they have not changed all that much over the years. As technology progressed and the PC became a household appliance, the joystick enjoyed much popularity. It has seen many modifications, such as programmable buttons and rudder/throttle control. Out of all the new features and modifications though, the best thing that happened to the joystick was the incorporation of force feedback. This feature allows the user to "feel" any action that is happening in a game compatible with the technology.

Flight simulation games are probably the biggest beneficiaries of this technology. But lately things have changed slightly, games such as Mafia allow you to control one or another aspect of the game using a force feedback compatible or normal Joystick. I have never been a real fan of driving a car with a joystick but because most new games offer force feedback I would try it, at least for a while, because for some strange reason it is a great feeling to crash into another car and feel the shock from the impact. If only I could hook-up my chair to a force feedback device.

Although force feedback is a great feature to have, joysticks offering this functionality are still expensive and many gamers choose not to buy them because of this. But do not despair; if you cannot afford or choose not to buy a force feedback compatible joystick, there are some amazing joysticks out there that should meet your every need.

Many gamers, including myself, only developed a real need for a joystick when Battlefield: 1942 was released. The reason for this was that FPS gamers could now actually fly an aircraft and play in FPS mode all in the same game. As well as the fact that it is not as much fun to fly an aircraft with your keyboard and mouse like it is with a joystick.

Looking at the products we received for this month's H@rdcor3 roundup it is evident that there are some good quality joysticks on the market. In general there were no real issues with these devices. There was one thing in particular though that I was not very happy with. Some of the joysticks did not ship with the Windows XP drivers and it resulted in me having to download them. I seriously hope this is an issue that the manufacturers will address as I cannot see that many customers would be happy if they have to do the same.



It is almost hard to believe that the Genius Flight2000 F-22X is the mid range unit in the Flight2000 range of Genius joysticks. It offers such simplistic functionality it is almost perfect. That is until you realise it can only connect to your computer via the 15-pin gameport. In hoping that a USB adapter would do the trick in converting the gameport, I tried connecting it to a USB port using a 15-pin gameport to USB converter. Sadly Windows XP told me that it could not recognize the device, and without any drivers supplied (no Windows XP drivers available for download), there was no chance that this would work. This joystick is as basic as they come and makes use of Windows' built in game controller support to operate. The unit itself feels very sturdy on a desk, and is equally comfortable to hold. There are a



total of 4 buttons on the device not including the 8-way hat-switch, rudder, and throttle wheels. I missed the fact that I could not simply twist the stick for rudder control, but what could I expect at an estimated retail price of R130.

This joystick is definitely not aimed at left handed folk; this is because there is a thumb-button just next to the trigger-switch making it extremely uncomfortable to hold with the left hand (righties rule!). The throttle and rudder wheels also do not offer much flexibility and are very sensitive because their minimum and maximum values are so close together.

I was actually quite impressed with this device, not that I would want to own one, but because it offers a great solution for a gamer on a very tight budget. Its game playability was acceptable and its responsiveness was acceptable.

Features	65	<b>Overall</b> <b>77</b>	<b>Pros:</b> It's cheap and performs well <b>Cons:</b> No USB support <b>Supplied by:</b> TVR Computers [011] 807 1390 <b>ERP:</b> R130.00 <b>Internet:</b> www.geniusnet.com.tw
Ergonomics	80		
Value for money	85		
Game Playability	80		

The Genius Flight2000 F-23 is in many respects almost identical to the Genius Flight2000 F-22X. This one is a different colour though and has 4 extra buttons; it also comes with a driver CD and a 6-language manual. Seeing that this unit also only supports the 15-pin gameport connection I could not resist attaching the 15-pin gameport to a USB connector to see if it would work, unsurprisingly it did not.

The driver CD that ships with the Genius Flight2000 F-23 is horribly out-dated; it has DirectX 5 on it as a recommended install and the software drivers are only able to install on a Windows 95 based system. That is no big issue as you can use the built in Windows game controller support to recognise the joystick as there are no special features on this joystick, alternatively you can download the drivers from the Genius website which was still at Beta 2 at time of going to print.

Looking more closely at the controller, you will notice that, apart from the 4 buttons, hat-switch, rudder, and throttle wheels, there are 4 extra buttons situated just below the throttle on this joystick. Although these are recognisable in most games, they are not situated in the ideal position, especially if you will be using your rudder a lot. There is also an LED situated on the opposite side of the 4 extra buttons to show this device's on/off status.

Its game playability was again almost exactly the same as that of the Genius Flight2000 F-22X, it was a tad more responsive in certain respects. Sadly though, I cannot see the value in the extra R100 that this joystick has over the F-22X and if I was to choose between the two this one would not be it.



Features	69	<b>Overall</b> <b>75</b>	<b>Pros:</b> None come to mind <b>Cons:</b> No value for money over the F-22X <b>Supplied by:</b> TVR Computers [011] 807 1390 <b>ERP:</b> R240.00 <b>Internet:</b> www.geniusnet.com.tw
Ergonomics	80		
Value for money	70		
Game Playability	82		

The Genius MaxFighter Digital F-31D features almost everything that a decent joystick should have. The reason why I say almost is because this joystick does not have a USB interface, and the stick cannot twist to activate the rudder feature. Everything else on the hardware is a huge improvement over the Flight2000 range of joysticks.

The driver CD shipped with this unit was also disappointingly out of date. It has DirectX 5 as an install option and the drivers on the CD will only install on a Windows 95 based system. I browsed over to the Genius website and was disappointed to only see Beta 2 drivers available for download.

On the joystick there are 10 buttons which are situated in an easy to reach and ideal location; it also has a rudder wheel at the base of the stick. This joystick features a slightly different approach to the throttle, unlike the conventional wheel-throttle, is now "digital" and is represented by two buttons next to the hat-switch. I was a bit disappointed with the placement of the thumb-button next to the trigger-switch. Although it is somewhat of an improvement over the thumb-button found on the Flight2000 joysticks, it is not always "press-able"; depending on the grip you have on the stick the thumb-button is sure to become unused. Speaking of which, this is a very comfortable joystick, it offers just enough resistance when moved and feels a lot more accurate than many of the other joysticks in the roundup.

The MaxFighter Digital F-31D is surprisingly heavy, and this is actually a plus feature as it is sure to stay exactly where you place it on your desk. Its game playability is not bad and I can roughly compare it to the Microsoft Precision Sidewinder 2.

At the end of the day I would not buy this joystick purely because it has no USB support and its stick cannot twist to perform rudder action. For everything else it performs great.



Features	80	<b>Overall</b> <b>84</b>	<b>Pros:</b> Comfortable <b>Cons:</b> No USB support <b>Supplied by:</b> TVR Computers [011] 807 1390 <b>ERP:</b> R320.00 <b>Internet:</b> www.geniusnet.com.tw
Ergonomics	88		
Value for money	86		
Game Playability	85		

Genius MaxFighter F-33D

This force feedback joystick is Genius's top of the range model. It is quite heavy and has a large footprint, making it very difficult to keep it between you and the keyboard when playing games. But being as large as it is makes it one of the most solid and sturdiest joysticks I have ever played with. It connects to your PC via the 15-pin gameport but a USB adapter is also included in the package.

I was impressed by the look and feel of this product, until I tried to install the drivers. I do not understand why Genius does not include updated drivers with their products. I mean, Windows XP has been available for little over two years now and yet there are no Windows XP drivers included in this package. They are however downloadable from the Genius website at a size of 1.26 MB, but I am sure many would agree with me that in spending this amount of money you would at least expect fairly new drivers to be included with the product. The unit also comes with an external AC adapter.

After I got that out of the way and the Windows XP drivers were installed, I went to the properties for the MaxFighter F-33D. Apart from being able to calibrate the joystick there is also a "Test forces" tab allowing you to experience the force feedback provided by this joystick, although this sort of feature is included with all force feedback joysticks it is still fun to use. Looking at the ergonomics of this joystick, I was happy to see that Genius did not experiment with some weird shape or button placement for this joystick. I liked the innovative bean shape of the base of this joystick because it is perfectly designed to rest your palm on when using the six buttons situated on it. The rudder wheel is also situated in such a way that using it with your

thumb is very easy while your other fingers are on the six buttons. The stick part of this joystick is much the same in size as that of the MaxFighter Digital F-31D, there are minor differences though. The 8-way hat switch is situated next to the thumb controlled digital throttle which, instead of the conventional wheel method, is pressed up or down to increase or decrease the throttle.

Its game playability was great although I would have loved to feel a much stronger force feedback in the games I played. Looking at its estimated retail price though, it is not a bad choice if you are looking for a force feedback joystick.



Features	90	<b>Overall</b> <b>88</b>	Pros: Very comfortable
Ergonomics	90		Cons: Its force feedback is not powerful enough
Value for money	88		Supplied by: TVR Computers [011] 807 1390
Game Playability	87		ERP: R1100.00 Internet: www.geniusnet.com.tw

Logitech Wingman Strike Force 3D



I am sort of embarrassed to say that I really underestimated this joystick when I saw it for the first time. The Logitech Wingman Strike Force 3D does not look quite as funky as the likes of the Saitek Cyborg 3D force or as smart as the Microsoft Sidewinder Force Feedback 2 but it has great functionality.

It has 9 programmable buttons and has two 8-way hat-switches. This joystick connects to your PC via the USB port and ships with an AC adapter to power the force feedback motor. The base of the unit is wider than normal joysticks resulting in a more comfortable rest space for the palm of your hand when you are using the buttons on it. There are two buttons and a wheel as well as a throttle on the base. The throttle's clever design allows you to use the throttle with your thumb without it sliding off; this is thanks to sides of the throttle's handle being bent upwards to create a sort of groove for your thumb to rest comfortably.

