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The Gathering of Developers, with titles like MAX PAYNE, HEAVY METAL F.A.K.K.², and KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS in development, can hardly be called choir boys. Who are these guys, and why do they think they're out to save gaming?
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The Real Half-Life

In Memoriam—Allen “Doc” Greenberg

I just threw away my editorial, my pompous words about the future of online gaming and how we stand on the brink of the next wave of multiplayer gaming. It’s a good editorial and it needs to be published, but it just doesn’t hold up against the story I must write. This is the story of a real deathmatch, the story of a man who died too soon. He was a friend, a colleague, a fellow editor, a father, and a gamer. In chronological years, this CGW editor lived only about half of a life’s expected duration. In important matters, his mark is longer.

He should have died under mysterious circumstances, like a hero in one of those adventure games he loved to play. He should have left behind a trail of puzzles, like the ones in the classics he continually challenged. He should have died with a wicked smile on his face as he shook us with his Gilbert Gottfried impression of a cantankerous East Coast nerd. He should have left us peacefully with a gentle smile on his face as he nodded approvingly at the son and daughter of whom he was so proud.

Instead, he died after living large. He died as the kind of mensch he admired in those short stories and novellas by his favorite author, Harlan Ellison. He was a victim of his own rare blood-type and his inability to recuperate fully after a series of organ transplants. He fought on to the end, hoping to make some sense of the suffering through which he was struggling.

And all the way through the period of savage nights and days of physical weakness, he played games. Even while the medication and physical weakness played games with his head, he kept on writing. He no longer tortured his editor-in-chief with lead paragraphs so bizarre and strange that it was unclear whether we had a genius with a strange sense of humor or a demented schizophrenic on our staff. His contributions started to get smaller and less regular, but he kept playing and he kept writing right up until the end.

This is a story about heroism. Please indulge me. I first came in contact with Allen Greenberg (or regularly, Allen’s favorite author happened to be the great author of speculative fiction, Harlan Ellison, and he not only knew that Harlan and I had once colored the atmospheres of our respective offices in blue storm clouds of unrestrained verbiage, but he was also aware that Harlan had taken some potshots at me on the Science Fiction Channel. Yes, I’m the editor of the so-called Video Wahoo Magazine about which Harlan railed in a couple of interviews.) When I asked the question, Doc trembled all over and exhaled quickly. “God help me, it’s Harlan Ellison.” I laughed the hardest I ever have in a job interview. I happen to admire Harlan, as well. I told Doc that this was grounds for hiring.

He died as the kind of mensch he admired in those short stories by Harlan Ellison.

Yet, there was a problem. Doc had been diagnosed with diabetes and had left his lucrative dental practice to work in a clinic. His skills had declined because his vision was getting worse and his partners no longer wanted him. He was able to help quite a few people in the clinic, but he knew that he wouldn’t last for long. Computer Gaming World became his new reason for living. He moved to California and had a great couple of years before the disease began to have an impact on his work.

Even though he was weak, he continued to edit our Prodigy publication until its demise. Doc was our first telecommuting editor during that period, and his work kept him going for a long time. Yet, his life was now a series of dialysis treatments and his trips into the office became more and more difficult. The adventure game puzzles that he once solved with ease was still weak, but his writing kept getting better and he was making the comeback for which we’d been praying.

Then, his body rebelled. He experienced a severe relapse. He left us suddenly. No more cynical shouts startling us in the office. No more incredible joy as he solved the latest puzzle. No more dry wit. Doc completed his adventure. He solved the last puzzle.

His cubicle in the office doesn’t look like the violence-torn setting for some angry Harlan Ellison story. It doesn’t look like the old sanitarium in THE BLACKSTONE CHRONICLES. But it looks pretty creepy without my friend and colleague. I wanted to see him win the transplant game. I wanted to see him get the best ending possible. I hope, for his sake, he did. Allen “Doc” Greenberg died in March of 1999. Shalom, Allen, Shalom. CGW
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Denny Atkin

Buy Get a Life

Spending Big Bucks—Real Ones—for Hot ULTIMA ONLINE Real Estate

An odd phenomenon struck online auction house eBay (www.ebay.com) this past March: People began selling virtual castles and imaginary characters. eBay has always had an amazing selection of items, from cheesy collectibles to used Ferraris. It can be an addictive online experience (this editor has spent an embarrassing amount of time and money on eBay filling out the Green Lantern comic collection he could never afford as a kid), so it's only appropriate that it would become a venue for trafficking in ULTIMA ONLINE accounts.

