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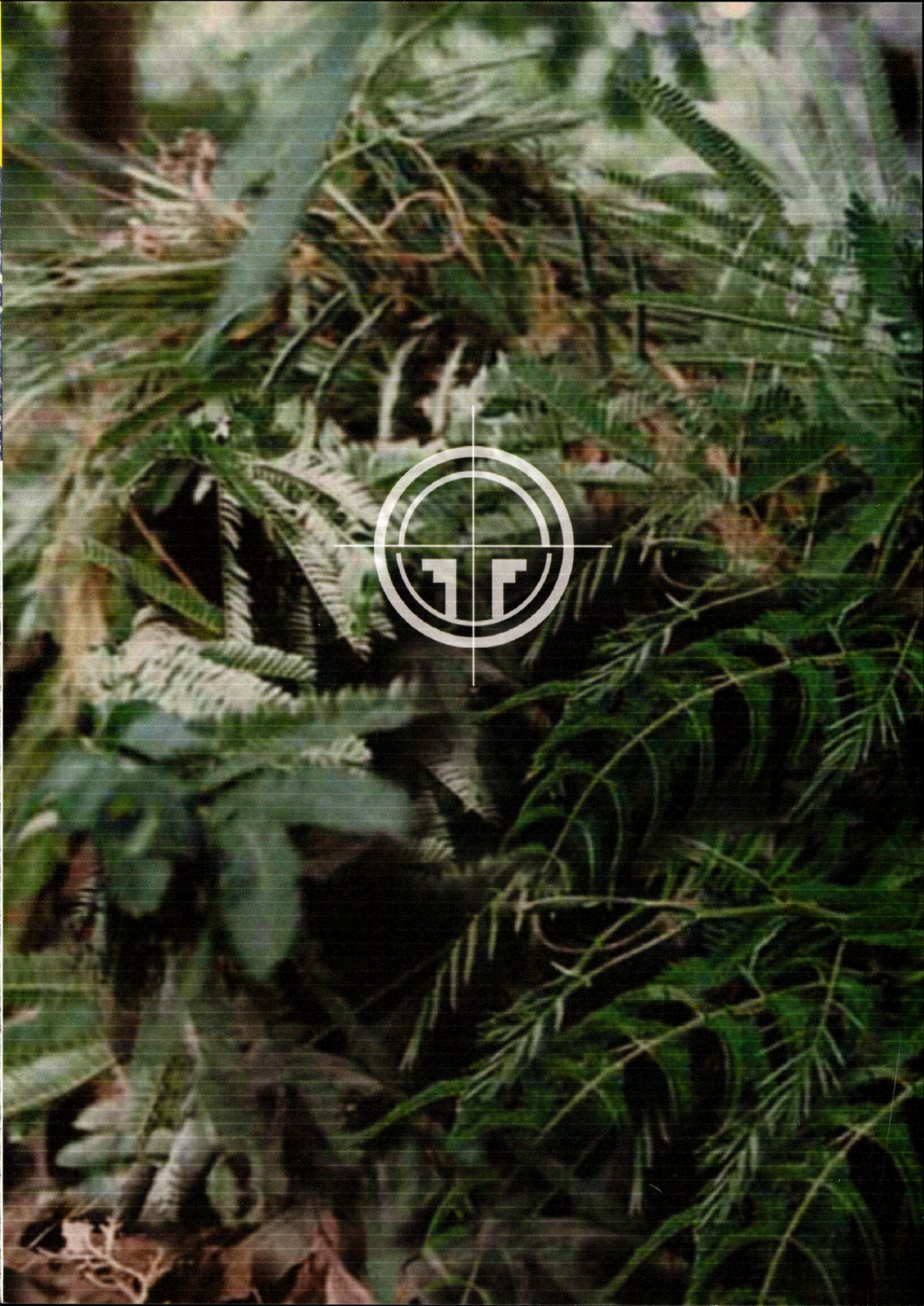

january 2002 volume 9 number 1

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We've got it all! From the sleaziest cheats to the handiest tips, our strategy guide is the very definition of ultimate. You can't afford to miss out on our incredible guides for:

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re•con (n): the sole unit an infantry battalion relies on for intelligence operations. Arguably the most specialized and highly trained troop formation of any regiment.

If you meet them in combat...

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

"I don't mind being one of the few. Trouble is, we keep getting fewer."

Bloody hell. It's almost 2002 already, and another year will soon be racked up, packaged, and have a bow placed upon its head for filing in the annals of PC gaming. And as the gunfire from *Return to Castle Wolfenstein* rumbles around the office, we're already looking ahead to a new year of challenges.

With the sounds of the *Star Wars Episode II* trailers also circulating, I started thinking that 2002 could be the *Attack of the Clones* for PC gaming, too. Maybe not clones: we have yet to see any rush-job *Sims* clones (a good thing), and hopefully the Tycoon bubble will burst after our expectations for the high-profile *Zoo Tycoon* went unrealized. More like *Attack of the Ports*. Xbox is now on shelves, and as the dust clears from the console wars, PC gamers can expect to see a variety of new games from traditionally console-focused publishers. While a game like *Halo* will require significant reworking to compensate for the greater flexibility and speed of our slick mouse and keyboard control mechanics, others will be much simpler ports. And that's not a bad thing.

"Port" is often considered a dirty word in the PC industry, mainly because the PC's processing and graphics power have far outstripped the consoles of the day. That's not so much the case with the Xbox, and while PCs will continue to get faster, Xbox ports shouldn't be met with the same derisive snobbishness. I'd like to see *Project Gotham* on PC since we haven't had a quality stylish racer like that since *Porsche Unleashed*...and we could play online over our broadband connections!

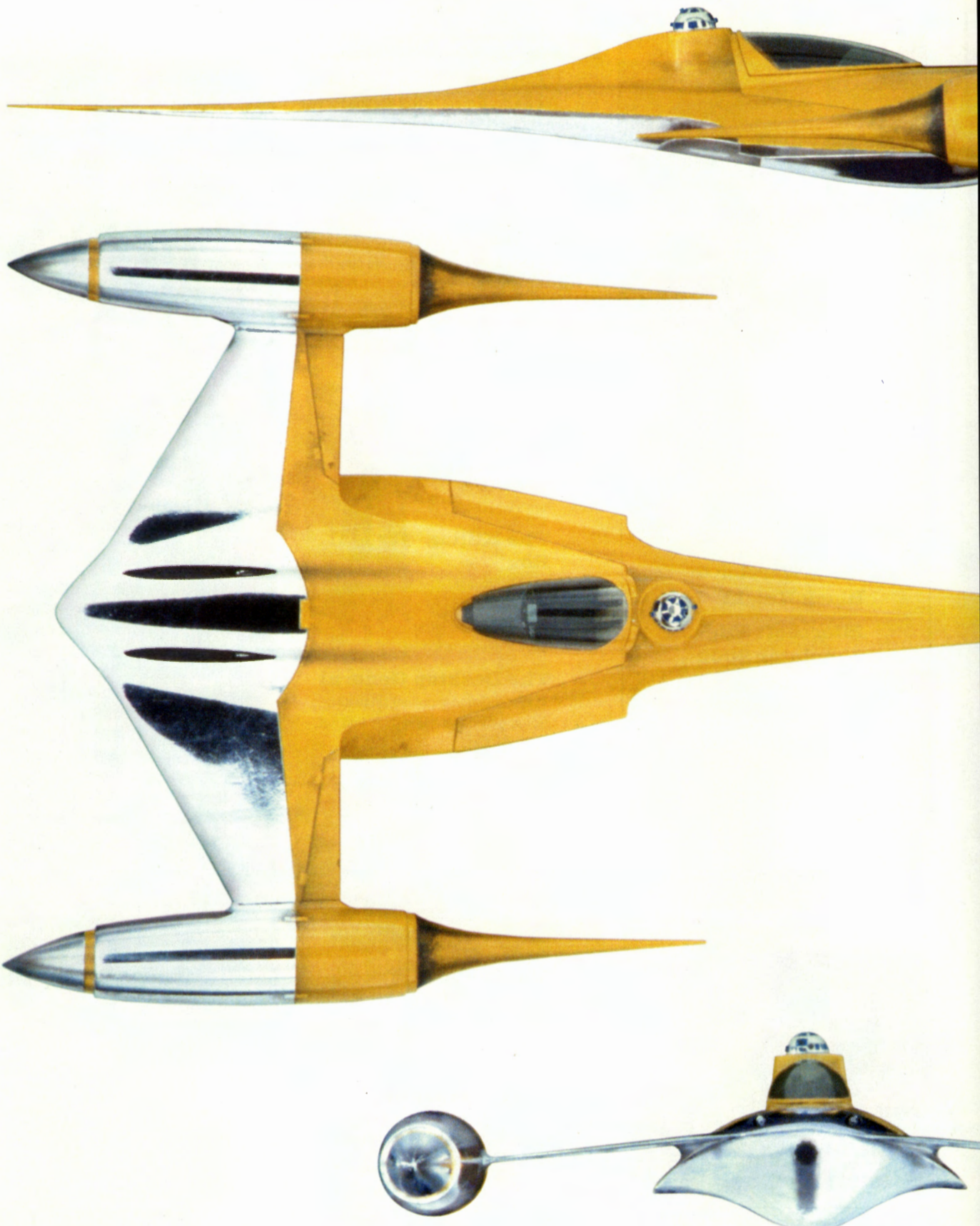
High-profile console publisher Konami is even bringing its football and basketball titles to PC, giving EA some much-needed competition. There's also a chance that PS2 hit *Metal Gear Solid 2* will reach the PC in the not-so-far future.

So don't be afraid of ports. It means more games on your PC, more options, and more competition. And that, too, is a good thing.

And moving on, congrats to quote-contest winner James King, who recognized last month's *Trainspotting* line. As always, send entries, thoughts, comments, and jokes to *ednote@pcgamer.com*.

Rob

Rob Smith
Editor-in-Chief



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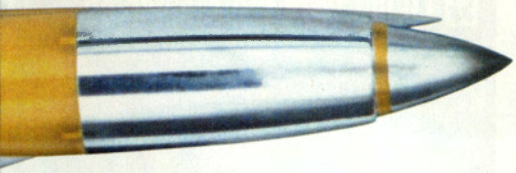

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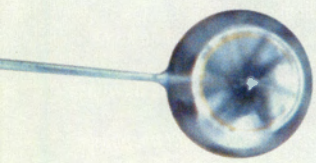

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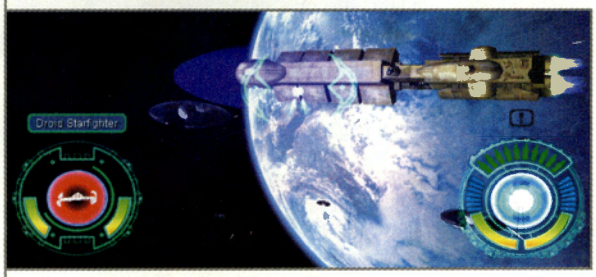

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From the Heart

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Insecure in His Masculinity

I WAS INNOCENTLY flipping through the most recent issue of *PC Gamer* when I came across an advertisement for the new ATI RADEON 8500 — you know, the ad featuring the topless girl with a giant RADEON tattoo on her back? "Nice," I thought. "I'd like to take her and... Sweet merciful crap! Is that a *GUY*?!" With all feelings of manliness gone, and with tears welling up in my eyes, I promptly retreated to the nearest corner, stripped myself of everything but my tighty-whities, and rocked back and forth nervously while hugging my knees. The only time I've felt dirtier was the time I played *Black & White* and spent a solid 10 minutes tickling my tiger's privates and giggling uncontrollably at his reaction.

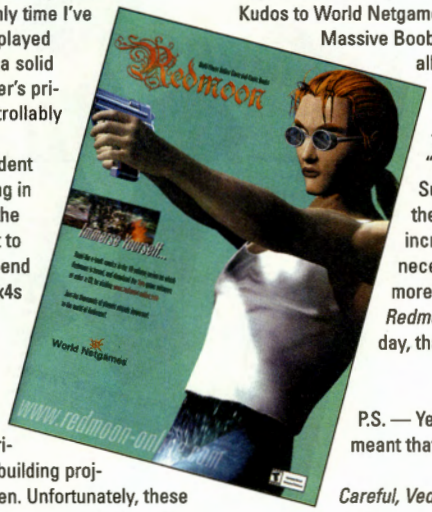
As a result of this incident I've been pretty much living in my local Home Depot for the past 11 days in an attempt to bolster my machismo. I spend most of my time holding 2x4s up to my eye to see if they're straight, and moving bags of cement from one end of the store to the other with my bare hands while mumbling various details of my "house-building project" to burly, unshaven men. Unfortunately, these things have done little to shore up my leaky self-esteem subsequent to my unnerving "he/she" incident. Oh boy — I think I may have a problem.

— Fritz Casper

Nah, that's not really a problem, Fritz. We know a woman who fell in love with a penguin at the zoo after mistaking it for a hottie in a tux after she lost her glasses. Don't you feel better now?

Secure in Her Femininity

BROWSING THROUGH YOUR November 2001 issue I got to page 113, and there, lo and behold, was a picture of a woman in a tank top whose breasts were of normal (even smallish!) human size. A "B" cup, at most! And you know what? She's sexy. Kudos to World Netgames for realizing that Massive Boobage is not the be-all, end-all of computer games or advertising. Besides, even if a company feels they just have to go the "Hot-Babe-in-Ad-Will-Surely-Sell-Games" route, they ought to realize that increasing breast size doesn't necessarily make a woman more attractive. I'll take the *Redmoon* girl over Lara Croft any day, thanks.



— Gillian Armstrong

P.S. — Yes, I'm female, and yes, I meant that last sentence.

Careful, Vederman... Vederman?... Can you hear me? Someone get a medic — I think he's choking. [Dear readers, Greg entered a coma shortly after reading this letter. He's doing better now, and should make a full recovery. — Ed.]

Living with the Memories

AS A FORMER GAME producer and a current Manhattanite, I read with some interest the Letter from the Editor in your December 2001 issue, discussing the industry's potential responses to the Sept. 11 tragedy (and the media's shameless, yet not surprising, continued diatribe against the gaming industry). Since that terrible morning, we've all heard about the various revisions that are underway, primarily in the form of removing the Twin Towers from games and films with New York skylines.

Yet, here in the city, as I walk along the crowded streets, brushing shoulders with the thousands of others like me who seem freshly woken from a careless slumber and trapped in the stupor of an endless, unfathomable nightmare, everywhere I look there's a proliferation of just such images. Posters, T-shirts, and framed prints of our lost edifices seem to cry out from every street corner and shop window. (In fact, as I write this on my computer at work, a postcard of the towers taken from aboard some ferry on the Hudson rests atop the monitor, like Poe's raven, forever lamenting "Nevermore.")

What America needs now is not censorship, but unrelenting truth: remembrance is what will heal, not some *Total Recall*–like revisionism, spot-wiping our collective memories. I, for one, have a burning desire to go rent King Kong (the remake), awful as it was, just to see those noble, beautiful structures in their full glory once again. Up until three months before the attack, I worked in 7WTC and saw the towers from a block away, every day, so they had almost become commonplace and peripheral, yet now I miss them terribly.

But I also realize that they are gone, along with the thousands who were working in or visiting them that day, and no amount of editing, revising, or censorship can possibly lessen the pain and sadness that are fundamental parts of the healing process.

I suspect most of the gaming community will conduct its own form of censorship, reverting for a time to those very genres you mentioned *[sci-fi and fantasy — Ed.]*. Not because they are feeling politically correct, but simply because they need a break from the day-in, day-out horror of living in a world where the planes you ride, the buildings you work in, even the water you drink can prove fatal.

I myself have returned to games like *Might & Magic*, *Ultima Underworld*, and *Baldur's Gate*, evading the endless parade of televised images of despair and destruction by escaping into worlds that have never known airplanes, skyscrapers, or global-scale terrorism. Games where I can actually "be" a hero, and do some good in the world.

— Eric Rawlins

Editor-in-Chief Rob Smith responds: Of the hundreds of letters we received on the subject, yours was certainly the most thoughtful and thought-provoking, Eric. Thanks for sharing this perspective with us.

SERIOUS SAM

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MEMO TO PCG STAFF: Play this game, you're fired.

America's Favorite Pastime

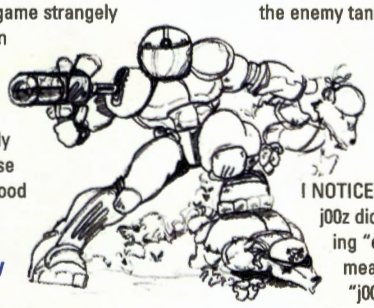
When we put Vederball *(shown above) on our December 2001 demo CD, we had no idea it would be such a smash hit! Here's what a couple of you had to say about this truly delightful little game (*cough*):*

WOW! I JUST FINISHED playing *Vederball*; I got 420 points on the first try! It's the best game based on Greg Vederman ever made! I don't consider myself a "fan" of the real Vederman — I'm just, like, envious of his job.

— Kyle

ON THE BACK OF YOUR November CD sleeve you guys made *Vederball* sound like some sort of horrible plague. That really piqued my interest, so I installed it. I found the game strangely appealing because even though it seemed simple on the surface, it was hard to always block the ball (especially against the drones, those devils). *Vederball* is a good game for us simple-minded folk.

— Margaret McCarthy



Don't put yourself down, Margaret: Vederball *is good for everyone. And its author is working on a new* PC Gamer *game. Here's an exclusive piece of concept art of the RobBot. The similarity to Rob Smith is just uncanny.*

New Fish

ME AND MY BUDDIES love your mag. We love PC games even though we don't get to play any. How about a shout-out for a guy doing six to 12 years?

— Bryan Ponce
prisoner number 97A6533
Washington Correctional Facility

Whoah! Anything you say, Bryan! Uh, hi, yes…we here at PC Gamer *would like to give a shout-out to all our peeps in lockdown at the Washington Correctional Facility in Comstock, New York. Thank you.*

j00z L337 3\/\0I_I6I-I?

Love it or hate it, L337 is here to stay (for another half-hour or so). Our Eyewitness story on this "hip" Internet lingo generated tons of email. Some of the better letters:

AFTER READING YOUR "Do You Speak L33T?" article in December 2001's Eyewitness section, I was amazed that you could possibly get "A Free Kill" out of "AFK." In all my years of gaming, I have never, ever seen anyone use "AFK" to mean that. If I ever heard someone say or type "AFK by enemy tank," I would run over there and shoot that guy on account of his being "Away From Keyboard" near the enemy tank.

— John Shaw

h3y j00 idi0t$, it's "1337," n0t "Leet," @nd "n00b," n0t "Noob."

— Patric

I NOTICED YOUR "l33t guide" and laughed. j00z didn't even mention "uber-l33t," meaning "extremely awesome," or "r0x0rz," meaning that something is good (as in "j00z r0x0rz," meaning "You're good" or "You rock!"). Please, be kind to l33t. BTW, don't use l33t-speak too much, or it's just annoying.

— Name withheld

Yeah? No shit.

Keyboard meets gamepad meets handrest in an unholy union of peripheral brilliance.

In the Pipe, Five by Five

AFTER READING YOUR review of the Nostromo n50 SpeedPad (December 2001 issue) I went out and bought one. Now that I've hooked it up to my laptop, I feel as though the gates of heaven have opened up and bore me a gift! In your article you talked about some of the difficulties of using a desktop keyboard for games. Magnify that by 10 and you'll have an idea of what it's like to play games on a laptop keyboard. The n50 is the perfect tool for the job and is a must-buy for laptop gamers everywhere. Thanks for saving this reader from his pain!

— Jim Sharp

Hardware Heroes

I'VE BEEN A LOYAL READER for a long time now, and I would just like to tell you how much I enjoy your hardware section. Also, my uncle, a computer salesman, always reads my issues of *PC Gamer* to see what you guys have to say about the latest hardware, so he can save time and money in his business. You guys rule!

— Craig Watkinson

Better yet, starting next month, we'll be adding a whole bunch of our Hard Stuff Q&A content to the PC Gamer *CD. Check it out! (And thanks, Craig.)*

Pocket Pool

IN YOUR RECENT ARTICLE about Pocket Gaming (December 2001), you showed many pictures of Pocket PCs, but I noticed as I flipped through the feature that I wasn't looking at the devices so much as I was looking at the owner of the pockets they were in! I'm curious to know who she is and I'm wondering if you could print a picture of her from the waist up. Not that there was anything wrong from the naval down — I'd just like to be able to associate a face with the, um, pockets.

— Tim Shannon

You're a dirty man, Tim, but here ya go! Her name is Tianna, and this is what she looks like from the waist up. Yep.

(Tianna borrowed *Official Xbox Mag* EIC Mike Salmon's head for this photo.)

Pixel Me This, Voxel Me That

IN THE *COMANCHE 4* preview you recently ran in your magazine, you mention its lack of "voxels." What's a voxel?

— Steve Crider

Simply put, a voxel is a pixel with volume. Voxel-based game engines like those in the Comanche *series showed promise in the mid-'90s because they were fast and attractive with no 3D acceleration required. By the time voxel-based games arrived on the scene, however, polygon-based games were already the norm, and once 3D acceleration took hold shortly thereafter, any game made with voxels began to look mighty ugly by comparison.*

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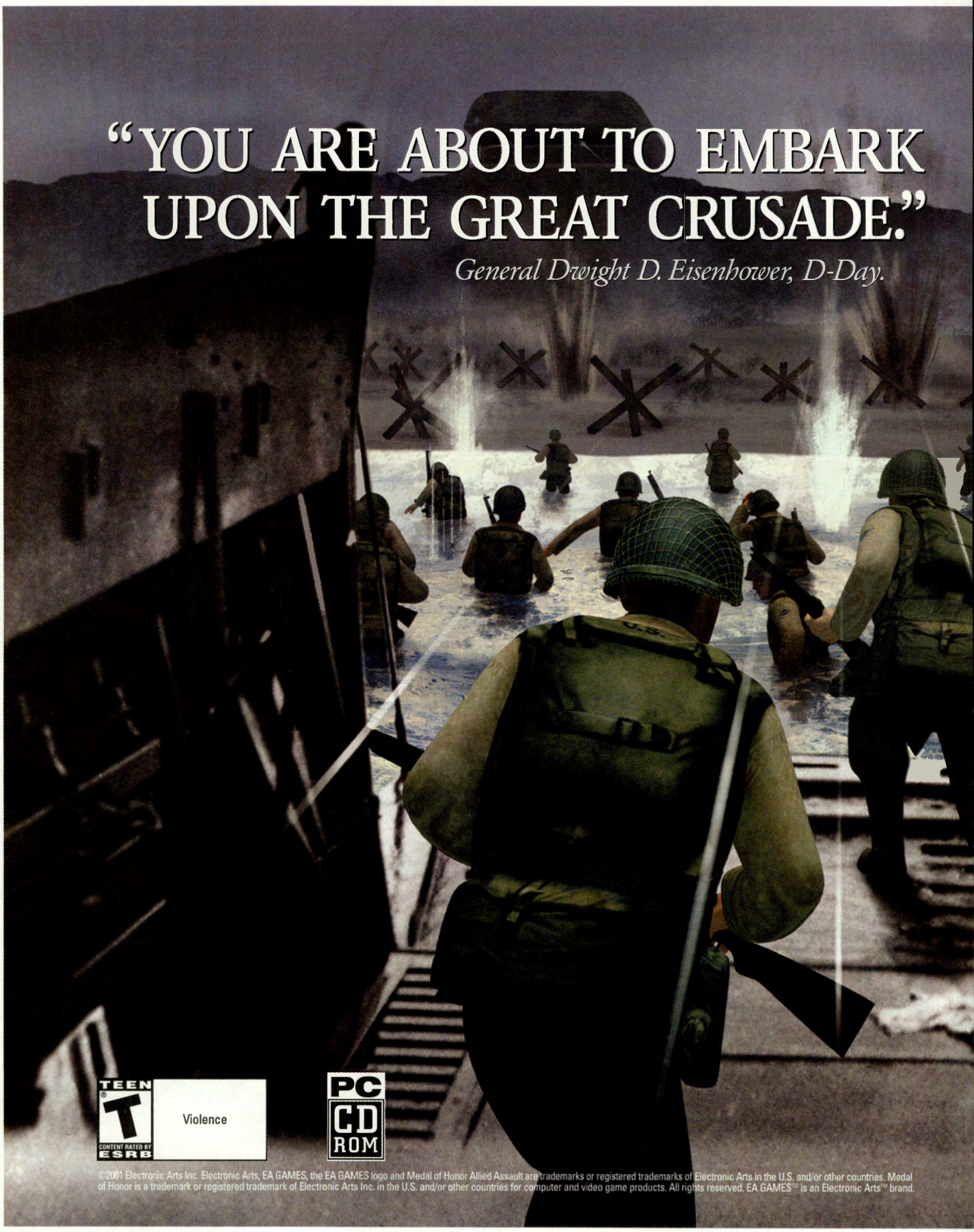

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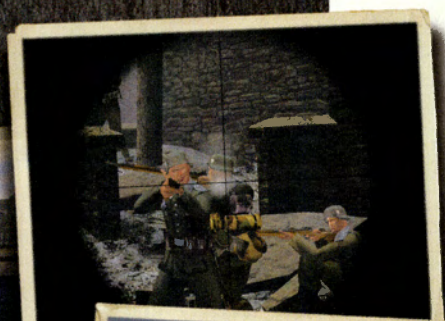

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City of Heroes

FACT: *City of Heroes*' lead designer, Richard Dakan, has authored game books for the board games Marvel Super Heroes, Crimson Skies, and Babylon 5, among others. Too bad She-Hulk couldn't make it into *City of Heroes* — yowza!

IN A NUTSHELL Look, up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's a tiny man-shaped zeppelin! No, it's...*you*!

Because *City* is set completely within an urban jungle, you won't find Aquaman-type heroes with water-based powers. Expect that to change in an upcoming expansion pack...

I've heard it time and again: PC gamers don't play superhero games. That's why titles like *Agents of Justice*, *Champions*, and *Indestructibles* get canned. Console ports are all we can expect. Blah, blah, blah. Well, phooey, I say — we just need somebody to show us how it's done.

City of Heroes is poised to be the game that smashes these preconceptions. It's the first massively multiplayer online RPG that casts you as a spandex-clad superhero, protecting megatropolis Paragon City from evildoers, endearing yourself to the city's non-powered NPC citizens, and forming leagues with like-minded super-friends.

Your first feat? Creating a unique super-persona. From a list of seven origins — Altered Human, Mutant, Gadgeteer, Magical Powers, Cyberware, Mystic Artifacts, and Superior Human — you'll select your powers, skills, and, if desired, a "flaw." (Having a weakness lets you put more points into powers and skills.) Pick your body type, sex — even write an origin story — and design an original (read: non-copyrighted) look using *COH*'s vastly configurable costume creator.

You have 50 over-arching super-powers to choose from, falling into two categories: control powers and core powers. Control powers let you manipulate exterior forces like light, cold, and energy, while core powers are exaggerations of natural abilities such as super-strength, invulnerability, and flight. Within each power are a variety of sub-powers to configure — usually involving range, area of effect, and damage — thereby minimizing the chance that any two heroes will have identical abilities.

Daredevil fans won't be left out: the Superior Human lacks powers but has no cap to acquiring skills, letting you learn pistols, lockpicking, martial arts, and more.

No player-controlled super-villains allowed: *COH* is about heroic roleplaying, not PvP. Got it?

"Yes, I, Color-Blind Man, will use my powers to rid the world of evil, villainy, and the color brown."

Henchmen go flying when faced with the power of your energy-blast gauntlet thingie.

Once you've "discovered your mutant abilities/been injected with super serum/watched your parents die," it's time to get to work. Ten to 15 villainous organizations will be active in Paragon City at launch, with more to come. Common street thugs are *COH*'s beginner "rats"; as you gain experience and power, you can tackle individualized missions (à la *Anarchy Online*) and group with other heroes to take on bigger threats as the game's epic storyline unfolds.

My worst fear before seeing *COH* in action was that it'd be *EverQuest* with superhero skins. No worries. Enemies don't "stand and swipe": super-punches knock them backward; energy blasts appear to have exploded right off the comic page; and villains take locational damage — a strategic maneuver, for those times when you need to target a weapon or power source.

Besides accumulating experience, you gain fame by successfully completing missions. Fame gets you noticed: citizens will point and gawk as you fly by, and your feats will be reported in the online newspaper. The 50 levels of fame range from Unknown to Legendary. Advanced fame opens up new character and costume options, plus better missions. Fame is also fleeting: stop playing or fail missions, and it'll dwindle.

COH's subscription model will be similar to other online games' (probably $9.95/month), says Cryptic. Currently, there's no publisher, but Cryptic insists that all development costs are covered, and talks with several big publishers are ongoing. A public beta will begin this spring. Take heart, true believers: if they make it, we will come.

— *Chuck Osborn*

F.Y.I.

CATEGORY: MMORPG
DEVELOPER: Cryptic Studios
PUBLISHER: TBD
WWW: cityofheroes.com
PERCENTAGE COMPLETE: 60%
RELEASE DATE: Summer 2002

WHAT'S SO SPECIAL?: For the first time, you can build your own unique superhero — even design his costume — and defend Paragon City in a massively multiplayer persistent online world full of heroes and villains.

DEVELOPER'S TRACK RECORD: *City* is Cryptic's first game. Founders Jack Emmert and Richard Dakan are well-known pen-and-paper-RPG authors, and several of Cryptic's programmers come from Midway/Atari.

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nVIDIA. DOLBY SURROUND NovaWorld

TEEN T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violence

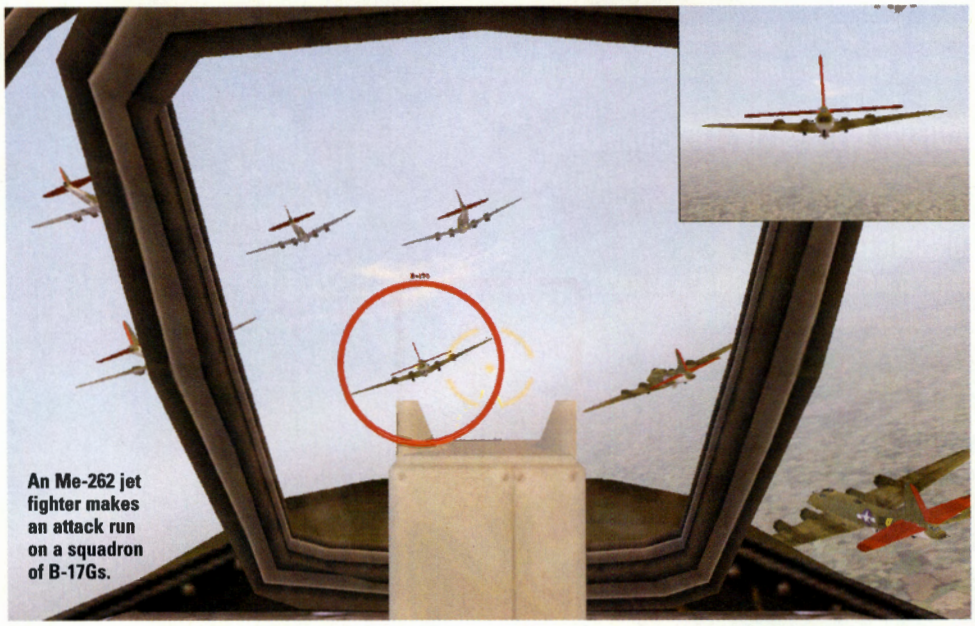
Jane's Attack Squadron

IN A NUTSHELL Seemingly dead, this stunning World War II flight sim has been reborn, and is nearly ready for action.

The Messerschmitt 262 fighter/bomber was much faster than anything in the Allies' fleet. But most of these planes never made it off the ground due to a ball-bearing shortage in Germany at the time.

Left to flounder on its own after Looking Glass Studios (the makers of *Thief* and *Thief II*) folded in early 2000 and publisher EA turned its back on the flight-sim market, *Jane's Attack Squadron* was likely a victim of its own ambition. This World War II prop sim was thought to be too hardcore for EA's target audience, and a mandated redesign eventually delayed it past the point of salvation, taking two years of development and flushing them down the toilet.

That is, until Mad Doc Software jumped into the picture. After hiring several ex-LG staffers, the developer subsequently joined forces with publisher Xicat to acquire the prestigious Jane's Information Group license that EA had recently abandoned. This new partnership then grabbed the rights for the dormant *JAS* project.



An Me-262 jet fighter makes an attack run on a squadron of B-17Gs.

Considering the less-than-bullish market for flight sims these days, why all the excitement about a homeless and unfinished WWII sim? "Looking Glass had done a great job with it," explains Mad Doc founder/CEO Ian Davies. "It was already a game poised to win legions of fans with its great graphics, top-shelf production values, and amazing gameplay. It's going to be fun to refine the game and give it a new life."

Looking at *JAS*' feature list, Davies' enthusiasm may well be justified. You'll be able to fly for either the Allies or the Luftwaffe in a series of scripted missions set between 1943 and 1944 (fleshed out by a full-featured mission editor). With 14 flyable aircraft — ranging from P-51 Mustang and Messerschmitt BF-109 fighters to Lancaster and Ju-88 bombers — you'll also get a healthy dose of aeronautical variety. What's more, the game's high-fidelity flight models (which will be scaleable and *editable*) can trace their lineage back to Looking Glass' critically acclaimed *Flight Unlimited* series.

An intriguing new damage model will also be shoehorned into the mix. "Our planes are made up of up to 47 different components, each of which is damageable," declares producer Tim Farrar. "We also accurately track where every shell hits and put a bullet decal in the appropriate spot, so you can survey your battle damage as you fly."

Very cool, but what really distinguishes the game from most WWII flight sims is its underlying ground-pounding theme, which will allow Mad Doc to showcase some very impressive pyrotechnic effects. "While the main focus of *JAS* will be on ground attacks, we'll have a number of escort and strategic bombing missions as well," says lead designer Steve Nadeau. "As the name suggests, *Attack Squadron* focuses on the tactical ground-attack role that was so important during WWII. However, it'll have missions where you'll fly in a multi-station B-17, B-24, Lancaster, or Ju-88, plus missions where you'll escort or intercept them."

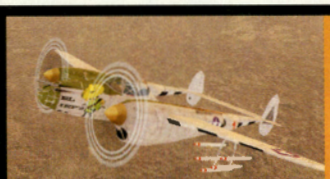
Jane's Attack Squadron will probably be a sight for sore eyes to anyone who's spent some serious stick time with earlier titles bearing the Jane's moniker. Perhaps even more encouraging for all flight-sim fans, though, is the fact that the franchise now appears to have some very capable hands piloting it into the future.

— Andy Mahood

The realistic cockpits capture every detail, right down to the lack of cupholders.

A squadron of B-17Gs drops its load somewhere over Germany. Kaboom!

F.Y.I.



CATEGORY: Flight simulation
DEVELOPER: Mad Doc Software
PUBLISHER: Xicat
WWW: xicat.com
PERCENTAGE COMPLETE: 70%
RELEASE DATE: Q2 2002

WHAT'S SO SPECIAL?: Sim fans were crushed last year when Looking Glass folded and EA let the near-complete *Jane's Attack Squadron* collapse with it. Second chances are extremely rare in this business.

DEVELOPER'S TRACK RECORD: Mad Doc made *Star Trek: Armada* and *Call to Power II*, but nabbing the Jane's license and several former Looking Glass programmers is the studio's biggest coup to date.

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Me battling vile olthoi insects in Marae Lassel

My millionth pyreal coin—ah... the joy of being a monarch

~ claw from nearly lost arm

Note to Self:
Olthoi breed deadlier than last month

Gauze from wound on nearly lost arm

Dusk lily from my 2nd trip to Marae Lassel

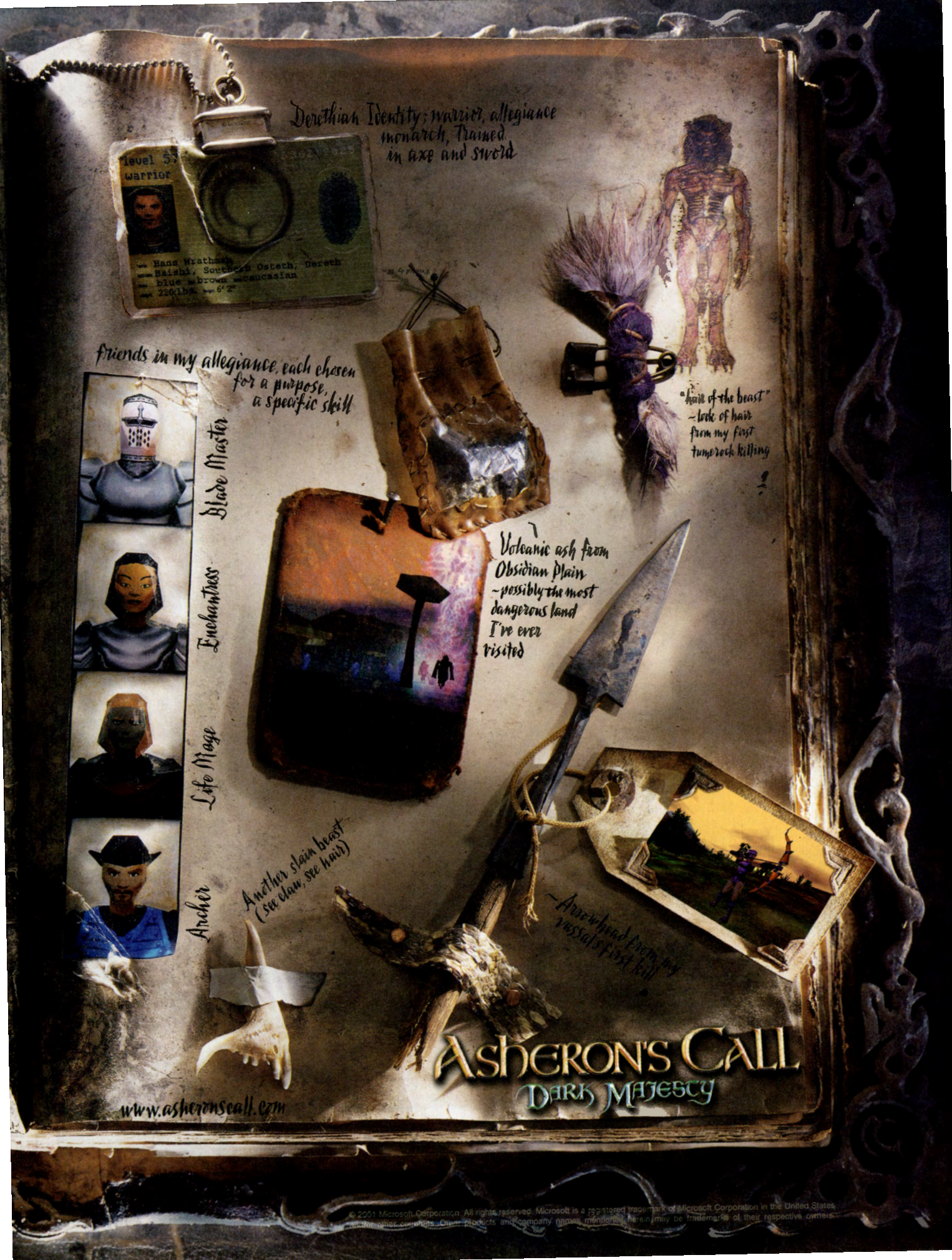
My house, Southern Osteth

purchased in March

Weapons stored here:
Quiddity Sword
~Pyreal Axe

My precious focusing stone allows me to, well, focus

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
ANIMATED VIOLENCE
BLOOD
LOBBINK
Zone.com
Microsoft



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hands on

As some big-name games finally near release, playable late-beta builds land on our desks. Here's where we give hot-off-the-burner first impressions of how these titles are coming along.