The stick itself is extremely comfortable, and sadly its design does not fully cater for a left handed user, but it is possible to use this joystick with your left hand and experience a minimum amount of discomfort. The stick hosts a trigger, two 8-way hat-switches, and 3 buttons. The design of this unit allows for the user to be able to access all of the buttons without any hassles.

The software, although it offers much the same functions as the other joysticks in this roundup, has a very intuitive user interface and creating or downloading profiles for your games are done quite easily thanks to it. The preset profiles are categorised under the respective game developers and it

already caters for a lot of games. You can even launch a game from the profiler if you wish.

Looking at the force feedback that this joystick offers I was quite impressed. It has a much stronger motor than some of the other force feedback joysticks, yet the unit as a whole is very light. Playing games proved no mean feat for this one, and you would definitely not be wasting your money on it.

Looking at the estimated retail price it is not easy to ignore the value that this products offers, and if I was to buy a joystick now this would have to be it. I really liked the Microsoft Sidewinder Force Feedback 2 but with this one I get all the same features at a much lower price.



Features	90	<b>Overall</b> <b>92</b>	Pros: Solid design   Button layout
Ergonomics	92		Cons: None comes to mind
Value for money	95		Supplied by: Rectron [011] 203-1000
Game Playability	92		ERP: R995.00 Internet: www.logitech.com

Microsoft Sidewinder Precision 2



The Sidewinder Precision 2 feels much the same as the Sidewinder Force Feedback 2 and they look much the same as well. The only difference between the two is that this one does not feature force feedback. I owned one of these a while back and I was very pleased with it, the only reason

why I got rid of it was because I bought myself a force feedback joystick.

This unit connects to your computer via a USB slot. The stick hosts a trigger, an 8-way hat switch and three buttons; it also has rudder support by twisting the stick. On the base of the unit there are four buttons and a throttle all of which are very easily accessible with one hand. This joystick is very comfortable and should not pose any problems even if using it for a couple of hours (Health Warning: You should not be sitting it front of your PC for hours on end).

The footprint of this unit is perfect to fit between yourself and your keyboard if you regularly switch between the two. Not surprisingly though you do not need to install the drivers that ship with this device, when I connected it to the computer Windows XP picked it up and installed the basic drivers automatically. If you install the drivers that ship with this drive you, it allows you to program the buttons but its calibration setup is the same as that installed with Windows.

Playing games with this joystick proved to be a pleasant experience and it was very responsive, although it does not offer much resistance when moving it around. Looking at its estimated retail price this joystick is not the cheapest option available but you will definitely not be wasting your money.



Features	86	<b>Overall</b> <b>88</b>	Pros: Comfortable   Very responsive
Ergonomics	90		Cons: It's not a force feedback
Value for money	90		Supplied by: Microsoft [0860] 225-567
Game Playability	89		ERP: R499.00 Internet: www.microsoft.co.za

## Microsoft Sidewinder Force Feedback 2

This USB only joystick features everything that I personally want in a force feedback joystick. It is not too big, so when I play at a LAN I can keep it between me and the keyboard permanently for when I switch between aircraft and vehicles. There is not a big external power-supply that I need to worry about and it only takes a standard two prong power adapter to work. As a matter of fact you do not even need to have it connected to a power outlet if you are going to be playing games that do not support force feedback. I was also quite glad to see that the updated drivers were supplied with this product and I was ready to use it in about two minutes.

Most of the joysticks in the Sidewinder range look and feel fairly similar, I am specifically referring to the Sidewinder Precision 2 and this one. On the base of the unit there are 4 buttons and a throttle switch. On the stick there is an 8-way hat switch, three buttons and a trigger. Although not designed to be fully ambidextrous, the Sidewinder Force Feedback 2 can be used by left handed people with a minimum amount of discomfort. In order to provide rudder control the stick can twist, this to me was a great added benefit. You do not need to install the drivers that are shipped with this product as Windows XP has built in support for it. Installing the drivers though allow you to set certain configurations for your joystick such as custom button configurations, keystroke commands, and even macros. There is also a profile section so that you can assign various programmed game actions. As with most other force feedback joysticks there is a forces tab in the properties section of this joystick's drivers where you can experience the force that this joystick can provide.

The strength of the motor in this joystick is very powerful and when playing force feedback games you can really feel the power of the force it inflicts on you. It also felt a lot more responsive in the Flight Simulator games. I also liked the fact that when playing games that do not support force feedback, this joystick offers a little bit of resistance when moving it around (as long as it is plugged in of course).

It is very difficult to find fault with this joystick, admittedly it is not very cheap but if you want something decent you will have to fork out the cash. If you want the best this joystick would be it, its force feedback is powerful and its ergonomics are excellent.



Features	92	<b>Overall</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>Pros:</b> Powerful force feedback   Ergonomics <b>Cons:</b> Nothing <b>Supplied by:</b> Microsoft [0860] 225-567 <b>ERP:</b> R1249.00 <b>Internet:</b> www.microsoft.co.za
Ergonomics	92			
Value for money	89			
Game Playability	90			

## Saitek S330 Rumble Force

The name is very misleading; this USB-only joystick is one of the entry level units in the Saitek range and does not feature anything that resembles rumbling. The Saitek S330 Rumble Force is a very futuristic looking device. It does not feature smooth round corners or conventional design; this is a welcome change from the joysticks we have become accustomed to.

Another plus point for this joystick is its fully ambidextrous design, as it is equally comfortable to hold in both the left and right hand. A very innovative design feature is that the rudder switch can be unscrewed and mounted on the other side of the device for left handed folk. On the stick itself there is a very funky looking trigger and the other 3 buttons on the stick also have a futuristic look and feel but sadly there are no buttons on the base of this unit. There is just one "flaw" with this product, there is no rudder switch, something I missed while playing the flight simulator games. Because this is a very basic joystick, and Windows XP recognises it, it is not necessary to install the device drivers. The drivers provide exactly the same calibrating options as those that come with the device.

Playing games with this joystick offered nothing spectacularly good. It was very responsive in all the games I played. This is partly thanks to the spring mechanism at the base of the stick making sure that there is more than enough resistance when moving the joystick around. Looking at its estimated retail price though this would not be my first choice of game controller.



Features	75	<b>Overall</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>Pros:</b> Fully ambidextrous design   Responsive <b>Cons:</b> More expensive than I would have liked <b>Supplied by:</b> VMS [011] 678 3221 <b>ERP:</b> R550.00 <b>Internet:</b> www.saitek.com
Ergonomics	80			
Value for money	74			
Game Playability	85			

## Saitek Cyborg 3D Force

The Saitek Cyborg 3D Force is a very sexy and futuristic looking joystick, as is the case with most of Saitek's products. This game controller is fully ambidextrous, a feature Saitek products often host. Power to this force feedback joystick is provided by an external AC adapter making the base of the Cyborg 3D Force not as big as other joysticks in this round up.

The throttle on this joystick is easy to use from both sides of the device; this is thanks to the clever design of the handle on the throttle. On the base there are 4 buttons, 2 on each side and on the stick there is an 8-way hat switch, a trigger and 4 buttons. The rudder is activated by twisting the stick. Above and below the hat switch there are 2 lights that light up when the force feedback is activated. Even though the Cyborg 3D Force has a force feedback motor built in it is surprisingly light. Being light does not make the force feedback on this joystick any less powerful though.

I had a bit of a problem when I installed the software with the supplied drivers. The force feedback did not work with any of the games. After searching through a couple of online forums I discovered that the supplied drivers do not work with Windows XP. I was not very happy when I discovered that the drivers I needed to download were 13 MB in size. After about 4 hours the drivers downloaded successfully and I was able to test the joystick's force feedback abilities. The software as with the other Saitek software allows for custom profiles to be created for the games that you play and you can download profiles from the Saitek website.

My overall impression of this joystick was a very good one; it offers great game playability at a reasonable price. This joystick should also be a hit among lefties wanting a comfortable force feedback game controller.



Features	89	<b>Overall</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>Pros:</b> Ambidextrous   Great to use <b>Cons:</b> I had to download drivers <b>Supplied by:</b> VMS [011] 678 3221 <b>ERP:</b> R1400.00 <b>Internet:</b> www.saitek.com
Ergonomics	90			
Value for money	90			
Game Playability	90			

The Saitek X45 is a flying man's dream. It is both intimidating and awe inspiring, but either way this controller is not for the faint hearted; if you play flight simulation games or you are a fan of the Mechwarrior series, this joystick is a must have. The X45 consists of two devices, a stand alone throttle and the joystick. Together they feature 26 buttons and switches, which could be a total overkill if you are not a die-hard gamer. The Saitek X45 is both Windows and Mac OS 9 (and higher) compatible.

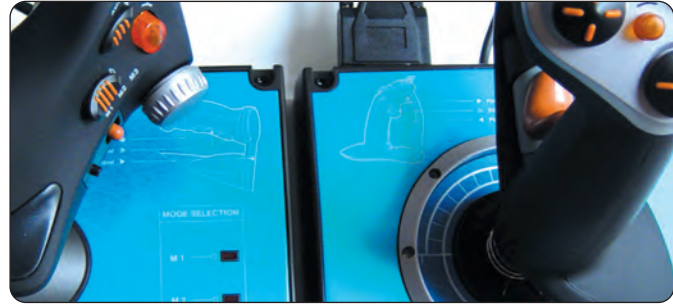
The throttle plugs into the joystick using a 15-pin connector, the joystick in turn, connects to your PC via the USB port. The X45 is surprisingly comfortable to use and if you create custom profiles for your games you can access almost every command imaginable using these 2 devices.

The CD contains profiles for a couple of games which include Mechwarrior 4, IL2, Crimson Skies, B17: Flying Fortress, and Flight Simulator 2002 to name a few. On the base of both the throttle and the joystick you will find a chart explaining the various buttons, useful if you forget where a button is situated.