It all started when eBay user Turbchawk (in real life, Steve, a 30-year-old firefighter) decided to sell his copy of ULTIMA ONLINE, complete with five characters and over half a million gold pieces. The account ended up selling for a whopping $521. Word got around, and within a week there were over 80 accounts for sale, many with bids over $500. At press time, one account had sold for $2,050, while another had reached $3,000 after 57 bids—and with six days to go until auction close!

The questions are obvious: Why would someone sell an account they'd spent thousands of hours developing? More important, what is it about this gaming experience that could cause dozens of players to drop hundreds—or even thousands—of dollars on a powerful account? To find out, I interviewed a number of UO veterans who were selling their accounts as well as wannabe castle lords who had bid $250 or more for these accounts.

Unreal Estate

For many, the appeal of buying UO accounts is one of solving a problem that Californians will empathize with: lack of real estate.

Shadow (in real life Richard, a 39-year-old controls design engineer) explains: "What it does for you is allow you access to items that might take you a very long time to acquire on your own much sooner than it normally would. Real estate in UO is pretty much set now. There are very few places that you can actually place a small house, let alone something huge. Therefore the only way to obtain such a place is to buy it in a game, through various Web sites or through eBay."

Others are looking for characters. They find it tedious to perform the activities necessary to build strong enough characters and they see buying an account as a way around this. When asked whether taking over another person's character spoils the role-playing aspect of UO, Scott, 28, a systems administrator, explains: "I have my own character that I developed and spent most of my time playing. I was looking for support characters for that character. UO doesn't allow for good role playing because you have to spend too much time doing mundane things to gain the wealth required for you to do any kind of adventuring."

Believe it or not, even romance can be a factor: "Well, my fiancée accounts as a group deal," Harlan says, adding, "We have kept our long-distance relationship alive via role playing on UO."

While many account buyers have been primarily interested in property, Harlan and his fiancée hope to see their characters live on. "So far the emphasis has been on how much gold and what equipment are available," Harlan reports. "Our sale is more about the mood we have created with our house and characters. Yes, our characters are good, but more than that, they have a history and a legacy. They are known in the shard as lovers and travelers. We are selling the characters' reputations as well as their statistics."

Sometimes, selling the account is a way to gain both money and time to spend in real life. Brian, 21, a student and part-time Best Buy computer technician, had put about 2,000 hours into ULTIMA ONLINE between August and March. "Many days I would put in 15-plus hours just killing stuff, making stuff, etcetera. I found myself many times up to 6 a.m. all night and not even knowing it." Brian saw the eBay trend starting and decided it would be a perfect opportunity for a self-intervention. "Since my time playing UO I have been my grades go from As to Cs, to the point where I did not want to do anything but play UO. I found myself laying in bed at night thinking about what I could be doing on UO right now. This continued during school, work, driving, everything. Even dates I would cut short to get home to play UO. I got a cable modem just for UO. I saw this getting out of hand, so I had to cut my addiction off. I have since started playing more quick games like STARSEIGE: TRIBES and others."

UO publisher Origin is cool about this whole trend; in fact, the company is planning to modify its user agreement to make such sales "legal" in the game license.

"We know items are sold and traded, but we did not think characters would hold such a high monetary value," says Origin's David Swafford. "The in-game economy in ULTIMA ONLINE has always been healthy and dynamic. It's only natural that eventually it would mirror in the real world like this."

With thousands of dollars changing hands weekly on eBay for virtual castles and characters, it's not hard to picture a near future in which companies join in and sell the games cheap but offer weapons, potions, and keeps as extra-cost options.
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**EXECUTABLE:** heroes3setup.exe
**DESCRIPTION:** Play 29 turns in one sample level.

In this demo, you get to play 29 turns of the latest game in the Might and Magic series. Gameplay centers around exploring with your heroes, recruiting new forces, managing resources, building up towns, doing battle with other heroes, and expanding your territory. Improvements from Heroes II include enhanced graphics, tons of new units, upgrades for all units, and lots of new spells and heroes. In the demo level, you are placed in a world with a good selection of towns, resources, wandering monsters, treasure, and enemy heroes to familiarize yourself with the game system.