The Norse clobbering Egyptians? Hey, it's all Greek to us.

Age of Mythology

DEVELOPER Ensemble Studios PUBLISHER Microsoft CURRENT RELEASE DATE March 2002

LATELY, IT SEEMS every new RTS wants to be like *Age of Empires* (*Galactic Battlegrounds*, *Empire Earth*, need we go on?) — except, ironically, Ensemble's own next project, *Age of Mythology*. The sibling resemblance is there, particularly in the harvesting: villagers mine gold, farm plots of land, and kill wildlife for food; there are town centers and unit upgrades; and there are three different civilizations — Greek, Norse, and Egyptian. But, as we saw in a recent sit-down with the alpha, there's plenty new to see and do.

AoM wears Ensemble's first-ever 3D engine with pride. The aquatic environments alone are superb: sea tide ebbs and licks the shoreline, and sea creatures — like the tentacled deep-water specialty unit, the Kraken — can be seen patrolling the murky bottom. A large-scale infantry battle showed off *AoM*'s advanced character animations, plus two of the five levels of camera zoom that will be available in the final version.

Naturally, the game's hook is mythology, and you'll find more creatures of myth here than in all of *Clash of the Titans*. By building shrines, you can generate a variety of specialty units, including a flame-spewing Fire Giant; the Medusa; a mighty Centaur that can toss infantry units around like a Nerf ball; a high-jumping Anubite that easily hops over castle walls; the icy Frost Giant, which freezes enemies with his breath; and flying units like the fiery Phoenix and the regal, winged Pegasus.

Deities can be petitioned for devastating super attacks. One of them is the meteor shower — a barrage of exploding boulders that leaves only scarred earth behind. Smashing! — *CO*

1503 A.D.

DEVELOPER Sunflowers
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts
CURRENT RELEASE DATE Early 2002

AMERICANS ONLY ENJOY games that involve death and gore. Oh, and if sales figures tell us anything, we also like Barbie games. Because the German-made *1602 A.D.* didn't contain either, very few people here in the U.S. ever played it. The joke is on us, though, because while its sales barely topped 100,000 copies over here, *1602* sold 1.7 million copies worldwide. Holy Blizzard-size sales, Batman!

1503 A.D. is the prequel to *1602*, and from what I've seen in my beta copy, it's freakin' brilliant. The gameplay is similar to that of empire-building games like *Caesar III* or *Zeus*, but, in an attempt to embrace U.S. *and* foreign markets, *1503* takes this strategy subgenre to new levels.

The sequel offers an extremely rich empire-building game in which you can select from over 250 building types and trade and interact with nine completely unique-looking (and -acting) civs. It's also got a robust RTS component that looks to be on par with many standalone RTS games.

One nifty feature I appreciate is the ability to decide whether or not you're going to involve yourself in combat. In the free-build portion of the game, if you don't create any military units, neither will your opponent(s).

You'll definitely be seeing the finished game in my playlist in the coming months. — *GV*

Cultures you'll interact with include Venetians, Africans, and Eskimos.

Dark Planet

DEVELOPER Edgies PUBLISHER Ubi Soft RELEASE DATE Q1 2002

HERE'S AN RTS with an odd hook — it's *intentionally* stereotypical and derivative. The three playable races represent the "holy trinity" of RTS civilizations: the Sorin ("monster" element), the Colonists (laser-wielding bad-asses), and the Dreil (insectoids). Each side plays a bit differently and has its own resource tree. In the beta, the cool graphics and customizable camera stand out, but the core gameplay still feels *too* familiar. — *GV*

DEMONWORLD

Dark Armies

In the battle between Light and Darkness, the forces of good must defend the virtues of the world against the Dark Armies. The final battle against the Ork Empire is here.

- Epic Strategic Combat based on the Demonworld Role-Playing Universe.
- Campaign with more than 50 Missions including Siege, Suicide Commandos, Espionage and Escorting
- 10 Multi-Player Modes with up to 4 Players (LAN, Internet)
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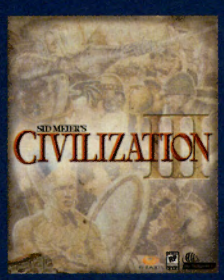

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"Don't step on my blue suede news"

eyewitness

VOL. 9 · NO. 1 · JANUARY 2002

NEWS

THE SEARCH FOR VIRTUAL REALITY

A new arcade-based system lets you play your favorite games in a whole new way

Remember that whole Virtual Reality phenomenon that disappeared from sight as quickly as it arrived? Well, it's about to get a facelift thanks to Atlantis Cyberspace and the latest PC first-person shooters. With Atlantis' prototype VR system, The Abyss, already operational in Seoul, Korea's ZZXYZ arcade in Coex Mall (the largest underground mall in the world), the company will build and ship between five and eight similar systems by the end of 2002. Their destinations include the U.S. (East and West Coasts), Europe, and Asia. The first systems will ship in early 2002, and by 2003, Atlantis expects to put out an additional 14 to 20 new systems.

What separates this VR setup from the pack is its use of current PC games: the Abyss was built to turn *Quake III* and *Unreal Tournament* into VR experiences. Using proprietary technology, the company is able to take any current 3D application or videogame and transform it into a VR experience with true depth perception, three-degrees-of-freedom movement (if you tilt your head, the game world inside your goggles tilts), and 3D sound. This conversion doesn't necessitate tampering with the PC game code, which circumvents the need to pay the game publisher or developer anything but $500 to $1,000 per year for a commercial-site licensing agreement. The content is recorded and synchronized within the pods before it's sent to your head-mounted display. You'll see both customized scores and names as an overlay on top of the game's graphics.

"Early VR games were more gimmicky than entertainment, and they failed to drive consumers back after they had tried them once," says Laurent Scallie, president of Atlantis Cyberspace. "By leveraging the best 3D content and creating a membership-based business model, I think the VR industry will be able to provide interactive entertainment to moviegoers and mall patrons on a regular basis."

The Atlantis system will sell for $250,000 for a four-pod system (four players) and $310,000 for an eight-pod system. Up to 32 pods can be grouped together to create self-contained interactive entertainment experiences, or smaller configurations can be placed within current arcades or movie theaters. The self-contained system includes a teller machine to accept cash or credit cards, a touch-screen briefing kiosk to explain the game and allow for customization, and force-feedback enhanced VR pods. These pods will be equipped with motion-sensing headgear used for aiming and buttons on the guns for firing and movement. Meanwhile, a 65-inch flat-screen TV or video wall with a roving virtual camera will show spectators the overall team action.

The Atlantis system will sell for $250,000 for a four-pod system and $310,000 for an eight-pod system.

A debriefing station will provide a video of the action and complete statistics, along with an online interface, which allows consumers to download their mission replay and stats to their home PCs or purchase the PC versions of their VR game. A typical game will cost $5 and include 17 minutes of entertainment, including a five-minute briefing, a five-minute mission in the pod, and a five-minute debriefing.

Playing *Doom III* in a full virtual-reality setting sounds like fun to us. You can be sure that we'll seek out one of these units as soon as it ships and give you a full hands-on report.

— John Gaudiosi

GAME MAKERS COULD USE THE ABYSS AS A PROMOTIONAL TOOL BY RUNNING BETA VERSIONS OF UPCOMING PC GAMES ON THE SYSTEM. OR THEY COULD CREATE CONTENT SPECIFICALLY FOR THE ABYSS.

THE PCG NEWS TICKER

Brad McQuaid has left Sony Online Entertainment (*EverQuest*), where he was chief creative officer. He is expected to continue working on online games.

Bridge Commander

***Star Trek: Bridge Commander* will ship with multiplay, the developer announced, including deathmatch, team deathmatch, Federation vs. Non-Fed, and starbase attack/defend.**

The Razer Boomslang returns! Karna Technology has found a new investor and plans to bring its ultra-sensitive mice back to stores along with other new gaming goodies.

By the time you read this, *Operation Flashpoint Gold Edition* will be available. It includes *OF*'s Red Hammer campaign, missions that let you play as the Russians.

PCG CONTEST

WIN RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN

Here's your chance to win a free copy of *Wolf*. Just email *eyewitness@pcgamer.com* with "I Want Wolf!" in the subject line, and include your name and address so we know where to send the prize if you win. We'll randomly pick five lucky winners to receive a free copy of the game. Contest ends Jan. 31, 2002. See additional rules on page 103.

NEWS

U.S. ARMY: GAME ON!

The military is investing in a few good PC games

It's often said that computers are changing every walk of life, and re-inventing every profession. It's certainly true in the United States military, which in 1992 established the Simulation Training and Instrumentation Command (STRICOM) to develop cutting-edge computer sims for use in training modern soldiers.

Gamers will get to play retail versions of two of the Army's new military sims, including *CS XII*.

That effort recently took a huge stride forward, as STRICOM announced a $45 million investment in the Institute for Creative Technologies (ICT) at the University of Southern California. Working with noted game developers Pandemic (*Battlezone II*, *Dark Reign II*) and Quicksilver Software (*Starfleet Command*), STRICOM/ICT has begun development of a series of highly realistic 3D combat simulations for use in training every branch of the U.S. military. And, in even better news for gamers, civilians will get the chance to play two of these games in commercial retail versions.

CS XII will be a company-level sim designed for training rifle-company captains. Set in the potential urban flashpoints of the next 15 to 20 years, it simulates command over squad-sized infantry units organized into platoons. *CS XII* will be a PC product geared toward users seeking an innovative training aid for infantry tactics. The other product, *C-Force*, concentrates on the smaller scale of squad operations, and is planned as a console game.

Both titles are being overseen by ICT creative director James Korris and developed under executive producer Rob Sears, whose credits include *MechWarrior 3* and *MechCommander*.

Korris points out some of the key questions the designers face: "In 20 years, for example, will soldiers wear computers? Will they be networked? What kind of information will troops receive and send? How will it impact split-second decisions made in the field? These are some of the issues that will distinguish these two products, along with the direct input of the U.S. Army itself."

To that end, the Army will be working closely with the ICT, making available its Training & Doctrine Command to help create the most realistic sims possible. The games will incorporate very real Army protocols on proper maneuver, covering fire, advance and withdrawal, and other essential elements of infantry tactics.

The end results should be both fantastic educational tools for Army officers and entertaining diversions for regular gamers. Says ICT director Richard Lindheim, "While offering unique training aids for potential squad leaders or captains, these products will also teach gamers everywhere about how to leverage human resources and information."

The games should be ready in two years or less. We'll keep 'em in our sights.

PC GAMER RECOMMENDS

GHOST RECON — 93%

Red Storm's latest tactical shooter is its best ever.

CIVILIZATION III — 92%

This follow-up to a gaming giant shows Sid's still got it.

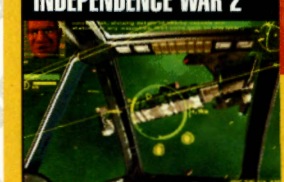
ALIENS VS. PREDATOR 2 — 86%

Outdoes the original in every way. A must-play.

C&C: YURI'S REVENGE — 90%

That angry psychic's back in this sweet *RA2* add-on.

INDEPENDENCE WAR 2 — 80%



Luscious looks + deep gameplay = timeless space shooter.

LAN-PARTY REPORT

WHAT: Nerd Club LAN Party
WHERE: Waverly, NE
WHEN: December 27–29, 2001

Nerds unite! Games being played at the Nerd Club LAN Party include *Unreal Tournament* and *Counter-Strike*; admission is $8. Get more information at *www.nerd-club.net*. Thanks to Scott McIntyre for giving us the heads-up on this one. Remember to send any and all LAN-party news to *Li@pcgamer.com* at least two months before the event.

THE PCG NEWS TICKER

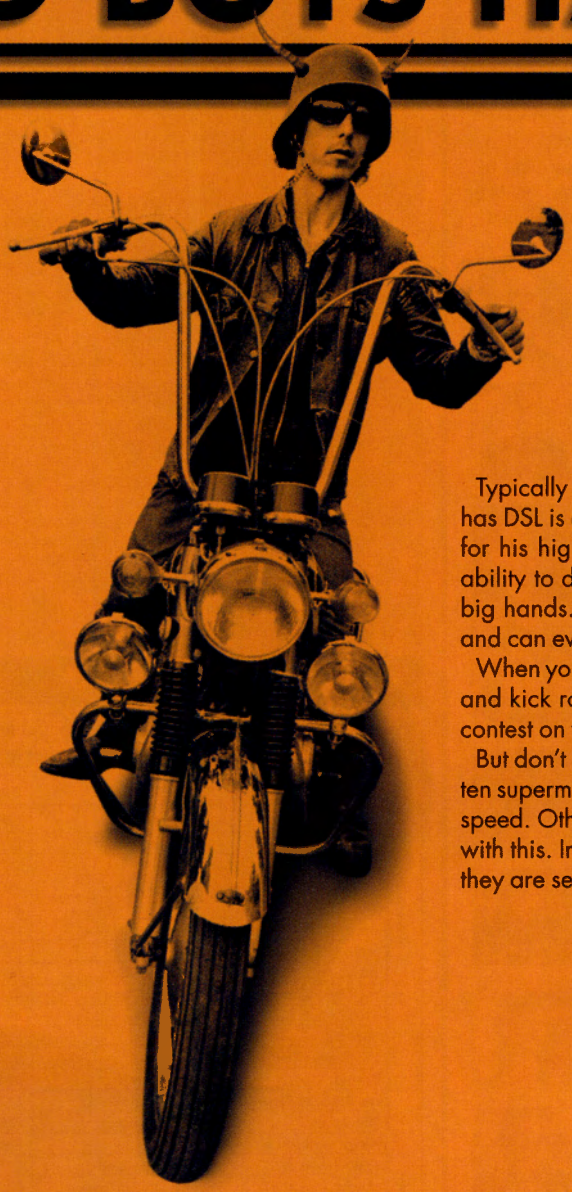
A weekly televised computer- and videogames tournament called The Electronic Games will begin in 2002. It'll air over [redacted] the grand prize will be $100,000.

Funcom has hired a consulting group for its MMORPG *Anarchy Online*. Funcom hopes the group will improve the [redacted] events.

Game Arts has just finished developing a PC version of hit Dreamcast RPG *Grandia II*. The port will be identical to [redacted] boost in screen[redacted]

After three weeks in stores, *Dark Age of Camelot* has sold 100,000 copies. This makes it the fastest-selling MMORPG ever, [redacted] *EverQuest* and *Ultima Online*.

WOMEN LOVE BAD BOYS. BAD BOYS HAVE DSL.



Typically referred to as "bad ass," the online gamer who has DSL is a belligerent yet irresistible sort. He is legendary for his high-speed Internet access. He is feared for his ability to download up to fifty times faster. He has really big hands. The DSL man never puts up with busy signals and can even use his phone while he's online.

When you see a DSL man, kiss your girlfriend goodbye and kick rocks, soldier. Or else you'll have a grappling contest on your hands.

But don't just take our word for it. Studies show nine out of ten supermodels prefer a man with DSL. Some seek out the speed. Others seek out the reliability. They are obsessed with this. In fact, when women go to the restroom together, they are secretly discussing DSL.

Hey, tough guy. Get EarthLink® DSL.

Upgrade to EarthLink™ DSL. The fastest way to get to the Real Internet and the smartest way to play online video games. DSL provides you with an "always-on" Internet connection. No more busy signals, delays or dropped connections during play. DSL is up to fifty times faster than regular dial-ups. It's just $49.95 a month.* Sign up before February 28, 2002, and receive a free DSL modem and free self-install kit. It's that easy. We'll even waive the $99 activation fee. You save a total of $450.** Get DSL and start kicking sand in the face of lesser gamers. Call 1-800-EARTHLINK or visit earthlink.net. Ask about getting your own static IP address so you can host your own game server.

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NEWS

PC GAMER CASTS THE HALF-LIFE MOVIE

The perfect stars for the movie adaptation

Half-Life is already a legend in the PC gaming community, and rumors of a movie based on the game have run rampant since its launch. While we're not aware of any specific deals being inked, Valve Software recently announced that it would like input from gamers about what they'd like to see in a *Half-Life* movie. Everything from actors to storyline ideas could be sent to *movie@valvesoftware.com*. Well, here are *our* picks for the cast...

GORDON — WILLEM DAFOE

That dark, weathered brow. Those deep, world-weary eyes. Slap on a goatee, and this messiah-cum-vampire is the spitting image of our favorite grocery-cart pusher.

MAN IN SUIT — TERRENCE STAMP

Only a guy with the stones of General Zod can play the menacing Man in the Suit. Just remember: Cast the *Limey* Stamp, not the *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* Stamp.

BARNEY — MATTHEW BRODERICK

Oh, that dopey, loveable Barney. Who better to play him than lookalike Broderick, who's acted with the same dopey expression on his face since *WarGames*.

OTIS — TOM SIZEMORE

There's no denying it: the resemblance is striking. Tom Sizemore's beefy stature and melon-sized noggin will literally make the smallish part of Otis come to life.

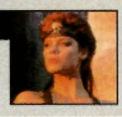
MARINE — ICE CUBE

The Cube has proven he's got what it takes to land a part in the *Half-Life* movie. *Three Kings* showed he can act, but *Next Friday* showed that he'll accept any role.

BLACK OPS — MICHELLE PFEIFFER

If you're going to have someone spend the entire movie in a tight leather suit, we can't think of anyone better than the original kitten with a whip, Michelle Pfeiffer. Mrow!

GINA — BRIGETTE NIELSEN



If we fire up the Way-Back machine, Brigette Nielsen circa *Red Sonja* is the clear pick to portray sultry love interest Gina. Nobody does pissed and sexy like Brigette.

SCIENTIST — KEVIN SPACEY

Just like the cool, collected scientist, Kevin Spacey never changes his expression without a really good reason. And we all know the scientist is a raging psychopath underneath.

HEAD CRAB — DAVID SPADE

We could say it's because of his gross talent. Or we could say it's because of the hair. But, mostly, we'd just love to see someone take a crowbar to David Spade's head.

DESIGN LAB

A MOUSE'S LIFE

■ By Don Breitwieser, Andover, NJ

YOU PLAY AS MYRON THE MOUSE. The object of the game is to gather food, start your own family, and avoid and torment your predators. The missions — played from a first- or third-person view — have a *Tom and Jerry* feel, such as framing the cat so the dog gets upset, saving a baby duckling from predators, and so on. You'll interact with a bunch of other animals, too, including squirrels, horses, birds, bats, insects, hawks, people, ground hogs, owls, and more. Some will be allies, others enemies.

Beware of children: If they know where your hole is, expect to see an elaborate mousetrap in the near future. If a boy catches you, you'll be tortured; if a girl catches you, she'll dress you up like a doll. You'll be able to escape from the kids, but it won't be easy.

The HUD will have two meters. If the fear meter gets too high, you'll lose health, forcing you to run away. The scent meter will tell you what's in a room but not its exact location. Scent recognition is learned: you'll figure out how to identify items via trial and error or by speaking to other mice and animals. (You'll also learn to identify items and traps by sight.) Food, water, and moral victories will boost health; mousetraps...won't.

Got a great idea for a game? Submit it to the newly revived *PCG* Design Lab! Each issue we'll be printing a monthly winning entry, the author of which will receive a random selection of goodies from the *PCG* Game Pile™. Those entries will then have the chance of appearing in a Design Lab roundup sometime in 2002, in which we'll award a *very* special grand prize — so good we can't announce it yet — to our favorite reader-submitted game idea.

So send your concepts for a new, wonderfully playable game design to *design@pcgamer.com*. (Or mail your entry to PC Gamer, 150 N. Hill Drive, Brisbane, CA 94005.) Your game design should have a title and a description that's 350 words or less; see more rules on page 103.

THE PCG RELEASE METER

BEHOLD: THE CURE for post-holiday blues. Our list is from Rich LaPorte of *www.gonegold.com*. Send release-date news to *laporte@gonegold.com*.

	Title	Publisher	Date	Prognosis
DECEMBER	Moto Racer 3	Infogrames	01/09/02	Green light
	Majesty Gold	Infogrames	01/10/02	Should make it
	Duke Nukem: Endang. Species	Take-Two	01/16/02	Possible
	Serious Sam: Sec. Encounter	Take-Two	01/16/02	Later
	Tropico: Paradise Isle	Take-Two	01/16/02	Sí, señor
	Disciples II	Strategy First	01/16/02	Next month
	Industry Tycoon II	JoWooD	01/17/02	Most likely
	Mafia	Take-Two	01/18/02	Later
	Mall Tycoon	Take-Two	01/29/02	Around here
	Taylor Made Golf	Xicat	01/29/02	Likely
	1503 A.D.	EA	01/31/02	About now
	Sid Meier's SimGolf	Maxis	01/31/02	Targeted
	Warrior Kings	Microids	01/31/02	Later
JANUARY	M4 Armored Clash	WizardWorks	02/01/02	Yes
	Necrocide	NovaLogic	02/01/02	Hopeful
	Medal of Honor: Allied Assault	EA	02/06/02	Fingers crossed
	C&C: Renegade	Westwood	02/06/02	Looks good
	O.R.B.	Strategy First	02/14/02	About now
	RIM	Fishtank	02/16/02	Possible
	Call of Cthulhu	Fishtank	02/16/02	Later
	Beam Breakers	Fishtank	02/16/02	Most likely
	ARX Fatalis	Fishtank	02/16/02	Next month
	Soldier of Fortune II	Activision	02/19/02	Would be nice
	Dark Planet	Ubi Soft	02/27/02	Probable

>>> THE PCG NEWS TICKER >>>

Joe Pantoliano (aka Joey Pants) appears in EA's online game *Majestic* as reporter Tim Pritchard. Pantoliano is known for his roles in *The Sopranos* and *The Matrix*.

Todd McFarlane is designing characters for the next *Ultima Online* add-on, *Lord Blackthorn's Revenge*. McFarlane Toys will also make action figures and two comics based on *LBR*.

Graphics-card maker NVIDIA has opened an online store at *www.nvidiashop.com*. It'll sell baseball caps, bags, scooters, umbrellas, T-shirts, and other items bearing the NVIDIA logo.

A new line of $20 value titles being developed by Virgin Interactive is here, marking Virgin's return to PC gaming after a yearlong absence. Titus Software is the publisher.

Max Payne has received even further kudos, snagging the British Academy of Film and Television Arts award for Best PC Game of 2001. Congratulations, Remedy!

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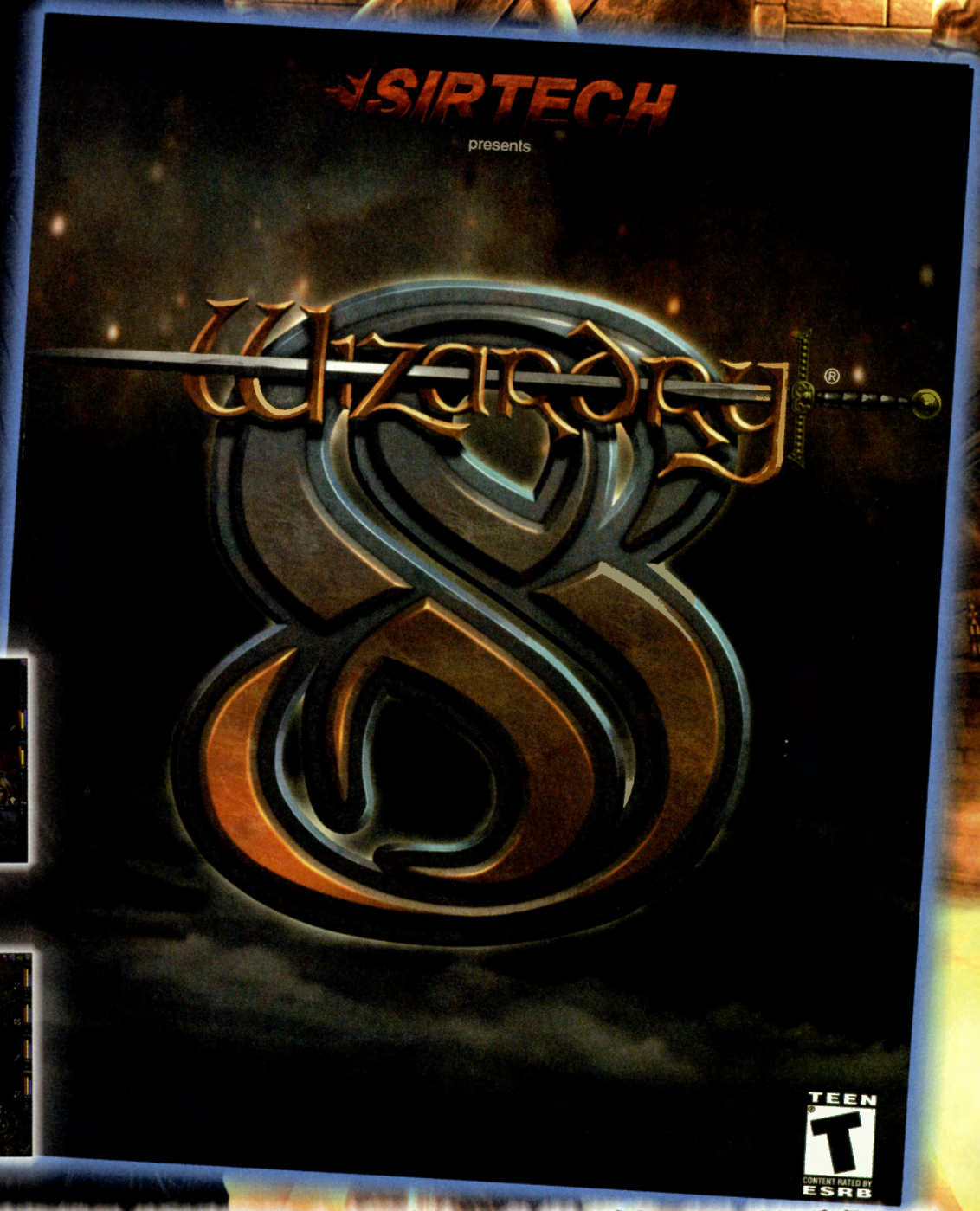

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PC GAMER PLAYLIST

Ghost Recon has got its steely claws dug in us *real* good, but some of us still managed to get a little quality play in this month with *Return to Castle Wolfenstein, Civilization III, Aliens vs. Predator 2,* and our old friend *Counter-Strike.* As always seems to be the case, too many great games, too little time to enjoy 'em all. We keep trying, though.

ROB >>> Aside from the joy of getting my hands on final *Wolf* code, I just can't stop playing *Championship Manager.* For everyone who's written asking where to buy this game, unfortunately, Eidos has no plans to make it available in the U.S. Your only option is buying it online from a European store and having it shipped. But it's worth it.

COREY >>> A 21-gun pulse-rifle salute for the developers of *Aliens vs. Predator 2,* who know exactly how to scare us senseless. I knew playing the Marine in this sequel would revive my *AvP* shellshock, so I was careful. Stealthy. Professional. And I *still* jumped in fright when the first Alien leapt for my throat.

DAN >>> I am obsessively making my way through every mission of *Ghost Recon* — checking my corners, laying down suppressive fire, and knocking on front doors with a 40mm M203 grenade launcher. When not ridding the world of the menace of Georgian rebels, I'm fooling around with *Takeda* from Xicat.

CHUCK >>> Not to bash the classics, but there isn't a better time to be a gamer than right now. Games like *Ghost Recon* are the reason I'm in this industry. *Yuri's Revenge* put the bite on me like crabs on Vederman. *Empire Earth*? Tough but engrossing. All I need is a revolutionary new adventure game, and I'm set.

LI >>> Who let the wolves out? Wolf, wolf, wolf. Oh man, that was awful. I don't think Rob will let that one fly. I can't believe I just wrote that. Ugh. I should've just said, "I've been playing *Return to Wolfenstein,* and it's a blast!" But no, I had to let my foolio, would-be rapster/hapster skills come out to play.

JIM >>> This month I've managed to finish *Ghost Recon* and I'm eagerly awaiting some online play. In addition to *Zoo Tycoon* and *Stronghold,* I've been enjoying *Myth III* and an early build of *Warlords BattleCry II.* In console-land it's all about *Metal Gear Solid 2* and *Halo,* baby. They're both near-perfect and worth every penny.

JOE >>> *Ghost Recon* already gets my vote for Action Game of the Year. The co-op play here in the *PCG* office has been phenomenal — better than with any of the *Rainbow Six* games. (It's even entertaining — and *nerve-wracking* — to just watch *other people* play)...*Pool of Radiance* bites — better wait until *Neverwinter Nights* to get your D&D fix...

CHIAKI >>> *Ghost Recon*!!! Yeah, yeah, I know, I'm a month behind, but some of us have to work around here (hee hee, if they only knew). Busted my way through the first mission and fell in love. Run. Crawl. Snipe. FIRE IN THE HOLE!!! Now all I need is a cold Newcastle. Oh, and my Assassin is kickin' some serious ass in *Diablo II: LOD.*

GREG >>> I hate to admit it, but I've been playing a lot of Xbox games this month. The dev kits are all over the office, so I sort of got sucked in inadvertently. *Halo* is brilliant, and will be even more so once it finally hits the PC sometime later this year — right, Uncle Bill? Hello? *[That's right, Greg: Halo on PC in six to nine months. — Love, Bill]*

NEWS

MAGIC ONLINE?

Soon, 6 million card players can duel over the Internet

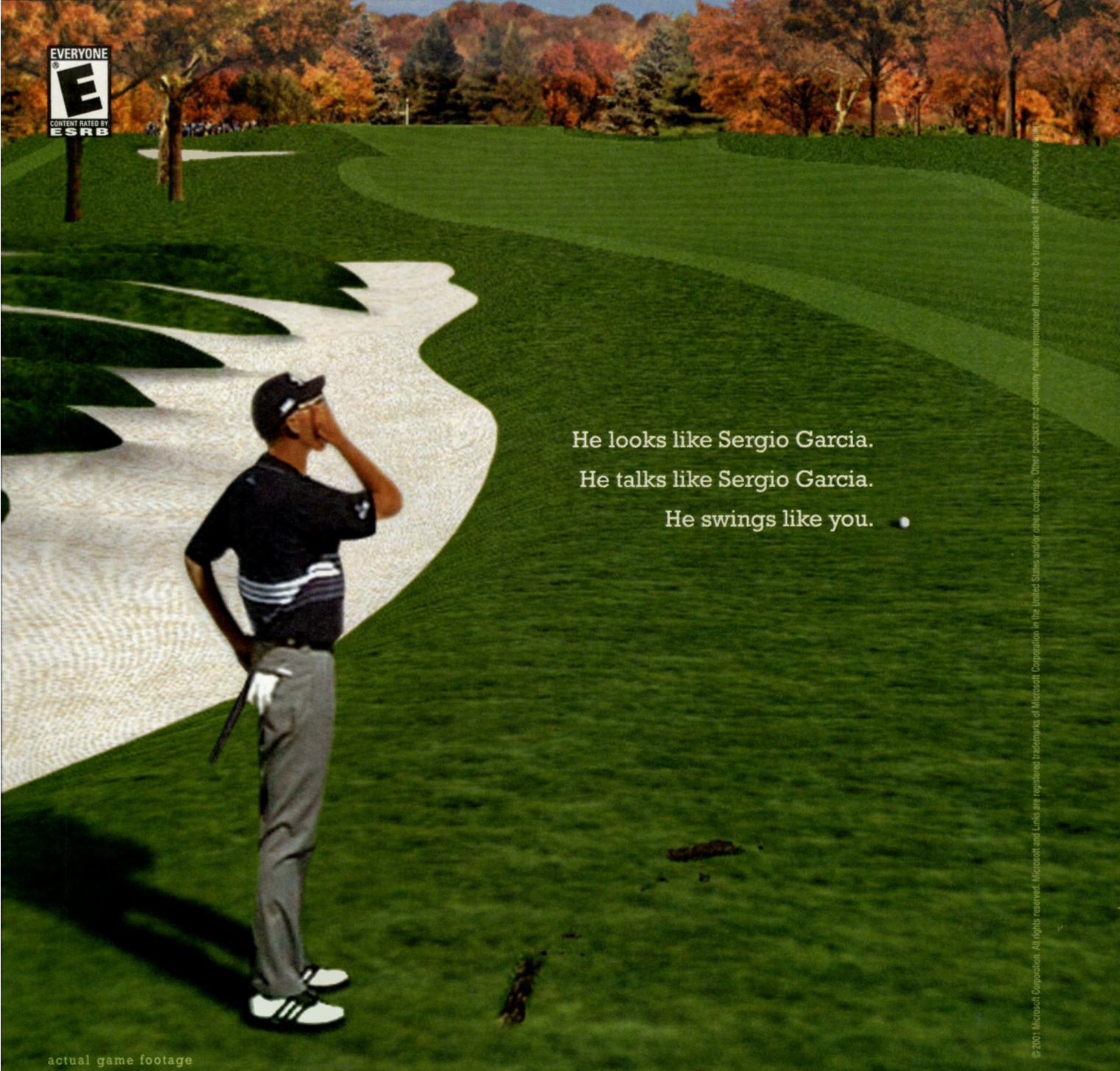
Back in 1996, MicroProse released a *Magic: The Gathering* PC game — a valiant attempt to capture the strategy and intensity of the card-game phenomenon. Now, after two years of work by developer Leaping Lizards, Wizards of the Coast is beta-testing *Magic: The Gathering Online* — a fully Internet-focused PC game — in preparation for a spring 2002 roll-out.

Your in-game avatar will change appearance as you advance in ranking.

Starting with 7th Edition cards, you'll buy booster packs and begin the deck-building process. For $15, you'll be able to purchase a retail box that includes rules and a CD incorporating the card game's famous (and vast) art library. The box will also include $10 of online credit.

While pricing has yet to be decided (card-game booster packs sell for $3.29; we expect the virtual versions to be less), the game will have no subscription fee, letting you play in a free room with limited options. When you buy your first booster pack, all functions become available.

From our early testing, the flexibility and scope of the software is amazing. You can sort cards easily by numerous criteria, use the deck analyzer, and watch all but locked games. The software also saves all your games so you can replay them and analyze moves. For Magic fans, it should be the online heaven that MicroProse first promised.



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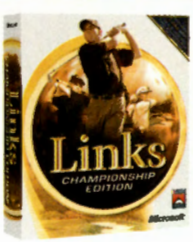
Realistic? Absolutely. Frustrating? Oh yeah.



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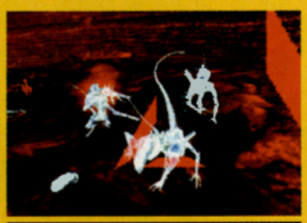
The Ultimate STRATEGY & Tips Guide 2002

Ghost Recon p32



Aliens vs. Predator 2 p38

Sid Meier's Civilization III p42

The Sims: Hot Date p44

SW: Galactic Battlegrounds p48

C&C: Yuri's Revenge p50

The holidays are over, all the games are installed, and you still can't get past the opening tutorial. No problem! You hold in your hands the Seventh Annual *PC Gamer* Ultimate Strategy and Tips Guide. Crafted by the finest strategic minds and forged in the white-lukewarm heat of desk-bound battle, this guide shall lead you to glorious victory. Or, at the very least, the next level. Guaranteed.

We haven't forgotten those unethical wimps lurking among you, either. We've also included a motherlode of the latest cheats and codes that'll get you to the end when you don't have the fortitude to do it yourself. Whatever your game plan, we've got the solution.

If you had the foresight to pick up the CD-ROM edition of this issue, then you've really lucked out. We've crammed our normally jam-packed disc with strategies for ***Myth III***, ***Operation Flashpoint***, ***Pool of Radiance: Ruins of Myth Drannor***, ***Independence War 2***, ***World War III***, and ***Zax: The Alien Hunter***, as well as extra strategies for ***Ghost Recon*** and ***Aliens vs. Predator 2***!