The throttle part of the X45 features a very innovative rudder control which is accessible by your pinkie and ring-finger. There is also a 4-way hat switch, 2 rotary controls, and a mouse controller which doubles as an 8-way hat switch. On the joystick you will find a trigger and a pinkie switch, which has a removable hook, as well as two 8-way hat switches, 2 fire buttons, and a missile launcher which has a safety cap. Once plugged into the USB port the primary fire buttons on both devices light up, making the X45 look real funky at night.



I really enjoyed using the X45, it is extremely precise and once you get the hang of it you will not want to use any other joystick ever again. The only feature that I would like to have seen on the Saitek X45 is force feedback, but I have no doubt that the guys at Saitek have one in the pipeline.

Sadly the Microsoft Sidewinder Force Feedback 2 is still my joystick of choice but this one comes a close second.



Features	92	<b>Overall</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>Pros:</b> Great Features   Precision <b>Cons:</b> No force feedback <b>Supplied by:</b> Virtual Media (011) 678 3221 <b>ERP:</b> R1276.00 <b>Internet:</b> www.saitek.com
Ergonomics	92			
Value for money	89			
Game Playability	93			



JOYSTICK NAME AND MODEL	INTERFACE	BUTTONS	THROTTLE	RUDDER	FORCE FEEDBACK	PROGRAMMABLE BUTTONS	PRICE	RATING
Genius Flight2000 F-22X	Gameport	4	Yes	Yes	No	No	R 130.00	77%
Genius Flight2000 Digital F-23	Gameport	8	Yes	Yes	No	No	R 240.00	75%
Genius MaxFighter Digital F-31D	Gameport	10	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	R 320.00	84%
Genius MaxFighter F-33D	Gameport/USB	10	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	R1100.00	88%
 Logitech Wingman Strike Force 3D	USB	9	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	R 995.00	92%
 Microsoft Sidewinder Precision 2	USB	8	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	R 499.00	88%
Microsoft Sidewinder Force Feedback 2	USB	8	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	R1249.00	90%
Saitek S330 Rumble Force	USB	4	Yes	No	No	No	R 550.00	78%
Saitek Cyborg 3D Force	USB	8	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	R1400.00	89%
Saitek X45	USB	26	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	R1276.00	91%

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# LOGITECH DRIVING FORCE WHEEL FOR PS2

▶ **Yet another, by peripheral makers Logitech, into the console market is the Driving Force wheel for the PlayStation 2. Using a USB jack to connect to one of your PS2's USB ports, the wheel supplies the player with a more realistic driving experience... or so they claim.**

Sturdily constructed in the style of other Logitech wheels, the Driving Force system features a wheel unit, a pedal unit, a power supply and a so-called "lap attachment."

This latter piece fits to the bottom of the steering unit, and is then gripped between the user's thighs, placing the steering unit on their lap. Alternatively, the player can clamp the wheel unit to a desk, but, then again, who plays PS2 games from a desk?

The wheel features the usual PlayStation d-pad and buttons on the upper sides of the wheel, with the shoulder buttons being mounted on the wheel's side spokes, and the start and select buttons on the wheel's lower spoke. Additionally, two paddles are set behind the wheel for added control and convenience. The pedal unit connects to the wheel unit via a cable, all of which are



powered by a power supply, which also plugs into the wheel unit. Everything is sturdily constructed and beautifully designed for comfort and aesthetic appeal. Sadly, this unit is resplendent with good intentions which basically resulted in potential problems for the end user. First of all, the lap-top steering idea is good in principle, but the practice of the

matter is a little more complicated than that. It's just plain uncomfortable, to begin with, and all the wires and cables tend to get in the way... particularly underfoot,

which is not where your cables are supposed to be, seeing as how you're using pedals. This leads to another niggle. Whenever the user presses down on any of the pedals, their thighs move. This is a basic physiological principle. It also leads to the wheel housing (which is clamped by the user's thighs) moving slightly whenever a pedal is depressed. Maybe not the biggest problem, but it can lead the more finicky gamer to clamping the whole thing to the coffee table instead of losing that modicum of control.

While the Driving Force system works with any PS2 driving title, there is a bit of a problem with the whole force feedback deal. Like the Logitech PS2 Mouse, there is limited support for the force feedback feature. At this time, only five games support the system, making the whole purpose of the wheel a little pointless - after all, when you buy a force feedback wheel, you wanna feel the force, right?

It is a good idea, but it needs a little looking at and refining, and definitely needs a lot more support from PS2 developers.

REVIEWED BY	
Walt "Shryke" Pretorius	
PLUS	MINUS
Nice control Beautiful design	Not enough support Lap driving

**SUPPLIED BY:** Logitech [011] 452-7331  
**PRICE:** R 949.00  
**INTERNET:** www.logitech.com

# SAITEK P3000 WIRELESS GAMEPAD

▶ **Saitek have answered my call for more wireless products, and dropped off the P3000 Wireless Gamepad for me to play with - all I can say is I'm seriously impressed and look, it has no cables to add to my mess I call my PC.**

This is one seriously awesome controller, besides being wireless it is also USB and has two rechargeable batteries; what really impressed me is that the wireless station incorporates the charger unit and it all runs off USB power, but will it perform equally impressively in-game?

After a few nasty experiences with wireless products (particularly mice), the P3000 was a revelation; any delay with a gamepad would destroy a gaming experience but with the Saitek P3000 this was not a problem, every move was rock solid and executed precisely. The first thing I loaded up was MAME (yes I own every ROM promise) and put the gamepad through its paces with Mortal Kombat and Metal Slugs to name but a few,



all I can say is my kids loved it. Many hours later when I finally got the gamepad back (the kids went to bed eventually) I tried it with Gran Prix 4 and Need For Speed Hot Pursuit 2, and within an hour or so with each game I managed to knock seconds off my best times. This controller is a perfect companion for all those PS2 ports of games like Metal Gear Solid and the like. I also found that this controller worked really well in GTA3 and other 3rd person games, although trying it in Counter-Strike was rather interesting to say the least.

The gamepad itself is just about perfect in design. It has a total of 13 buttons - an analog/digital switch, an A/B switch (for those who like to change things around) two shoulder, 6 regular, a "shift" button that gives every button another function, and the analog sticks both push in to act as buttons themselves. There are two analog sticks and a

directional gamepad (or D-gamepad). For those who have used a PS2 controller, it's similar, only more comfortable. I guess the only thing missing is a rumble feature but I consider rumble a cheap effect that adds nothing to many games, so most gamers won't miss this feature especially those without a console. This has to be one of the most comfortable controllers I have ever used; I find many controllers only suite smaller hands, thanks to Saitek I now have a decent gamepad to use (ok so I have erm rather large hands).

Not only is the P3000 an awesome gamepad it is also one of the best looking ones around, finished in black and silver it looks dead sexy. Gamers looking for the best of the best when it comes to a wireless gamepad need look no further, the price is slightly intimidating but it's worth every cent at the end of the day. Saitek have produced a most remarkable gamepad, and they are definitely not getting this one back as I have become too attached to it.

REVIEWED BY	
Brett "KnightMarE" Hamilton	
PLUS	MINUS
Wireless Programmable Performance	Slightly expensive No throttle No force feedback model

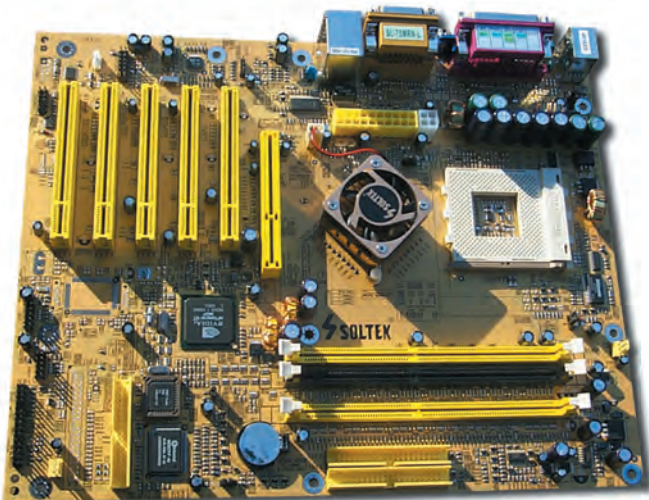
**SUPPLIED BY:** VMS [011] 678 3221  
**PRICE:** R 799.00  
**INTERNET:** www.saitek.com

# SOLTEK SL-75MRN-L N-FORCE2 MOTHERBOARD

► Soltek have been manufacturing high quality motherboards for the past few years, at

last I got a chance to get my hands on one. Dubbed the "Golden Flame" (the PCB is gold in colour), the N-Force 2 offering from Soltek seems to have everything a hardcore overclocker would want without frightening away the casual user.

The N-Force 2 chipset is a force to be reckoned with, it competes well with all offerings from VIA and SIS. Offering support for 8\* AGP 333 FSB and Dual Channel DDR 400 we have one fully featured board on our hands. Dual Channel DDR effectively allows you to double your memory bandwidth by using two of the same memory modules in the "yellow" memory slots. Although we have seen many solutions offering Serial ATA connectors we haven't really seen that many Serial ATA drives that take advantage of this technology, the Soltek board has support for EIDE ATA 133 speed drives. Sound is provided by the Realtek ACL650 onboard sound chip, this provides 6 channel sound support, although it is not quite an Audigy, it performs well and has a low CPU usage. Included was an onboard LAN connection which helps save those precious PCI slots. The N-Force 2 Solution preformed between 7% & 12% better in memory benchmarks and about 5% faster in other benchmarks compared to my stock system. This is a decent improvement and I'm guessing I would get slightly more if I moved to DDR 400. Soltek have included their RedStorm OverClocking on the Award BIOS, the amount of overclocking features is quite impressive. RedStorm allows you to adjust the Vcore voltages from 1.1 - 1.85v in 0.025v increments, DDR voltage settings from 2.5 - 2.8v on 0.1v increments, AGP voltage settings of 1.5 - 1.8v in 0.1v increments and VDD voltages of 1.6 - 1.8v in 0.1 increments. You can also adjust FSB settings to upwards of 200MHz for those who really want to push their systems to the outer limits. Once you get to these limits you'll be glad to know that the Soltek board supports Anti Burn Shield II which will stop any harm coming to your Athlon XP CPU. Considering the price, this is a seriously good option for that next motherboard upgrade, add to this the fact that the PCB is finished off in an awesome gold colour you have one more reason to add a window to your case.



## ► nitty gritty

What's onboard...

### CPU

Supports AMD Athlon 600Mhz ~ 1.4Ghz @ 200Mhz FSB  
Supports AMD Athlon 1.0Ghz ~ 1.4Ghz @ 266Mhz FSB  
Supports AMD Athlon XP 1500+ ~ 3000+ @ 266/333Mhz FSB  
Supports AMD Duron 600MHz ~ 1.3Ghz @ 200Mhz FSB Bus Frequency  
100/133/166MHz Internal  
200/266/333Mhz External  
Alpha EV6

### Expansion Slots

1 AGP 8x  
5 PCI Expansion Ports  
1 PS2 Keyboard Port  
1 PS2 Mouse Port  
6 USB 2.0 Ports (4 rear accessible, 2 via expansion bracket)  
2 Serial Ports  
1 Parallel Port  
3 Stereo Audio Ports  
1 Game Port (via expansion bracket)

### Chipset

nVidia nForce2 IGP  
nVidia nForce2 IGP  
nVidia nForce2 MCP2  
AMD HyperTransport Interconnect @ 800MB/s

### Special Features

BIOS overclocking control of FSB, voltages  
Onboard Realtek nForce Networking

### REVIEWED BY

Brett "KnightMarE" Hamilton

### PLUS

Price  
Looks  
Features

### MINUS

Not serial ATA  
One VGA output

SUPPLIED BY: TVR Computers [011] 807 1390  
PRICE: R 998.00  
INTERNET: www.soltekusa.com



Q&A | FAQ

What is rAge?

rAge is that feeling you get when everything goes wrong. You've been sitting dead still in your car on the highway, and through the heat haze you stare at the tar next to your car cursing the idiot mechanic that charged you R800 to fix your air-conditioning for the second time and now it still doesn't work. You watch the tar and the little insects crawling about next to the side of the road in the grass that hasn't been cut in a year even though you always pay your taxes, the same grass that some stupid dog ran across the road out of and caused the accident up the road. You can see the activity ahead, it's very close, there's flow alright but only a single lane is open and everyone and their idiotic brother is staring at the wreck on the side of the road - they all inch through and as you watch, someone stops the flow to reverse his tow truck across the road to move another idiots car who has just rear-ended some other idiot who stopped to watch all the idiots at the side of the road. Someone behind you hoots, it's the kind of hoot that pierces your calm. You start talking to yourself about how all these stupid people should just do everyone a favour and drive into a concrete bridge support at top speed. Wouldn't it be great if you had some super power to just disintegrate everyone on the road so you can get to your meeting with your important client who hates it when people are late? You can picture all those big shots in the boardroom now waiting for you, they wait for a call you can't make because the cellular service provider has a grey area on the stretch of road you're now stuck on. It is not about the meeting, it's about the delays you always have to suffer through, it's about a world full of morons who never contribute and are only there to get in your way and consume your time, that's the problem - too many people. The idiot towing the fresh accident still hasn't hitched the car, he's on his cellular laughing at something, another hoot, tow truck idiot looks up, annoyed, he turns around facing the other way, now leaning against his truck. You stare at your phone - still no damn signal (damn service provider). If the tow truck idiot can make a call why can't you. He's so relaxed. Is it getting hotter? Tow truck idiot is still talking on his phone, you can see him laughing at something, he's so close you can almost hear the happiness - you hate him and his stupid laughing, it's just under a kilometre to freedom, to a phone call, to the end of this damn line. Something changes, you feel calm and resolute, you inch slowly out of line and drive through the grass, tow truck idiot is still laughing and smiling, you're close to him, you feel your car thump something hard, the kind of hard that means you need to stop and look, the kind of thump that now stops your car dead, you jump on that pedal, your engine revs too loud and dirt flies out behind your car, there's another hoot, you can feel the people in their cars next to you shaking their heads and thinking what an idiot you are, you try reversing, you are now shouting at your car to move, it doesn't. Damn cellular service provider. Tow truck idiot is finished, he turns and looks at you, laughing out loud and pointing, calling out to his other idiot tow truck buddies to see what an idiot you are for trying to drive over such a wide drainage ditch. You open your door, your car lurches and dies - you walk towards tow truck idiot. He laughs at you - he asks you what's up buddy, he asks if you need a lift buddy, just too loud, just loud enough so his idiot friends can hear him and laugh at you. You remember seeing red, you remember taking a step towards tow truck idiot with a wild swing of your fist, screaming at him to die, you loose all control, somewhere in a calm millisecond you remember always wondering what seeing red really meant when other people, people who are never in control like you, say they saw red, you now know what it means.

This is rAge.

Be there ... 26 - 28 September 2003



# LEADTEK WINFAST A300 ULTRA TD MYVIVO

Six to eight months ago, this would have been the most awesome graphics card to land on my desk ever, but oh have times changed and it's all ATI's fault. Leadtek, to give them credit, have produced the best FX5800 solution that I have seen.

NVIDIA I recall came from nowhere and destroyed all that lay in its path (3dfx it was nice knowing you) to get to the top of the 3d graphics card department. Now their biggest hurdle is maintaining this lead; ATI have taken the lead at the top of the market with the awesome 9700 & 9800 range leaving NVIDIA battling to retake what it once took for granted.

Leadtek have created the best of a bad situation by getting around the FX-Flow problem (yes the one that sounds like an angry hair dryer when you launch 3d apps on any other FX card). Leadtek have introduced their own unique cooling system that sees the FX getting encased in an all round heatsink with two built in fans, you still lose a pci slot but it is 1000 times better than any other FX solution offered at this moment and it's quieter than my 7200 Cpu cooler fan.

Temperatures hover between 50 and 60 degrees Celsius, so best you have some decent cooling if you are going to use one of these monsters. Let's have a look at some benchmarks but first a comment on how far we have come. I remember receiving the first ever 3dfx Voodoo card, it had 4mb ram and I managed to get 24fps in Quake at the time, just for fun I went and re-benchmarked Quake with the FX. Would you believe that I got over 600fps? This just shows the incredible amount

of development that has gone into 3d graphics in the space of the last eight years.

If you look at these results on their own you would be pretty blown away, unfortunately we know better and realize that the ATI 9700pro is right up there and the 9800pro is one step ahead. I'm guessing NVIDIA's working hard on drivers for the FX range (I got a whopping 2100 more points on 3dMark03 with new detonators) while working on how to once again grab the lead in 3d graphics. Image quality and features are on par with most of ATI's offerings; when it comes to anti-aliasing and anisotropic filtering ATI is still ahead by a fairly large margin (7%-20%) depending on resolution and level of detail.

One thing that never ceases to amaze me is that video cards have reached such an advanced state when compared to software, that we might not see any implementation of the FX DirectX9 features for the next year or two. So at the end of the day we have a massively powerful graphics card running at 20% of its capacity. Maybe the graphic card companies need to work on making existing technology cheaper and easier to manufacture, I for one would love to see a R99 video card that gives you awesome performance in the games

we are playing today instead of worrying what fps I would get in a game 2-3 years away.

Leadtek have provided an awesome card, it is bundled with 2 games (Gun Metal and Big Mutha Truckers). The

WinFast A300 Ultra TD MyVIVO has Video-In and Video-Out

capabilities. The blue cable that ships with the A300 allows for easy access to both S-Video and Composite in and out connectors. A power cable splitter is also included with the card, as well as a standard S-Video cable, a composite video cable and a DVI-to-DB15 adapter. A slew of software also accompanies the

A300. In the box we found ULead Video studio SE DVD and Cool 3D SE, along with Cult3D and Coreoreal Embedded, Visual and Bright Some "Leadtek" branded programs shipped with the A300 as well, WinFast PVR, WinFastDVD and WinFox II.

An amazing card that just didn't release on time, for NVIDIA fans it's the best you can buy at the moment, unfortunately ATI still hold the lead in the 3d graphics market.



RESOLUTION	3dmark 2001	3dmark 2003	Vulpine GL Mark	UT2003 Bot Match	UT2003 Flyby
1024 X 768	12123	5141	86 fps	54 fps	152 fps
1600 X 1200	10020	n/a	50 fps	52 fps	129 fps

REVIEWED BY	
Brett "KnightMarE" Hamilton	
PLUS	MINUS
Fast and furious Beautifully constructed All the bells and whistles	Price ATI wielding large stick in form of 9700 & 9800 pro's

SUPPLIED BY: Rectron [011] 203 1000  
PRICE: R 5995.00  
INTERNET: www.rectron.co.za

# LOGITECH CORDLESS XBOX CONTROLLER

Logitech really seem to be stepping into the console market in a big way, and why shouldn't they? After all, they produce some of the best PC peripherals around, so seeing them making an entry into the console controller market can only be a good thing. In fact, we saw a very similar controller to this one released for the PlayStation 2 not so long ago.

Like its PS2 cousin, the Logitech Cordless Xbox controller is a very well put together device. It's sturdy and feels incredibly durable (although I wouldn't try throwing it around too much... it's expensive).