Ghost Recon

Look what we've got here. Why, I've never seen a lazier, smellier, uglier bunch of soldiers in all my life! You pukes don't deserve the privilege of shining my boots! Unfortunately, Uncle Sam *needs* ya, so I'm giving ya this complete walkthrough of *Ghost Recon*. Now move out like you've got a pair!

Don't throw a grenade into the barn: you'll take out the guards, but you'll also kill the pilot you're trying to rescue.

1–"IRON DRAGON"

From your starting point, fan out and head west. You'll face opposition at the bunker just west of where you start and also at the one covering the first path to the north.

Your first objective is to take out the enemy camp. Try to surround it with your three squads without being seen, and then open up with everything you've got. The idea here is to overwhelm the camp with firepower.

Next, head to the caves. Send two teams in to clear them out and leave one team outside (and to the south of the two cave entrances) as guards. Leaving a team is important because when you grab Papashvili, reinforcements will come from the west and block your exit. By keeping a team outside, you'll be able to gun down the reinforcements before they pose a problem. Remember, Papashvili won't surrender until you kill all the men in the caves.

Now make it back to the extraction point alive. There *will* be an ambush waiting for you there, so clear the area before escorting in Papashvili.

2–"EAGER SMOKE"

Watch out for patrols in the woods near your insertion point. Bring a demolition expert and plant the demolition charge on the F/A-18 first, and then rescue the hostages. Have two squads head over to the plane, with the third squad hanging back, protecting your boys from any enemy flanking maneuvers. Hug the northern edge of the map, so you can go from tree to tree and get close to the enemy soldiers guarding the wreckage. Then it's just a matter of shooting straight and watching your back. Reinforcements will rush to the scene from the south after the shooting starts, so make sure you take care of them before moving in your demo guy to set the charges.

Next, take the house and barn in that order. Use old-school *Rainbow Six* tactics — i.e., use multiple simultaneous entries and slice the pie. A sniper is also helpful for eliminating any sentries standing in the windows or walking the perimeter.

3–"STONE BELL"

Stay off the railroad bridge. Never cross it: you'll be a sitting duck. The north and south patrols won't be too much of a challenge. Send one squad after each patrol, and leave behind the squad with the anti-tank weapon. Take out the patrols fast so you'll have time to set up an ambush for the tank column.

With the patrols neutralized, hunker down on the edges of the canyon (the edges of the bridge will do) and move your anti-tank squad up to the location of the team that wiped out the north patrol. You want to gain the advantage of being on high ground, keep that advantage, and exploit it. Take control of the squad with the M136 and annihilate the enemy tanks yourself. After the tanks are down, open up with everything you've got to catch the enemy troops in a blistering crossfire. Sweet!

4–"BLACK NEEDLE"

Enemy soldiers are in the booths on both sides of the bridge. Use a sniper to pick off targets on the far side of the bridge and to cover your boys as they advance across the bridge.

Enemy troops are always in the buildings at the crossroads, so clear those. You have to move quickly to reach the UN troops in time. After secur-

Before moving north, nail this bunker overlooking the south side of the map.

Here is your objective, Papashvili. Don't shoot him!

Unfortunately, you can't shoot through the walls of this booth.

On harder difficulty levels, more enemy soldiers will attack the UN troops.

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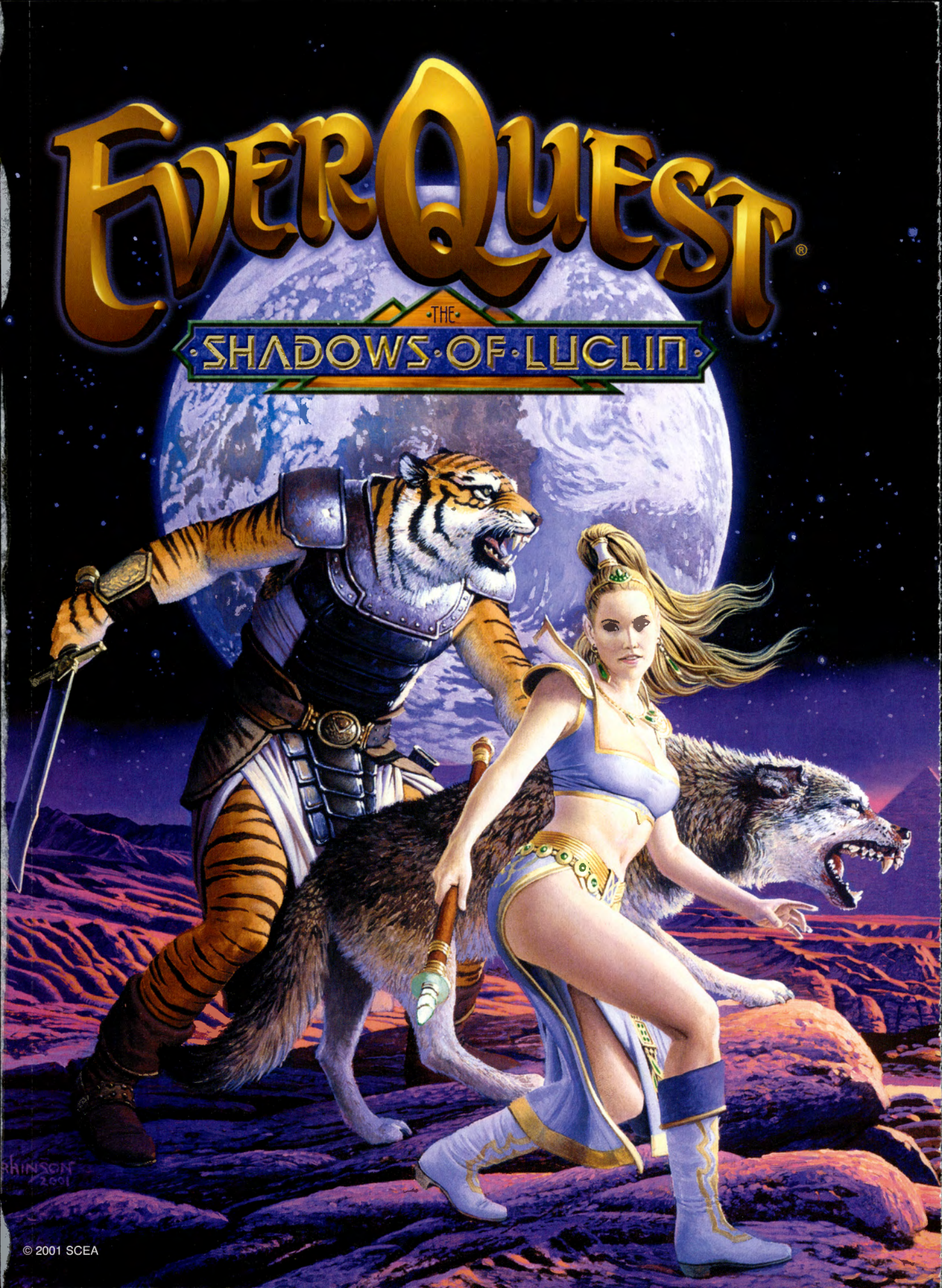
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Fourth Place (50 Winners)

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- Entirely re-designed player characters with high-resolutio equipment, featuring over four times the number of poly characters.
- Join hundreds of thousands of real people and play coop competitively as you strive for honor, fame, and fortune
- Develop your character over time, and make friends as and adventure through murky swamps, frigid highland dungeons, and more.
- Take part in an enormous world with thousands of in- and a dynamically progressing story in which you pla

ing the crossroads, send two squads to help out the UN troops in the village. Leave one squad behind; put them on any hill that overlooks the crossroads because reinforcements will show up there as soon as you relieve the UN troops. Also, on higher difficulty levels, watch for snipers in the hills overlooking the village.

5–"GOLD MOUNTAIN"

Right off the bat, you'll encounter a patrol to the right of your insertion point by the bus. Take them out and watch for any buddies they might have. Go in the bank through the back door first! A few grenades through the front door will help soften up the enemies inside and get their attention — a perfect diversion for a second team to bust in through the rear.

Next, head to the embassy. Snipers are on the embassy roof: kill them first. When you take the embassy, leave a sniper on the roof to cover your other two squads. Watch for a sniper in the hotel. Go into the hotel and clear it out *before* heading to the helicopter crash site. The entrance is in front of the hotel by the green canopy.

A tank and some troops will come in from the top-right corner of the map when you reach the downed chopper. If you don't have any anti-tank weapons, run back to the extraction point to escape. If you do have anti-tank weapons, just take out the tank and the troops and then mosey on back to the embassy.

6–"WITCH FIRE"

Immediately head for the road at the middle of the south edge of the map. You'll just need one squad with an M136. Hide behind some bushes and wait for a truck to come by. Set your squad's RoE to "Recon" so they won't open fire too early. When the truck comes down the road from the south, wait for it to come into view and pump a rocket into the back cargo-bay area. Time this just right, and you'll kill all the enemy soldiers in the truck with one rocket, plus take out the driver. Timing and concealment are crucial.

Once these enemies are dispatched, take out the SAM site. After that, storm the house to the southeast, watching for enemy soldiers coming out of the castle from the northwest and the northeast.

Now storm the castle. Try to take multiple entrances at the same time and get the documents from the northwest house. After you've nabbed all the docs, expect another ambush near the extraction point.

7–"PAPER ANGEL"

You have two options here, and neither one's easy. Option one is to hit the enemy camp first with two squads with heavy weapons, and then stealthily send in a demo team to plant the charges at the bridges. This method takes time and patience.

Option two is to do exactly what the briefing tells you *not* to do: tackle the main group of bad guys head-on. If you bring some M136s with you, set up a three-pronged ambush, watch your back, and use a sniper wisely, you can actually pull it off. But you won't be able to do it if you don't have the demo specialist with the SA-80 (Tunney) unlocked, because there are four enemy tanks and your regular demo guys carry only three rockets. If you bring one demo guy with charges for the bridge, one with the M136, and the specialist, you'll have enough rockets to destroy all the enemy tanks. What a feeling!

Whichever approach you use, be sure to watch for enemy patrols on both sides of the river: they travel up and down the sides in groups of three.

8–"ZEBRA STRAW"

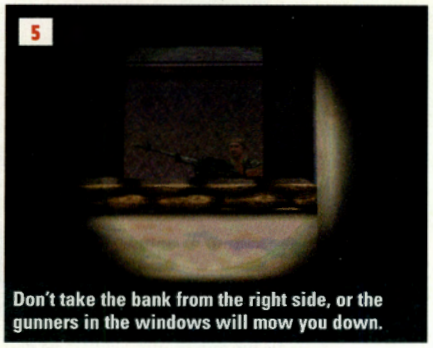
Set all teams to "Suppress and Hold." Hunker down in the ruins of the house directly to the north of the insertion point. A rush of enemy soldiers will come from the north and from the east.

After you've successfully held off the attack, head over to the street. The friendly tank will have no problem taking out the enemy tank. Watch the ruins on both sides of the street for enemy soldiers packing anti-tank weapons.

You can actually take out the northern artillery from the ground; use your map to locate it and head there. As soon as you see it, use an M136 to destroy it from the ground below (see screenshot, next page). Getting to the eastern artillery is harder: it's deeper in the mountains and well-defended. Send in one team from the north and one from the south, and catch the objective in a pincer movement in the middle.

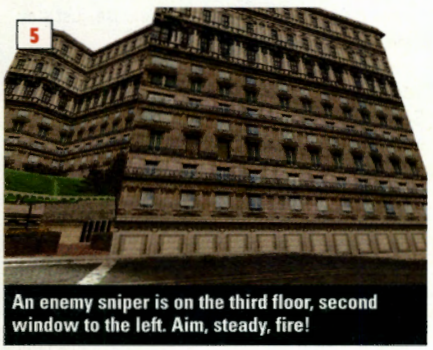
9–"BLUE STORM"

The fog severely limits your vision, so turn up your speakers and listen. Concentrate on one island at a time; fan out, and hit them fast and hard. Remember that gunfire usually draws more enemies, so if you wipe out one patrol, sit quiet for a



5

Don't take the bank from the right side, or the gunners in the windows will mow you down.



5

An enemy sniper is on the third floor, second window to the left. Aim, steady, fire!

7

These guys may look formidable, but they're not invincible. A well-placed sniper can smoke 'em.

6

These soldiers defending the SAM site are well-dug-in: use grenades to pry them out.

7
When you're by the river, watch for patrols both across and above you.

8
From here you can take out the artillery to the north.

9
Remember this man's face. You need to take him alive.

13
Here's why you don't want to storm the jet hanger through the front door.

few moments to check for reinforcements before moving on. Don't kill the officer! (He appears as a yellow diamond on your map.) Otherwise, just stay frosty and don't miss.

10–"FEVER CLAW"

Save often: this mission is big, long, and tough. The single most important thing is to watch the rubble for hidden snipers. Bring some demo men with M136s. Your friendly tanks will take out enemy tanks, but it helps to move ahead of the action to clear a path for them. That means you'll have to take out some enemy armor yourself.

Take advantage of short-cuts. Send one team up well in advance of the armor to clear each objective, and leave the remaining two teams near the tanks to provide close escort. There's no real trick here: it'll just take a little skill and a lot of luck.

11–"DREAM KNIFE"

If you've unlocked the specialists with silenced weapons, bring them along! Also, bring a good sniper — he'll be vital. You won't have a problem securing the first entry point south of your insertion point. Watch for a guard in the booth by the road. After that, you'll have to take one gate at a time.

Secure a gate using suppressed weapons and then move your sniper up to the window to cover your team as it heads to the next gate. Repeat this procedure to move deeper into the compound. When you get near the POWs, be sure to get a solid ID: they're *very* close to two guards. You'll have to take out both guards quickly — they'll shoot the POWs the second they suspect something.

If you want to go for the doctor, leave one team watching the door as you go in. A group of enemy soldiers will rush the hospital after you secure the doctor, so be ready. Finally, on the way back, watch for an ambush at the extraction zone. Scout the area and wipe out any enemy troops before moving in the POWs.

12–"IVORY HORN"

The docks are crawling with enemy soldiers, so you'll want a good sniper. If you can get him on top of the crane in the middle of the map, he'll be able to knock out a lot of guards. Remember to look up when you're inside the sub pen — guards are up there!

Always enter buildings through two entrances at a time! It may be tempting to split up your team to take out both subs simultaneously, but your chances of success improve greatly if you use one team as cover while the second team plants the demo charges. When you've finished one sub pen, *then* move on to the next.

13–"ARCTIC SUN"

A good sniper will help here, as will grenades. The stairs are the only way up the control tower. Use grenades to flush out blind corners.

When you take the tower, leave one team behind to watch the bottom of the stairs, as reinforcements will storm the tower once you have it. Your sniper will be able to drop a few sentries from his vantage point on the top of the control tower. You should also use him to cover your squads as they advance toward their objectives.

Getting the Hokum isn't too hard, but when you go after the jet fighter, use the *rear* entrance. On harder difficulty levels, two mounted machine guns guard the main entrance, and they'll slice you to ribbons if you try to go in that way.

14–"WILLOW BOW"

Look up! There are lots of enemy snipers in the mountains above you. Hug the walls of the hills to limit your exposure to enemy bullets. No real trick here: just take it slow and grow eyes in the back of your head.

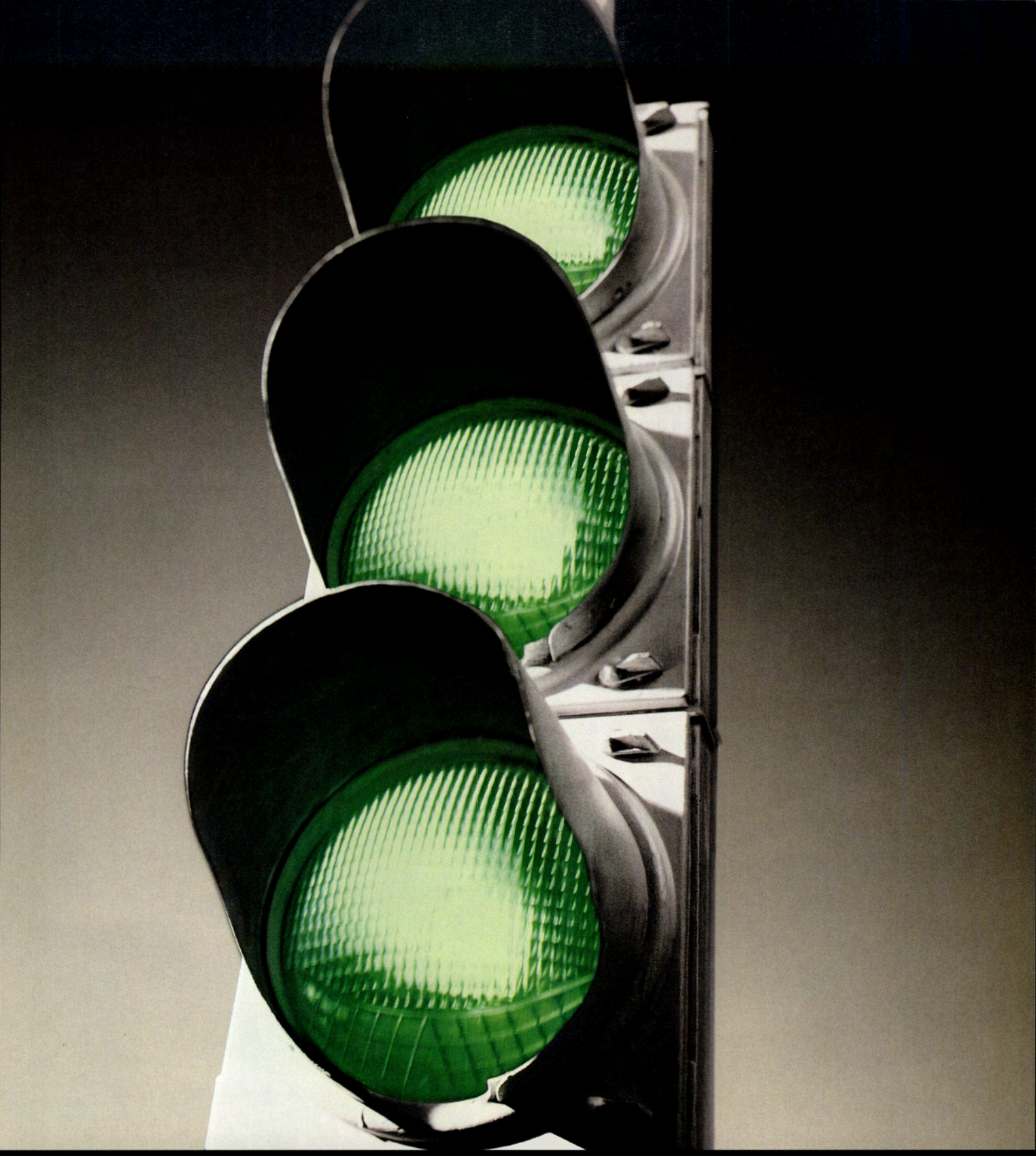
Take out the enemy camp from above. A ledge overlooks the enemy base camp; from there a SAW gunner and a sniper can devastate the entire area. Make sure you have one squad watching their back, as anyone they miss will go around and attack them from behind.

15–"WHITE RAZOR"

A good sniper will make things much easier. Get to the friendly troops fast. Once you relieve them, you'll need to escort them out of the combat zone if you're playing on Veteran or Elite difficulty. Sometimes they'll run into a small patrol just as they're getting to the eastern edge of the map, so it's better to ensure they're protected.

When you're in the mall, watch out for civilians — they'll pop up at the worst times. Once you make it past the mall and onto Red Square, you'll encounter a tank. If you're quick, you can destroy it with an M136 before it spots you. Expect tons of troops to rush you once you make your location known. After you gain a foothold on Red Square, take control of your sniper and use him to kill the machine gunners behind the sandbags. You'll have more tanks to deal with also, so keep your demo men alive. Use your sniper to clear out any visible troops, send in a squad to mop up what's left, and use your demo men to take out the tanks.

14
If you're pinned down by these mounted guns, wait until they overheat before exposing yourself. When they've overheated, black smoke will come out of the barrel.



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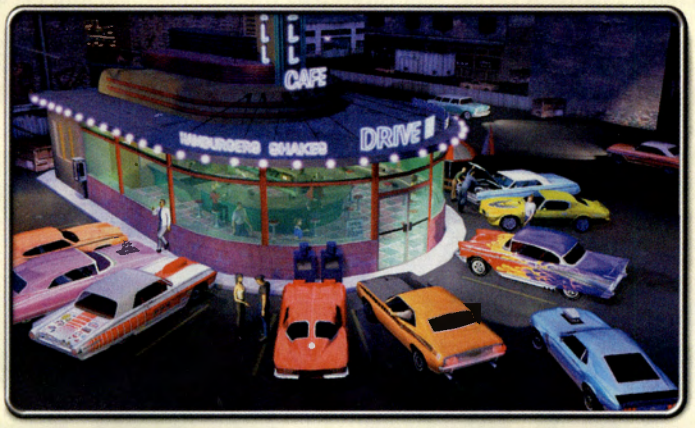

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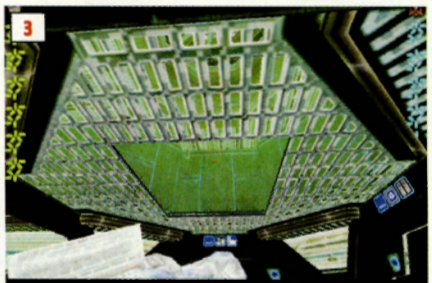
Aliens vs. Predator 2

The galaxy's hairiest three-way returns as Aliens, Marines, and Predators do their best to spill each others' innards. This walkthrough will help those playing as the coolest creature, the Predator; check out this month's *PC Gamer* CD for complete walkthroughs of the Marine and Alien campaigns.

As a Predator, it's better to keep your distance, picking off enemies one at a time.

Whenever you're stuck, scan the area above the floor for a way to progress.



Remember that the Predator can jump 20 feet in the air, so exits are often far above you.

1–"HUNT"

- Stick to the trees, killing only when you have to. You should *always* be cloaked.
- Most of the entrances to other areas are at tree level, not on the ground.
- Make your way to the lagoon. Let the marines fight it out with the Aliens, then finish off the last big Alien.
- After the cut-scene, repeat the process by sticking to the trees and looking for the tunnels off the ground. Keep cloaked.

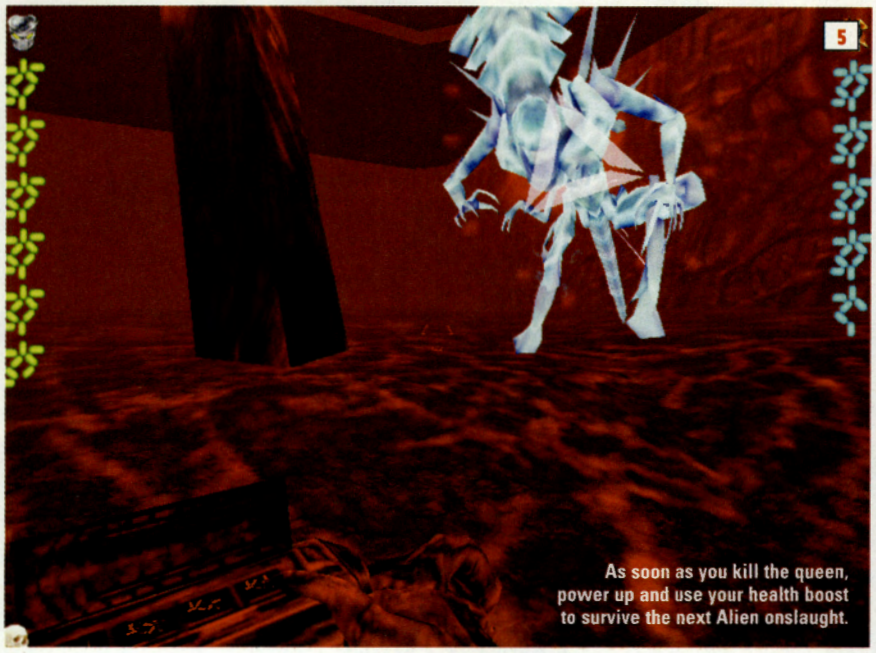
2–"INTERLOPER"

- When getting ready to assault the marine base, look for the ATV near the fence. You should see two humans setting up a sentry gun. Head straight for them to avoid the other sentry guns.
- Continue toward the center, taking out marines in your way. Avoid the water: it shorts out your cloaking device. Look for a truck lying in some water. Jump onto the truck, and then onto the dry ground. Take out the guard and hop onto the lift.
- When you're inside the cargo bay, hop on the crates up to the third level. Look for a console to activate a crane arm with a crate attached to it. Hop onto the crate and ride it up to the fourth level.
- Look for a panel on the wall. Hack it. Use the ladder you just lowered to climb to the top of the lift. Open the double-doors on top of the lift and hop down.
- When the lift comes to a stop, kill the investigating guards. Work your way around to the left, killing anything that gets in your way. Go through the double-doors and up the stairs.
- Kill all the guards in the stairwell. Go through the open door. Kill the rest of the guards. Make three big jumps to reach the next level. Look for a ledge with two steam vents next to it. Jump up to the ledge, and then jump up two more times. Move left on the top-most ledge until you get to an open platform. Look up and there should be one last jump to get to the upper level.
- Kill all the guards. To kill the sergeants, shoot them in the head with your spear gun. Look for a ladder up to the next level. Kill more sergeants. Finally, look for a ladder up into the small room.

Switch vision modes so you can "lock on" to the Aliens with your plasmacaster. Don't waste time with the alt-fire: one shot will kill them.

3–"UNEXPECTED ALLIES"

- After you break out of the container, open up the nearby panel and hack the circuitry.
- Get in the turnroom and take it up. Kill the first two guards you come across. Leave and go left. Go down the ladder, hitting the green switches to open the gates. Kill the guard at the bottom of the ladder.
- Go into the large room, where you'll overhear the scientists talking. Look up and you should see a red light blinking. Jump up to it, destroy the panel, and hack the circuits. Go through the door you've just unlocked.
- Kill the two guards. Go through the door they were guarding. Kill the lab technician and take the remote bombs from the tray. Hack the nearby panel, and use the bombs to kill the two guards in the next room.
- Go through the door. Grab your mask and net-gun, and then leave. Kill the guard who attacks and go through the room he came out of. Climb up the ladder and continue on.
- After the load screen, kill the two guards below you. Flip both switches and back off. Go through the hole after the explosion. Enter nearby lab and grab your gear. Kill the two investigating guards.
- Move along the hallway until you get to a much larger lab. Grab your equipment. Leave the lab.



As soon as you kill the queen, power up and use your health boost to survive the next Alien onslaught.

- Kill the two guards in the hallway. Look for a hole in the grating overhead. Jump up through it, and look for an electrical box. Tear off the cover and hack it.
- Jump back down. Kill the guards. Go in the room that you opened up and grab the last of your weapons.
- Get to the open door. After the cut-scene, hop off the top of the elevator and make your way down to the bottom of the cargo bay. When the dropship gets in close, jump onto its roof.

4–"OLD DEBTS"

- Go through the metal gate on your right. Drop down into the tunnels. Switch to the red-vision mode and your plasmacaster so you can attack the Aliens.
- Move through the tunnels until you get to a large open room with a pool in the middle. Kill all the Aliens.
- Move through the tunnels located on the opposite side of the room. Look for an opening in the ceiling where you can see an exit to the surface. Jump up to it.
- Move up the hill, killing all the Aliens. Look for a tunnel to your right. Move through it, then turn left. Run until you fall when the floor collapses.
- Find the large set of pipes. Jump onto the pipes and turn to the right. Defeat the two Predaliens. Continue on.
- Destroy the breeding eggs. Move through the main tunnel passage, killing all the Aliens that come your way.
- Work your way around to the elevator. Throw the switch to the left of the elevator, and then wait for the fuse box to explode. Hack the circuit board, hop in the elevator, and take it up.
- Take the stairs to your left down to the trashed room. Flip the antennae switch.
- Go across the landing bay to the array carrier override. Hack it. When the empress alien attacks, retreat back down the stairwell. There you can attack her at your leisure, as she is too big to fit into the stairwell.
- After you meet your clansman, take the ladder down. Kill the guard and the technician. Hack the console in the underground room. Move back up to the room you just unlocked. Kill all the guards.
- Look for a panel in the floor that opens. Slip down and work your way around to the main room.
- Kill all the guards and take out the sentry guns with your plasmacaster. Look for a lift to take you up to crane control. Release the switch. Go down the hole created by the crate you just dropped.
- Follow the tunnel, killing all the Aliens. Look for a maintenance tunnel on the right at the end of the tunnel. Go through it. Follow the path downward. Kill all the humans and Aliens. Look for a tunnel that leads to an airshaft.

5–"TROPHY"

- Go through the tunnel in the corner. Kill the first facehugger you come to. Grab your last weapon. Head back out the tunnel and kill the next facehugger. Jump through the vent by the entrance to the tunnel.
- Hack the console on the other side of the vent. Kill all the Aliens. Follow the tunnel you just opened up. Look for a switch to raise the drill. Continue down the tunnel. Kill all humans and Aliens that come your way.
- Follow the tunnel underneath the drill you just raised. Kill all the Aliens and the queen.
- Wander through the hive killing all the Aliens. When you get to the queen, do whatever it takes to kill her. Our suggestion: make sure you're in the infrared mode, use the plasmacaster, and back up while circle-strafing around the central pillar. (The queen doesn't have the tight turn-radius that you do.) Kill her and all her children.
- Head down to Rycof's last stand. Stay cloaked. Kill him with remote bombs and a plasmacaster.

CHEATER'S CORNER

Aliens vs. Predator 2

During gameplay, press Enter and type <cheat> , followed by one of the codes below. (Note the space after <cheat> — e.g., <cheat> mpcanthurtme.) Press Enter again to enable the code.

mpcanthurtme God mode.
mpschuckit Full weapons, ammo.
mpkohler Full ammo.
mpsmithy Full armor.
mpbeamme Transport to beginning of level.
mpsixthsense No-clipping mode.
mpicu Third-person view.
mpxfiles Access all levels. (After entering this code, start a new game, and you'll see all the levels available.)

Commandos 2

Select Single-Player, select New Game, and then input one of the following codes next to Keyed Mission. You'll then skip to the subsequent level.

LEVEL 1: Normal: XHGDR Hard: PLKUM Very Hard: PVTSL
LEVEL 2: Normal: WKUC4 Hard: JE5SH Very Hard: SKDJF
LEVEL 3: Normal: YSM51 Hard: DFY3B Very Hard: 3DYNG
LEVEL 4: Normal: B7D8F Hard: K9D3H Very Hard: 9BG3S
LEVEL 5: Normal: 3GHSL Hard: NMWQ9 Very Hard: KJWJK
LEVEL 6: Normal: AZLM1 Hard: 16G3L Very Hard: E2J7H
LEVEL 7: Normal: JAHSG Hard: WL3CZ Very Hard: ZX78Y
LEVEL 8: Normal: UN63A Hard: LPQ6T Very Hard: TRIB4
LEVEL 9: Normal: VAZ2P Hard: SRCM8 Very Hard: TRD78
LEVEL 10: Normal: 9TT5W Hard: PAEN8 Very Hard: 1LPQD

Using GONZOANDJON as your player name will enable the following cheats. (You can also enable them during gameplay by selecting a commando and typing GONZOANDJON.)

Ctrl + V Invisibility.
Ctrl + I Invincibility.
Ctrl + Shift + N Win mission.
Ctrl + Shift + X Kill all enemies.
Shift + X Teleport.

Empire Earth

During a multiplayer game, hit Enter, type one of the following codes, and then hit Enter again.

my name is methos All resources and reveal map.
atm +1,000 gold.
you said wood +1,000 wood.
rock&roll +1,000 rock.
creatine +1,000 iron.
asus drivers Reveal map.
somebody set up us the bomb Win game.
ahhhcool Lose game.
display cheat Print all cheats.
the big dig Lose all resources.
boston rent Lose all gold.
uh, smoke? Lose all wood.
headshot Remove objects from map.

Ultimate Ride

Enter these codes at the padlock icon on the main menu to access the indicated props.

whiner Rollergod trophy.
princess Mega jewel.
nursewacko Giant sword.
cheese Cottage with thatched roof.
orb Satellite.
ferdinand Zeppelin.
grub Space diner.
dentist Drill.
sphere Pinwheel with effects.
aqua Calliope.
gofish Fish fountain.
fireitup Make all coaster trains emit fire.
naugahyde Make all environments use wooden texture.
cottage Wizard's cottage.

THE GRITTY REALITY OF WAR IS IN YOUR SIGHTS

0600 Parachute behind enemy lines, take out radar

0800 Command squad in beachhead assault

1000 Fly Cobra attack helicopter to soften up enemy positions

1300 Drive civilian vehicle through checkpoint

1500 Pilot and command a platoon of M1A1 tanks to take enemy stronghold

1800 Go covert with sniper rifle to assassinate enemy commander

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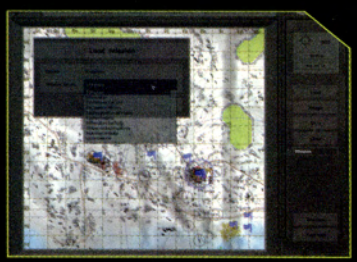

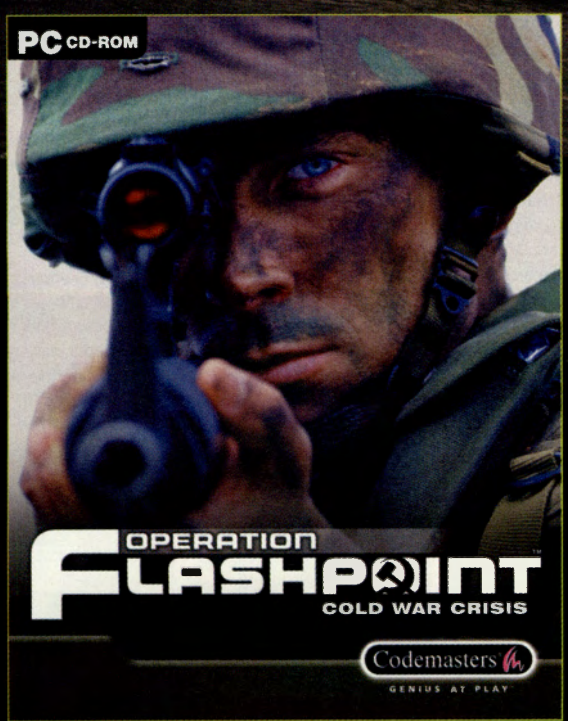

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SID MEIER'S

Civilization III

Many people laud the brilliance of games like *Civ III*; others find the steep learning curve too daunting. Well, we won't stand for that, and that's why we're offering these tips and strategies to help you get up and running in *Civ III* even if you've never understood how to play any of its predecessors!

Pollution (the orange blotches) wreaks havoc with your cities. Have your workers clean it up right away.

FROM THE GET-GO

Before starting your game, you need to decide *how* you're going to play. There are five ways to win, and since each civilization has different strengths, you should pick a civilization that complements the way you want to play the game. For example, if you want to win by being the first to launch a spaceship bound for Alpha Centauri, choose Babylon or China — civilizations that enjoy scientific bonuses. On the flipside, if you want to utterly annihilate the opposition, pick the militaristic Persians or Zulus.

Before starting, make sure that you have barbarian activity set to villages. Don't waste a lot of time searching for the best place to build your initial city, but try to find a place that has grasslands on one side and a forest on the other. For your city to grow, you need to have an excess of food and a production source. Grasslands and ocean squares marked with the fish icon provide the best sources of food, and forests give you shields, which represent how fast you can produce units and structures.

After building your initial city, build another settler. (Since barbarians are set to villages, they won't wander the map and attack you.) If your civilization gives you a scout, send it to explore the area directly around you. Once your settler is done, send it out and immediately begin to build another one. Also, order your worker to start making improvements by pressing A; your workers will now automatically start building roads, mines, and other improvements.

At this point your primary focus should be expanding your empire. Make sure your cities aren't right on top of each other, but that they're in the same basic vicinity. The reason for this closeness is that your culture rating plays a large part in your overall success (this role is represented by the dotted line that surrounds your cities) and you want your cities to create one unified wall of influence. If there are pockets here and there where your influence is missing, rival civilizations can build a town right next to you, which could present a serious threat later in the game. Be mindful of the culture rating and build four more cities (at least one next to a supply of gold), and then create three more workers and put them to work by pressing A.

At this point, use your initial city to create a barracks, which lets you create veteran units, followed by a warrior for each of your cities. (Every city should have at least one military unit at all times.) In your other cities build granaries, followed by walls. Once each of your cities has a barracks, a granary, and a wall, build three more settlers and expand your empire. (You'll need to research specific things to build these structures; that's covered in the next section.) Take care to position your new cities on the fringe of your current area of influence, which will ensure you expand outward in a controlled manner.

Continue to expand your empire in this manner for the rest of the game. Use your existing

Your foreign advisor tells you what kind of arrangements other civs have with each other.

Before waging war, position your forces on the enemy's supply lines.

Carefully weigh the pros and cons before agreeing to any trades that other civs offer you.

ONWARD TO VICTORY!

BEFORE DECLARING WAR you need to check with your advisors and see which civilizations are employing mutual-protection agreements; if you attack someone who's allied with several other civilizations, you'll get your ass handed to you.

That said, you *can* exploit the mutual-protection agreements for your benefit. Create mutual-protection treaties with every civilization (except the one that you plan on attacking) and then move your forces into the territory of the civilization you wish to fight. They'll tell you to leave their territory; ignore that request. Leave your forces there, but whatever you do, don't declare war. Since mutual-protection agreements don't work if *you* declare war, it's imperative that you have war declared on you.

Rest assured, though, that if you leave your forces there long enough, the civilization you're planning on attacking *will* declare war, which will enable you to invoke your mutual-protection agreements. As a result, every other civilization you've had the foresight to ally with will declare war on your enemy, and you'll be on your way to a glorious victory. Yes!