With a fifteen meter range and a reliable 2.4 GHz radio system, the controller allows a huge freedom of position and movement for the user. Its signal is strong and isn't very easily interfered with. Additionally



the device features two memory expander slots in the receiver (which is plugged into the console) as well as a vibration feedback for added sensation. The supplied four AA batteries will keep the controller going for a whopping fifty hours of game play.

Constructed of strong, non slip plastic, the controller uses the exact button configuration used by the standard Xbox controller.

The unit automatically powers down when not in use, which helps those of us who are scatter brained enough to forget these things.

This is a great controller, all in all, except for a few factors. The first is the overall size of the unit. It's big, bigger yet than the already large standard Xbox controller. Add to that the heavy weight of the unit, and you encounter something of a

problem, especially when younger users are involved. This unit is not small hand friendly.

The next problem relates to the cost of the unit. However, if you already own an Xbox, you obviously can afford one of these!

That said and done, I must admit that this is something I would personally max my credit card on. I wouldn't say that it's any more or less responsive than the usual Xbox controller, but the convenience of not having to get tangled up in a cord makes a hell of a lot of difference. This is the second time I have seen one of Logitech's cordless console controllers, and it's the second time I say "good job!"

REVIEWED BY	
Walt "Shryke" Pretorius	
PLUS	MINUS
No cord Comfortable	Heavy

SUPPLIED BY: Logitech [011] 452-7331  
PRICE: R 749.00  
INTERNET: www.logitech.com



# PHILIPS 150MT LCD TV

► LCD technology has come a long way, and we are now seeing different technologies converging. Like for instance Philips, who have produced a LCD monitor that is also a television. Great, so now I will never have to leave my bedroom.

This is not a new invention, both Samsung and LG have introduced similar ideas. Having a monitor that is also a TV has its uses, I can check the latest stock prices and then watch a CNN financial report (not that I have any kind of stock portfolio to talk about). After working on nothing smaller than 17inch screens for the last few years a 15inch display is just a little small. Supporting a maximum resolution of 1024 \* 768 at 75Hz is pretty much an LCD standard; in any other resolution the display looks well, horrible. Philips have provided an auto size button which automatically fits the image to the screen, I really like this function after spending many hours adjusting my monitor display to fit every resolution perfectly.

Having both PC and TV inputs means a mind-boggling array of ports at the back of the device. All of them point downwards, which requires you to tilt the monitor for access. On the PC front, there's the standard D-Sub (or VGA) input, and a separate mini-jack for audio-in. On the TV side, there's a standard coaxial TV antenna-in, SCART, S-Video (for use with DVD and Video CD players) and composite video (CVBS) for Video CD players and VCRs. As for outputs, a headphone and line-out port is provided on the lower right side of the

monitor.

Tuning the TV in was a breeze and is made easier thanks to the addition of a remote control, I also hooked it up to my DVD player via S-Video and the picture quality was awesome (add S-Video TV to Xmas wish list). Sound is provided by 2 \* 2.5 watt speakers, not exactly mind blowing stuff but it gets the job done. One of the features that is top notch is the picture in picture option allowing you to watch TV while you work (I want the 18inch model, please Mr. Ed Sir). Picture quality in both TV and PC mode is really very good; the refresh rate is in the 25millisecond area making this LCD viable for almost all applications except 1st Person shooters. The unit is finished off in black and grey (are all the products I review finished off in these 2 colours?) and looks very attractive on my desktop, the unit is more bulky than traditional LCD panels but a lot smaller than anything else I have with a TV tuner in it. I'm guessing this is the way forward with more and more technologies finding their way into component systems. I for one think it's a great idea, pity that the Philips unit costs more than a TV and LCD monitor combined.

#### REVIEWED BY

Brett "KnightMarE" Hamilton

#### PLUS

It's a flat TV  
It's a flat monitor  
Spiffy looking

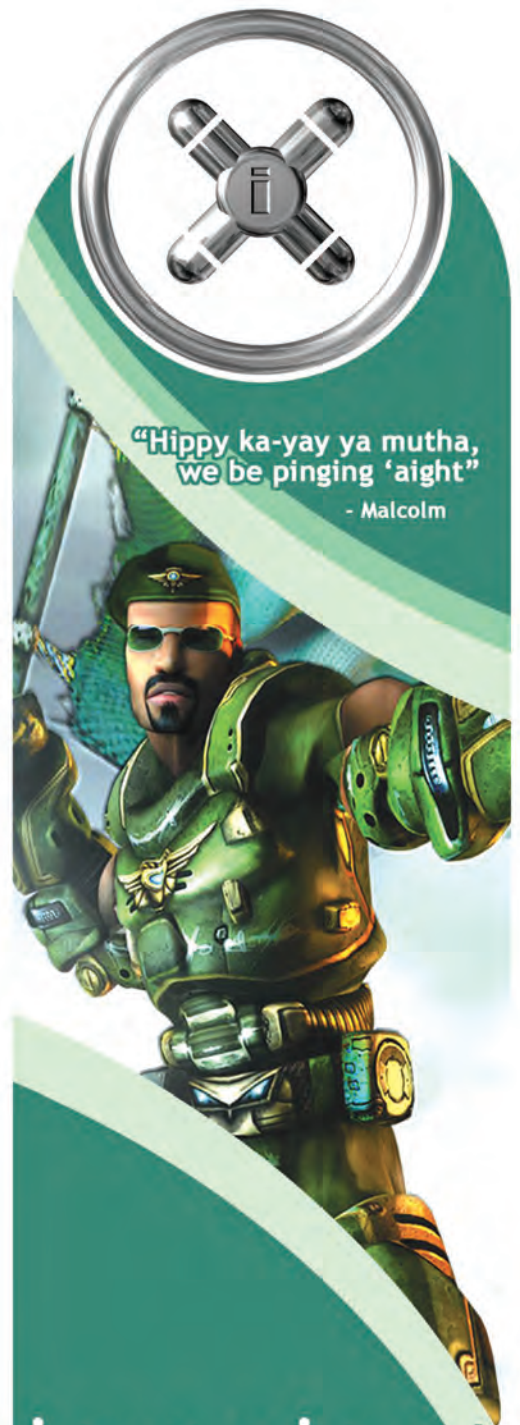
#### MINUS

Price  
15 inch display too small

SUPPLIED BY: Philips [011] 471 5000

PRICE: R 12 500.00

INTERNET: [www.philips.co.za](http://www.philips.co.za)



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# D-LINK DCS 1000 INTERNET CAMERA

Well, finally a product for the paranoid South African. Wondering what's happening at home while you are at work? Well D-Link has the right product for you, the D-Link DCS 1000 - Internet Camera. You are now able to connect via a webpage to actually see what's happening at home.

This camera is able to record everything that happens while you are away or is only activated when a sensor is triggered to start recording. Setup was petty simple as the unit is totally IP driven; you plug it into your network and install the client side software to discover and configure the camera for use. You can then proceed to setup the camera to record in AVI format to your hard drive (this uses a reasonable amount of



space). The camera itself is pretty robust but is for indoor use only, I guess you could mount it in a waterproof unit but considering that the camera doesn't record in the dark it would be pointless for use outside of the home/office. The camera supports a few internet options to allow you to remotely view the camera from almost anywhere that has internet connectivity. Image quality is on the low side but good enough to make out any perpetrator with a reasonable degree of accuracy. This camera

would not fit into the recreational range of cameras but considering its ease of use could find its way into small to medium businesses on a budget that are looking after their own security. Wall mounting brackets were provided to mount the camera - once the camera is mounted it has to be adjusted manually to get the best possible coverage and it has a limited zoom function. Although these cameras would provide a business with a sense of security, the home user would probably enjoy showing the video of the day 'We got robbed' with final footage being the crooks removing the camera along with your refrigerator light bulb.

REVIEWED BY	
Brett "KnightMarE" Hamilton	
PLUS	MINUS
Home security for the budget conscious	Did I just get hired by home security weekly?

**SUPPLIED BY:** D-Link [012] 665 2165  
**PRICE:** R 4199.00  
**INTERNET:** www.d-link.co.za

**10 things for the paranoid...**

**u m m**

Writing the review on this product felt really bland, so I decided to spice things up by trying to figure out 10 weird and / or bizarre ways to use this camera.

- 1) Monitor your families every move and count how many times they pick their nose.
- 2) Paint a wall, record it drying, play it back at every family outing.
- 3) Mount it outside your house, drag two wires across your road, add a flash, and then issue your own R1000 fines to all your neighbours for speeding.
- 4) Make your own silent movie.
- 5) Record things in the dark and then try figure out what they are.
- 6) Put it upside down and tell everyone to come look at an Australian camera you found on the internet.
- 7) Record images of your garden and put up a website so that American's can come view wild Africa. (updated every 30 seconds)
- 8) Mount one in the NAG office to see what the Editor really does all day [see option 1].
- 9) Mount it near your TV, leave said TV on sports channel, and watch sport all day via web access from work.
- 10) Spy on your family to find out who's been using your Counter-Strike CD-key when you are not at home.

# SAHARA USB 128MB FLASH DISK

In a networked environment transferring files between computers is pretty easy, but what about sharing your saved games or some digital photos with your friend down the road, not connected to the Internet?

Using floppies served their purpose when Granny used her 486 to transfer words docs, today files in excess of one meg pose somewhat of a dilemma. Wasting a 700 or 650 meg CD for a 16 meg file is not a solution and using 16 floppies would certainly drive me up the wall. One of the best products currently available that could quite easily substitute the floppy is the portable USB Flash Disk drive. Moreover, as soon as people realize how affordable and versatile this product is, it could even substitute a CD-RW in certain circumstances.

After opening our Sahara Flash Disk box, here's what we found - 128meg USB Flash Disk; Removable neck strap; A very well put together Users Manual; A one meter USB extension cable; A CD Rom that contains, apart from the driver, Foxmail4.2, Flashzip compression software and security software to protect your data from prying eyes.

The Sahara USB Flash Disk is a

compact memory module that acts as a removable drive when plugged into your USB port. It fits in the palm of your hand and is much more convenient than bulky Zip drives or external hard and floppy drives and is the ideal product for people who need to conveniently transfer files from work and home or between any other computers. This device uses Flash Memory as a storage media and connects via the USB interface. The Disk may be re-used more than a million times and can save your data for up to ten years. Not only is this smart device small and lightweight, it is shock resistant, operates without needing an external power supply and the transfer rate is fifteen times faster than a floppy drive. The Flash Disk performs faster than a ZIP disk both during writing (up to 2 MB/s) and reading (up to 3



MB/s) thanks to Windows hard drive caching. It's important not to unplug the Flash Disk while it is writing otherwise data corruption may result. If the LED indicator is always on it is safe to unplug the unit, if the LED is flashing you must wait. It is plug-n-play on Operating Systems that support USB 1.1, like Windows ME, 2000, XP, Linux Kernel 2.4x and Mac OS 8.6 or higher making it easy for even the average computer user to operate. The OS will detect the device and add it as a free drive letter. Windows 98 requires the driver to be installed from the installation CD shipped together with the Flash Disk before it will function normally. Capacities currently shipping to South Africa are 16MB, 32MB, 64MB, 128MB, 256MB and 512MB and we are told that the 768MB, 1GB and the 2GB options are not far away.

The best part about the Sahara USB Flash Disk is most certainly the price, at R320.00 for the 128MB sized unit and just under R1300.00 for the 512MB Flash Disk makes this a very attractive option indeed.

REVIEWED BY	
Joe "Teh" Soap	
PLUS	MINUS
No drivers needed Small and lightweight Very affordable	It might be mistaken for a lighter

**SUPPLIED BY:** Sahara Computers [011] 542 1000  
**PRICE:** R 320.00  
**INTERNET:** www.sahara.co.za

## Satellite Notebooks [1410 & 5200 series]

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With a new screen technology "to-die-for", graphics artists, multimedia enthusiasts, movie freaks and game junkies will welcome the new Satellite 5200 series with the NVIDIA® GeForce™ FX Go 5600 GPU, as they address the major concerns of tomorrow's hardcore multimedia user. The new Satellite 5200 features a mind-blowing display screen, Clear Super View, turning the notebook into a multimedia, movie and gaming monster.

#### Cinematic 3D graphics

For truly immersive games, graphics must be of cinematic quality, with rich colours and realistic effects. The NVIDIA® GeForce™ FX Go GPUs – delivers unprecedented programmability to the mobile PC platform, and a new level of 3D graphics realism. The CineFX™ engine gives developers the tools to easily translate their artistic visions and also features true 128-bit studio quality colour for the most lifelike scenes and characters.

#### Enhanced video processing engine

NVIDIA's enhanced video processing engine (VPE) plays DVD titles with record low CPU utilization. GeForce™ FX Go application compatibility and stability allow you to edit, mix and produce your own videos. NVIDIA's enhanced Digital Vibrance Control™ (DVC) gives you control over image optimization, so you can easily change the image settings for different content or lighting conditions.

#### Unsurpassed software quality and compatibility

The NVIDIA® Unified Driver Architecture (UDA) is the industry standard for graphics software. The GeForce™ FX Go is the first mobile platform to be officially supported by game developers. In addition, NVIDIA provides a host of complementary software for mobile PCs: NVIDIA's nView™ multi-display technology delivers the ultimate in viewing flexibility and control. NVIDIA's NVRotate™ display technology allows users to pivot any display connected to a GeForce™ FX Go from landscape to portrait mode. NVIDIA's NVKeystone™ real-time display correction technology allows a user to easily project an image onto any surface.

#### Advanced power management

Every processing and display capability of the GeForce™ FX Go GPU is engineered for use on the go. NVIDIA's advanced power management technology, PowerMizer™, includes aggressive clock gating, intelligent clock scaling and automatic voltage scaling to provide the perfect balance of maximum performance and longer battery life.

### Satellite 1410



#### MOBILE MULTIMEDIA MADE EASY AND AFFORDABLE

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#### Get connected

Your Satellite 1410 notebook comes loaded with connectivity options, so you're free to communicate without being tied down. A built-in modem gets you online anytime, anywhere. Fast InfraRed synchronises data with your PDA, mobile phone or printer. Built-in LAN lets you access your office network and both models are wireless LAN upgradeable via an optional PCI card.

#### Entertainment to go

Get more out of life with all-in-one onboard drive functionality and the latest multimedia toys and gadgets fitted as standard. Watch DVDs at home or on the go, or burn data, music or images onto CD, thanks to DVD and CD-RW/DVD-ROM combo drive configurations. High-performance graphics and Toshiba Bass Enhanced Sound give amazing video and sound quality. Easy Keys let you control MP3 and CD playback, even when your computer is off. Want to watch movies or play games on a bigger screen? Just connect your notebook to an external monitor or TV via the TV-out port.

#### Move with style

Designed to make a big visual impact, the case is a real attention-grabber. Open the lid and it's equally impressive inside, with brilliant ease of use built in. The huge TFT screen is crisp, bright and easy to read. You get instant one-button Internet access, and an ultra-comfortable palm rest with Touch Pad – including a Toshiba scroller on the Satellite 2410 which enables the user to easily move the cursor up and down.

#### Life made easier

Here's everything to run your life in your hands – an all-in-one hardware package plus a fantastic bundle of pre-installed software for out-of-the-box functionality. Windows XP Home Edition puts all the excitement of the digital age at your fingertips. In short, when it comes to handling any business or leisure task, these versatile notebooks do it all!





# UT 2K3 EDITOR CHAPTER 6: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Here we are... the last installment in our basic tutorial series about building levels for Unreal Tournament 2003. It has been an informative and fun six months, but this is the last time I will guide you in the building process. Once you have completed this final step, you will be able to construct good, fun deathmatch levels for both single and multiplayer purposes. But there is so much more out there, and so much more you can do with this editor. Sadly, we do not have the time to carry on, so I will leave you with these last few steps that will make your levels memorable and challenging.

## The Natives are Restless

Placing paths within your level is essential if you want to have a successful game incorporating bots. See, bots

essentially realise what they need to pick up, and that they need to kill opponents. What they don't understand is how to get from point A to point B, particularly when the two points have no objects for pickup between them. For this we use path nodes.

But before we get onto the technical side of this very easy yet time consuming process, there is something that you as the level designer needs to understand. Every object you place within the game, in terms of pick-ups, player starts and jump triggers and the like, forms part of a path network. These objects, when paths are created, take on the additional properties of being path nodes themselves.

Therefore, a bot following a path node will be able to find these objects without you having to tell them that they are there. This, my friends, makes life all that much easier.

► These two pictures show a perfect example of how path nodes and objects interact - the top with no paths visible, and the bottom with paths shown

Keeping this in mind, you will realise that you actually need to place fewer path nodes than you may initially have thought.

Path nodes are basically guide points for your bots to follow. To place a path node, simply right click on the floor of the level and select "Add Path Node" from the pop-up menu. This places an object that looks like an

## details

sounds and other stuff

Adding ambient sound to your level is very easy. What you need to do is bring up your level properties by hitting F6. Dig around a bit for the ambient sound setting - you will also find areas to add descriptions and screenshots for your levels.

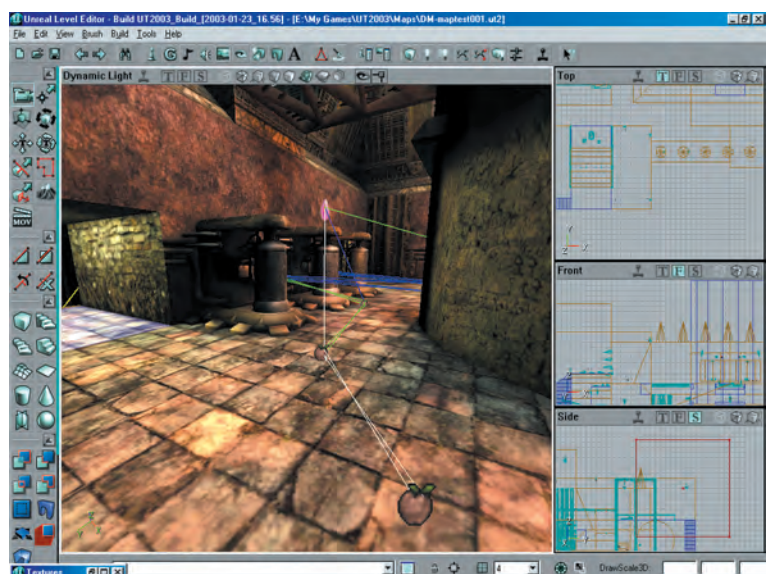
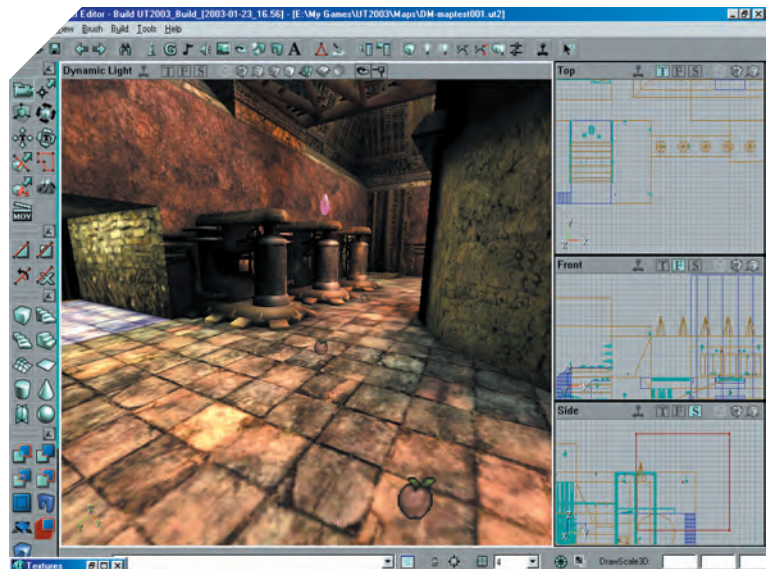
Each aspect of your level has a great many settings. Do not be afraid to explore - try out settings and effects as much as you like!