If you're successful in your negotiations, you can persuade other civilizations to declare war on enemy civilizations.

cities to move military forces quickly into your new cities so they have a defense as soon as they are constructed.

RESEARCHING TECHS

Each civilization begins with certain advances already researched, so it's impossible for us to tell you which advancement to research first. However, there are key advancements that you'll want to grab right away no matter what — pottery, masonry, iron working, mathematics, construction, and writing.

Pottery enables you to make granaries, which effectively double the rate at which your cities grow, and iron working lets you build swordsmen. Once you've researched iron working, iron-ore icons will appear on the map; once you see these, instruct one of your workers to connect the supply of ore to one of your cities with a road.

Masonry lets you build city walls, which give a 50% bonus to any defensive units stationed there. Mathematics lets you build the catapult, and construction lets you build more advanced structures like the coliseum. Lastly, writing lets you build embassies in the capital of any civilization you encounter. (The one limitation here is that the other civilization must also have writing researched for you to construct an embassy.)

At this point, research all of the technologies in the Ancient Times and then move on to the Middle Ages. From here, you'll slowly whittle your choices down in an effort to focus on the way you want to win. If you want to win by achieving military dominance, for example, focus research on all relevant military advancements.

One final note on advancements: keep an eye on pollution and global warming. In the later stages of the game, as global warming begins to wreak havoc on the planet, you'll have to deal with pollution. These blotches will severely reduce your food supplies, which could lead to starvation, so research anti-pollution advancements such as ecology and recycling as soon as you can.

RAW MATERIALS

One of the major keys to being successful in *Civ III* is a steady and reliable flow of resources. As you research new technologies, the corresponding resource will appear on the map as a little icon. If these resources appear within your area of influence, you'll automatically reap the benefits if you connect them to a road or a railroad track. If they're outside of your area, though, you'll need to employ your workers. Once you've located a resource, send a worker out to it and order him to make a colony; once the colony is completed, build a road so that it's connected to the rest of your roads. Make sure you station at least one military unit at each colony and pay attention to enemy movements that could impact the status of the road connected to the colony. If that road is severed, you'll lose access to that resource.

WAGING WAR

Even if you're planning on winning the game through peaceful means such as Cultural Victory, you'll need to field a sizable military force and strike out against any nearby civilizations. For example, if you discover a rival civilization on your

Having at least one city on each island/continent will make staging an invasion that much easier.

Jungles hold disease, which can infect and kill your citizens. Clear them away from your cities.

CHEATER'S CORNER

Ghost Recon

During gameplay, hit the Enter key on the numpad to bring up the console. Type one of the following cheats, and then hit Enter.

superman Toggles invincibility.
teamsuperman Toggles invincibility for your team.
shadow Toggles invisibility.
teamshadow Toggles invisibility for your team.
toggleAI Turns AI on and off.
togglePlayerInvis Player doesn't show up in AI threat lists.
timeFactor F Clock speed multiplied by F.
playerRunSpeed F Player run speed multiplier (AI run speed not affected).
autowin Advances game to after-action review.
magic8ball Shows all enemies on the command map.
ammo Toggle unlimited ammo for all firearms.
refill Replenishes the avatar's entire inventory.
unlockhero Unlocks the next hero character in the campaign.
kit [filename] changes the avatar's kit — use one of the following kit names in the brackets:

(NOTE: All kits go from 01 to 04)

REGULAR KITS:
sniper-01.kit
rifleman-01.kit
heavy-weapons-01.kit
demolitions-01.kit

SPECIALISTS' KITS:
astra_galinsky-01.kit
buzz_gordon-01.kit
dieter_munz-01.kit
guram_osadze-01.kit
henry_ramirez-01.kit
jack_stone-01.kit
klaus_henkel-01.kit
lindy_cohen-01.kit
nigel_tunney-01.kit
scott_ibrahim-01.kit
susan_grey-01.kit
will_jacobs-01.kit

KITS FROM MULTIPLAYER MODES:
mp_demo_primary.kit
mp_demo_primary_02.kit
mp_demo_primary_03.kit

Return to Castle Wolfenstein

During gameplay, hit the ~ key to bring down the console. Type one of the following cheats, and then hit Enter.

/god God mode.
/give all Gives you all guns.
/no clip No-clip mode.
/cg_thirdperson 1 Third-person view.
/spdevmap [mapname] Warps you to the mapname you've typed — e.g., /spdevmap forest. Map names include forest*, sfm*, Norway*, Dam*, Crypt, and Castle. NOTE: Map names with asterisk indicate points you can jump to and have the correct weapons.

Star Wars: Galactic Battlegrounds

During gameplay, hit Enter, type the following cheats, and then hit Enter again.

Skywalker Win mission.
tarkin Destroy all enemies.
forcefood +1000 Food.
forcenova +1000 Nova.
forcecarbon +1000 Carbon.
forceore +1000 Ore.
forcebuild Fast build.
forceexplore Reveal map.
forcesight No fog.
simonsays Gives you Simon the Killer Ewok.
darkside# Destroy opponents (# = 1–8).

Changing your system of government is key to successfully managing your empire.

If you don't plan carefully, you'll find yourself fighting a multi-sided war.

border early in the game, mobilize your forces and eliminate them. It may not be pretty — or easy — but a key to success is the ability to expand. If you can't expand, you're hosed.

To fight a war successfully, you'll first need embassies in the capital cities of every other civilization: this will let you keep tabs on various trade and military agreements. Remember, you don't want to wage war on someone who has agreements with other nations, so check with your advisors before launching a campaign. In addition to having your military power ready to move, you'll also want several settlers ready as well to build your expansion cities.

Before attacking, scout the area outside the civilization's area of influence and locate any roads that connect them to key resources. Position units on those roads. Your other units should be positioned so you can target multiple cities at once. As soon as you declare war, order your units located on the roads to pillage those roads: the roads will be destroyed and the flow of raw materials from those sources will be cut off.

Now have your forces attack the enemy's cities, all while targeting any internal supplies of resources. As you defeat enemy cities, have your forces raze the city, which will completely destroy it. This act will anger the other civilizations, but since the enemy can reclaim conquered cities by exerting cultural influence, there's a good chance you'll lose those cities and any forces stationed there. It's not worth the risk.

As the battle rages and you reduce the size of the enemy's empire, send in your settlers and have them construct cities in key locations. Just make sure that these cities are some distance from the enemy's area of cultural influence. Make sure you have at least one military unit in each of these towns.

One strategy to employ during the war, especially if you're kicking ass, is to offer a peace treaty to the civilization you're attacking but demand money, researched advancements, and their world map in exchange for peace. If they give in to your demands, agree to the treaty, but immediately re-declare war on your next turn. This move will damage your reputation with the other civilizations, so weigh that risk against the potential benefits.

There's one more thing that you'll need to keep your eyes on while you're fighting a war, and that's your own people. If you're using a representative system of government, your people can (and will) get tired of it all, and uprisings will cripple your cities. Once this happens, negotiate for peace. If you expect to be fighting a lot of wars, switch to a non-representative system of government, such as communism.

Heresy, you say? It's okay to be a Red if you control the world and the people's will!

When waging war, use the full might of your military, including bombers to reach cities away from the front lines.

THE SIMS HOT DATE

Before heading downtown, choose your goal and get the best bang for your simoleons.

MEET NEW PEOPLE. Downtown is a great place to meet new Sims. The most cost-effective way to do this is to visit any lot downtown and meet people on the street. Use the greet interactions, then the "Ask-What Are You In To?" interaction to see if you have compatible interests. Another great way to meet people *and* keep the fun score high is to rent boats at the park. You'll automatically start talking to anyone else playing with boats or feeding fish at the ponds.

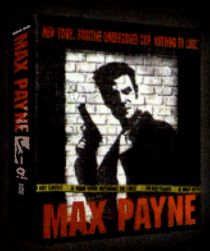
FRIENDS. Sims need lots of friends to get ahead in their careers. Once you've met a friendly Sim downtown, go home, call them on the phone, and ask them to accompany you downtown on your next visit. Since hygiene doesn't matter over the phone, it's less risky than asking in person. (Low-hygiene Sims will find it very hard to get a date in person!) Sims on a budget may prefer to relax in the lounge chairs at the beach. Sims will chat and increase relationships all day and night in these chairs, and it doesn't cost a single simoleon! But building a friendship this way takes a long time, and you risk losing other friendships in the meantime. If you have the money, take a prospective buddy out to dinner or to a bar, where you can use the new dining or bar social interactions, giving you access to social options not usually available to new relationships.

LOVERS. While the Hot Tub is sexy, it's expensive and stuck at home. If you want the sparks to really fly, try taking a date to dinner and snuggling up in the cozy dining booths of your favorite restaurant. If you have a high enough relationship (and don't stink), your date will accept the cuddle interaction. Once you're cuddling, try for the Kiss, Caress, Romantic Kiss, or even the Make Out kiss, if you feel lucky. These are very powerful relationship boosters.

GIFTS. Downtown is a good place to pick up gifts. The best way to see if a Sim will like something is to take them on a date downtown and buy gifts with them. Their thought balloons will show how much they like or dislike something before you give it to them.

If you really want to win your date's affections, you can't beat the local fried-fish emporium.

"IF JOHN WOO WERE TO MAKE A GAME, THIS IS WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE."*



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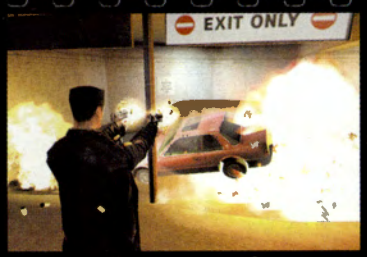

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*QUOTE FROM COMPUTER GAMES MAGAZINE

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STAR WARS:

Galactic Battlegrounds

So the six races play fundamentally the same, but there's a unique unit on each side offering a fresh angle on attack or defense. Here's how to make the most of that special unit, ensuring strategic success and universal domination. It's the Force, y'know.

Dark Troopers can detect hidden units and are stronger than your average Stormtrooper.

GENERAL TIPS

- Build five or so Heavy Assault Mechs (AT-ATs, Large Fambaas) and load them up with basic infantry. Start attacking a defenseless enemy building with the Assault Mechs and when enemy reinforcements arrive, unload your troops to trash them. Have another sneak-attack force ready to attack the enemy base from another side.
- Shielded walls provide excellent defense against ground forces, but they can withstand only a few attacks if the enemy has Heavy Pummels. Make sure you have adequate defensive units (Deployed Cannons, Heavy Artillery) to counter their heavy machine units.
- Put shield generators all around your base. They provide unshielded buildings and units with enough protection to deflect almost all damage from infantry attack.
- Food is *the* most important resource to monitor. Early on in a game, it can be the most erratic and inconsistent supply to come by, so make sure you develop a system for producing it immediately.

GUNGAN UNIQUE UNIT: FAMBAA SHIELD GENERATOR

The FSG is a mobile unit that provides any army with a powerful defense. Units or buildings around an FSG are given the same amount of shields as hit points. This benefit gives any Gungan army an edge on the battlefield. Use FSGs in conjunction with strong units to maximize their efficiency.

Attack with a few Large Fambaas and Heavy Artillery units along with about three FSGs. Use infantry units and an adequate anti-air defense to take down other infantry units and air units. Be sure to bring along the most crucial units, the Heavy Pummels, to destroy walls, defensive structures, and inner buildings with haste and ease. If you can, bring the pummels in an Air Transport for easier movement. Just watch for anti-air turrets and troopers.

Lastly, bring one or two cannons for extra support damage. This attack force should be able to break down the enemy's front-line defense. Not only will the shielded units be hard to defeat, but they'll also take time to destroy. While your opponent is busy defending his base, build another attack force that is also shielded, so if the first wave fails, the second wave can continue the assault. Unfortunately, this wave approach takes resources and time to build, so it'd be smart to create many workers and an adequate defense while building.

FSGs can also be used to shield buildings. Though their range of shields don't match those of Shield Generator buildings, they cost less. FSGs can also move to shield other buildings that are attacked, or move if the buildings around them have been destroyed.

This unique unit allows Gungans to have one of the greatest defenses in the game. Few units can match this one's benefits.

EMPIRE UNIQUE UNIT: DARK TROOPER

The Dark Trooper is a strong Strike Mech that can detect hidden units. Besides this ability, this uber-Stormtrooper has no other distinguishing features. However, these units make some of the best front-line infantry in any assault.

Dark Troopers are durable, with plenty of hit points, so send them in first Keep enemy troops busy with the Dark Troopers and use Heavy Artillery shots to destroy the weakened units. More often than not, the infantry will fall with the first volley, but if any survive, they'll charge at the Heavy Artillery, forgetting about the Dark Troopers — a fatal mistake. Be wary of skilled opponents who'll retreat, regroup, and attack from another direction.

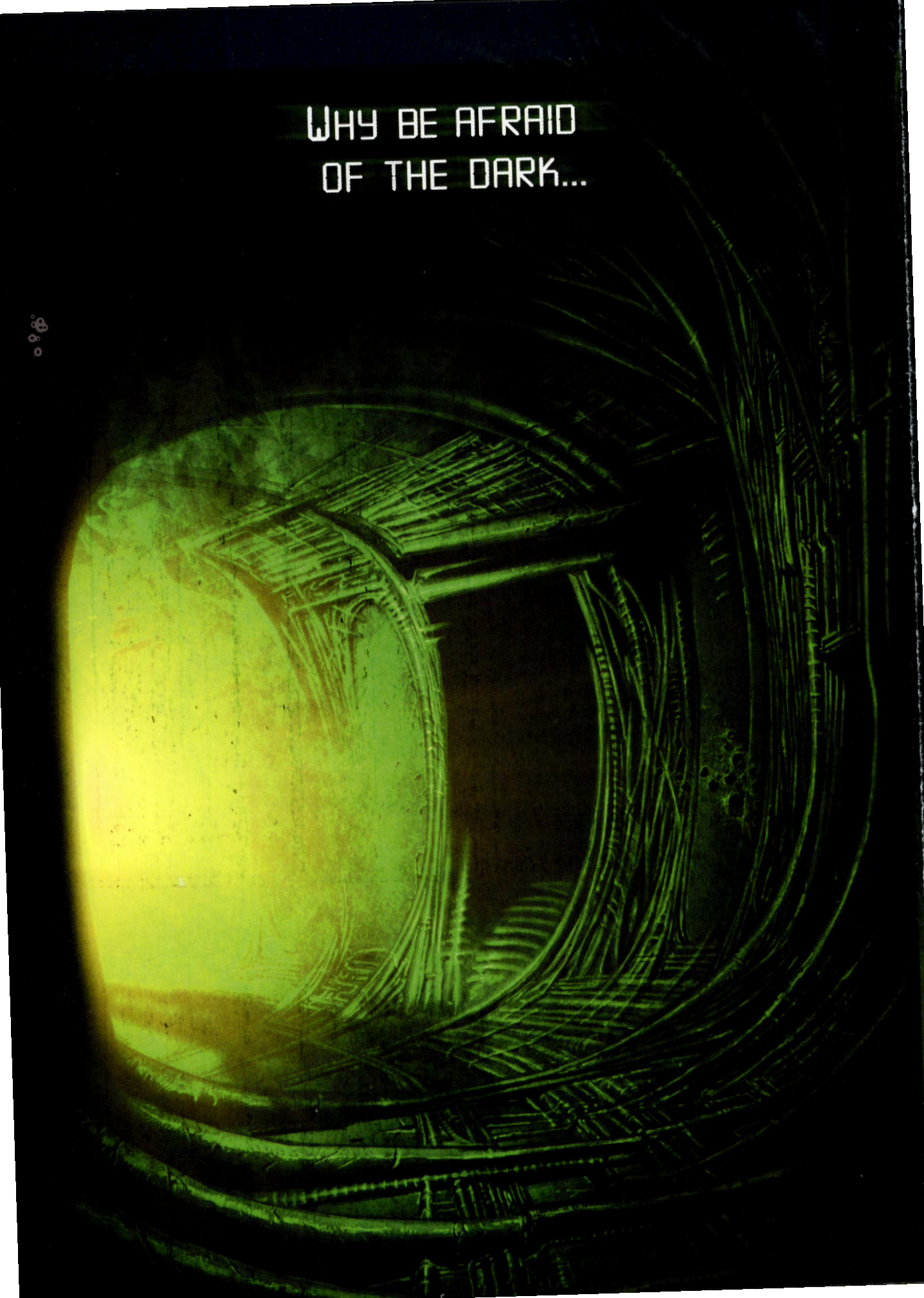
Though adept at wasting infantry, Dark Troopers will barely scratch buildings. In addition, mounted troops and defensive buildings turn Dark Troopers into Bantha fodder.

The Fambaa Shield Generator: vital for your offensive units' protection.

Durable shields make Destroyer Droids good defensive and offensive units.

Berserkers are great at different types of offensive melee attacks.

Royal Crusaders, while melee units, are very effective defensively.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THE EVOLUTION OF FEAR
ALIENS VERSUS PREDATOR 2

TRADE FEDERATION UNIQUE UNIT: DESTROYER DROID

Armed with heavy weaponry, built with strong armor, and topped with almost impenetrable shields, the Destroyer Droid can easily take out enemy infantry — and it can do so without taking much damage, making it one of the best units to deploy in both a defensive and offensive role.

Like the Dark Trooper, Destroyer Droids make good front-line units. Their strong lasers and resistant shields allow them to penetrate enemy bases. Place some near enemy infantry-production buildings and direct some to destroy farms and workers. Every infantry unit that is produced will be instantly killed by the Destroyer Droids — and any shot or two the infantry pull off before dying will be absorbed by Droids' shields. With all infantry reinforcements having been destroyed instantly by Destroyer Droids, the Heavy Pummels and Heavy Artillery will have an easy time trashing the base.

Defensively, Destroyer Droids' shields can take myriad infantry shots before being disabled. However, Destroyer Droids can't attack air units, which can penetrate their shields. Be sure to have anti-air defense around the Destroyer Droids. and they'll be almost unbeatable.

WOOKIEE UNIQUE UNIT: BERSERKER

Upon building a fortress, you'll have the ability to create Berserkers. While Berserkers have no projectile weapons to speak of, their hand-to-hand combat skills are unparalleled. Because they're fairly cheap to make once you have a steady and consistent supply of food, they're very easy to mass-produce. Once you have a group of five or more, they became virtually unstoppable as an offensive weapon when attacking smaller bases and groups of enemies.

For attacking larger bases, they can be used *very* effectively in collaboration with grenadier units. By backing up your Berserkers with lines of grenadiers (or any units capable of shooting projectiles), they'll be protected from extreme fire before reaching their target. Without this backup, Berserkers are *highly* susceptible to heavy fire from a distance.

ROYAL NABOO UNIQUE UNIT: ROYAL CRUSADER

After building a fortress as the Royal Naboo, you'll have access to the Royal Crusaders. They're tremendously powerful in hand-to-hand and melee combat. Because they're extremely efficient in destroying offensive Mechs, they work as a primary form of protection for your bases. Build enough to put around your entire perimeter, and place them strategically. A medium-sized group of Royal Crusaders will usually make very quick work of oncoming tanks. Using them in conjunction with defensive turrets will provide unsurpassed protection for your bases.

While Royal Crusaders are ideally suited for defensive combat, they can easily be used to perform offensive melee attacks. Much like the Wookiee Berserker, they can be very powerful and effective when grouped together. When backed up by projectile-firing units, Royal Crusaders can obliterate small bases and groups of enemies very quickly. Remember, it's infinitely more effective to use medium-sized waves of melee attacks than to send in all your Crusaders at once.

REBEL ALLIANCE UNIQUE UNIT: AIRSPEEDER

After constructing a Rebel Alliance fortress, you'll be able to build Airspeeders. Useful as scouts, they're relatively strong air vehicles that are inexpensive to mass-produce.

If you want to severely weaken or destroy an enemy base, attacking independently with a large group of Airspeeders can be very efficient. In numbers, they can destroy virtually any unit or building in a matter of seconds. Because most players (including CPU opponents) don't usually allow for massive aerial attacks, they'll literally have no way of defending against such an attack. So use *all* possible Airspeeders at once during a massive attack rather than attacking in waves. The more Airspeeders you have, the more effective the attack will be.

It's extremely hard to defend a base against heaps of attacking Airspeeders.

CHEATER'S CORNER

Project Eden

When the game installs, it creates a shortcut on your desktop. Right-click on this shortcut and select "Properties." On the "Target" line, you should see the default path C:\Program Files\Core Design\Project Eden\Eden.EXE. At the end of this line, add one space and type -cheats (giving you C:\Program Files\Core Design\Project Eden\Eden.EXE -cheats). Now start the game using the shortcut, and, during gameplay, go to your Resource Menu (by right-clicking) and look for the tiny icon in the lower righthand corner of the screen. Click on this icon to bring up a cheat menu.

Red Faction

During gameplay, hit ~ to bring up the console, type one of the following cheats, and then hit Enter.

bighugmug All weapons and ammo.
vivalahelvig God mode.
heehoo Fly mode.
camera1, camera2, camera3 Changes camera perspective.

EASTER EGG: On Disc 2, in the data\movies folder, is a file called technochunk.exe. Run it for a laugh.

Zoo Tycoon

NAME A GUEST:
Mr. Orange, Mr. White, Mr. Blonde, Mr. Brown, Mr. Pink, or Mr. Blue: Colors of buildings and guests' clothing will change appropriately.
Russell C All exhibit fences become broken, freeing animals.
Adam Levesque Get all animal-care programs.
Lou Catanzaro Get all animal-enrichment programs.
John Wheeler Get all animal shelters.
Hank Howie Get all staff-education programs.
Steve Serafino Get all endangered animals.
Andrew Binder Get all animal houses.
Charlie Peterson Get all exhibit foliage.
Akiyama Unlock all scenarios that ship with the game.
Alfred H Crows and seagulls will appear, sending guests running and screaming.

NAME AN EXHIBIT:
Kathmandu Get the Yeti.
Blue Fang Guests will be double-charged for the use of buildings without them noticing.
Microsoft Get double the normal donations at exhibits
Xanadu Get the Unicorn.
Wonderland Get a bonus toward the chance of guests entering the zoo.
Cretaceous Corral Get the Triceratops.

Name a female tour guide Rosalie, and all your tour guides will work for free.
Name a bear Deer, and the bear will immediately break out of its exhibit.

DATES:
If the real-world date is Oct. 31, all buildings and guests will start off orange and black, new guests will enter wearing orange and black, a flying witch will make appearances, and a Jack-O'-Lantern is available for placement.

If the game date is Dec. 25, a snowman and a Christmas tree are available for placement and Santa and his reindeer will fly across the map.

If the game date is Sept. 15 — the day that Microsoft and Blue Fang signed the contract for *Zoo Tycoon* — a biplane with the Microsoft logo will fly across the map pulling a Blue Fang banner. This will happen as long as a guest enters the zoo on that date.

MISC:
Pressing $ will give you $10,000, but weakens a random exhibit fence.
Pushing Ctrl-F will toggle on/off the drawing of all foliage on the map.
Penguins can kill pretty much any animal in the zoo. When they reach a happiness rating in the 90s, they will dance.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 103

C&C: Yuri's Revenge

The new units introduced by Westwood's terrific new *Red Alert 2* expansion are causing even seasoned players to re-evaluate well-worn strategies, and develop new ones. To help you get the jump on them, here's a tactical tour of all three factions, straight from the game's design team...

The new Soviet Boris unit can devastate enemy bases by calling in MiG air strikes.

Yuri Mastermind units can turn the tide of an armored battle by mind-controlling enemy tanks.

Siege Choppers are among the scariest new Soviet units, but are very vulnerable to Yuri's air defenses.

YURI'S FACTION

Since Yuri's technology uses an opponent's strengths against him, brute force and tank rushes won't work like they used to. But there's no bigger diss than seeing Yuri mind-control your paratroopers or Tesla Tanks and feed them into a grinder. And worse, one well-placed blast from his Genetic Mutator can turn a base defended by GIs and Conscripts into a base overrun by gray, hulking Brutes.

- Combinations of units are essential for winning with Yuri. Try a mix of Brutes, Gattling Tanks, and Lasher Tanks for siege attacks. Or swap the Brutes for a Mastermind, a pair of Magnetrons, and a Flying Saucer to raid bases for their units and cash.
- Pump out a few Brutes early to counter any early tank rushes. Later, you can supplement your defense with Psychic Towers to gain control of any marauding units.
- Tank Bunkers offer a great deal of protection, and they're cheap. If your enemy is keen on airborne assaults, order Gattling Tanks into your bunkers, and you've got a devastating defense against land and air attacks.
- If an opponent tries to overload your Mastermind unit, have the units that are being controlled attack the invading unit.
- If Robot Tanks are advancing on your position, have a few Flying Saucers handy. Saucers can drain power from an enemy base, causing Robot Tanks to go offline, unable to move or defend themselves.
- Chaos Drones mean big trouble for your foes. These units deploy a gas that causes enemy units to go berserk and attack their own. Alone, they're pretty defenseless, so mix in a few Lashers and Brutes for protection.
- The Virus sniper unit is best used when hidden behind buildings and beneath trees.

SOVIET FORCES

In *RA2*, the Soviets were all about slow-moving, heavily armored units. In *Yuri's Revenge*, that basic philosophy hasn't changed, but their arsenal now includes some lighter, faster units. The Soviets now also have Boris, an infantryman with considerable firing range and the ability to call in air strikes. He's also immune to mind control.

- When attacking Yuri, incorporate Terror Drones and dogs. They might be small, but they're immune to psychic attacks and can destroy Yuri Clones and Masterminds.
- Keep your Siege Choppers on the outskirts of your opponent's base and slowly inch them in: they're easily destroyed by anti-aircraft defenses. It's also wise to use Terror Drones and Flak Tracks to protect deployed Siege Choppers from attack.
- When using Boris, make sure he's hidden among trees, or placed on higher ground than his target.
- Build your Industrial Plant as soon as possible: it's essential for building large forces. A good Soviet base always has two war factories and one Industrial Plant.
- General tip: protect Machine Shops at all costs. They regenerate all your vehicles to 100%, making them priceless.
- Many of the skirmish maps have elevated terrain. An effective strategy is to land and deploy Siege Choppers on the plateaus and attack your enemy from above.

ALLIED FORCES

Previously reliant on light, fast-moving vehicles, the Allies now have some new units like the Battle Fortress that move a little slower but have vastly increased firepower. Tanya's now been elevated to hero status, making her immune to mind control and giving her increased firing range and armor.

- The new Guardian GI units make short work of heavy armor. Use them in groups of three around your base for extra protection against both land and air attacks.
- The best assault unit against a Yuri base is the Robot Tank. It can't be mind-controlled, can travel across water, and can float across different elevations. But don't forget, it needs power. For added firepower, mix in a few Mirage Tanks.
- Gap Generators are more precious than ever: use them to avoid Yuri's mind attacks. The first one should always go next to your War Factory.
- If you've got Chrono Legionnaires, drop them in a Battle Fortress for a potent attack combo. This setup can be used to whittle down any Soviet or Yuri force, but be careful: a Yuri clone can still use its mind powers to control it.

Yuri players, take note: the new ballistic missile subs can strike enemy bases virtually undetected.

The nuclear weapon is still potent, but it can't take out a fully charged enemy base with one hit.

play games.

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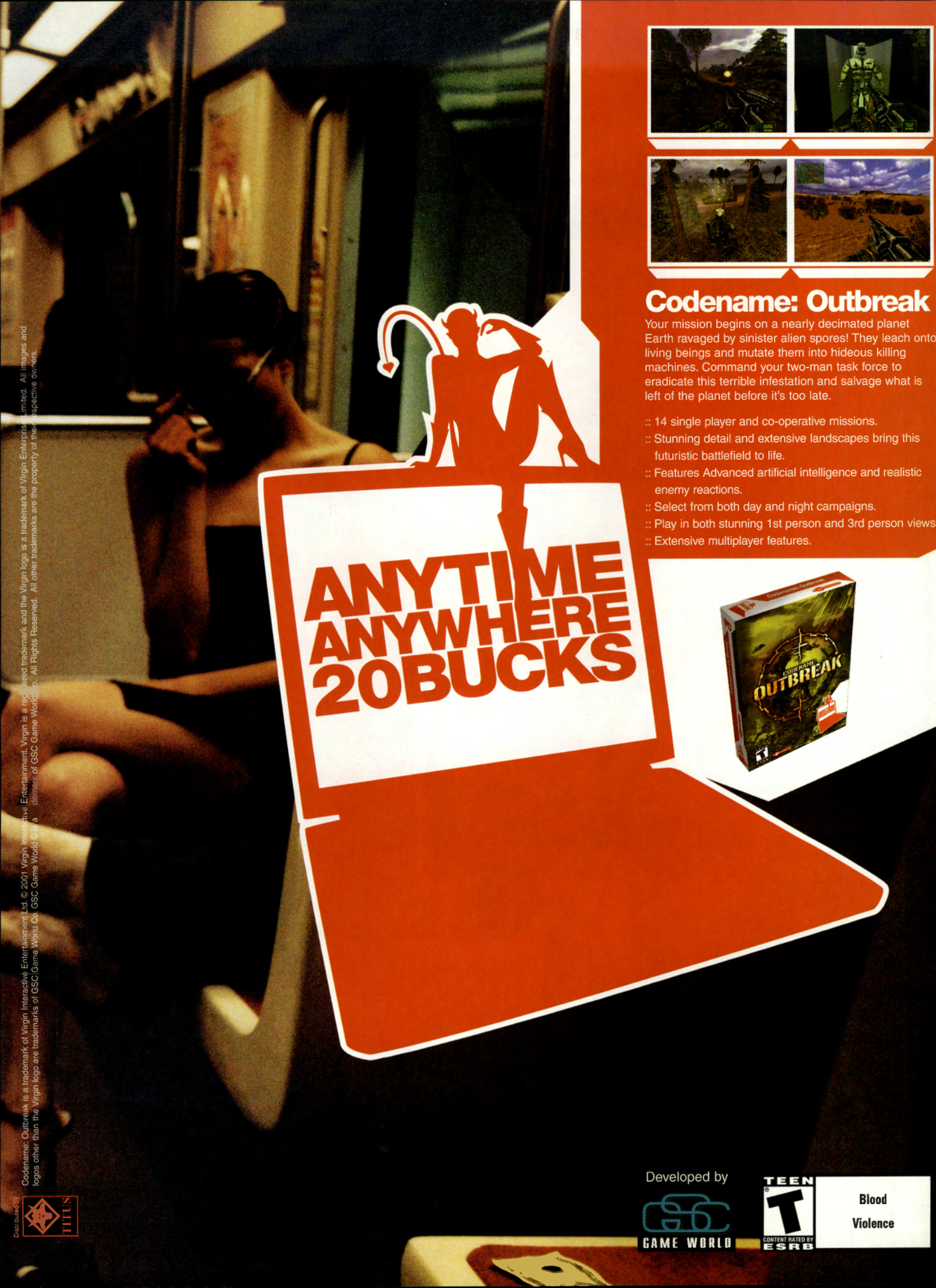
play games.



Codename: Outbreak

Your mission begins on a nearly decimated planet Earth ravaged by sinister alien spores! They leach onto living beings and mutate them into hideous killing machines. Command your two-man task force to eradicate this terrible infestation and salvage what is left of the planet before it's too late.

:: 14 single player and co-operative missions.
:: Stunning detail and extensive landscapes bring this futuristic battlefield to life.
:: Features Advanced artificial intelligence and realistic enemy reactions.
:: Select from both day and night campaigns.
:: Play in both stunning 1st person and 3rd person views.
:: Extensive multiplayer features.

Developed by

GSC GAME WORLD

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Violence

Distributed by TITUS

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Nightstone
:: Three playable characters. Choose among a Barbarian, an Amazon and a Wizard. Play as up to three characters at the same time.
:: Unique combination of RPG/Adventure/Strategy.
:: Enhanced enemies AI: The enemies can detect you by sound and vision.
:: Non linear gameplay, a total of 35 levels, in the shape of standalone missions.
:: Three different multiplayer modes: Deathmatch, Team Play or "Find the exit" with special maps, for up to 8 players connected to a LAN or via Internet.
:: Very easy to use level editor: build new levels to play on-line and add scripts to items and enemies in real time.
TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood
Violence
Screamer 4X4
:: 10 actual 4WD licensed vehicles to choose from.
:: Six different terrains, each with 10 courses to choose from.
:: Weather effects, coupled with different times of day.
:: Five multi-player games with unique courses: Catch Up, Destruction, First to Point, King of the Hill and Off-Road Rally.
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Original War

:: Innovative, intuitive RTS with an intriguing storyline.
:: RPG elements as the characters gain skill points for surviving sequential levels of play.
:: Each team member has individual attributes, which makes him or her more valuable.
:: Build your own unique team with individual personalities and abilities while harnessing elements from surrounding environments.
:: Incredibly detailed graphics, fluid gameplay, and real 'line-of-sight' battles.
:: Play as American Marines or Russian Soldiers in multiplayer mode.
:: Battle with 5 players in the multi-player mode.

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Strong Language
Violence

Cue Ball World

:: Play snooker, pool and a host of minigames.
:: World class ball physics that are just as accurate off the table as on.
:: Eight different immersive real world environnments – all fully animated.
:: A series of increasingly intelligent CPU player opponents.
:: Four highly addictive sub-games (stunt tables, maze tables, darts, thumb wrestling).

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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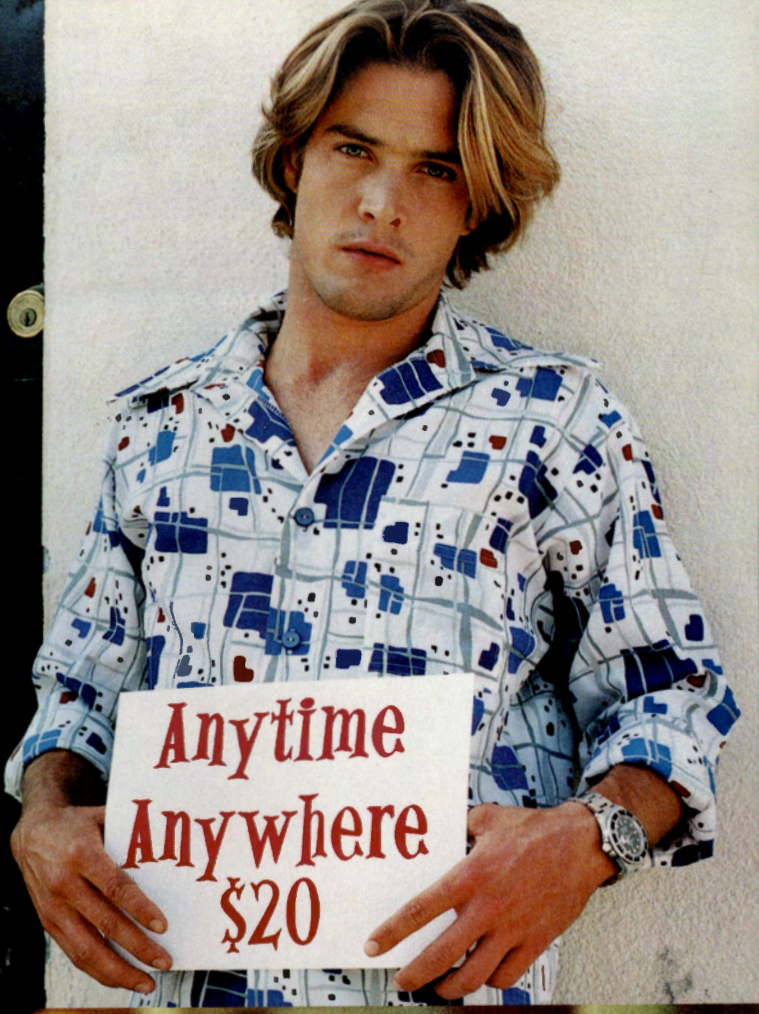
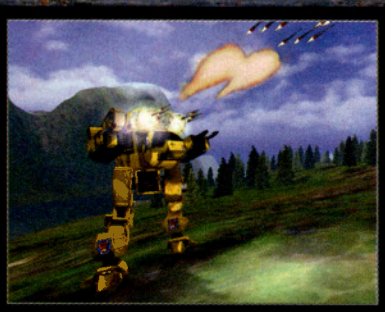


No murders to avenge.
No helpless families to save.
No morals to uphold.

Sweet.



You're the Black Knight and you've got better things to do. Like lead an infamous legion of rogue mercenaries into battle, trade weapons on the black market, even fight for the ruthless House Steiner. All while piloting the most badass 'Mechs ever. Welcome to the darker side of MechWarrior... Black Knight. Where it's good to be bad.

MECHWARRIOR 4 BLACK KNIGHT

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB VIOLENCE

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RATING SYSTEM

Only the greatest games should receive our coveted Editors' Choice award, and our rating system reflects that. With a quick glance at the score box in each review, you can see where the game fits into the great gaming scheme of quality.

90% — **100%–90% EDITORS' CHOICE**
It's not easy to get here, and it's darn near impossible to get a score near 100%. A game in this range comes with our unqualified recommendation, and is an absolute must-buy.

80% — **89%–80% EXCELLENT**
These are excellent games. Anything that scores in this range is well worth your purchase, and is likely a great example of its genre. This scoring range is also where we might reward specialist/niche games that are real breakthroughs in their own way.

70% — **79%–70% GOOD**
These are pretty good games that we'd recommend to fans of the particular genre, though it's a safe bet you can find better options.

60% — **69%–60% ABOVE AVERAGE**
Reasonable, above-average games. They might be worth buying, but they probably have a few significant flaws that limit their appeal.

50% — **59%–50% MERELY OKAY**
Very ordinary games. They're not completely worthless, but there are likely numerous better places to spend your gaming dollar.

40% — **49%–40% TOLERABLE**
Poor quality. Only a few slightly redeeming features keep these games from falling into the abyss of the next category.