## a sample

learning by example

On the cover CD of this month's issue you will find a completed level, using only elements taught in this tutorial series. Feel free to try it out, but more importantly, feel free to open it up in your UnrealEd program and see how it was put together. This method of "learning by example" is a great way to learn new tips and tricks. Be careful not to save any changes you might make, though and, if you want to, make some backups of the original files first! There are a few flaws put into this sample level for you to try and find - and fix... to play the level, simply save it from our Cover CD into your UT2K3 Maps directory. Once you are in the game, select "instant action" and look for the map entitled DM-NagEditor under the deathmatch maps.

ON THE CD



apple in your level. A good tip here is to add your path nodes in the orthographic view mode of the editor. By doing this, the nodes will automatically be placed at the right height from the floor. Once you have added a second node and hit the build path button, the two nodes will be connected by an invisible line which the bots will roughly follow. Any path node placed near objects like pickups will automatically be connected to those pickups as well. To view the paths (which I personally feel is a very important thing,

just to make sure that you're not skipping anything out) simply right click on the top left corner of the view window, and select "Show Paths" under the Views option of the pop up menu. This will add a whole slew of multicoloured lines to your level. Don't worry about the colours - just worry that everything you want to be connected is connected.

Path Nodes (and objects) do not have an infinite radius of effect. If they are placed too far apart, they will not "see" each other, and the bots will not react properly.

The nodes must be no further than 1200 units from each other. This is still a rather large area, you will see. However, placing individual nodes is a quick process, and the more nodes you place, the better your bots will navigate the level. So, in this case, more is definitely more. If you want your bots to jump down, place the path node close to the edge they are to jump down from. If it is close enough to another node, a path will be formed, and the bots will react accordingly. Getting them to jump up is a bit trickier: you will need to insert a jump spot where you want the bots to jump to. Remember that heights of greater than 128 can only be jumped with other aids, so bear this in mind. The jump spot can be found in the actors browser, under navigation point (and then under jump dest).

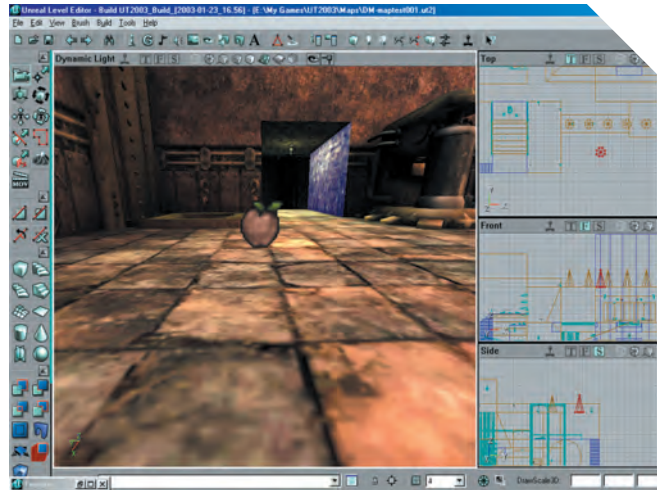
Once that is placed, select or insert the node that the bot will jump from. This is a normal node, but needs to be modified under the actor properties menu. This modification is the same as putting in a jump pad - under the forced destination category of each element of the path, identify the other element. Refer back if you need to, but trust me - it's the same process!

Once you have put all the path nodes in, be sure to hit the build paths button. Actually, doing this often is a good idea, as it will keep updating your path and will show you (with the correct display settings) where changes may need to be made. It's also a good idea to save often. That is about it. Thanks for reading and following this tutorial series (at least I hope you did - otherwise I will have done a helluva lot of work for naught).

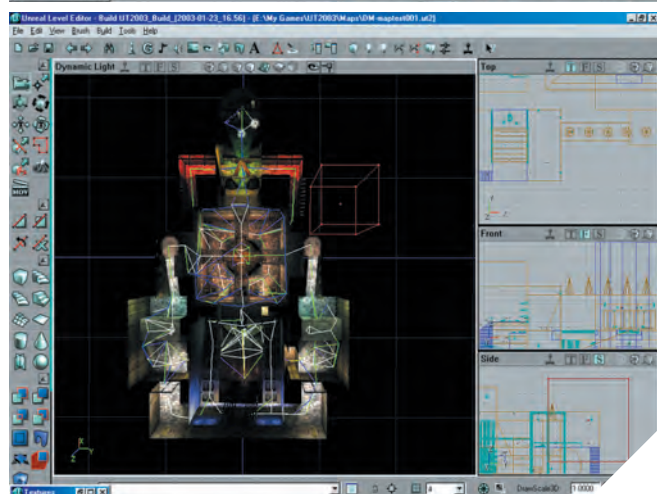
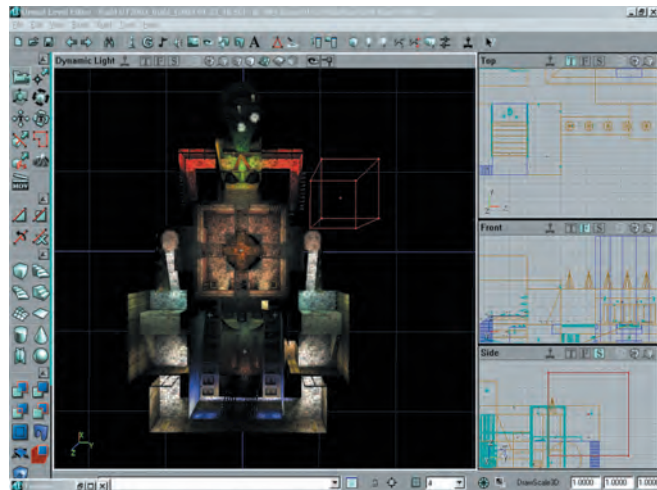
Remember that the most important thing about the levels you create are that they are fair and, above all, fun. Good luck, and happy building.



▲ ▼ The proof, as always, is in the pudding. mistakes may show up while you play the level - just fix them!



▲ Not quite a carrot on a stick, but sure to have similar results; this is what a path node looks like - an apple on an invisible string tied to an invisible stick - where's the donkey through?



▲ These two shots show the sample level from a top down perspective: top, no paths; bottom with paths

## more info

internet resources

As stated in the introduction to this final chapter, there is a lot more that can be done with this editor. Your best bet to further your level building skills (if you choose to do so) is to visit one of many internet sites that offer further tutorials. However, I feel that your best bet will be [www.planetunreal.com/architectonic](http://www.planetunreal.com/architectonic). These are complete and very extensive tutorials, with constant updating and new information being added. A highly recommended resource indeed!



### The Mix Tapes KRS-One

"I'm the newest and the truest MC on the mic," the man says, aggressive and hard-core all the way. Yes, that's right, it's another KRS-One album, and believe me, these guys are hard. When it comes to real, hard-core stuff, KRS-One is a defining band of the genre. They promote themselves shamelessly, belittle other artists, and complain about the problems with hip-hop. But that's what it is all about, and KRS-One delivers a high grade of hip-hop for fans of this aggressive yet strangely smooth music brand. If you're not a fan, be warned, you'll probably not be able to stomach this... **(David Gresham)**



### Comfort in Sound Feeder

Brit Pop isn't dead. It has just mutated. Feeder is a good example of this mutation, being a fusion of old brit pop styles and the more modern college rock movement. While the style that the band produces is interesting enough, it tends towards a slightly vapid and forgettable sound. While musically accomplished and very entertaining, there is just nothing here to hook the listener - nothing that goes beyond ordinary. Fans of feeder may enjoy this album, but those who don't know the band may not be able to tell them apart from the pack. **(David Gresham)**



### Tell someone who cares Wonderboom

I must say, straight off, that I really enjoy Wonderboom, and for a number of reasons. Besides being some of the nicest guys I have ever met, they are also one of the most established and professional acts in the country. Not only that, but you are guaranteed of always finding something different on their albums. But you're also guaranteed of delivering superb music to the listeners.

This new album is a great new addition for those that enjoy the band. It is full of the driving, unconventional rock that fans have come to appreciate over the many years that this great band has been rocking the local scene. **(David Gresham)**



### Mohicans Various Artists

When it comes to the spate of "spiritual global music" that seems so popular these days, you are guaranteed of one of two things - it's either going to be good, or bad.

While these kinds of music collections tend towards Celtic influences, Mohicans is an album that celebrates the rich heritage of native Americans.

This is a great album to relax to, with lots of soothing sounds to relax to. And it is, above all, a breath of fresh air in a market that is getting a little stale. Not everyone will enjoy this, but if you like your music soothing and relaxing, then this is something you should definitely look into. **(Gallo)**



### Dru World Order Dru Hill

The long awaited Dru Hill album is finally here, and fans will be very pleasantly surprised with what they find. It's a more mature band that now makes its appearance on this well produced and soul felt R&B album.