30% — **39%–0% DON'T BOTHER**
Just terrible. And the lower you go, the more worthless you get. Avoid these titles like the plague, and don't say we didn't warn you!

HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS

With each *PC Gamer* review, you'll find two very important pieces of information: the game's minimum hardware requirements and the hardware configurations we recommend as the *least* you'll need to really enjoy the game. While a game will run on the minimum system the manufacturer specifies, it might not run all that well. Because of this, we test each game on several systems so we can bring you a more realistic assessment of the horsepower you'll *really* need.

Return to Commander Keen

When id Software announced its plans to use the *Quake III* engine for an eye-popping update of its first classic game, we were extremely excited. After all, *Commander Keen* was a revolution in gaming — the first id game ever in 1990, and also the first action-platformer to feature a 10-year-old saving the galaxy.

Just imagine this id classic with *Quake III* graphics. It'd be...something.

Return to Commander Keen will be designed by Wicked Googly Software of Nova Scotia, Canada, under licensing agreement with id. *PC Gamer* negotiated the exclusive scoop to bring you the whole story of this upcoming masterpiece.

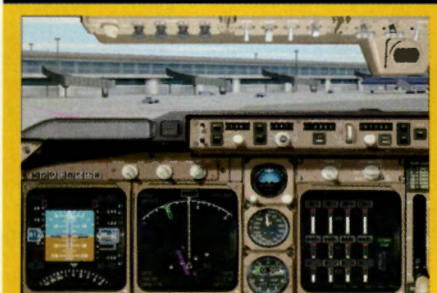
The game is set two weeks after the ending cinematic of the original. (Okay, it wasn't exactly a cinematic — more like an ending screen.) Billy Blaze, the civilian little-kid alter ego of space-faring Commander Keen, is about to turn 11 years old. But Billy is about to face his greatest threat ever — puberty!

After experiencing "special feelings" while watching some girls play dodgeball, Billy decides to sublimate the new sensations by pouring yet more effort into his double life as galactic superhero Commander Keen. But alas! It turns out that his heroics are needed to liberate the planet Wowlookatem, where a curvaceous Amazon dictator has enslaved the population.

"As id has grown up since then, we want Commander Keen to have grown up as well," says project director Rich Guy. "We wanted the character to join the mature, more sophisticated pantheon of PC gaming greats. And that meant a leather-clad dominatrix villainess with great big jumblies."

With the Quake III.a.1.0x engine providing trilinear-flipflopping graphical power, the jumping puzzles and raygun effects should be top-notch. We definitely can't wait to check out the all-new, all-spectacular *Return to Commander Keen*.

DON'T MISS...



FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2002 pg. 58

Microsoft makes a big step forward in the evolution of its world-renowned flight-sim series. Andy Mahood brings you a detailed accounting of the 2002 edition, which features new planes, new cockpits, new terrain features, and impressive new avionics.

DARK AGE OF CAMELOT pg. 80

We may finally have the *EverQuest* killer. This massively multiplayer online RPG hosts a deep, rich environment where you're truly encouraged to roleplay characters. It's already got 100,000 players, and that total will only climb as more people get wind of this awesome experience.

ESRB RATINGS In each issue, we'll be supplying the ESRB rating of each of the games we review on the Category line in the "Vital Stats" box. The Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) is an industry association that provides parents with useful guides to the maturity level of the games available on store shelves. A rating of "E" (for "Everyone") indicates that a game is suitable for all ages. A game rated "T" (for Teen) may contain some objectionable material, and you should examine the box for specific content guidelines before purchasing it. An "M" rating (for "Mature") indicates that a game is not suitable for minors. "RP" indicates "Rating Pending."

MS Flight Simulator 2002

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

Microsoft gets it perfect with the very best *Flight Sim* ever.

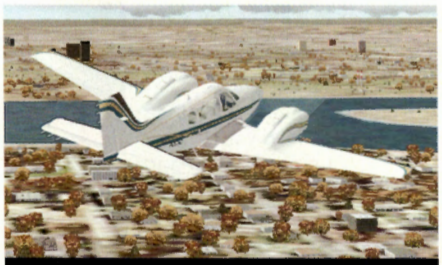
It was only a couple of years ago that Microsoft's *Flight Sim 2000* proved to be a buggy slideshow that was all but unplayable on mid-range PCs. With the release of *Flight Simulator 2002*, however, the Redmond gang has introduced some of the most sweeping technological advancements to hit the genre in years. Competitors like *Fly! II* and *X-Plane* would be well-advised to start stocking up on extra oxygen right now if they ever want to fly in the same rarified air as this civilian flight-sim opus.

VITAL STATS

CATEGORY Flight sim (T)
DEVELOPER Microsoft
PUBLISHER Microsoft
REQUIRED PII 300, 64MB RAM, 650MB HD, 8MB 3D card
WE RECOMMEND PIII 800, 128MB RAM, 2GB HD, 32MB 3D card, joystick or flight yoke
MAXIMUM PLAYERS 16

Learning some valuable lessons from last year's *Combat Flight Simulator 2*, Microsoft has succeeded in turning out the most visually stunning PC flight sim ever. Although load-times can be quite lengthy as a result of all this fresh eye candy, the sim's streamlined new graphics engine is surprisingly devoid of any significant gameplay hiccups or frame-rate hits, particularly if you've got the recommended level of hardware. It's even smooth on a PII 400, though.

These fluid frame-rates are especially remarkable when you consider the exponentially greater level of graphic detail in *FS2002*. Ingenious new AutoGen scenery populates the terrain beneath you with appropriate 3D buildings, trees, and landscape elements. It's complemented by dozens of photorealistic cities and airports, as well as enhanced visual effects like jet contrails, volumetric clouds, downloadable real-time weather, and stunning lighting effects.



FS2002's scenery engine places appropriate buildings and vegetation as you fly over different terrain.

The new 3D virtual cockpit (working instruments included) may become the standard for VFR pilots.

Toss in a database of over 21,000 worldwide airports with breathtaking mountain ranges and coastlines (complete with breaking waves), and you wind up with one of the most spectacular flight environments that you'll find outside of a real plane.

Instrument Flight Rules pilots also have quite a bit to cheer about. Microsoft has added a long-overdue Air Traffic Control module that finally brings the franchise into the 21st century. You can now file an IFR flight plan that involves full ATC participation all the way from pushback to touchdown, and dozens of AI aircraft share the crowded airways (and airwaves) with you.

The sense of immersion goes beyond any other game in this series. In fact, the only thing really missing is the little guy with the flashlights helping you park your jumbo.

Like its immediate predecessor, *FS2002* ships in both a standard and Professional version. The former features a 12-aircraft hangar, including the new Cessna 208 Caravan floatplane and Boeing 747-400. The Pro Edition offers 16 planes, including a Beech Baron 58 twin and a fixed-gear Cessna 208 Grand Caravan. Many of these aircraft boast impressive virtual 3D cockpits (with working instruments), and their flight modeling remains as solid as ever. But as is usual for the *FS* series, the Boeing "heavies" are sadly lacking in detailed real-world instrumentation.

The game's accommodating open-architecture design will eventually allow add-on developers to address this shortcoming, but until then, owners of the Pro version can entertain themselves with that edition's bundled aircraft editor and gmax 3D modeling tool. (The Pro Edition also boasts a nifty "Instructor's Station" option that lets you generate systems failures and weather changes on another user's computer.)

Apart from the inexcusable absence of a printed manual, it's awfully difficult to find any significant faults with *Flight Simulator 2002*. The new release delivers everything that a dedicated flight-simmer could ask for. This game will be a very hard act to follow for a long time to come.

— Andy Mahood

My 10-passenger Cessna 208 Caravan floatplane makes a splash near Seattle's Space Needle.

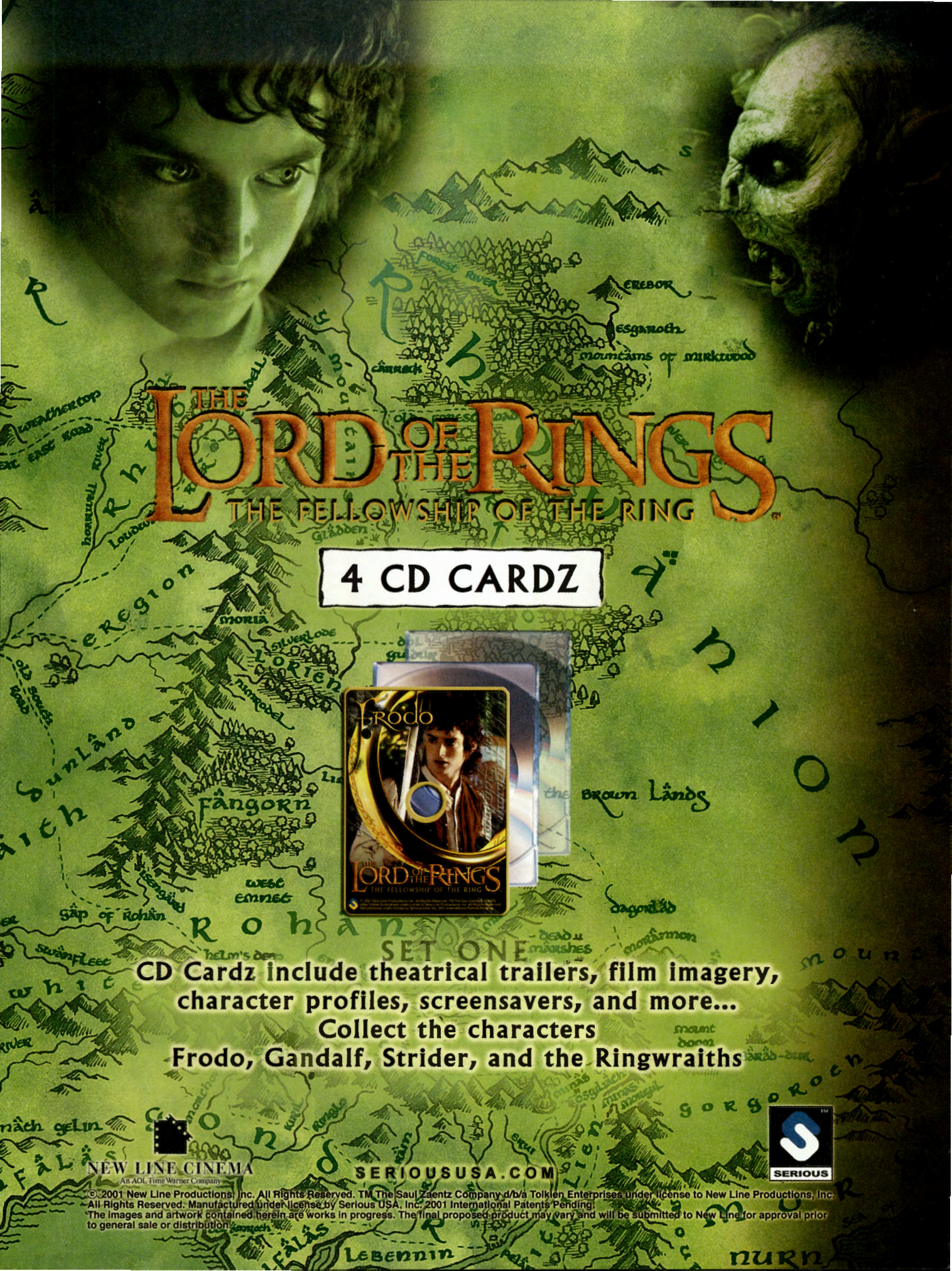
FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Superb graphics and frame-rates; over 21,000 airports; interactive ATC; open-architecture design.

LOWS: No printed manual; lengthy load-times; simplified jumbo instrumentation.

BOTTOM LINE: Microsoft's most ambitious and outstanding *Flight Sim* title to date.

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE **92%**



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The Sims: Hot Date

Take your Sims out on the town in the add-on that lets you stray off the block for the first time.

The Sims, as we all know, was a great game. If it had a critical flaw, it was that it didn't let you explore outside your Sims' house. Since the game's stunningly successful launch, *The Sims* has screamed for an add-on that would let you expand your horizons.

Hot Date goes much further than the first two expansions, allowing your Sims to venture into the outside world. And because this new addition is all about courtship, the interpersonal dynamics — a rather thin part of the original *Sims* design, I always thought — have been beefed up, too. The result is a cool new step forward for the behind-closed-doors lives of Simsdom.

VITAL STATS

CATEGORY Simulation (T)
DEVELOPER Maxis
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts
REQUIRED *The Sims*, PII 300, 64MB RAM, 600MB HD
WE RECOMMEND PII 450, 128MB RAM
MAXIMUM PLAYERS 1

Of course, the inherent perceived problem with any simulation of dating is that computer programmers — hardly the world's leading authorities on love and romance — created it. It's like asking us to accept a "realistic" flight simulation designed by plumbers.

But any concerns you may have about authenticity are largely irrelevant once you realize that this is, after all, *The Sims*, and *Hot Date*'s simulation of the romantic merry-go-round is every bit as stylized and arbitrary as *The Sims*' representation of life as a whole. Proceed with that in mind and you'll have plenty of fun.

The heart of *Hot Date* is a new Downtown area, to which all the local Sims have flocked in droves — presumably because they've all effectively been shut-ins up until now. So call a cab and choose your destination — there's a beach, a park, a mall, a restaurant, and various other locations for you to find the virtual mate of your dreams.

Of course, getting a Sim to take you up on your offer of a date, much less take their pants off, isn't going to be easy: just as in real life, gaining someone's affection is achieved via a skillful balance of conversation, flirting, compliments, and tickling. The happy news is that stalking doesn't seem to be much of a crime in *Hot Date*, and the game allows for the kind of persistence that might normally get one thrown in the cooler.

Here's the new Downtown area in all its glory. Plenty of prime pick-up opportunities here. Get out and find yourself some love!

If the ready-made Downtown isn't to your liking, you can create your own personal meet-market with a new set of building materials and objects. There are some new, *Hot Date*–specific character types, too (including a Blonde Bombshell, Jock, and Femme Fatale), so you can step into the shoes of the romantic alter-ego that best suits you. (Funny, there's no "pallid PC game reviewer" character.)

Hot Date's a great product for Simphiles, but a word of warning to people who expect it to re-invent *The Sims* — it doesn't. It definitely adds more than the two preceding expansion packs, but it's still a slave to the simplistic mechanics that, for many, start to get old after a few weeks of play.

If nothing else, *Hot Date* does offer a tantalizing preview of the kind of social interactions and communal areas that will be possible once the game's long-awaited online incarnation becomes a reality.

— Gary Whitta

Some things never change: the malt shop is a prime spot for a good old-fashioned all-American date.

You can try picking up chicks at the mall's fashion boutiques, but that's a bit creepy, don't you think?

If you're not having much luck in one area, just call a cab and try your pick-up lines somewhere else.

FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: It's great to get out of the house; plenty of romantic possibilities and fun situations.

LOWS: Not enough new gameplay for the unconvinced; still no hardcore shagging scenes.

BOTTOM LINE: A fun step for *The Sims*' evolution, and an exciting glimpse of (hopefully) things to come.

PC GAMER 80%
EXCELLENT

FALCON MACH V

THE DEFINITION OF "AIR SUPERIORITY"

GEAR of the YEAR 2001
MAXIMUM PC

"If you thought the end of the Cold War meant a halt to weapons R&D, think again. Falcon Northwest's new MACH V proves that plenty of cash continues to flow into the campaign against the tyranny of slow 3D Gaming. Like a freshly declassified fighter-bomber, the system swooped in and precision-bombed nearly every benchmark record in existence." VERDICT: 10/10, Kickass Product Award, Gear of the Year (Best Desktop System)
-Maximum PC

"In total, we evaluated 7 power and 11 value systems... Falcon Northwest's MACH V game machine is the unrivaled speed champ in this lineup. ...the (Athlon XP 1800+) MACH V we tested scored a 121 on PC Worldbench 4, setting a record for performance and beating the fastest Pentium 4 system we tested by 14 points. This system is fast and fun." TALON 3.1: "...this Talon posted a stunning PC Worldbench 4 score of 116, second only to another Falcon - our power list's (MACH V)"
- PC World

"FALCON SETS A NEW HIGH-WATER MARK WITH ITS BEST-EVER PC The Falcon team have always been excellent system builders, but this new computer is the cleanest, best-cabled model we've ever seen from them. It's Falcon's best MACH V to date. We're smitten." Score: 95%, Editor's Choice Award
- PC Gamer

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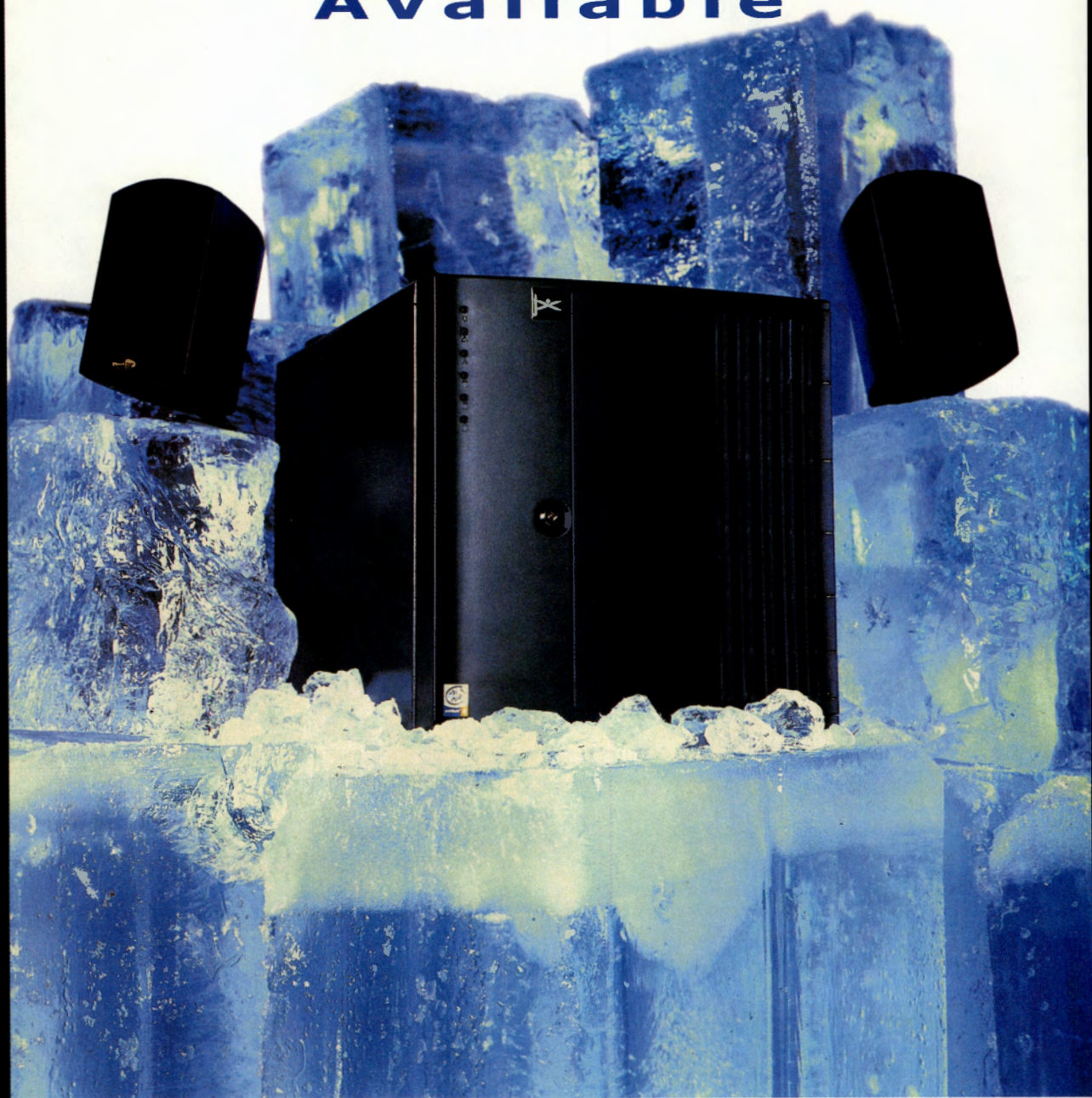

*Ice Not Included

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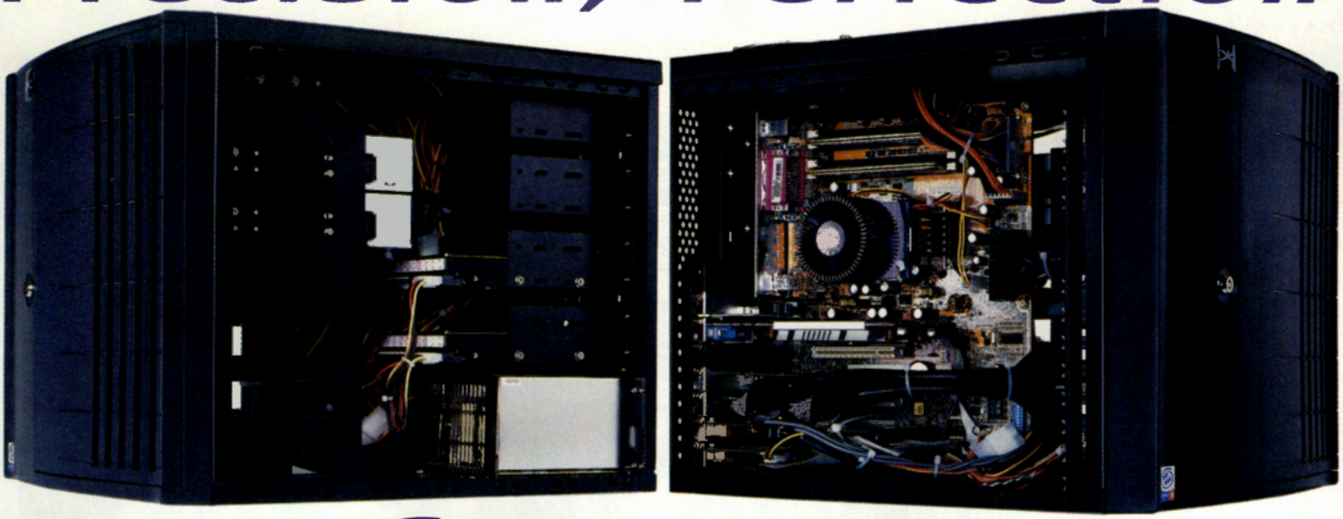

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- Thermaltake® Indigo Orb Active CPU Cooler
- ***Black*** 'Mini-Cube' Case with 300 Watt PS
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- 256MB Samsung® PC-800 RDRAM
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- NVidia® GeForce3™ Ti-500 nFinite-FX™ GPU 64MB DDR Video Adapter
- ***Black*** Plextor® 24x/10x/40x EIDE CDR/CDRW
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Return to Castle Wolfenstein

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

Nazis, zombies, and now with added airstrikes — yep, *Wolfenstein* is back with a bang.

I'll spare you the sentimental retrospective about how the original *Wolfenstein 3D* birthed the first-person-shooter craze and get straight to the point: *Return to Castle Wolfenstein* is a damn, damn fine game. Want a perfect example of how far the first-person-shooter genre has evolved since it first hit our 386s? *Wolf*, as it's affectionately known, is *it*. The game's graphics, sound, and gameplay reflect all the improvements and advances we've made in the last decade, and wraps them together in one genuinely fun, challenging, and varied package, with a pretty little multiplayer bow on top (see boxout, next page).

VITAL STATS

CATEGORY	Action (M)
DEVELOPER	Nerve/Gray Matter
PUBLISHER	Activision
REQUIRED	PII 400, 128MB RAM, 800MB HD, 16MB RAM 3D card
WE RECOMMEND	PIII 850, 128MB RAM, GeForce2 or higher
MAXIMUM PLAYERS	64

Our hero, U.S. Army Ranger B.J. Blazkowicz, makes the move from flat 2D sprites to the lush and beautiful 3D world of id Software's *Quake III* engine. To say that he and his Nazi nemeses have never looked better is an understatement of epic proportions. This collective facelift gloriously brings to life the German army and Nazi commandos, brings half-to-life undead zombies, and brings an imposing life to the baddest cyborg monstrosities since *Doom II*'s Cyberdemon.

The enemies have up to 150 different looks, and their level of detail is amazing.

The FG42 paratrooper rifle is *tough*, but you'll need something bigger to beat these cybernetic baddies.

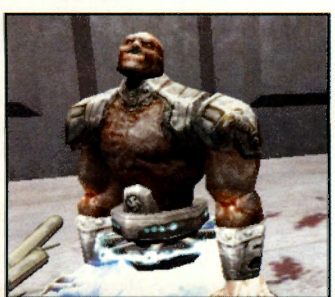
High-res textures, smooth animations, and detailed character models are just some of the treats *Wolfenstein* has to offer. Nazi soldiers have immaculately detailed uniforms, complete with medals, patches, and insignia. Enemy troops encountered on the battlefield look the part: many wear the scars of battle, bloody bandages, and tattered clothes. As an added treat, the all-female elite guards of the SS Paranormal Division cram their svelte bodies into tight leather outfits that would make Lara Croft blush.

Not only do these characters look great, but they move great, too. Sentries walk the perimeter, stopping from time to time to curse their guard duty lot with a buddy or smoke a cigarette. Elite Guards perform various acrobatic flips as they shred you to bits with their Sten guns. And zombies shamble like no other videogame zombie has shambled before, all thanks to some very well-executed motion-capturing.

These bad guys aren't dumb, either. While you won't run into the same level of AI complexity that impressed us so much in *Ghost Recon*, these enemies are certainly capable of giving you a thorough and humiliating spanking if you slack off. Snipers armed with the devastating paratrooper rifle duck behind cover between shots rather than staying exposed, and soldiers are alerted when they see the bodies of fallen comrades.

As B.J., you begin as a prisoner in the dungeons of the Nazi-controlled castle: You've been captured while checking out reports of paranormal goings-on. Escaping from Castle Wolfenstein is just a small part of the game. As the story unfolds, you'll travel all over World War II Europe, from

Your flamethrower is useless against certain bad guys, such as this venom trooper armed with one of his own.



As you learn more about wicked Nazi experiments, you'll meet more bizarre enemies. The Loper leaps with tesla power, and the Super Soldier (below) is a super-badass.

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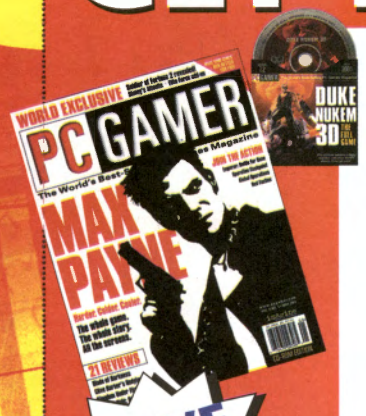

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PC GAMER

MULTIPLAYER BLISS

NOT TO BE OUTDONE by the developers of the single-player part of *Return to Castle Wolfenstein*, Nerve has created what is easily one of the best multiplayer packages ever to ship with a game. The core of this portion resides in eight team-based multiplayer maps.

In "Village," the Allies must storm a cemetery and steal gold from Nazi defenders. "Castle" is a close-quarters battle in Castle Wolfenstein itself. Other maps include "Das Boot," an attack on a Nazi subpen; "Beach Invasion," the beach landing map used for the multiplayer tests; and our favorite, "Destruction," a pitched fight to control a small bombed-out town. "Destruction" plays much like some of the *Day of Defeat* levels we've come to love so much, only better.

Granted, some of the levels, such as "Das Boot," are a little *too* big and convoluted, especially for small groups of players. But great character classes provide tons of tactical depth: Medics heal and revive fallen comrades, Engineers have dynamite for breaching obstacles, Lieutenants can call in airstrikes, and Soldiers have access to heavy weapons for all the grunt work. In this game, more than any other we've played in a long time, teamwork is crucial. The right balance of Medics, Engineers, Lieutenants, and Soldiers can help ensure victory.

What does this all mean? Good times galore — and for now, goodbye to *Day of Defeat*.

Next to the flamethrower, the tesla gun is one of the coolest weapons in the game. Its electric arc homes in on multiple enemies.

When the fast-firing venom gun starts ripping through enemies, it tears 'em to shreds. Watch the heat meter, and let the gun cool between bursts.

snow-capped mountains to bombed-out cities, infiltrating secret underground labs and ancient crypts. With each level, you'll uncover more about a Nazi scheme to crush the Allies by harnessing the powers of the undead.

Once again, the *Quake III* engine shines brightly. Dark tombs look wicked and foreboding thanks to eerie fog, cracked sarcophagi, and flickering torches. A secret weapons factory is replete with shiny Death Star flooring and wondrously reflective textures. Even more spectacular levels are the ones that re-create alpine villages, some of which have been ravaged by war. These environments all bristle with the polish that makes some games truly great. It's all in the details, be it rust on metal grating, moss on stone walls, or Nazi propaganda posters hanging in the castle hallways.

The sound department is no slouch, either. PC sound has improved dramatically in just the past year, and recent releases have all showcased superb sound effects. *Return to Wolf* is no exception: the audio in this game is easily on par with the terrific sound in *Ghost Recon*. Bullets make different noises depending on what materials they impact against, the flamethrower emits a breathtaking whoosh when fired, and the screams from Nazi soldiers desperately trying to pat out the flames will make you smile the morbid smile of victory *[or in Rob's case, cackle like a maniacal madman — Ed.]*. The sound-design team paid every bit as much attention to detail as the modelers and level designers, and complemented by the game's dynamic music, the result is an aural masterpiece.

The mission objectives in *Wolfenstein* are some of the most diverse I've seen in an FPS. Some call for you to eliminate all

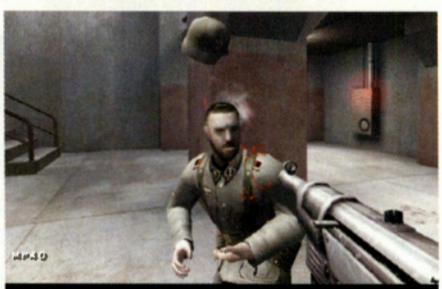
So hot, yet so bad. Never before have we been so conflicted about killing Nazis.

By sneaking up on unsuspecting enemies, you can backstab them — a guaranteed one-stab kill.

Cool in-game cutscenes keep the story moving. Here, some Nazi scientists experiment on Lopers.

A head-on attack against numerous foes is suicide. You'll have to be smarter than that to win the game.

When using the flamethrower, douse your enemies with a quick stream, then run away and let 'em burn.



Did I shoot off this guard's helmet, or is he just really surprised to see me?

opposition, both living and undead, while others include escorting a tank through a Nazi-held town, sneaking into an enemy camp, and (my personal favorite) assassinating five high-ranking SS officers in a quiet countryside villa. A few of the missions require absolute stealth, but it's not over if you're spotted — only if you're spotted and the person who saw you is able to sound the alarm. A savvy gamer will take out the guard before the button is pressed, or better yet, destroy the button itself so no alarm can be sounded.

Other missions are completely open-ended, and while it's fun to kick down a door and pump the surprised SS troops full of .45-caliber slugs, the stealthy approach is incredibly satisfying. Silently creeping up to a Nazi scumbag and knifing him in the back is guaranteed to be one of the best moments in gaming this year.

A few people have voiced concern that the inclusion of zombies would compromise the game's gritty WWII feel, but trust me when I say that their worries are completely unwarranted. When the zombies are introduced to the game, it's in a part of the story where they make sense, and you won't see them anywhere else. Also, you don't spend that much time fighting these gruesome corpses. The meat of your opposition will come from the German Army, and later in the game you'll encounter some impressively tough cyborg mutations called Lopers.

The biggest challenge, though, comes from the bosses, and in *Wolfenstein*, you'll have to deal with some of the hardest end-level battles ever. These epic shootouts will pit you against mechanized supersoldiers, a large SS woman possessed by demonic spirits, and other horrors that are best kept secret. Strangely enough, while these struggles are tough, and the chances of you winning on your first try are slim, they're truly thrilling. I finally downed the final boss with just four health remaining, and Rob managed it with eight health and his last remnants of ammo — a perfect example of the finely honed game balance, which gives you a real sense of accomplishment.

The arsenal is made up mostly of real-life WWII weaponry such as MP-40 submachine-guns, Thompsons, Colt 1911s, Lugers, and Panzerfauzt rocket launchers. By now, you've probably already heard about the biggest treat: the flamethrower. This instrument of destruction is both beautiful and terrifying in its pyrotechnic glory. Never before has a more convincing representation of fire been created on our PCs, and when you get your hands on this baby, you won't want to let it go. Topping off the weapons lineup are two experimental arms you'll find during your missions into Nazi research laboratories — the venom gun (a handheld minigun) and the tesla gun (which projects purple lightning similar to what the Emperor in *Return of the Jedi* cast from his hands).

We experienced no significant performance issues on a range of systems, but a GeForce2 is certainly recommended. Similarly, we had nary a crash through the entire game, though one time a level loaded and our guns were missing. A quick reload solved the problem.

Gray Matter didn't take any mind-blowing new steps in the world of first-person-shooter creation. Instead, it took the core aspects of every good shooter, and made them great. By the time you finish this game, you'll be eager to go back for more, and at a harder difficulty level (there are three). *Wolf* is money well-spent, and I recommend it to any gamer.

— Li C. Kuo

Levels such as the airfield (left) are very open-ended in terms of how you should approach them. The detail in the stained glass in this church (right) is astounding.

FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Everything we love about first-person shooters is here, and polished to perfection.

LOWS: No new strides — you've done it all before, from killing Nazis to torching zombies.

BOTTOM LINE: This one sets out to be the perfect shooter, and does just that.

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE 91%

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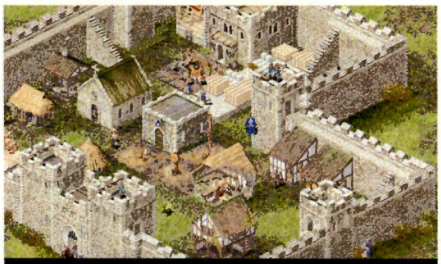
Stronghold

Ye olde real-tyme strategy game meets *SimCastle*.

You can't build walls during battle, but you can rebuild them immediately afterward.



Houses change size as your castle grows, adding some visual variety.

The map editor lets you create your own land — in this case, one full of bunnies, wolves, and bears.

VITAL STATS

CATEGORY Real-time strategy (T)
DEVELOPER Take-Two
PUBLISHER Firefly
REQUIRED PII 300, 64MB RAM, 770MB HD
WE RECOMMEND PIII 500, 128MB RAM
MAXIMUM PLAYERS 8

Since I first heard about it, I've been excited about *Stronghold* — and worried about it. I thought the idea of a *SimCastle*-style game was a great one, and an in-depth RTS siege game had just as much promise. But could developer Firefly Studios bring these two distinct elements together into one cohesive and entertaining whole? Well, yes they did.

The military campaign ramps up nicely from building small, wooden forts and defending them against incompetent foes, to erecting enormous stone strongholds and holding them against berserk armies. Occasionally I was confronted by new challenges that I had no idea how to combat, but a clever hint system hidden in the mission screen kept me charging forward. The cut-scenes are rather amateurish, but the pastoral music is well done and fits the tone of the game beautifully.

There's a good variety of offensive troops and defensive measures. Mace men, archers, knights, mysterious monks, and others are directed easily thanks to the hotkeys and intuitive controls. Although there are a few missions where you must evict a fellow castle owner, most of the missions are spent on the defensive — which can be frustrating sometimes, as you can't scout your off-screen enemy. However, dispatching your foes via death pits, flaming swamps of pitch, and boiling oil does bring a giddy sense of satisfaction.

The economic model is fairly straightforward. You gain money by taxing your citizens and selling goods, and lose money by hiring soldiers and building sophisticated buildings. The production lines are more complicated than in RTS action games like *Red Alert 2*, but nowhere near as complex as those in *The Settlers Fourth Ed.* You have to build wheat farms, mills, and bakers to get bread, but that's as complicated as it gets. Strangely, walls and buildings are built instantaneously, with no consideration given to the lengthy construction of castles in real life.

Because of the rather simplistic nature of the production and technology trees, I didn't find the economic campaign as rewarding as the military one. (The game lets you choose either angle.) If you don't want to bother wasting resources on a standing army, you're free in the economic campaign to build your dream castle. You even get a map editor that lets you tailor your own unique countryside. Once I discovered how to spawn hundreds of rabbits and then hundreds of wolves, I got plenty of grisly entertainment from those little squeaks of horror.

The multiplayer component is equally basic, with only two modes: Last Man Standing and King of the Hill. Because *Stronghold* is about building castles, not siege armies, too often competing players end up with beautiful fortresses that they dare not venture out of. The game supports the GameSpy Arcade matching service, but the single-player campaign is clearly its strength.

Stronghold is a very sound strategy game. It borrows the proven models of other successful games, and puts them in a new venue. It's fun, deep, and bug-free. What else do you need?

— Jim Preston

The early sieges are fun, but things don't heat up until you bring in the boiling oil.

WOLVES IN THE GRASS

Although most of the game is spent defending your castle from inside your city walls, it does pay to hide some elite troops in the woods, where they can ambush unsuspecting catapulters.

FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: A nice city sim and a fun RTS; excellent military mode; charming graphics/music.

LOWS: Facile economics model; can be somewhat static at times; anemic multiplay.

BOTTOM LINE: Not quite a classic, but it offers plenty of fun in medieval warfare and castle running.

PC GAMER **82%** EXCELLENT

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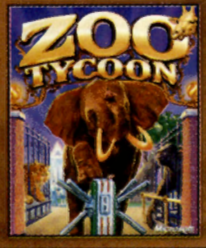

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
MILD VIOLENCE

BLUE FANG GAMES

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F1 2001

Get ready for a new standard in the fast lane of F1 racing.

LATEST LICENSE

F1 2001's up-to-date licensing features every team, driver, and track from the 2001 GP season, including the Jaguar of Pedro de la Rosa. You can tell the pros had some input here.

When you consider that Infogrames and Ubi Soft aren't even making Grand Prix games anymore, it would seem that EA's new *F1 2001* game takes this year's checkered flag purely by default.

That's unfortunate for the hard-working crew at developer ISI, because this new title kicks such serious butt that it would likely have wrested the F1 crown away from its European counterparts on the strength of its superior gameplay. Featuring the most up-to-date driver, team, and circuit licensing of any current F1 sim, *F1 2001* can also lay claim to some of the finest open-wheel driving dynamics since the marvelous *Grand Prix Legends*.

VITAL STATS

CATEGORY Racing (E)
DEVELOPER Image Space Inc.
PUBLISHER EA Sports
REQUIRED PII 333, 64MB RAM, 250MB HD, 16MB 3D card
WE RECOMMEND PIII 500, 128MB RAM, 1GB HD, 32MB 3D card
MAXIMUM PLAYERS 8

The damage modeling is very unforgiving if you drive like an orangutan with it turned on.

The garage menu is the most complete of any F1 game. And each tweak really makes a difference.

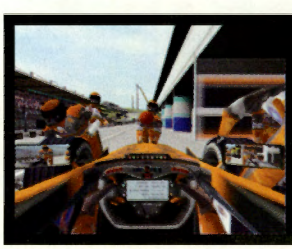
An Arrows A-22 prepares for the start of the U.S. Grand Prix at Indianapolis.

Though the game's advanced 200Hz physics model isn't perfect — brake lock-ups are practically nonexistent, and off-road grip is unrealistically exaggerated — it does a superb job of communicating the near-tactile sensation of rubber meeting road. Even the subtlest mechanical or aerodynamic tweaks in *F1 2001*'s advanced car-setup screen will produce discernable results on the track.

Each of the featured team vehicles also offers its own handling characteristics. But gearheads likely won't appreciate the fact that *every* garage adjustment must be saved before it can be tested.

F1 2001 delivers one of the most convincing sensations of raw ground speed that I've ever seen in a PC racing game. This feeling is largely due to a scintillating new 3D graphics engine that actually goes so far as to render individual track irregularities and bumps. Despite some inaccuracies with the odd circuit layout, the game's visual detail is head-and-shoulders above that in any previous F1 title.

Maintaining problem-free performance with all of these slam-bang graphics isn't easy, though. NVIDIA-equipped gamers will have to tweak their card's drivers to ensure a smooth frame-rate, and some text-file hacking is also required to eliminate a graphical bug wherein cars simply vanish once they've pulled a short distance ahead of you. Until EA and ISI get around to releasing a patch (which will hopefully feature some sorely needed force-feedback support as well), you'll need to perform much of this tinkering on your own.



The animated pit crews are as much fun to watch here as they are in real life. They definitely add to the experience.

As with its parent title, *F1 2001*'s standard gameplay options — Quick Race, Test Day, Multiplayer, Grand Prix, and Championship — have been supplemented with a handy Driving School section, as well as a full set of driving aids to help insulate inexperienced racers from the sim's challenging vehicle dynamics.

While the absence of any dedicated server support for the multiplayer game is a little disappointing, the tremendously well-tuned (and fully tunable) opponent AI in the single-player game more than makes up for this gap. Toss in some cool dynamic weather effects and the most delicious sounds you're likely to hear outside of a real-life Grand Prix event, and *F1 2001* breaks out of the slipstream as the clear winner in the battle for PC F1 supremacy. I just wish it wasn't a win by default: it's unfortunate that there aren't any other entries around to occupy the lower two steps of the podium.

— Andy Mahood

FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Outstanding physics; convincing sensation of speed; sparkling graphics; adjustable AI.

LOWS: Needs tinkering to run smoothly; track inaccuracies; no multiplayer matchmaking site.

BOTTOM LINE: A visual and visceral triumph, and the best modern F1 sim on the market.

PC GAMER **88%**
EXCELLENT

MechWarrior 4: Black Knight

CATEGORY Action (E) **DEVELOPER** Cyberlore Studios **PUBLISHER** Microsoft **REQUIRED** *MechWarrior 4*, PII 300, 64MB RAM, 8MB 3D card **WE RECOMMEND** PIII 800, 128MB RAM, 32MB 3D card **MAXIMUM PLAYERS** 16

In *MechWarrior 4: Vengeance*, you played the good guy. While it was great fun to reclaim the rightful throne of Kentares IV, the *Black Knight* add-on puts you in the 80-ton armored shoes of the bad guy — and it's an equally satisfying role.

This time you're a lance commander who's been unceremoniously drummed out of the army. Disgusted with your treatment, you join the infamous Black Knight Legion — a ruthless group of rogue mercenaries loyal only to the hard dollar. Naturally, your new path will take you into battle against the king you helped install.

The high ground has never been so valuable in a *MechWarrior* game. (Foreground: the new Ryoken.)

New toys include five additional Mechs to pilot, of which the most interesting are the Black Knight (a fearsome and unique-looking 75-ton battle beast) and the Sunder, a 90-ton assault Mech well-suited to close combat. You get nine new weapons, including several potent autocannons and a cluster-bomb launcher for the Long Tom Cannon (oh yeah!).

And you'll need 'em too, because — as with most add-ons — *Black Knight*'s single-player campaign was designed to give you a tougher challenge than that in the original game. I had little trouble breezing through *MW4* on the Veteran difficulty setting, but *Black Knight*'s "Regular" setting has been totally humbling.

There are 20-plus missions, nearly as many as in *MW4*. A cool new addition to the single-player game is the "black market," where you can buy new Mechs and weapons. Multiplay, meanwhile, has undergone a major retrofitting, adding five really fun new game modes: Absolute Attrition, Stronghold, Siege Assault, Goliaths, and Clan vs. Inner Sphere.

The Uziel is tough, but still no match for the Ryoken in a close-in fight.

At $30, *Black Knight* may seem pricey for a traditional add-on. But given that it's nearly as big as *MW4*, that's a fair price. And it's quite fun being "bad" for a change.

— Steve Klett

PC GAMER EXCELLENT 80%

Rogue Spear: Black Thorn

CATEGORY Action (M) **DEVELOPER** Red Storm **PUBLISHER** Ubi Soft **REQUIRED** PII 266, 64MB RAM, 550MB HD **WE RECOMMEND** PIII 500, 128MB RAM, 1GB HD, 3D card **MAXIMUM PLAYERS** 16

Black Thorn is described as a "stand-alone expansion." With only nine missions, it's half *Rogue Spear*'s size — and priced accordingly — yet doesn't need the original game to be played. (A planned 10th mission set aboard a French airplane was cut post–Sept. 11.)

But while *Black Thorn* may offer "more," it's also more of the same. As squad-based tactical shooters go, the *Rainbow Six* series has always been at the top of the heap. But this is the *Rogue Spear* engine's final tour of duty (now that the far superior *Ghost Recon* has been released), and its limitations restrict you to the same old formula: strike fast, rescue the hostages, repeat eight more times, and you're done.

If warned, terrorists will attempt to kill their hostages. Take them out before that happens.

The obligatory story setup is this: a diabolical mastermind has begun restaging real-life acts of terrorism from the past 20 years, hoping to draw the Rainbow team out into the open and eliminate them.

Though perfunctory, the plot serves as a good excuse to armchair-quarterback some of the world's most renowned terrorist takedowns. Unfortunately, despite a diverse range of well-designed environments, there's a dizzying sameness to the missions. Only one — a race to assassinate a bus driver before he can transport a busload of terrorists across the border — feels fresh.

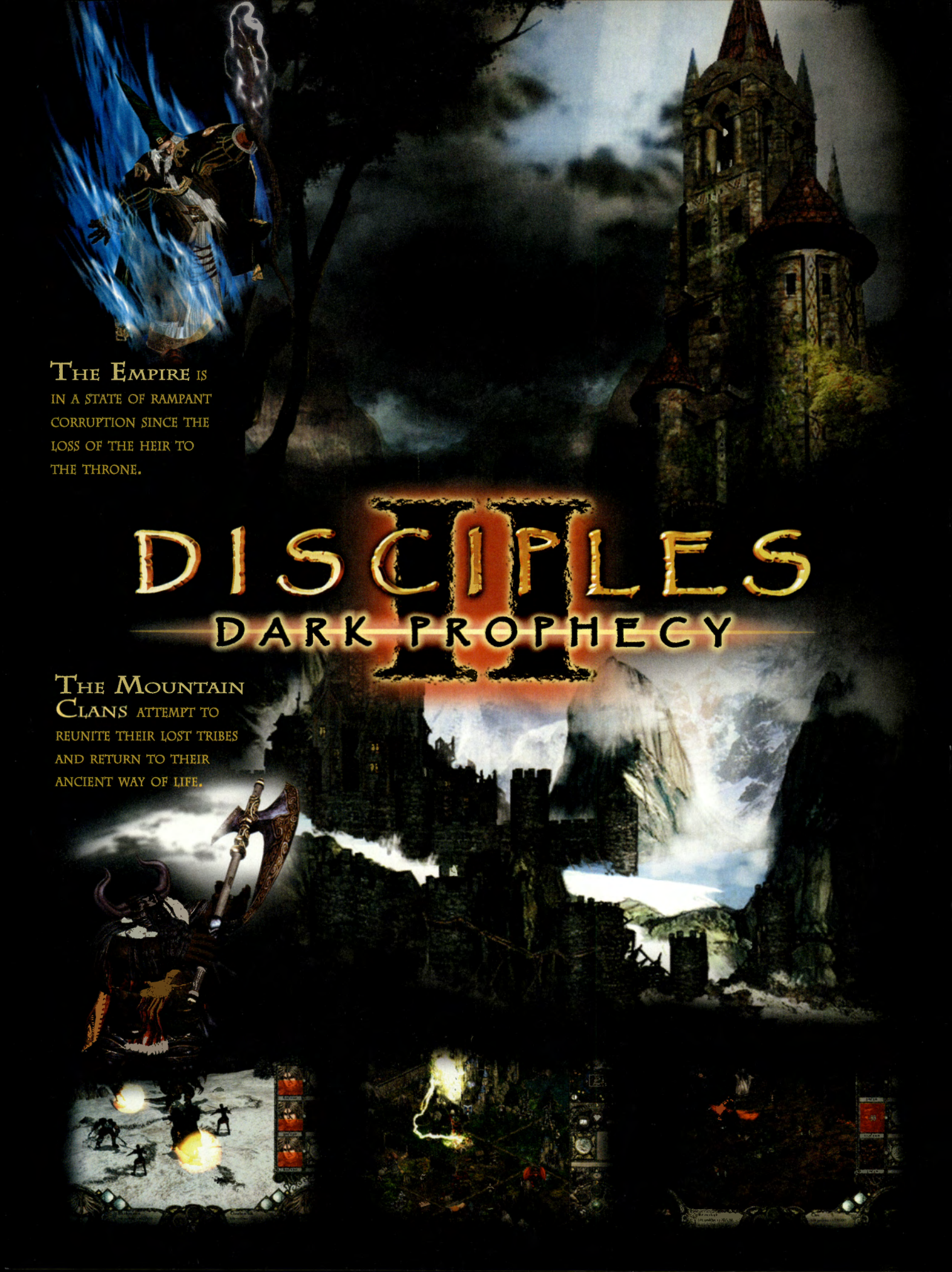
Because the mission-planning learning curve is so steep, newbies to this series may feel overwhelmed. On top of that, the so-called "tutorial" doesn't tutor. (No instruction, just five mini-missions.) *Black Thorn* does pack in over 10 new weapons and gadgets, and introduces a new multi-player mode called "Lone Wolf" — *Rogue Spear*'s version of King of the Hill.

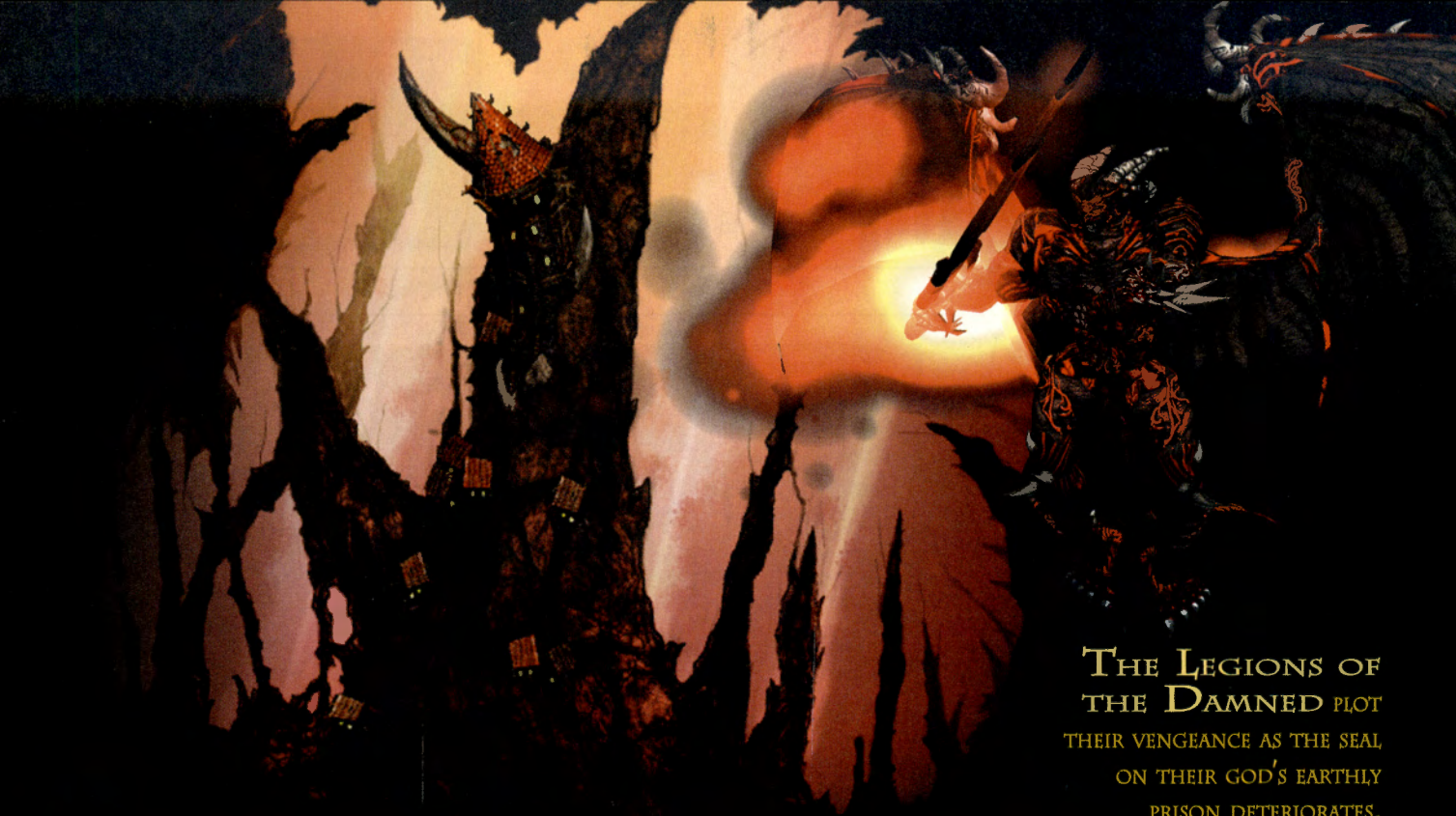
Here's a present from yo mama, Osama.

It's a competent last hurrah for an aging engine. For *R6* completists, and anybody who'd just like to spend a day shooting terrorists, it's also an old friend worth revisiting. But *Ghost Recon* is many miles ahead of it.

— Chuck Osborn

PC GAMER GOOD 73%


THE EMPIRE IS IN A STATE OF RAMPANT CORRUPTION SINCE THE LOSS OF THE HEIR TO THE THRONE.
DISCIPLES II
DARK PROPHECY
THE MOUNTAIN CLANS ATTEMPT TO REUNITE THEIR LOST TRIBES AND RETURN TO THEIR ANCIENT WAY OF LIFE.



THE LEGIONS OF THE DAMNED PLOT THEIR VENGEANCE AS THE SEAL ON THEIR GOD'S EARTHLY PRISON DETERIORATES.

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Zoo Tycoon

ZOOS FOR THE AGES

Zoos have been a part of many cultures for thousands of years. The ancient Egyptians had zoos in 1500 B.C., while the Greeks, Chinese, and Indians all had animal collections.

***Snooze Tycoon* is more like it. This game has the imaginative spark of a wet napkin.**

When *RollerCoaster Tycoon* was released, no one thought a little game made almost entirely by a solitary Scotsman would go on to be one of the best-selling PC games for the next *two years*. Never one to miss an opportunity to make money, Microsoft went looking for its own tycoon game, and found one from developer Blue Fang.

VITAL STATS

CATEGORY Strategy (E)
DEVELOPER Blue Fang
PUBLISHER Microsoft
REQUIRED P233, 32MB RAM, 250MB HD
WE RECOMMEND PIII 500, 128MB RAM, 500MB HD
MAXIMUM PLAYERS 1

Unfortunately, there's a lot more to creating a compelling management sim than taking a family experience and slapping the word "Tycoon" on it. Nothing proves this point more than *Zoo Tycoon*, a flat and predictable game that's never more than slightly amusing.

Its *RollerCoaster* influences are never far from the screen thanks to the familiar interface, little giggling visitors, and pastel color palette. The central problem with *Zoo Tycoon*, though, is its real dearth of creativity: you can't display much ingenuity as a player, and the developers have shown little themselves. The main task in the game is keeping your animals happy by following the instructions of the zookeepers right down to the literal ground. The zookeeper will tell you if the cheetah, for example, needs a little more dirt, a little more water, and a little less grass. As a player, that's exactly what you do: simply follow instructions.

Beyond the individual animal exhibits, the rest of the park is completely pre-fab. From the tiny ice-cream stands to the enormous petting zoos, these buildings are already constructed, needing only to be clicked on and placed. You can set the general size of the pens and the layout of the walkways, and tweak the landscape a bit, but for the most part, the game has a cookie-cutter feel. The result of all the pre-fabrication is that almost all your parks look the same, with little opportunity to add any personal touch.

Zoo Tycoon has only 13 scenarios to complement the standard free-build mode. The tutorials and the beginning challenges gently ease you into the game, but once you reach the intermediate and advanced scenarios, some frustrations appear. For one, the game strangely allows you to construct your zoo in pause mode. This means that time-sensitive challenges are robbed of their urgency because you can build your zoo exactly the way you want it (cash permitting), and *then* turn on the clock. Even worse, you have no way to speed up time, so if you accomplish a scenario's goals before the proscribed time limit, you'll have to spend the remaining time just performing occasional upkeep, waiting for the clock to run out.

Graphically, *Zoo Tycoon* is not without its charms. Seeing those cute little people overpay for their salty snacks while gazing at the lions is sorta fun. Everything is quite small, however, so picking up some of the cutesy creatures to examine them is an exercise in pixel hunting. Fortunately, you can turn off the foliage so you can see your park a little more clearly, but on the flip side, the game seriously chugs when you have a lot of little people onscreen.

Microsoft promises to support *Zoo Tycoon* with continual updates for animals, buildings, and attractions. Those extras may breathe a little more life into a game that feels uninspired. *Zoo Tycoon* will undoubtedly please parents who want to buy something for Junior that doesn't include sawed-off shotguns and gore, but for veteran tycoons, there are more rewarding things to manage than this zoo.

— Jim Preston

The interface is certainly clean and friendly, but the 2D sprites are quite ordinary.

The pre-fab nature of many of the buildings makes working with them cumbersome.

This zookeeper thinks I'm doing a great job despite the fact that my jaguar was depressed as hell.

Zoo Tycoon does have dozens of cheats, which let you do everything from embezzle money to raise a yeti (see pg. 49).

FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Cute, colorful graphics; chirpy soundtrack; as inoffensive as Katie Couric.

LOWS: No real creative options; gameplay is routine instruction-following.

BOTTOM LINE: An utterly ordinary tycoon game that'll please only the most casual PC gamers.

PC GAMER 48%
TOLERABLE

Myth III: The Wolf Age

CATEGORY Real-time strategy (M) **DEVELOPER** MumboJumbo **PUBLISHER** Take-Two **REQUIRED** PII 400, 96MB RAM, 8MB 3D card **WE RECOMMEND** PIII 800, 256MB RAM, 32MB 3D card **MAXIMUM PLAYERS** 16

Raw carnage at its finest. Attack, my Dwarven allies, attack!

I feel sorry for the folks at MumboJumbo who had to deliver *Myth III* to their overlords at Take-Two in a brutally fast 11 months. If the developers were given more time, they might have produced something special, but as it stands right now, this game is a mess.

The plot unfolds over 25 levels, but it never reaches the quality of the story-telling we saw in the first two *Myth* games. There's far too much exposition between the levels, and the rendered cut-scenes are atrocious. The characters look like they were carved out of LEGO blocks, and the animation is rather clunky.

The graphics are better — the characters are now true-3D and the trees move in the wind — and the battlefield can still be marred with blasts and littered with enemy body parts. The new units, like the flame-throwing Dwarven Smiths and the Trow Iron Warrior, are well-designed.

Unfortunately, all the units, old and new, suffer from significant AI problems. Units get lost within a large group and don't always attack when you tell them to, and ranged fighters accidentally hit your own forces. These issues occurred in the original *Myth* but were pretty much fixed in *Myth II*; now they're back and worse than ever.

I also had a consistent problem with saved games not working properly — they'd load, but the game would run at around 5 frames per second — and clipping problems were rampant.

Fans of multiplay will find numerous modes of play, including King of the Hill and Hunting, but only six maps. I had some problems with lag, but it's hard to know whether that's a fault with the game or with the GameSpy service (Bungie.net being long gone).

It's entirely possible that after some patches *Myth III* will be polished to where we could recommend it, but it's truly unfortunate it was released in such shoddy shape. This series is one of my favorites; I'd hate to see it end on such a sour note.

— William Harms

PC GAMER 58%
MERELY OKAY

"We shall fight on the beaches...
on the landing grounds...
in the fields...
in the streets...
in the hills.

We shall never surrender!"
-Winston Churchill

WE COULDN'T HAVE SAID IT BETTER OURSELVES...

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-Computer Games Online, October 2001

TEEN T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood
Violence

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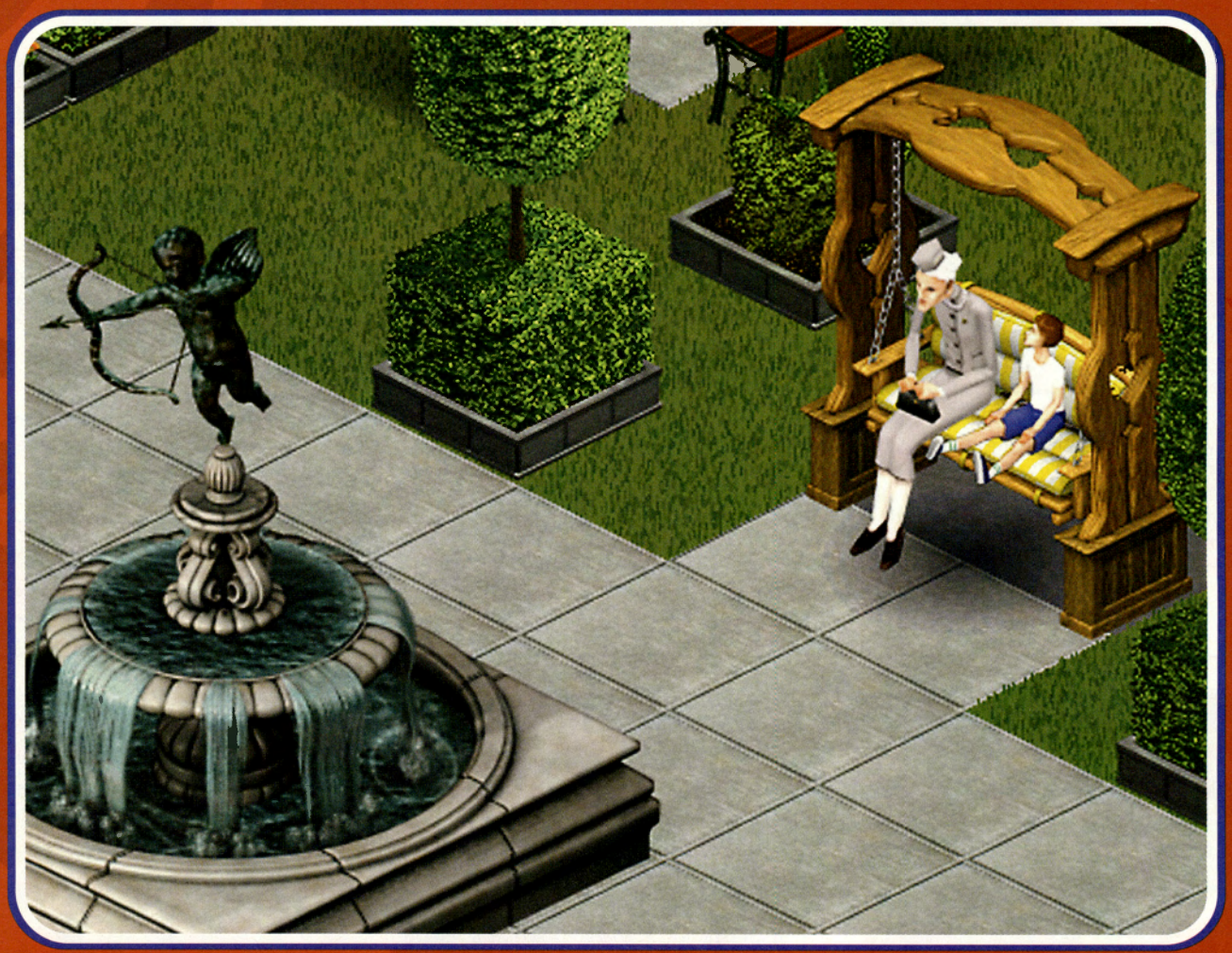
Swingers



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Mature Sexual Themes
Mild Violence

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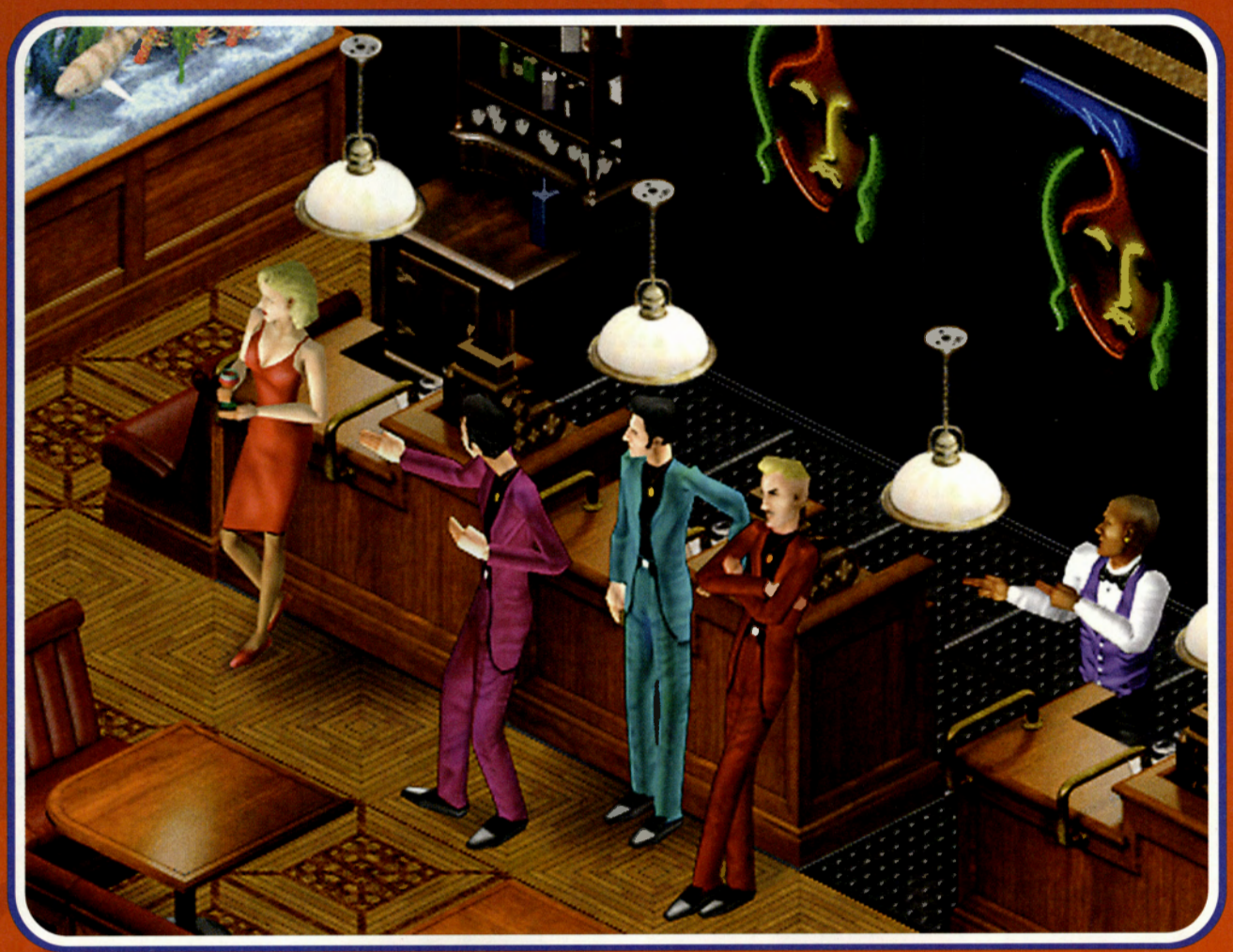
Swingers



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Dark Age of Camelot

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

Life was violent in Camelot's dark age...and anything but dull.

Well, it finally happened. In 2001, a massively multiplayer game launched without any problems — or with only very minor ones, at least.

All but one of *Camelot*'s servers went live as planned, stayed up, and remained stable. Accounts were registered without snags. The experience was fun and relatively lag-free for the newbies let loose on the world on that first day.

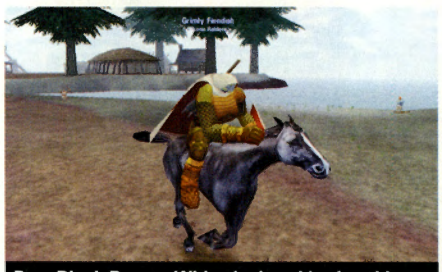
VITAL STATS

CATEGORY Roleplaying (T)
DEVELOPER Mythic Entertainment
PUBLISHER Vivendi
REQUIRED PII 333, 64MB RAM, 250MB HD, 16MB 3D card
WE RECOMMEND PIII 500, 128MB RAM, 1GB HD, 32MB 3D card
MAXIMUM PLAYERS 3,000 per server (MMORPG)

Vivendi and Mythic have to be given some major kudos for a smooth launch, especially when compared to recent debacles such as *Anarchy Online* and *World War II Online*. But how does *Camelot* actually shape up as a game?

For those who missed our preview, *Camelot* is a faction-based MMORPG, the factions being the three realms of Albion, Hibernia, and Midgard. It has a traditional monster-bashing level-up model, but with the twist that at higher levels you can travel to the other realms and do battle, player-vs.-player. (Similarly, you may have to defend your own realm from invasion.)

Gaining levels is achieved via two main methods: monster-bashing (naturally) and questing. The quests are well-woven into each realm's background storyline, and the game also offers mini-quests to pad your experience, although mini-questing has a cap of one-third of your experience per level.



Poor Black Beauty. With a jockey this size, this thoroughbred won't be winning, placing or showing.

Combat styles are highlighted with a satisfying, whooshing trail — sort of like a tracer for axes!

Trade skills have also been given considerable emphasis. Characters can be smiths, weapon-crafters, and tailors, making equipment that's a cut above the normal loot drop or store-bought weapon (quest items are top of the proverbial ladder, however). If you're committed, you can make good money from the trade system.

The overall game economy is tight on cash flow, but it works — and better tight than loose, when you look at the hyper-inflated headache that was *EverQuest*'s economy. You'll be scrimping and saving for armor and weapons, but quest equipment helps a lot, and there's plenty to be had.

And then there's the intricate guild system, which allows you to customize ranks, privileges, and so on, with guild emblems, housing, and player-owned horses all slated to appear in the game in the near future.

The only real negative thing I can say about *Camelot* is that it's not quite complete. Technically, it's stable and release-worthy. However, sticking points include the fact that relic-thieving hasn't really been tested yet (at least not externally in beta), the thief classes haven't been fully fleshed out, and there are still possible balance issues. Mind you, balancing classes isn't the easiest of tasks (points to the ever-swinging *EverQuest* Nerf bat — necromancers, duck!). But what's admirable is that the current content works, and it's fun. From here, Mythic can only add.

How similar is the game to *EverQuest*? Fairly close in many respects (and certainly a lot more so than *Asheron's Call*), but it definitely differentiates itself enough. The developers have put a lot more thought into the design of the economy, the longevity of gameplay with the realm conflict — heck, into the design of the whole game. There are no corpse recoveries (though death still stings), and every class can solo successfully.

Overall, it's impressively well thought-out, and a highly engaging MMORPG that's kept me captivated for the last few weeks solid. *Camelot*'s a must-buy for online RPGers, and we expect that it'll only become more polished and feature-packed as the months go by.

— Darren Allan

A stun spell hits an unfortunate werewolf, sandwiched between two mighty trolls.

FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Exciting realm-vs.-realm scenario; stable and not laggy; working economy.

LOWS: Some class-balance issues; thief class not finished; not all areas fully itemized.

BOTTOM LINE: It's evolutionary rather than revolutionary, but it's still the new genre leader.

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE 90%

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EX12PCG1Y

GAME CONSOLES: THE VEDE'S ACHILLES HEEL

I'M A GAMER — a PC gamer. I buy all of the consoles, too, but they just don't do it for me in the same way. After I've had a new console for a month or two, it inevitably becomes something more like a toaster oven to me — sure, I'm glad I have it, but it's not something I spend much time thinking about. Eventually, the money that I could be investing in new console games goes right back into my PC, and my "hot" new console becomes the latest addition to my $299 paperweight collection.

I'm well aware of how quickly I lose interest in consoles, but just like that kid down the street who wears his bicycle helmet even when he's not on his bicycle, I continue to bite my own ass. Last year I waited in line all day and most of the night just to be one of the first to own a PlayStation 2. I can honestly say that I spent more time waiting in line to buy it than I've spent playing games on it since, but I still haven't learned my lesson.

As I write these words, it's Sunday, Nov. 11, 2001, and Xbox is launching in a mere four days. I shouldn't care, but sadly, it's all my peanut-size brain can focus on. Since I didn't pre-order, my plan is to get in line at my local Target at around 8:00 p.m. on Nov. 14, and then to wait there in the bitter cold until the store hands out confirmation tickets at 6:00 a.m. the following morning. I am a moron: Hear me roar.

"The Vede"

Greg Vederman,
Senior Associate Editor

PRODUCT TYPE

- [ ] ENTRY
- [ ] MID
- [x] DREAM

Every hardware review now includes a chart that lets you know if a product is meant to be used with an Entry-level, Mid-range, or Dream-class computer, or if the product itself falls into one of these three categories.

hstrinity

So you want to build a new PC, huh? As you may know, it can be a tricky affair. Luckily, Hard Stuff editor Greg Vederman is here to help you select the best parts for the job. The prices listed below (obtained almost entirely from *www.pricewatch.com*) reflect the lowest prices we could find as we went to press. (Note: Prices do not include shipping costs.)