One word of warning to those not familiar with this band - they may come across as a hardcore hip-hop band, as far as image goes, but they certainly are not. Image and sound don't seem to come together for this band - in truth, their music is soulful and heartfelt rhythm and blues. Give it a listen before you buy it. **(Universal)**



### Loyalty Fat Joe

Hip hop artists seem to be a dime a dozen these days - they really are crawling out of the woodwork at every opportunity. Take Fat Joe for example. He has been around for a while, and he has done fairly well for himself, but he seems to be getting tired, and has always apparently survived in the cutthroat music world by riding the wave of hip-hop mania created by other acts. He isn't bad, but he isn't the best out there either. Dedicated hip hop collectors should get this album, but those that are more selective will probably want to give it a miss. **(Gallo)**



### Hootie and the Blowfish Hootie and the Blowfish

It never ceases to amaze me how this band is able to sing about incredibly depressing things (in terms of relationships, mainly) and still make them sound happy and bouncy. I just don't understand it. That said, it is great to hear some feel good music out there that is not senseless and silly... stuff that has a little substance and meaning to it. And this new album by Hootie and the Blowfish is full of just that.

They have been around for some time, and they have produced both good and bad work, but this particular self-titled effort falls firmly into the former category. **(Gallo)**



### Barelaked Nadies [DVD] Barenaked Ladies

What more could you ask for? 160 minutes of some of the most unconventional, sweet rock you will ever come across. This great DVD features the videos of the greatest Barenaked Ladies tracks of the years 1992 to 2001... yes, they've been around that long. Also included on the DVD are live performance excerpts from several concerts, as well as rare interview footage and commentaries by the band.

This is a brilliant collection for the fan, and those who like music DVDs as a whole will find the overall quality and production of this product highly satisfactory. A great collection indeed! **(Warner)**



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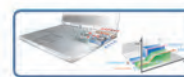
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**Goldmember**

Yeah baby, he's back in the third instalment of what has to be the funniest films around. Austin Powers has gathered a following and Goldmember promises not to let anyone down; although it does lose a little bit of steam, it's still as brilliantly funny as all the rest, and the opening scene is pure brilliance (I will not spoil it for you, go and watch it). This time Dr. Evil and Mini-Me have somehow escaped from a maximum-security prison and they team up with Goldmember.

Together they formulate a plan for world domination (what's new).

This particular scheme requires a large amount of time-travel, and kidnapping Austin Powers' father, England's master spy, Nigel Powers. As Austin chases Dr. Evil, Mini-Me and Goldmember through time, he stops in 1975 to "connect" with an old girlfriend, detective Foxy Cleopatra. Groovy baby we want more.



**Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets**

A story for children about a boy who finds out he's a wizard, meets up at school with others who are like him and has adventures all the time. Who would have thought that this "children's story" would become the biggest grossing book and film of all time? Harry Potter is in his second year of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

He is visited by the house-elf named Dobby and warned not to go back to Hogwarts. Harry ignores his warning, and returns. But then, strange things start to happen. People are becoming petrified, and no one knows who/what is doing it. Harry keeps hearing a voice, which seems to be coming from within the walls. They are told the story of the Chamber of Secrets.

It is said that only Salazar Slytherin's true descendent will be able to open it. The Chamber of Secrets is a lot darker than the first film and in my belief all the more better, so good on you Harry and keep us safe from all things bad.



**Signs**

I was impressed by the Sixth Sense. Then we had the dreadful Unbreakable. Now we have Signs and although it is not the Sixth Sense it is most definitely not Unbreakable - Signs is somewhere in-between.

Signs tells the story of the Hess family who wake up one morning to find a 500-foot crop circle in their backyard. It seems that extraterrestrials are responsible for the sign in their field and what follows is tests of faith and belief as the battle begins. Highly recommended but watch that grass outside the window.



**The New Guy**

The cover to this movie impressed me and the tag line did even better than that. The first five minutes had me wanting to run out and buy the DVD to add to my collection.

But I didn't and thank goodness for that as the further I got into the movie the worse it became.

Dizzy Harrison is an unpopular, high school geek who gets himself expelled from his high school, learns the techniques of being cool from a prison inmate, and enrolls at a new high school, where he gets noticed by the head cheerleader and helps the school football team gain self-respect to win games.

But things turn sour when Danielle's disgruntled boyfriend begins investigating into "Gil Harris" past to uncover any dirt on him.



**Lilo and Stitch**

What is Disney up to? One minute they give us hi-tech computer animation and the next we are given hand drawn stuff. At least the story lines are still as brilliant as ever and Lilo and Stitch is a notch above the rest.

It gives us a darker side to Disney (a little like The Black Cauldron, but not as dark). We don't have any cute animals or birds flying around and singing songs, instead we have a huge brat of a child and a monster created by a mad scientist for outer space loose on earth. At its core it still does have that Disney touch of meaning and how family are so important in one's life... Blah Blah Blah... Yadda Yadda Yadda.

Will we ever see a Disney where there is not a cute ending and everyone lives badly ever after? NOT.

Lilo and Stitch is great for the whole family but not recommended for the little one to watch it on their own for the first time and likewise for the parents.



**K-11: The Widowmaker**

Harrison Ford and Liam Neeson star in a thrilling drama about what many believe to be the most dangerous time in global history.

The story is inspired by a chilling event that happened in 1961 during the Cold War when the Soviet Union had enough nuclear weapons to destroy the world two times over and the United States had the nuclear power to destroy the world ten times over.

This is not Harrison's finest hour and for a good laugh close your eyes and listen to his accent, it's funnier than anything you have ever heard.



**The 51st State**

Samuel L Jackson plays Elmo McElroy, a streetwise American master chemist who heads to England to sell his special new formula - a powerful, blue concoction guaranteed to take you to 'the 51st state.'

McElroy's new product delivers a feeling 51 times more powerful than any thrill, any pleasure, any high in history. But his plans for a quick, profitable score go comically awry when he gets stuck in Liverpool with an unlikely escort (Roberts Carlyle) and his ex-girlfriend (Emily Mortimer) and becomes entangled in a bizarre web of double-dealing and double-crosses.



**Windtalkers**

In 1942, several hundred Navajo Americans were recruited as Marines and trained to use their language as code. Marine Joe Enders is assigned to protect Ben Yahzee - a Navajo code talker, the Marines' new secret weapon.

Enders' orders are to protect his code talker, but if Yahzee should fall into enemy hands, he's to "protect the code at all costs." Against the backdrop of the horrific Battle of Saipan when capture is imminent, Enders is forced to make a decision: if he can't protect his fellow Marine, how far will he go to protect the code? Nicholas Cage does war, a whole new side to his acting ability that has to be seen to be believed.

Recommended for one time viewing.



**On the Edge**

Made in 2000, On the Edge is about suicidal patients discovering their true selves while going through therapy in a treatment center.

The short description tells it all and with the world as depressing as it is we don't need to see films about suicidal people,









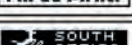


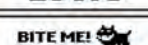













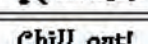





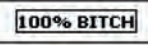





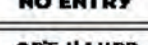
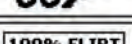









Give it a miss and rather watch one of the above movies for a laugh or a bit of action.



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	20051	24051		20142	24142
	20053	24053		20143	24143
	20054	24054		20149	24149
	20059	24059		20150	24150
	20063	24063		20154	24154
	20067	24067		20156	24156
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# SHRYKE STORMS INTO THE ROOM, OBVIOUSLY VERY ANGRY...

**Shryke:** Priest! Priest? Dude, where are you?

**Priest:** [conspicuous silence]

**Shryke:** Hey, dude, you'll never guess what happened...

**Priest:** [conspicuous silence]

**Shryke:** Someone broke into my place and stole my TV, VCR and PlayStation! Can you handle it?

**Priest:** [conspicuous silence]

**Shryke:** Hey, Priest? Are you around?

**Priest:** [conspicuous silence]

**Shryke:** So now I have to play all the games I wanted to as ports... can you believe it. Ports!

**Priest:** [conspicuous silence]

**Shryke:** I mean, don't get me wrong. Nothing wrong with console games [checks under the couch for Priest]. Nothing at all. But they're supposed to be on console, right? Hey, dude, where are you?

**Priest:** [conspicuous silence]

**Shryke:** But now I've had to go find all the games in PC versions. Sure, they're cheaper, but hell! Those games just don't make the grade on the computer, you know what I'm saying? They just don't cut it. I must find the guy that stole my PS2. I'll get Bruno on his butt...

**Priest:** [conspicuous silence]

**Shryke:** [Spins around frantically] Priest! Damn it, man, where are you? Can't you see that I am in the middle of a crisis here? I am having to suffer the rigors of terrible gaming. I think I'm going cold turkey... PRIEST!!!

**Priest:** [conspicuous silence]

**Shryke:** [Falls on the floor, sobbing] It's not fair. No more ports, please. I can't handle it. They suck sooo bad. Dude, please help me. I need a gaming fix, really badly. Please, dude... [sobs a little more]

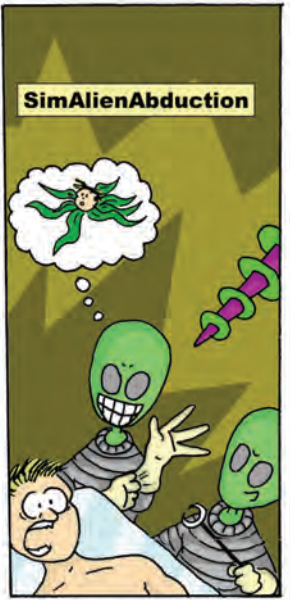
**Priest:** [conspicuous silence]

**Shryke:** [Struggles to his feet] PRRRRRIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIISSSSSSSTTTTT!

**Priest:** [conspicuous silence]

**Shryke:** [Slaps forehead] Oh, hang on. E3. Priest is at E3. Left the other day. Damn. This ported game thing is really driving me nuts... But I'll have to wait till my buddy gets back before I can get any help. I must be strong. I must be strong. I must! [Leaves, chanting to himself and looking harried]

**Priest:** [Opens the door leading in from another room to check if Shryke has gone. Goes to the cupboard and takes out Shryke's TV and PS2 before setting down to a game of X-Men 2...]



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