ENTRY-LEVEL SYSTEM — ROUGHLY $999

CASE	
300-watt ATX form factor	$100
PROCESSOR	
AMD Duron 1GHz	$59
MOTHERBOARD	
Asus A7V-133	$76
MEMORY	
256MB PC-133 SDRAM	$12
CD-ROM/DVD-ROM DRIVE	
Creative Labs PC-DVD Ovation 12x with software DVD decoding	$60
FLOPPY DRIVE	
Samsung 3.5-inch 1.44MB	$8
HARD DRIVE	
40.0 Maxtor 7,200rpm	$88
SOUND CARD	
Creative Labs Audigy (white box)	$59
MODEM	
3COM #2976 56K v.90 hardware modem	$49
MONITOR	
17-inch Optiquest Q71	$140
VIDEO CARD	
GeForce2 Pro 64MB DDR	$80
JOYSTICK	
Microsoft SideWinder Joystick	$30
GAMEPAD	
Logitech WingMan Rumblepad	$23
SPEAKERS	
Labtech Pulse-424 — 2.1	$39
KEYBOARD	
Addtronics	$15
USB MOUSE	
Logitech or Microsoft	$39
TOTAL	**$877**

MID-RANGE SYSTEM — ROUGHLY $1,800

CASE	
300-watt ATX form factor	$100
PROCESSOR	
AMD Thunderbird 1.4GHz 266MHz	$115
MOTHERBOARD	
Gigabyte GA-7DX (revision 4.3)	$80
MEMORY	
256MB PC-2100 DDR SDRAM	$22
CD-ROM/DVD-ROM DRIVE	
Creative Labs PC-DVD Encore 12x with Dxr3 Technology	$130
FLOPPY DRIVE	
Samsung 3.5-inch 1.44MB	$8
HARD DRIVE	
80GB Maxtor 7,200rpm ATA-133	$175
SOUND CARD	
Creative Labs SB Live! Audigy MP3+	$85
MODEM	
3COM #2976 56K v.90 hardware modem	$49
MONITOR	
19-inch NEC FE950+	$323
VIDEO CARD	
NVIDIA GeForce3 Ti 200	$180
JOYSTICK	
Microsoft SideWinder Precision 2	$45
GAMEPAD	
Logitech WingMan Rumblepad	$23
SPEAKERS	
Logitech Z-540 (4.1)	$80
KEYBOARD	
Addtronics Keyboard	$15
MOUSE	
Logitech or Microsoft USB mouse	$39
TOTAL	**$1,469**

DREAM SYSTEM — ROUGHLY $3,000 AND ABOVE

CASE	
300-watt ATX form factor (AMD recommended)	$100
PROCESSOR	
AMD 1900+ GHz	$261
MOTHERBOARD	
Asus A7V266-E	$175
MEMORY	
512MB PC-2100 DDR SDRAM	$60
CD-ROM/DVD-ROM DRIVE	
Pioneer 16x DVD-ROM	$60
DVD DECODER	
RealMagic Hollywood Plus PCI card	$50
BURNER	
Plextor 24x10x40 CD-RW	$160
FLOPPY DRIVE	
Samsung 3.5-inch 1.44MB	$8
HARD DRIVES	
Two 100GB Western Digital 7,200rpm ATA-100s	$440
IDE RAID CONTROLLER	
Promise FastTrak100 (ATA-100)	$75
SOUND CARD	
Creative Labs SB Live! Audigy Platinum 5.1	$200
MODEM	
3COM #2976 56K v.90 hardware modem	$49
MONITOR	
22-inch ViewSonic P220f	$675
VIDEO CARD	
NVIDIA GeForce3 Ti 500	$320
JOYSTICK	
Saitek X36 Flight Control System (USB)	$96
GAMEPAD	
Logitech WingMan Rumblepad	$23
SPEAKERS	
Klipsch ProMedia 5.1	$399
KEYBOARD	
Microsoft Natural Keyboard Pro	$40
USB MOUSE	
Original IntelliMouse with IntelliEye technology	$55
TOTAL	**$3,246**

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PC CD ROM

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Your Own Home LAN

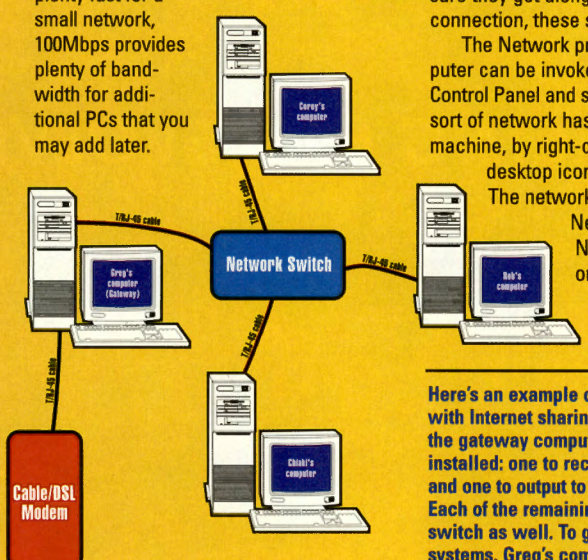
HOW TO TRANSFORM YOUR HOUSE INTO A MULTIPLAYER GAMING MECCA

You don't have to be an engineer, a technician, or anything more sophisticated than a partially trained dyslexic monkey to successfully set up a home network. Sharing files and an Internet connection — and more importantly, fragging the bejeezus out of friends and family in the safety of your own home — has never been easier.

The most challenging aspect of home networking is setting up the hardware. You'll have to link each PC properly before you configure the software. Sound intimidating? Don't worry: we'll get you through it.

SETTING UP THE HARDWARE

- To set up a traditional network, each PC requires a network card (NIC). Connect each NIC to a network hub or switch with the appropriate type of cable. For Internet sharing, you'll either have to use a router, or connect one of the computers to a cable or DSL modem with a second NIC, transforming that PC into what's known as an Internet gateway. (More on that in a bit.)
- We're going to focus on a reliable, traditional Ethernet network built with standard 10-base-T/RJ-45 NICs and cables, and a switch (or hub). Don't worry — this stuff is all standard equipment, and any computer-store geek should be able to point you to the right gear. (See "What You Need" sidebar for pricing and examples.)
- Every computer on your network will need an NIC. You'll want to use 10/100 NICs, which can transfer data from 10 to 100 megabits per second. While 10Mbps is plenty fast for a small network, 100Mbps provides plenty of bandwidth for additional PCs that you may add later.
- You should get PCI NICs, and make sure that they and the switch you purchase are designed for 10/100, 10-base-T networks with RJ-45 connectors.
- Switches offer any number of RJ-45 ports, from five to dozens. Make sure the switch you select has enough ports to accommodate each of the computers you plan to network together. (Each computer takes up a single port.) Check out Netgear's FS105 10/100 5-port Switch, or, for a router-and-switch-in-one (a terrific alternative if you don't have broadband Internet access right now but plan to get it later), Linksys' EtherFast Cable/DSL Router.
- Install a NIC and its drivers in each computer. Then connect each NIC to the network switch or hub with a length of 10-base-T/RJ-45 network cable.
- You can share an Internet connection via your PC alone, or by using a home router. If you get a home router, follow its directions for Internet sharing. (Don't worry — it's easy.) Otherwise, assume the computer nearest your cable or DSL modem will be used to share the Net connection. That PC, called a gateway, will need *two* NICs — one connected to your cable or DSL device, and the other connected to your network switch. Make sure your gateway computer is running Windows Me or XP.



Here's an example of a gateway-based network with Internet sharing. Greg's system is set up as the gateway computer, and has two NIC cards installed: one to receive the cable/DSL modem, and one to output to the uplink port on the switch. Each of the remaining computers connects to the switch as well. To get Internet access on all systems, Greg's computer must remain on.

CONFIGURING COMPUTERS

Before you worry about sharing a Net connection, you'll have to introduce all of your networked computers to each other and make sure they get along. If you're not sharing a Net connection, these same instructions apply.

The Network properties sheet in each computer can be invoked in two ways: by opening Control Panel and selecting Network, or, if some sort of network has already been set up on the machine, by right-clicking on the networking desktop icon and choosing Properties. The network icon might be titled Network Neighborhood or My Network Places, depending on your Windows version.

Once in Network properties, click on the

WHAT YOU NEED

One network card per computer (two for the gateway computer)

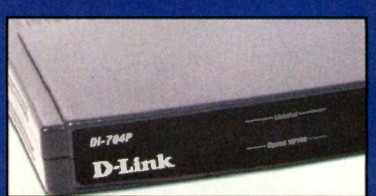
EXAMPLE: Linksys EtherFast 10/100 LAN Card (LNE100TX)

PRICE: Approximately $20 plus shipping (online)

One Router capable of handing as many computers as are in your network (replaces gateway computer — each system needs only one LAN card; also acts as a switch)

EXAMPLE: Linksys EtherFast 4-Port Cable/DSL Router (BEFSR41)

PRICE: Approximately $75 plus shipping (online)



One switch capable of handling as many computers as are in your network

EXAMPLE: D-Link DI 704P Ethernet Broadband Firewall and Router

PRICE: Approximately $97 plus shipping (online)

Length of 10-base-T/RJ-45 cable to connect from each LAN card to switch or router

PRICE: $10 to $100 plus shipping, depending on length (online)

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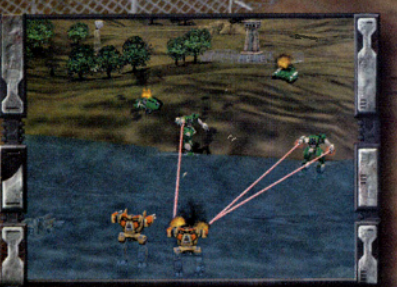

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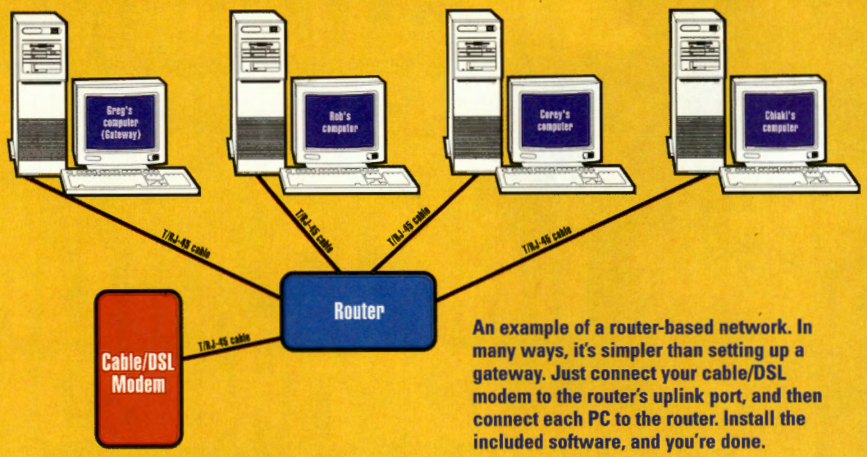
Identification tab and choose a name for your Workgroup. (To find Network Identification in Windows XP, follow these same instructions but go into Network properties and click on the Advanced button). Pick one name, like HOME, and make sure that each of the computers you plan to network together uses it.

Each PC will also require a unique Computer Name. Unlike the Workgroup, you can't use the same Computer Name twice. You'll have a much easier time maintaining your network if you use logical names that describe each computer, like BRAD, DOWNSTAIRS, or GATEWAY.

Follow these steps based on your OS:



An example of a router-based network. In many ways, it's simpler than setting up a gateway. Just connect your cable/DSL modem to the router's uplink port, and then connect each PC to the router. Install the included software, and you're done.

WINDOWS 98/98SE

If you have a Windows Me or Windows XP machine on your network, start with that one first. Either of those OSs will make a diskette that helps set up any Win 98 PCs you have. But if Win 98 is all you've got, read on!

Invoke the Network dialog box through Control Panel. On the first tab you'll see a list box containing (hopefully) your NIC and some network stuff. If your NIC isn't listed, it isn't installed properly — reinstall the drivers and try again.

Make sure at least three items appear in the list box: your NIC, the TCP/IP protocol, and Client For Microsoft Networks. Some games still use IPX/SPX, so you may want to add this protocol, too. If any of these clients or protocols are missing, add them by clicking Add, selecting the category (client or protocol), and then selecting the appropriate items from the list.

TCP/IP needs to be set to its default settings. This process is automatic if you've never installed a network on your PC before, but if you've had it wired in the past, you'll have to check. Here's how:

Select TCP/IP and click Properties, and you'll see a configuration dialog box. Check each tab: DNS Configuration should have "Obtain IP address automatically" selected, Gateway should be blank, WINS should have only the bottom option checked ("Use DHCP for WINS resolution"), and IP Address should be set up to "Obtain an IP address automatically." Don't worry about Bindings, Advanced, or NetBIOS unless you altered them yourself for a previous network.

If you want to share files across the network, simply click the File and Print Sharing button on the Configuration tab. Once you reboot the computer, you'll be able to share files and folders through Windows Explorer by right-clicking on them and selecting the Sharing menu item. Sharing a file is a great way to check the network; if the other PCs can see a file, they're talking.

WINDOWS ME

- Setting up a network on Win Me is much easier than dealing with that heady Win 98 stuff. Head to the Start menu, go to Accessories, then Communications, and choose Home Networking Wizard.
- Click Next. The wizard will ask you a few questions about the role of your computer. If it's your Internet gateway, select "A direct connection to my ISP using the following device" and choose the NIC that's connected to your Internet device from the drop-down menu. Otherwise, choose "A connection to another computer on my home network..."
- When you configure a Windows Me gateway, it'll ask if you want to create a diskette to help set up the other computers on the network. Say "yes" if you're dealing with any Win 98 or Win 95 PCs, and insert a blank floppy. Then, take the floppy disk around to any pre–Windows Me computers and run the Setup.exe file supplied by the network wizard. Don't run it on other Win Me or Win XP machines, though — their network wizards will know how to look for the gateway on their own.

WINDOWS XP

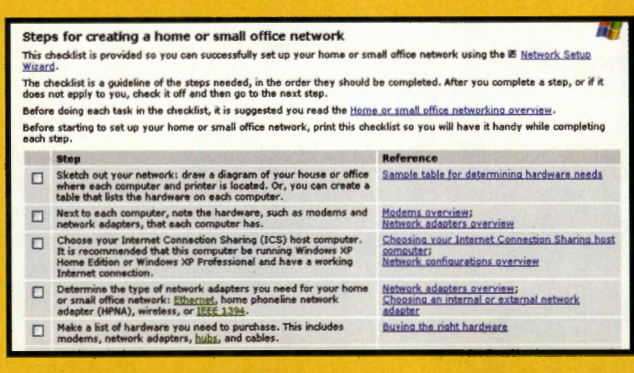
- Amazingly, Win XP is even easier to network than Win Me. Just head on over to the Start menu, go to Accessories and Communications, and click on Network Setup Wizard. The wizard offers a full checklist to help you get set up. If you're configuring your gateway, when the wizard asks about your Internet connection, select "This computer connects directly to the Internet"; otherwise select "This computer connects to the Internet through another computer," or "Other" if that's not the case.
- Now follow the rest of the steps. As with Win Me, the wizard will offer to let you create a setup diskette in case you're dealing with any Win 9x boxes.

DOUBLE-CHECK AND TROUBLESHOOT

With Internet sharing, remember that the gateway PC *must* be on at all times in order for the other computers to use the Internet. If it's shut down, the network will still be functional but none of the PCs will be able to surf the Net. If you choose to go with a router instead of setting up a gateway, all computers will have broadband Internet access at all times.

If, for some reason, one or more of the PCs on your network can't find the Internet or the other PCs, make sure the network switch, router, or hub is powered up, and that all cable connections are firm. If everything checks out, run the networking wizard again. Make sure you've told each PC where to look for the Internet. After running the network wizard, reboot the machine even if Windows doesn't ask you to.

If the gateway gets shut down or rebooted and the other PCs are unable to access the Internet, you should wait until the gateway is powered up and finishes loading Windows. Then reboot each of the other machines. PCG



Steps for creating a home or small office network

This checklist is provided so you can successfully set up your home or small office network using the Network Setup Wizard.

The checklist is a guideline of the steps needed, in the order they should be completed. After you complete a step, or if it does not apply to you, check it off and then go to the next step.

Before doing each task in the checklist, it is suggested you read the Home or small office networking overview.

Before starting to set up your home or small office network, print this checklist so you will have it handy while completing each step.

	Step	Reference
☐	Sketch out your network: draw a diagram of your house or office where each computer and printer is located. Or, you can create a table that lists the hardware on each computer.	Sample table for determining hardware needs
☐	Next to each computer, note the hardware, such as modems and network adapters, that each computer has.	Modems overview; Network adapters overview
☐	Choose your Internet Connection Sharing (ICS) host computer. It is recommended that this computer be running Windows XP Home Edition or Windows XP Professional and have a working Internet connection.	Choosing your Internet Connection Sharing host computer; Network configurations overview
☐	Determine the type of network adapters you need for your home or small office network: Ethernet, home phoneline network adapter (HPNA), wireless, or IEEE 1394.	Network adapters overview; Choosing an internal or external network adapter
☐	Make a list of hardware you need to purchase. This includes modems, network adapters, hubs, and cables.	Buying the right hardware

HINT

If you have a PC running Windows XP, print out the network checklist before you get started with your home network. Without this list, you're liable to make mistakes that could cost you some time.

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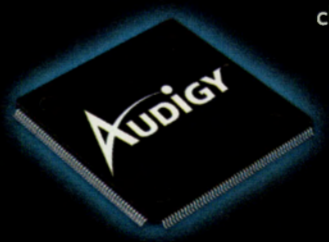

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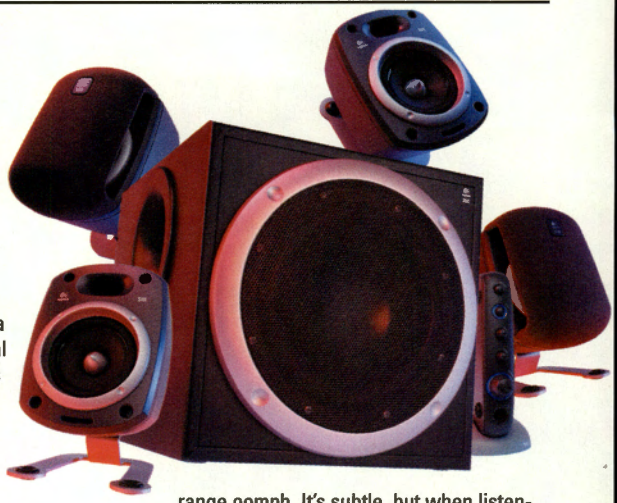
Z-560

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

A THX-CERTIFIED ANSWER TO KLIPSCH'S PROMEDIA 4.1



Testing speakers isn't always as easy as it may seem. Some people test with sound meters, while others use specially made test tones designed to push a speaker to its breaking point. In the end, though, it all comes down to a reviewer's ears and a couple simple questions: Do these speakers sound good? How do they compare to other speakers in their category?

When it came time to plan out our review of Logitech's new Z-560 4.1 speakers, Question 1 was easy enough: "Yeah, they sound damn good." Question 2 was harder to answer than we had anticipated because, quite honestly, no other set of speakers has ever come so close to kicking Klipsch's ass.

At 400 watts (RMS), the Z-560 packs exactly as much juice as Klipsch's ProMedia 4.1, the undisputed five-speaker champ. Each of the Z's four satellites outputs 53 watts, while the enormous subwoofer — easily as big as the unit that comes with Klipsch's ProMedia 5.1, but not as powerful — gets 188 watts to itself.

The unit's satellite speakers can be easily wall-mounted, and instead of having all of the controls on one of the satellites, this system comes with a handy external pod that houses volume, fade, bass, and M3D (3D sound) controls, as well as a headphone jack.

In early tests, the Z-560 actually sounded better to us than the ProMedia 4.1. At the time, we were testing several hard-rock tunes that pump a lot of bass and treble, and when it comes to bass intensity, Logitech wins hands-down. In fact, the system sometimes produces too much low-end. In a few instances, even after rolling the bass all the way back, we had to go into Windows' own Advanced Play Control applet and turn down the bass even further in order to enjoy a flatter, more realistic audio experience.

That's why, in the final analysis, Klipsch's speakers outperform Logitech's — pretty much everything sounds more natural on them. Conversely, the Z-560 seems to have been designed to be more "fun," and in some ways more instantly impressive — these speakers give you a terrific sense of depth, size, and separation, but at the expense of some clarity and mid-range oomph. It's subtle, but when listening to songs, games, and movies, certain sounds — especially voices — just don't carry quite as well as they could. Still, we had to do *a lot* of testing before these differences became apparent, and overall, we were *really* impressed with the 560's performance. They're easily the best 4.1 speakers for under $200.

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE 90%

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ENTRY
MID
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MOMO Force

A BIG WHEEL THAT KEEPS ON TURNIN'

The best force-feedback wheel ever made was Logitech's original Formula Force. In the late '90s it sold for roughly $200, and Logitech lost money on every unit it sold. But that was back when it looked like force-feedback wheels were really going to take off.

Unfortunately, the trip was short and downhill from there. Not only did the quality of FF wheels start declining rapidly after the Formula Force, but in-game support for feedback sputtered, too. To this day, game developers largely ignore FF until the last minute, and as a result, many racing games offer little more than a jolt here and there. It's too bad, too, because Logitech's new MOMO Force harks back to the good ol' days.

MOMO isn't just a name that high-school kids call each other; it's also the name of a famous Italian racing-wheel company that builds and designs wheel for just about every exotic car on the road — and most of the ones on the race track, too. MOMO designed this wheel to be rugged, functional, and attractive, and it did a good job. This comfy wheel is even covered in real hand-stitched leather, so gripping it is a dream.

The wheel has six buttons on the front plus twin shifter paddles immediately behind the wheel at 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock. Even if you've got very long thumbs, all but the top two buttons on the face are hard to reach. We often had to move our hands around more than we'd like to get them into button-pushing position.

Force effects are extremely strong and responsive — definitely the best implementation we've seen since Formula Force. Everything from subtle vibrations to earth-rattling jerks is carried out with ease and fluidity. Unfortunately, there's a problem: We tried three different MOMO wheels and each one pulled slightly to the left of center when playing games. If we held the wheel at 12 o'clock we'd still drive straight, but since the artificial centering was off anywhere from 5 to 10 degrees, it always felt like we were fighting the wheel a little.

On the other hand, MOMO's pedals are the best Logitech has ever made. The pedals are covered with metal and the base unit is covered with diamond plate, and both gas and brake pedals are hinged right beneath the pedal plates so that when you press down on them with your feet, they feel an awful lot like the real thing.

Flaws aside, MOMO Force is the best feedback wheel we've seen in ages. If Logitech can find a way to get the centering mechanism working flawlessly, we'll be in NASCAR heaven, and even if it doesn't, this issue's only a minor annoyance. Definitely give this wheel a try and see what you think of it.

PC GAMER GOOD 75%

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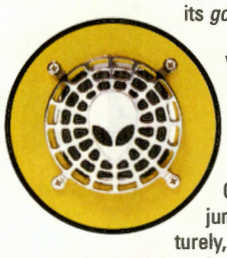
Area-51

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

ALIENWARE'S LATEST SYSTEM COULD MAKE EVEN HAL 9000 JEALOUS

Since most of the technology under the hood of this latest Area-51 has been around for a couple of months, you may be wondering why the machine costs nearly five grand. Sure, 2GHz P4s aren't cheap, and neither are GeForce3 Ti 500s or Sound Blaster Audigy Platinum eXs, but even more expensive than any of these items are this system's dual 100GB hard drives running in RAID 0 mode and its single DVD-RW drive (not to mention its *gorgeous* 22-inch NEC monitor).



What's a DVD-RW drive? Why, it's a DVD-ROM drive that plays movies, burns (and re-writes) up to 4.7GB of data onto blank DVD media, and even works as a CD-RW! Before you start jumping up and down prematurely, please note that the existing technology doesn't allow you to burn copywrited DVD movies. Even if it did, blank media costs $10 or more, so you might as well buy the movies you want instead of trying to pirate them — not that the thought ever crossed your mind, of course.

The drive worked like a charm for us, and the ability to get so much info onto a single disc was a godsend — 640MB to 700MB just doesn't always cut it anymore. The downside is that the unit is much slower than a standard DVD-ROM drive when it comes to spinning up and installing programs. Since this one drive does a little bit of everything, we can forgive Alienware for not including an extra drive. Still, as cool and as powerful as this drive is, watching games install from it is like watching paint dry. After just a few installs we were left craving something as "average" as a standard 32x CD-ROM drive. Do yourself a favor: if you can afford a DVD-RW, cough up the extra few bones and get a standard drive as well to speed up everyday tasks.

Many companies customize their cases these days, but what you may not know is that Alienware started it all when they began painting their cases (and keyboards and mice) in different colors nearly two years ago. Not much has changed since then, except that the Alienware brand name is now engraved from top to bottom along the front lefthand side of the case, which looks really cool.

In the past we've been sent dark colors like silver and blue; we've even seen green. All three of these colors looked great. This time, for something different, we asked for a yellow one. Unfortunately, this lighter color didn't turn out as well. While the paint job is certainly adequate, because the case's natural color is so dark (it looks like it's either gray or black), the end result is a bit uneven — just fine in some places, but a bit too thin in others. Another coat really would have helped balance the differences in the way the metal case and plastic front panel take the paint. After all, when you're paying $5,000 for a system, *everything* should be perfect.

Despite this nitpick, the new Area-51's construction is superb. Cables are bundled better than we've ever seen in an Alienware, and cooling is abundant and functional, allowing this system's overclocked video card (250MHz core/520MHz memory) to remain stable throughout all our tests.

Overall system performance is excellent, but right now AMD has a slight lead in many games with its Athlon XP 1900+ processor. The difference isn't huge — and it actually seems to disappear completely when you compare the AMD to the brand-new 2.2GHz P4 chip that Alienware sent us right before we went to print. We didn't have time to test it completely, but early testing shows this new P4 with 512K cache to be as much as 30 frames-per-second faster (or more) than the 2GHz when running *Quake III*. Look for a supplemental update with complete benchmark numbers in next month's issue.

In the meantime, we think the debate over which CPU is "better" — Athlon XP or P4 — is largely academic, so we're going to ignore it altogether and continue playing *AquaNox* on this kick-ass Area-51 at 1600x1200 in 32-bit color!

SYSTEM SPECS

■ System	
Processor	P4 2GHz
Motherboard	Intel 850MV
Memory	512MB PC-800
■ Storage	
Primary Hard Drive	100GB, 7,200rpm, ATA-100
Secondary Hard Drive	100GB, 7,200rpm, ATA-100
RAID Controller	Promise FastTrak100
DVD-RW Drive	Pioneer DVR-A03
■ Expansion	
5.25-inch bays	4 (3 free)
3.5-inch bays	6 (3 free)
AGP Slot	Yes
PCI Slots	5 (1 free)
RAM Slots	4 (2 free)
■ Audio	
Sound Card	Sound Blaster Audigy Platinum eX
Speakers	Klipsch ProMedia 5.1
■ Video	
Primary Display Adapter	GeForce3 Ti 500
Monitor	22-inch NEC FP1375X
■ Other	
Mouse	MS IntelliEye Explorer USB
Keyboard	107-Enhanced Windows Keyboard
Mouse Pad	fUnc sUrface 1030
Network Card	Intel Pro/100 S
Recovery CD	Yes
Warranty	1-year toll-free onsite
OS	Windows XP
Extras	LAN-Gamer Accessory Kit (Gear Grip Pro Harness, Plantronics LS-1 Headphones, 25-foot RJ-45 Network Cable)

BENCHMARKS

■ 3DMARK2001
(Tests run at 1024x768 in 32-bit color with triple frame buffer, 32-bit Z-buffer, compressed textures, hardware T&L enabled, and V-sync disabled)
3DMarks: 7,684
Game 1: Car Chase
High Detail: 40.0 fps
Game 2: Dragothic
High Detail: 65.0 fps
Game 3: Lobby
High Detail: 56.1 fps
Game 4: Nature: 44.8 fps
Fill Rate: 1,630.5 MegaTexels per second
Vertex Shader: 55.3 fps
Pixel Shader: 98.6 fps

■ QUAKE III
(Tests run in full, 32-bit color with trilinear filtering, max.-res textures, compressed textures, and V-sync disabled)
640x480
205.9 fps
800x600
202.3 fps
1024x768
184.4 fps
1280x1024
141.1 fps
1600x1200
103.1 fps

■ MDK 2
(Tests run in 32-bit color with trilinear filtering, max.-res textures, T&L enabled, and V-synch disabled)
640x480
182.2 fps
800x600
177.0 fps
1024x768
175.8 fps
1280x1024
150.8 fps
1600x1200
109.8 fps

FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: 2GHz P4; dual 100GB hard drives; DVD-RW; LAN accessories and best-in-class game controllers.

LOWS: DVD-RW is slow; yellow paint doesn't look as good as darker colors.

BOTTOM LINE: Despite a couple hiccups, the new Area-51 is still one of the very best PCs you can buy.

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE **90%**

hsq&a

Q In your December issue you wrote a terrific story about Windows XP. You mentioned that because some older games may not work with it, gamers may wish to leave Windows 98 on their system when upgrading to the new OS so that they can use both. I didn't know that was possible! How can I set up my computer like this?

— David Alexander

A It's called dual-booting, Dave, and here's how you do it:

Before we get started, it's important to note that you CAN NOT install two operating systems on the same partition — Microsoft doesn't support it and it isn't likely to function properly. With that in mind, let's pretend you've got a 20GB hard drive, and that the entire 20GB is allocated to your C: drive. Let's also imagine that you've already got Windows 98/Me installed. To dual-boot between Windows XP and Windows 98/Me, you're going to need to do one of three things:

(1) Split your 20GB drive into two partitions using the utility software on your Windows CD or Windows boot disk. Your C: drive should be formatted using FAT32, and your new D: drive should be formatted using either FAT32 or NTFS. Be aware that you'll lose all of your data in the process, so make backups of everything you want to keep before you do anything! Once you've completed this step, install Win 98/Me on your C: drive first, and then install Win XP on your D: drive.

(2) Buy a program like "Partition Magic" and it will allow you to break up your drive into separate partitions without having to erase a thing. Your new D: drive is where you'll install Win XP, and it should be formatted using either FAT32 or NTFS.

(3) Buy and install a second hard drive so that you can install Windows XP on it. Format this drive (D:) using either FAT32 or NTFS.

Once everything is installed, remember to treat each OS as a separate entity: install programs and drivers on both platforms independently, as if they were two different computers. If you've chosen to install Win XP over a FAT32 file system, you'll be able to trade files (and play some games) back and forth between it and Win 98/Me, but that's pretty much the extent of the crossover. If you install Win XP over NTFS instead of FAT32 so that you can reap the benefits of its added security, stability, and performance, you'll be able to look at Win 98/Me files when running Win XP, but not the other way around.

Some games, even newer ones such as *Rune*, won't work under Win XP. The answer: dual-boot!

So there you have it! From now on, whenever you turn on your computer, you'll be asked which OS you'd like to load. Select the one you want and you'll be off to the races!

If you have a hardware question or comment, or just want some...thing, write to **Greg Vederman, Hard Stuff, PC Gamer, 150 North Hill Drive, Brisbane, CA 94005,** or email *gvederman@pcgamer.com.*

DANIEL MORRIS
extendedplay@pcgamer.com

Takeda's Ambition

A finalist in the Independent Games Festival scores a publisher. Welcome to feudal Japan!

The 2001 Independent Games Festival, held last March in San Jose, Calif., produced 10 finalist games. One of them was a real-time strategy epic set against the backdrop of feudal Japan's shogunate wars (making it very similar in theme to EA's excellent *Shogun: Total War*). The product of two years of work by Toronto-based indie developer Magitech, *Takeda* impressed the judges enough to earn honorable mention.

Now that I've had a chance to play the version that Xicat Interactive is releasing commercially, I can safely say that the game *should* have won the *grand prize* at the 2001 IGF.

Its inspirations are squarely within the realm of two brilliant Nintendo Entertainment System games that never got the attention they deserved — *Nobunaga's Ambition* and *Romance of the Three Kings*. Amazingly involving for its time and platform, *Nobunaga's Ambition* put you in the shoes of a Japanese daimyo seeking to unite the fiefs and claim the throne for himself. *Takeda* does the same, but takes advantage of a PC's guts to provide a gorgeous RTS environment in which to seek the throne for Takeda Shingen.

Big-scale strategy — in *Takeda*, siege is the key to defeating rival warlords.

It's hard to believe that *Takeda*'s stunning artwork came from a group that was largely self-funded. The game's sepia-toned look is straight from the carved-block art style of the period. And the unit graphics themselves, rendered from a bird's-eye view, are excellent. Divisions of cavalry, archers, spearmen, and musketeers sweep into conflict, clashing in open fields, spilling across rivers, and storming strongholds.

Takeda Shingen is a young man with a dream — to conquer his rivals and rule a united Japan. Can he get it done?

The game accurately models the historical chain of command on the feudal Japanese battlefield. You're represented by a marshal on the field, but the battle won't end if your commander is killed — control will pass to the next senior officer, though the whole force will suffer a morale loss. Morale affects each integrated division as well, reflecting the dismay of losing commanders in an era when individual lords owned the loyalty of clan warriors serving under them.

The scale is huge. Each side (two players can go head-to-head, or you can take on the crafty AI) can contain up to 12 divisions, each packed with up to 40 troops. In all, that makes for a possible 960 soldiers fighting on one battlefield. It's truly a sight to see.

Campaign play adds significant role-playing elements, which also mirror the innovative depth of the genre's NES forebears. Each battle affects the ones to follow, creating an immersive, non-linear storyline. Dialogue-rich cinematics arc the story, no matter the outcome of an individual battle — a *lot* of thought went into this campaign mode! As commanders and their divisions gain battlefield experience, they'll become deadlier in subsequent combat. Most pleasing is a feature that can be traced directly back to *Nobunaga's Ambition* — each of your subordinate generals is a uniquely motivated personality, and his fortunes under your command will lead to many very different possibilities for on-field advantage and surprise.

Ming-Sheng Lee and the rest of Magitech have crafted a visually sweeping, dynamically structured wargame that captures the feel of classic feudal-Japan strategy games. More impressively, this indie studio built a game that's every bit as compelling as *Shogun*, and on its own time and dime. Kudos to Xicat for recognizing goodness at the grassroots. PCG

Two armies collide at a river crossing. Terrain plays a crucial role in the game's battles.

MY FIVE GAMES OF THE MONTH... 1. GHOST RECON, 2. COMBAT MISSION, 3. TAKEDA, 4. BASEBALL MOGUL 2002, 5. GHOST RECON (AGAIN)

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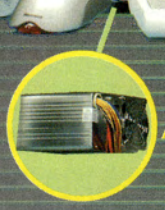

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Eliminate
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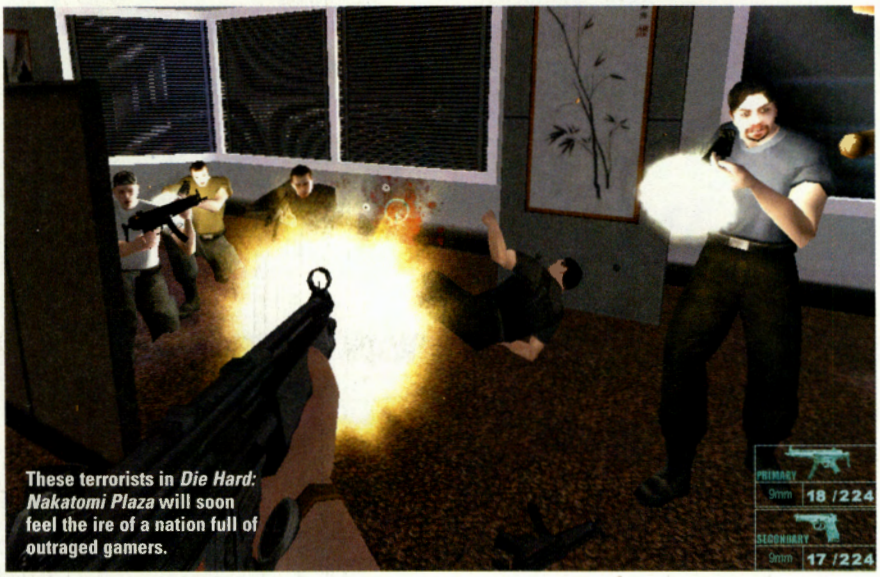
Can We Still ~~Kill~~ Terrorists?

...and other questions left unanswered in the wake of September 11th.



These terrorists in *Die Hard: Nakatomi Plaza* will soon feel the ire of a nation full of outraged gamers.

Throughout gaming history there have been a few consistently reliable bad guys — Nazis, demon hellspawn, evil sorcerers — you know the ones. A few months ago, anonymous "terrorists" could be included on that list. And until Sept. 11, the faceless, generic terrorist was about as relevant to the average sheltered American as a space alien or an orc.

Needless to say, the terrorist isn't faceless anymore, and the fight against terrorism is no longer a game.

In the days following the attack, the national mantra became "nothing will ever be the same again." Movies with terrorist themes were put on hold, or cancelled outright. The World Trade Center, after two solid days in an apocalyptic TV tape loop, was erased from any and all new media, including games.

M-rated actioner *Rogue Spear: Black Thorn* has received little criticism from the moral police in post–Sept. 11 days.

Still, how sensitive must a game be in a world where the next terrorist attack can be as close as your mailbox? The gaming industry is surprisingly hand-to-mouth, relying on planned sales from one game to fund the next, each with longer development cycles than a comparable film or TV show. Canceling a game or performing major revisions to excise objectionable material isn't always an option.

"As sad as it is to say, terrorism is now a part of our landscape," says *SWAT 3* game designer Tammy Dargan. "It's not going anywhere and it won't be eradicated for a long time, if ever. Does that mean we shouldn't deal with the subject? That we should behave as though terrorism doesn't exist? I don't think so."

At the same time, Dargan admits to a shift in focus for the next chapter in the series (which, at press time, does not yet have a title). "Past *SWAT* games have dealt with international terrorism, including biological warfare. After the events of Sept. 11, we decided to refocus our attention on domestic security and urban crisis and the types of extreme situations SWAT officers would find themselves in most often."

Craig Hubbard, designer for *No One Lives Forever*, agrees. "I think the situation calls for sensitivity, but I don't believe terrorist themes are any less relevant or appropriate now than they were before Sept. 11. Terrorism is a popular premise in games, movies, and novels because it's such an enduring problem in the real world."

And, in the short run at least, Hubbard appears to be right. Terrorist-themed games like *Rogue Spear: Black Thorn* and *Real War* were released post-tragedy, with nary a peep from the usual moral watchdogs. *Global Operations*, an FPS set in real-world hotspots, remains in development. In fact, if the jump in rentals of terrorism-themed movies in the days following Sept. 11 is any indication, some gamers are probably hungry for games that put a terrorist enemy in their sights.

And why not? If the Senator Liebermans of the world really think that action games turn normal kids into skinny, pale killing machines, then wouldn't they want to put a copy of *Ghost Recon* in the hands of every draft-age American male? I don't think that'll ever happen, yet it's an all-too-ironic possibility for an uncertain future.

"I think the industry should be responsible when developing content. We should respect those who lost their lives on 9/11, and their families and friends," offers Bryan Ekman, art director at Piranha Games, who says that the content in his upcoming "one guy against the terrorist scum" actioner *Die Hard: Nakatomi Plaza* has been unaffected by the tragedy, despite a delay in its release date. "I suspect games will be more content-sensitive during the next few years."

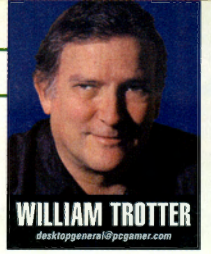
Not everyone agrees with that sentiment. "The genie has been let out of the bottle," counters Dargan. "Realistic first-person games exist, and if the industry never made another one, the existing games can still be played. That said, however, the gaming industry makes games to make money. If issue-sensitive games start selling, then that's what they'll make. And when those no longer sell, they'll move on to what does."

It seems that in times of war, just as in peacetime, the most powerful barometer of sensitivity is the American wallet. POG

MOD OF THE MONTH

OKAY, ENOUGH DOOM and gloom. This month's mod is the pseudo–sports-classic-in-the-making *Proball* for *Quake III*. That's right: *QIII*'s not just for maiming anymore. Now you can play soccer and a bastardized version of basketball, too. I kid, but seriously, you should check it out. It's best when played with friends, 'cause bots can't jump. (Trust me on that one.) Get it at *www.planetquake.com/proball/*.

MY FIVE GAMES OF THE MONTH... 1. RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN, 2. GHOST RECON, 3. QUAKE III, 4. UNREAL TOURNAMENT, 5. ROGUE SPEAR: BLACK THORN



WILLIAM TROTTER
desktopgeneral@pcgamer.com

Back to the Front!

The Colonel takes another look at *World War II Online* and finds it much improved.

PC Gamer's policy is to review games as they are when you pull 'em *out of the box*. With frequently updated online games, however, we realize the need to revisit our scores — especially with a title as ambitious as *World War II Online*.

Cornered Rat/Strategy First's *WWIIO* was shoved out the door at least six months prematurely, thereby creating one of the most disastrous launches since

With the new additions via its various patches, *World War II Online* is now a real land, sea, and air sim.

Battlecruiser 3000AD. Because of the game's enormous potential, Rob Smith and I gave it a "provisional" review in the September 2001 issue (score: 50%) and promised to re-examine it after a suitable interval.

Well, version 1.3.0 came out in mid-October, so I went back to check it out.

On the whole, I was very favorably impressed. I see no point in cataloging the multitude of small (but cumulatively significant) technical patches — you can read all about them on *www.wwiionline.com*. Suffice it to say that I found the game much more stable and far less buggy than before.

More importantly for readers of this column, *WWIIO* has matured greatly *as a wargame*. Here are some of the reasons why:

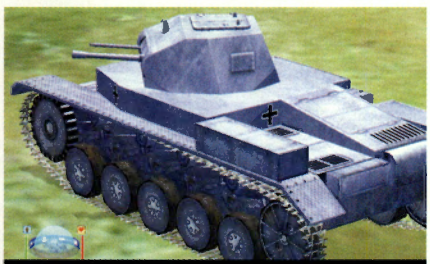
SPAWNING LIMITS All vehicles now have some level of restraint governing the amount, rate, and variety of units available at the game's chokepoints. For instance, you can't access some of the most potent units until you reach a certain rank. And if a chokepoint is "contended" (i.e., being fought over), heavy weapons cannot be spawned there until one side or the other captures the whole town. These new spawning rules mean noticeably fewer vehicles are running around (no more vast and historically absurd hordes of French Char-B's!), and each one now has greater strategic and tactical value.

BETTER INFANTRY Soldiers are now subject to more realistic and intuitive movement commands. They have new weapons (including hand grenades), and sappers with satchel charges now give the grunts at least a modest close-range anti-tank capability. Overhauled terrain graphics also provide more cover for the ground-pounders.

IMPROVED ROLEPLAYING ELEMENTS The rank and mission-scoring systems have been thoroughly reworked. "Mission priority" now has appropriate weight, though it's still worth your time to accept some low-value, bottom-of-the-food-chain missions if you're new to the game. Overall, the mission/promotion paradigm seems much more dynamic and player-driven.

NEW AIRCRAFT The Brits finally have a bomber, offsetting the hitherto lopsided German advantage conferred by the Stukas. It's the Bristol Blenheim, which packs a respectable bomb load (1,000 pounds) and boasts an extremely precise bombsight. But its defensive armament is weak, making it very vulnerable to the new German plane, the Messerschmitt Bf-110. The 110 is mediocre against Allied fighters, but it's well-armed and makes a pretty good ground-strafer.

A (TOKEN) NAVAL ELEMENT A lot of early buyers were especially outraged when the box promised "naval operations" and the game didn't have any. Now each side has access to a few sleek, heavily armed riverine gunboats (Fairmile B's). Granted, you can't do much with them yet (though they do make very potent mobile anti-aircraft platforms), but they're so cool — and so much fun to take into battle — that they've made me intensely curious to see what Cornered Rat can do with larger, blue-water vessels.



Tanks now have to worry about infantry with anti-armor capability.

The infantrymen still don't have any machine guns or mortars, and a really good downloadable manual would definitely make the game more accessible. But on the whole, I would say that *WWIIO* is now the kind of game it should have been back in June, when its publisher first charged $50 for it. If that's an ambiguous recommendation, so be it. It's probably too late for Strategy First to lure back the thousands of pissed-off customers who got burned by the initial release, but Cornered Rat has worked its ass off to improve the game while enduring a tsunami of scorn and vitriol, and that speaks volumes for its dedication.

Bottom line: I think the game's now worth the pay-to-play monthly fee, and if Cornered Rat gets enough financial support to continue its development, *World War II Online* might well evolve into the visionary masterpiece we all hoped it would be. POG

New aircraft like the Bristol Blenheim let you take on Stukas for bomber supremacy.

MY FIVE GAMES OF THE MONTH... 1. WORLD WAR II ONLINE, 2. DECISIVE ACTION, 3. SQUAD BATTLES: VIETNAM, 4. COMBAT MISSION, 5. IL-2 STURMOVIK (BETA)

ANDY MAHOOD
simcolumn@pcgamer.com

Swapping Seats

The makers of *F1 2001* didn't just race real cars — they got pros to race their game.

A few issues ago, I publicly challenged PC racing-sim publishers to park the fannies of some of their key programmers in the cockpit of a proper race car at a professional driving school. Such real-world experience would, I argued, instill a greater level of appreciation for the complex dynamics of real-world motorsports in the people who develop driving titles.

Papyrus has used this technique quite effectively in the past, but I would soon discover that the folks at ISI (the developers of *Sports Car GT* and EA's *F1* series) had also logged some quality time at the Derek Daly Academy in Las Vegas before finalizing the code on their new *F1 2001* sim for EA Sports.

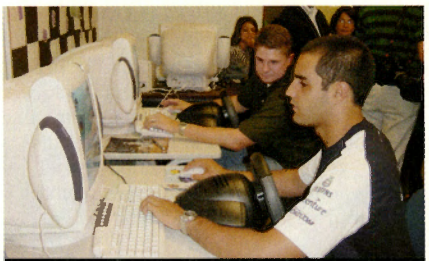
It seems to have paid off, too, because *F1 2001*'s physics modeling is some of the best you'll see in a Formula One sim. Was this racing because of something *I* said?

ISI's *F1 2001* has the best Formula One physics model. Clearly, the developers' track time is paying dividends.

Well, no, not really: this school session was run over a year before my column was printed. But it's still nice to know that my opinions actually count for something, and that my suggestion seems to have been an inherently good one after all.

So what was the final consensus of all those who participated?

"Driving school turned out to be a tremendous help," says ISI Producer Chris Wynn. "Not only did we learn the proper way to drive a race car, but we learned what it *feels* like to drive an open-wheel car as well. Everything we learned was immediately implemented in our new physics model for *F1 2001*, and some of the book knowledge was translated into the Driving School section of the game." (Wynn also took malicious delight in pointing out that EA Sports Senior Producer James Hawkins wound up spending almost as much time *off* the track as on during the three-day course.)



F1 driver Montoya takes advice from ISI's Wynn on making setup adjustments to his *F1 2001* car.

Hawkins goes head-to-head with Jordan F1 driver Zonta in *F1 2001*. The professional prevailed.

It sounds as though this racing may become a regular event.

"I'm sure we'll continue to send our employees to experience driving school," Wynn says. "We actually sent three newbies back in February."

Our conversation eventually turned away from the subject of amateurs driving real race cars to that of pros driving virtual ones. During development, *F1 2001* was put through its paces by a number of elite F1 pilots. The feedback that EA received from some of these world-class drivers was quite fascinating.

"I got to race Ricardo Zonta [who races for the Jordan F1 team] head-to-head several times during our launch event at this year's main Monza test," recounts Hawkins. "He was absolutely hooked on the game, and very competitive. We engaged primarily in test days at the A1-Ring, as that's one of Ricardo's favorite circuits and one of the easiest to learn. He was immediately taken aback by how accurate the circuit modeling was, and was instantly at home driving the car. In his first five laps he blew away everyone except me, and to say he was closer to my lap times than I was comfortable with is an understatement. With lots of press around, the last thing I needed was to be beaten by Zonta. Unfortunately, on the second day, it simply couldn't be avoided. I had completed a faster lap than his earlier in the morning, but on camera in the afternoon I simply got beat. It might have been by only two-tenths of a second, but when you're pushing to the edge, as in real life, that's a lot of time."

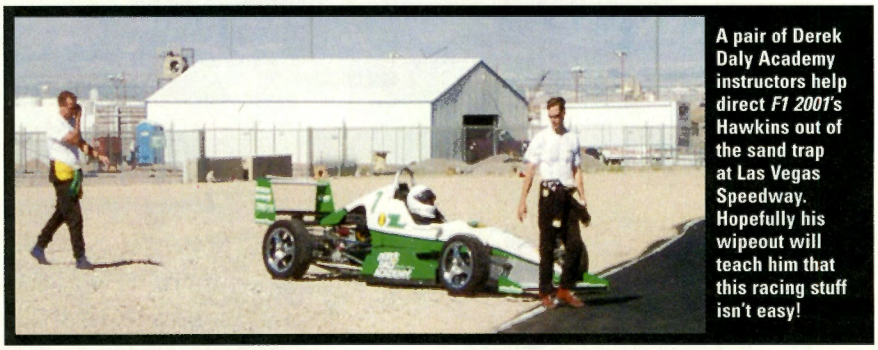
Wynn also described Juan Pablo Montoya's [Williams team] first reaction to the game. "The first thing Montoya said was, 'Hey, that's my wheel,' and after his first run he immediately wanted to change the car to suit his driving style. Like Ricardo, he was impressed with the detail in our vehicle-setup options and by how well he could actually 'feel' the changes we made."

Hawkins was also impressed with Montoya's speed, but his praise came with a disclaimer. "Montoya was fast right away, and after a little time in the garage, he was flying. But he had to resort to cheating to beat me."

From the developers' accounts, it seems that Hawkins and Wynn were more than able to hold their own against the pros when it came to playing *F1 2001*. But how did all of those freshly race-trained programmers fare?

"Generally, us producer types are fastest," says Hawkins, sporting his best poker face. "Although recently a few of the EA Quality Assurance staff did manage to apply a little pressure. The programmers, with just a couple of exceptions, really do suck."

Hmm...maybe it's time to send them back to school. PCG



A pair of Derek Daly Academy instructors help direct *F1 2001*'s Hawkins out of the sand trap at Las Vegas Speedway. Hopefully his wipeout will teach him that this racing stuff isn't easy!

MY FIVE GAMES OF THE MONTH... 1. F1 2001, 2. MICROSOFT FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2002, 3. SUB COMMAND, 4. IL-2 STURMOVIK (BETA), 5. RALLY TROPHY (DEMO)

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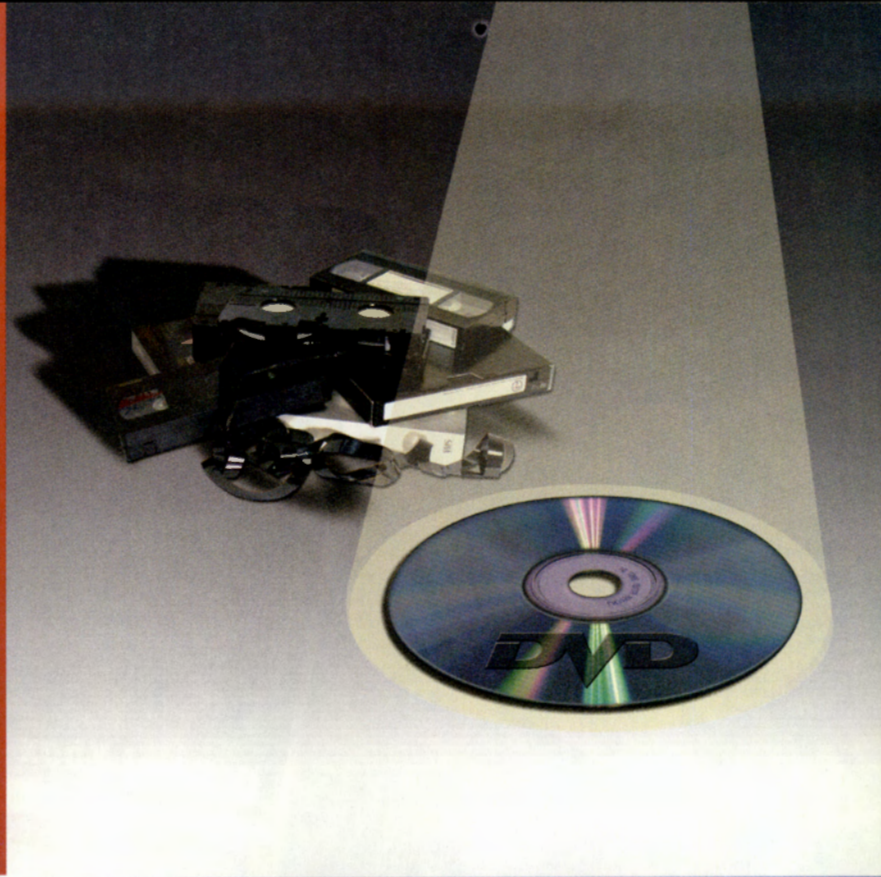

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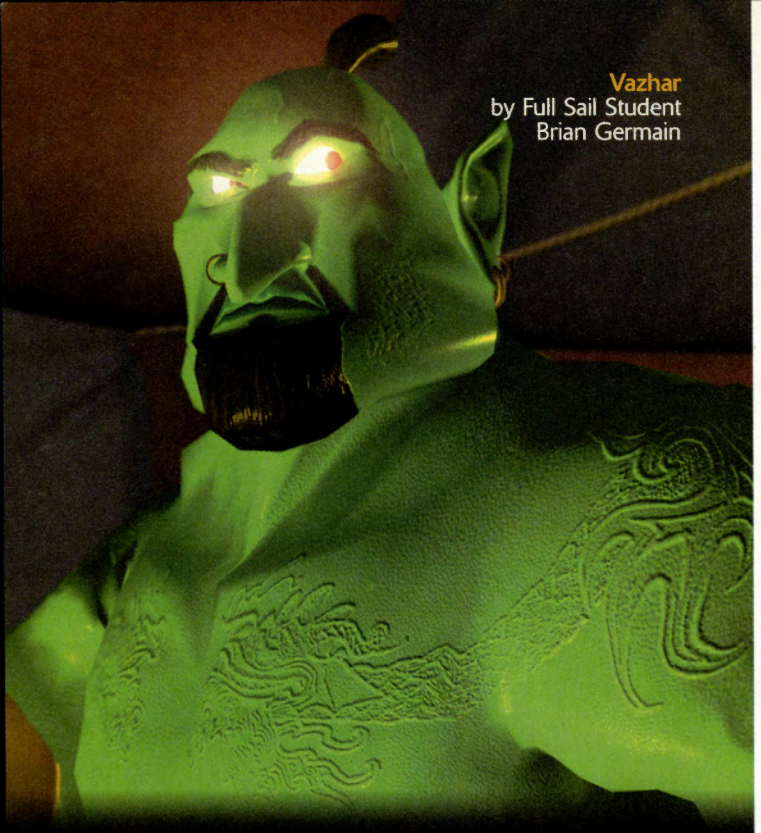

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- Mature sexual themes
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CHEATER'S CORNER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 49

Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

During gameplay, hit Pause and, while holding Shift, type the following codes. NOTE: Use Numpad keys to type numbers.

s66s Fat tires.
4awd Perfect balance.
4w62 Add eight minutes to run.
648w Unlock Burnside.
648a Unlock School.
648d Unlock Warehouse.
648s Unlock Granny.
as86wa84 Always Full Special.
466wss Score times 10.
ssw664 Score divided by 10.

Typing of the Dead

Type the following codes at the Password screen. Note: Codes must be in uppercase using the Shift key (Caps Lock won't work).

BBCDTBC open "vs. CPU" mode (1)
DOAKSIM open "vs. CPU" mode (2)
STKZJGH open "vs. CPU" mode (3)
POQRTJC Can select infinite continues (at the Options screen).
DEBTINU Can select up to nine continues (at the Options screen).
TORAMAN Can select five lives (at the Options screen).
KIKMAHP Open all.
TMTSINO Can play the last chapter from the start of the game.

NOTES: The "vs. CPU" mode is the mode that is "hidden."

The Sims

During gameplay, press Ctrl+Shift+C, and then type the following codes:

klapaucius $1,000 simoleons.
rosebud $1,000 simoleons (if using version 1.1+ or the *Livin' Large* add-on).
water_tool Make your home an island surrounded by water.
set_hour # Change time of day to # (1–24).
sim_speed # Game speed to # (-1000 to +1000).
interests View personality and interests of your Sims.
autonomy # Change how Sims think on their own (1-100).
grow_grass # Grow grass # (1–150).
map_edit on/off Edit the map.
route_balloons on/off Basic tutorial on/off.
sweep on/off Shows ticks of the game.
tile_info on/off Show or hide tile info.
log_mask Set event logging mask.
draw_all_frames on/off Draw all frames on and off.
history Dumps family-history file.
edit_char Open Create-A-Character screen.
draw_floorable on/off Floorable grid.
draw_routes on/off Selected person's path displayed.
move_object Move any object.
prepare_lot Check and fix required lot objects.
preview_anims on/off Preview animations.
rotation (0–3) Rotate camera.
house # Autoload indicated house #.
visitor_control Toggle allowing visitors to be controlled via keyboard.

Operation Flashpoint

At the main menu, type campaign, and you'll get a message telling you that all campaigns are now unlocked.

Press Left Shift + Numpad –, type one of the following cheats, and then hit Enter.

end mission Wins the mission. (NOTE: You'll get no points for beating a mission using this code. Don't use it too often or you'll lose the campaign.)
save game Adds an extra save-game slot.

Max Payne

To enable the game's cheat codes, use the Start menu Run command to run the game's executable file (Maxpayne.exe) after adding -developer to the end of it (e.g., "C:\Program Files\Max Payne\Maxpayne.exe"-developer). Now, during the game, you can hit F12 to bring up the console. Type any of these cheats in the console and then hit Enter.

coder God mode, all weapons, and unlimited ammo.
god God mode.
mortal Turns off god mode.
getallweapons All weapons.
getinfiniteammo Unlimited ammo.
noclip No clipping mode.
noclip_off Turns off no clipping mode.
getbullettime Fill up bullet-time.
showfps Show frame rate.
getpainkillers Get eight PainKillers.
c_addhealth (100) Add 100 to Health.
jump10 Jump higher (set to 20 or 30 to jump even higher).
SetWoundedState Walk as if wounded.
SetNormalState Walk normally.

To jump to any level, type maxpayne_gamemode->gm_init(levelname) where the levelname is one of the following:

startup_level
tutorial
end_combat
part0_level1
part1_level1
part1_level1b
part1_level2
part1_level2b
part1_level3
part1_level3b
part1_level4
part1_level5
part1_level6
part2_level0
part2_level1
part2_level2
part2_level2b
part2_level3
part2_level4
part3_level1
part3_level2
part3_level2b
part3_level3
part3_level4
part3_level5
part3_level5b
part3_level6
part3_level7

World War III: Black Gold

During gameplay, press Enter and type peace. Now type one of the following codes, and then press Enter.

HereYouAre! Reveal enemy units and buildings.
BeautifulWorld Reveal map.
Shower Large amount of explosions on screen area.
MoneyForNothing Gives money.
NobelPrize 1 Instant research.
Smash Large explosion in center of screen.

TO SKIP A MISSION: During the game, hit Enter, type world.endmission 1, and then hit Enter again.

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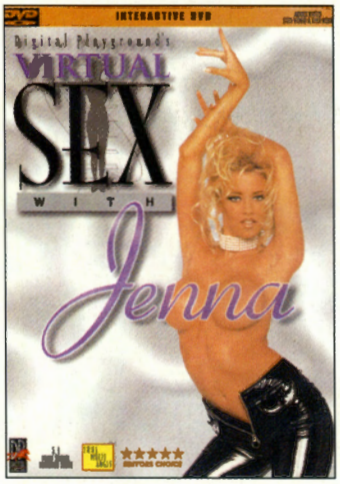
Things You Should Know About...

The Numbers

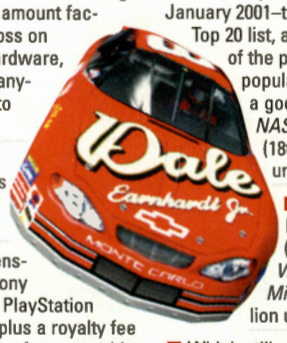
We all know that computer- and videogames are big business. How big? *Really* big (though not as big as the porn industry!). Read on...

- Estimated revenue of videogames in 2000: $8 billion
- Estimated revenue of Hollywood movies in 2000: $7 billion
- Revenue of the pornography industry in 1997: $8 billion (source:



E. Schlosser: "The Business of Pornography," *U.S. News and World Report*, Feb. 10, 1997). This figure has likely increased significantly since then, thanks to The Vede's ever-growing appetite.

- Estimated revenue of the gambling industry in 1998: $54.3 billion
- Top-selling PC game in 2000: *The Sims*
- Unit sales of *The Sims* in 2000: 1,775,788 (source: NPD Intelect)
- Top-selling PC game in 2001 (January–September): *The Sims*
- Unit sales of *The Sims* in 2001: 909,000 (source: NPD Intelect)
- Total estimated revenue from *The Sims*' 2,684,788 sales: $110,293,397 (source: NPD Intelect)
- Worldwide box-office revenue of *Titanic* movie: $1,835,400,000 (domestic revenue: $600,790,000 — source: Box Office Report)
- Domestic revenue of *Super Mario Bros.* movie: $20.9 million
- Number of Americans who played electronic games in 2000 according to an Interactive Digital Software Association (IDSA) study: 145 million
- Increase in PC-game sales in 2000: 8%
- Decrease in console-game sales in 2000: 4%
- "Directly and indirectly, the demand for computer- and videogames generated employment for 219,000 people [in 2000]" (source: IDSA report)
- Units of *Unreal Tournament* sold in first three months of release: 128,765
- Units of *Quake III* sold in first three months of release: 248,241
- Amount spent on marketing of Xbox: $500 million (Note: This figure includes the amount factored in for the loss on each piece of hardware, estimated to be anywhere from $50 to $125 per unit)
- Licensing fee paid to PC makers for developing a PC game: $0
- Estimated licensing fee paid to Sony for developing a PlayStation 2 game: $25,000 plus a royalty fee based on number of games sold
- Estimated amount of revenue lost to game publishers in 1999 due to piracy: $3 billion
- Number of subscribers paying $9.89/month for *EverQuest*: 410,000
- One estimate of the size of the *online* computer-gaming industry by 2005: $26 billion (source: crazy)
- One company that probably thinks that figure is possible if it gets its product on shelves by 2003: LucasArts (which is creating *Star Wars: Galaxies*)
- Top-selling console title from January 2001 through September 2001: *Pokémon Crystal* for Game Boy Color
- Top-selling PC game of all time (1993–Sept. 2001): *Myst* (4.3 million units; $147 million revenue)
- 20th-best-selling PC game of 2001 (January through September): *Myst III: Exile* (193,000 units; $8 million)
- Saddest entry on January 2001–through–Sept. 2001 Top 20 list, and proof positive of the power of clueless buyers wanting any old game for their kids, and not reading *PC Gamer* first: *Frogger* (8th position; 345,000 units; $2.7 million)
- Most surprising entry on January 2001–through–Sept. 2001 Top 20 list, and proof positive of the power of a great, popular license tied to a good game: Sierra's *NASCAR Racing 4* (18th position; 209,000 units; $8.9 million)



- 6th-best-selling PC game of all time (1993–Sept. 2001): *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* (1.6 million units; $28 million)
- Which still pales in comparison to *RollerCoaster Tycoon* (4th position; 2.5 million units; $67 million)
- Hope for the future — good games getting delayed, but still kicking ass, and still selling well: *Black & White* (390,000 units; $16.4 million) and *Tribes 2* (206,000 units; $8.5 million)

NEXT MONTH FEBRUARY 2002

Massively multiplayer games: Where do they stand? What's new with *EverQuest*, and how do you pick it up again? Will *Lord Blackthorn's Revenge* bring gamers flooding back to *Ultima Online*? What's *Anarchy Online*'s story? Do *Shadowbane* and *Dragon Empires* have a chance in this ever-crowded arena? These questions, and innumerable more, answered next month. Plus...we unveil a top-secret project guaranteed to bring a smile to every gamer's face.

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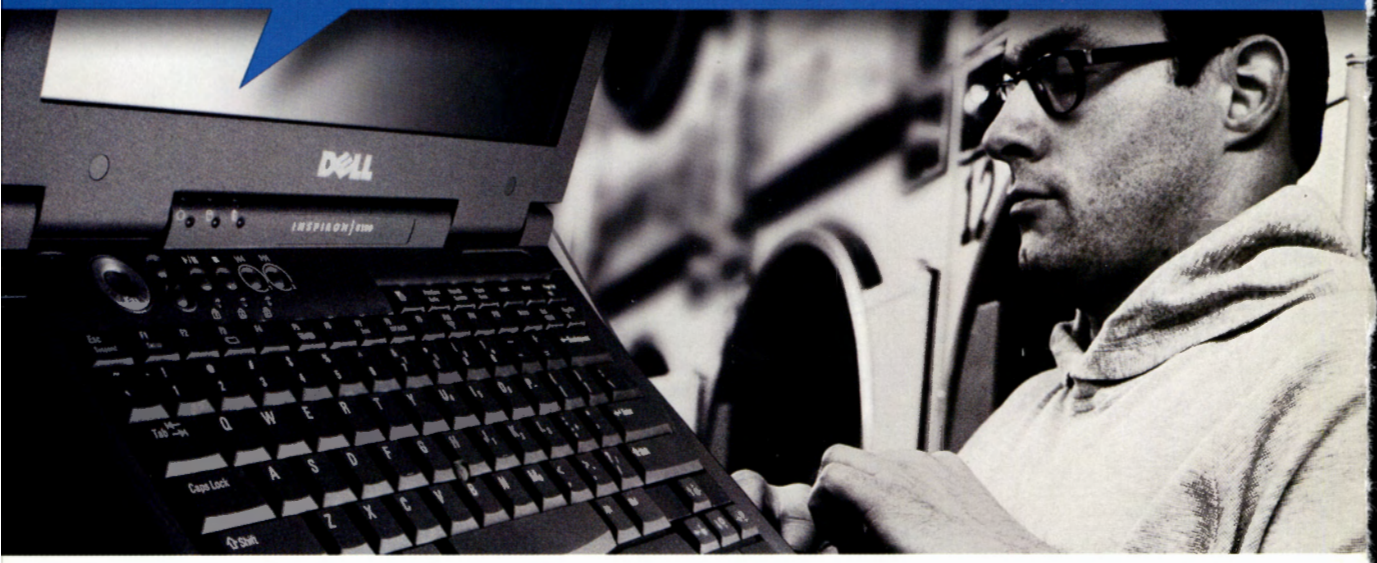

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- 56K[6] PCI Telephony Modem for Windows®

$899 or as low as **$27**/mo for 45 mos.[12]
No payments for 90 days
for qualified customers.
E-VALUE Code: 00520-501208q

Recommended upgrade:

- 40GB[5] Ultra ATA/100 Hard Drive (7200 RPM), add $20

Dimension™ 4300 Desktop

Superior Performance, Smart Value

- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor at 1.70 GHz
- 128MB SDRAM at 133MHz
- 40GB[5] Ultra ATA/100 Hard Drive (7200 RPM)
- 17" (15.9" vis, .27dp) E771 Monitor
- 16MB ATI® Rage™ Ultra Graphics Card
- 48X Max CD-ROM Drive
- 16X/10X/40X CD-RW Drive with Roxio's Easy CD Creator®
- SB Live! 1024V Digital Sound Card
- Harman Kardon® HK-195 Speakers
- 56K[6] PCI Telephony Modem for Windows®

$1099 or as low as **$33**/mo for 45 mos.[12]
No payments for 90 days
for qualified customers.
E-VALUE Code: 00520-501210

Recommended upgrade:

- 256MB SDRAM, add $80

Dimension™ 8200 Desktop

Cutting Edge Technology

- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor at 1.80 GHz
- 256MB PC800 RDRAM
- 40GB[5] Ultra ATA/100 Hard Drive (7200 RPM)
- 17" (15.9" vis, .27dp) E771 Monitor
- NEW 64MB NVIDIA™ GeForce2 MX Graphics Card with TV-Out
- 16X Max DVD-ROM Drive
- 16X/10X/40X CD-RW Drive with Roxio's Easy CD Creator®
- SB Live! 1024V Digital Sound Card
- Harman Kardon® HK-395 Speakers with Subwoofer
- 56K[6] PCI Telephony Modem for Windows®

$1499 or as low as **$45**/mo for 45 mos.[12]
No payments for 90 days
for qualified customers.
E-VALUE Code: 00520-501214

Recommended upgrade:

- 19" (18.0" vis, .26 dp) M991 Monitor, add $80

Dell | Standard Features

Each DELL system shown here has a number of standard features, including:

- MS® Windows® XP Home Edition
- MS® Works Suite with MS® Money Standard
- Dell Jukebox powered by MusicMatch
- 6 Months America Online™ Membership Included[7]
- Dimension™ Desktops shown here include 1-Yr At-Home Service,[4] 1-Yr Limited Warranty,[2] 1-Yr 24x7 Phone Support
- Inspiron™ Notebooks shown here include 1-Yr Mail-In Service, 1-Yr Limited Warranty,[2] 1-Yr 24x7 Phone Support

Dell | Solutions

Software and Accessories

- Epson® C80 Color Printer, $179
- Canon® 1240U scanner, $199
- Lexmark™ All In One Print Center, $199
- HP® 318 Camera, $199

Service and Support

How about some peace of mind to accompany your new Dell™ system?

Dimension™ Desktop Service Upgrades:

- Upgrade Dimension™ Desktops with 1-Yr Ltd Warranty,[2] 1-Yr At-Home Service[4] and 1-Yr 24x7 Phone Support: 3-Yr Ltd Warranty,[2] 3-Yr At-Home Service[4] and Lifetime 24x7 Phone Support, add $119 (4300S and 4300 series) or add $139 (8200 series)

Inspiron™ Notebook Service Upgrades:

- Upgrade Inspiron™ Notebooks with 1-Yr Ltd Warranty[2] and 1-Yr Mail-In Service to: 3-Yr Ltd Warranty,[2] 3-Yr Next-Business-Day On-Site Service[4] and 24x7 Lifetime Phone Support, add $219

Everything you'd ever want in a PC starts right here. Whether you're looking for high-performance multimedia to take on the road, or a versatile desktop that's perfect for home, Dell can custom-build a solution that is just right for you. And by making PCs to order and shipping direct instead of using a middleman retailer, Dell is able to give you the very latest technology at a low price, all backed by an award-winning service and support team that knows your PC like it's their own. So go online or call today, and discover a better way of finding, buying, and owning the perfect computer. A better way that's easy.

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Order the easy way. Visit **www.dell4me.com** or call toll free **1-877-285-3355.**

troubleshooting. To receive next business day service, Dell must notify the service provider before 5pm (customer's time). Availability varies. Other conditions apply. [5]For hard drives, GB means 1 billion bytes; accessible capacity varies with operating environment. Download speeds limited to 53Kbps. Upload speeds are less (about 30kbps) and vary by modem manufacturer and online conditions. Analog phone line and compatible server required. [12]Monthly payment based on 13.99% APR FOR QUALIFIED CUSTOMERS. OFFER VARIES BY CREDITWORTHINESS OF CUSTOMER AS DETERMINED BY LENDER. Under 90 Days Same As Cash feature, interest accrues during first 90 days if balance not paid within 90 days. Customers not eligible for 90 Days Same As Cash feature may be offered standard 48-month financing with APRs ranging from 16.99% to 26.99%. Example: $1650 purchase price, at 19.99%, 48 monthly payments at $51. Taxes and shipping charges extra and vary. From CIT OnLine Bank to U.S. residents with approved credit. Intel, Intel Inside, Pentium and Celeron are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. MS, Microsoft, MSN and Windows are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. America Online and AOL are service marks of America Online, Inc. Dell cannot be responsible for errors in typography or photography. ©2001 Dell Computer Corporation. All rights reserved.

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Keep your E-VALUE CODE handy! It's the easiest way to find and build your perfect PC – at the lowest price – when you decide to order.

I've got strength in numbers...and in options.

Dell | Home Notebooks

Inspiron™ 2500 Notebook

Practical and Affordable Mobility

- Intel® Celeron® Processor at 900MHz
- 12.1" SVGA TFT Display
- 128MB Shared SDRAM
- 10GB[5] Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- Fixed 24X Max CD-ROM
- Intel® Integrated 3D® AGP Video with up to 8MB Shared System Memory
- Sound Blaster® Compatible
- 26.5 WHr Li-Ion Battery
- Internal Mini-PCI 56K[6] Capable Fax Modem
- Floppy Drive Not Included

$999 or as low as **$30**/mo for 45 mos.[12]
No payments for 90 days for qualified customers.
E-VALUE Code: 00520-801209m

Recommended upgrades:

- Add a Dell Notebook Protection Backpack, add $79
- Add a Notebook Surge Protector, add $29
- Add a Defcon Notebook Security Device, add $39

Inspiron™ 4100 Notebook

Uncompromising Performance in a Thin and Light System

- Intel® Pentium® III Processor at 1GHz-M featuring Intel® SpeedStep™ Technology
- 14.1" Super XGA+ TFT Display
- 256MB SDRAM at 133MHz
- 20GB[5] Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 24X Max CD-ROM
- 16MB DDR 4X AGP ATI® Mobility™ Radeon™ M6 Video
- Sound Blaster® Compatible Sound with Wavetable
- 59WHr Li-Ion Battery with ExpressCharge™ Technology
- Internal V.90/56K[6] Modem and 10/100 Fast Ethernet Mini-PCI Combo

$1479 or as low as **$44**/mo for 45 mos.[12]
No payments for 90 days for qualified customers.
E-VALUE Code: 00520-801214m

Recommended upgrades:

- 30GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive, add $99
- 3-Yr Limited Warranty,[2] 3-Yr Next-Business-Day On-Site Service[4] & Lifetime 24x7 Phone Support, add $219

Inspiron™ 8100 Notebook

The Ultimate Multimedia Notebook

- Intel® Pentium® III Processor at 1.13GHz-M featuring Intel® SpeedStep™ Technology
- 15" Super XGA+ TFT Display
- 256MB SDRAM at 133MHz
- 30GB[5] Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- Fixed 8X Max DVD-ROM Drive
- 32MB DDR NVIDIA® GeForce2 Go® 4X AGP 3D® Video
- Sound Blaster® Compatible Sound with Wavetable
- 59WHr Li-Ion Battery with ExpressCharge™ Technology
- Internal V.90/56K[6] Modem and 10/100 Fast Ethernet Mini-PCI Combo

$1999 or as low as **$69**/mo for 45 mos.[12]
No payments for 90 days for qualified customers.
E-VALUE Code: 00520-801219m

Recommended upgrades:

- Add a 2nd Bay 8X Max CD-RW Drive, add $179
- 3-Yr Limited Warranty,[2] Mail In Service & 24x7 Phone Support, add $119

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[1]Must register for AOL within 30 days of invoice. To avoid paying monthly membership fees, cancel during the 6-month promotional period. Even during promo period, telephone access charges on your phone bill (call your phone company for details) and surcharges for premium services and 800# access may apply, including AK. Availability may be limited, especially during peak times. For new, 18+ U.S. members with major credit card or checking account only. Limited time offer.

Prices, specifications and availability may change without notice. Taxes and shipping charges extra, and vary. Valid for U.S. Dell Home Systems Co. new purchases only. For a copy of our guarantees or Limited Warranties, write Dell USA LP., Attn: Warranties, One Dell Way, Round Rock, Texas 78682. [4]At-Home or On-Site Service provided via third-party contract with customer. Technician will be dispatched as necessary following phone based

I've got 2.0GHz.
I run circles around speeding bullets.

Dell | Home

Dimension™ 8200 Desktop

Cutting-Edge Technology

- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor at 2.0GHz
- 256MB PC800 RDRAM
- 40GB[5] Ultra ATA/100 Hard Drive (7200 RPM)
- 19" (18.0" vis, .26dp) M991 Monitor
- NEW 64MB NVIDIA® GeForce2 MX Graphics Card with TV-Out
- 16X/10X/40X CD-RW Drive with Roxio's Easy CD Creator®
- SB Live! 1024V Digital Sound Card
- Harman Kardon® HK-695 Surround Sound Speakers with Subwoofer
- 56K® PCI Telephony Modem for Windows®
- 10/100 PCI Fast Ethernet Network Card
- MS® Windows® XP Home Edition, MS® Works Suite
- 1-Yr Limited Warranty,[2] 1-Yr At-Home Service,[4] 1-Yr 24x7 Phone Support
- 6 Months of America Online™ Membership Included[7]

$1899 Ask us about no payments for 90 days for qualified customers.
E-VALUE Code: 00518-501218

Recommended upgrades:

- 80GB[5] Ultra ATA/100 Hard Drive (7200 RPM), add $70
- Turtle Beach® Santa Cruz™ DSP Sound Card, add $40
- 3-Yr Limited Warranty,[2] 3-Yr At-Home Service,[4] Lifetime 24x7 Phone Support, add $139

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