**HUGE 335-PAGE STRATEGY GUIDE TO SID MEIER'S ALPHA CENTAURI**

**Video Clips**
- Planescape Torment
- Darkstone
- Max Payne
- Giants

**Toolbox**
- Myth II Tactics
- Alpha Centauri Strategy Guide

**Additional June CD Titles**

**MACHINES**

**PRODUCT/GENRE:** First/third-person action game
**EXECUTABLE:** machinessetup.exe
**DESCRIPTION:** Play three single-player missions and one multiplayer mission of futuristic warfare.

**HIGH HEAT**

**PRODUCT/GENRE:** Baseball
**EXECUTABLE:** high2k_demosetup.exe
**DESCRIPTION:** Play three innings with either New York or San Diego.

**DEER HUNTER 2**

**PRODUCT/GENRE:** Hunting Game
**EXECUTABLE:** dhunter2demo.exe
**DESCRIPTION:** Easy sample hunting ground to find yourself some venison.

**ROLLCAGE**

**PRODUCT/GENRE:** Arcade racer
**EXECUTABLE:** rollcagesetup.exe
**DESCRIPTION:** Drive two cars on one track in this wild and crazy racing game.

**THE AXE**

**PRODUCT/GENRE:** Interactive music game
**EXECUTABLE:** demostalexsetup.exe
**DESCRIPTION:** Claymation characters take solos with three different instruments.

**SEVEN KINGDOMS III**

**PRODUCT/GENRE:** Real time strategy game
**EXECUTABLE:** sevenkingdomswww.exe
**DESCRIPTION:** Non-Interactive multimedia presentation describing Seven Kingdoms III including a video trailer.

**VIRTUAL DEEP SEA FISHING**

**PRODUCT/GENRE:** Deep sea fishing sim.
**EXECUTABLE:** vds_fishinginstall.exe
**DESCRIPTION:** The demo has a fishing trip off the coast in San Diego with a 10 minute playing limit.

**REQUIEM**

**PRODUCT/GENRE:** First-person 3D action shooter
**EXECUTABLE:** requiemsetup.exe
**DESCRIPTION:** Battle one boss and her demon spawn in this one chamber sneak peek.
Vampire Bites Back

I loved the cover on the April issue. I just opened up my May issue to find people bitching to all hell about it. Get a life people! It's a freakin' picture of a vampire! Sorry if some of us don't get off looking at pictures of chairs and rolling nice green lawns on our magazines. Go read Better Homes and Gardens or some crap if you don't like CGW. And CGW, keep putting out more and more awesome covers!

Alaric

We'd like to thank all those who wrote in support of the April cover. When the issue came out, most of the feedback was negative, so most of the May issue letters reflected that. Since then huzzahs have outnumbered hurrumps about 3 to 1. It has been the most controversial cover ever, and we thought we'd print a few more opinions here before closing on the issue.

I just read the Letters section in May's issue. Screw all the prudes, wussies, and whiners that didn't appreciate the fine example of a female vampire that graced April's cover! Keep up the good work, CGW. From a 33-year-old male who gets a mahogany whenever Cleopatra's emmissary visits him in Civ II.

Grant Bordan

What was all the fuss about? You see a lot worse on TV, at the movies, at the mall, at the beach, etc. You would have to stay in a room with no TV, never go out, or blindfold yourself not to see this kind of thing.

Anyway, keep doing what you do best and that's put out a great magazine. You don't have to worry about me ever canceling my subscription, unless you start covering country music or give sewing tips.

Doug Anderson

I thought that the Vampire cover was inappropriate. The cover should be representative of what the other 200 or so pages of the magazine contain. The people who are looking for video game content are now saddled with a magazine that, while the content is appropriate for many age groups, and environments, the cover is not. You do not do your readers a service by putting them in this situation.

Ryan Spantan

I'm appalled at the rash of letters concerning your April cover. What's the big deal? Anytime I want to see worse than that, all I have to do is watch an episode of Melrose Place. Clearly we as a nation either have way too much time on our hands, or are just too friggin' repressed. Perhaps it's a combination of both.

Mike Bean

I fit your target demographics (34, white, professional male), and I am sick of seeing women used as marketing devices. If CGW wants to use sex to sell, that is your right and the consumers will then vote with their dollars (you might be on the winning end). But don't take your argument for doing such to some false intellectual plane. It is pure "boobs, sex, violence = sales (money), and we want ours" marketing plain and simple.

Scott Morgan

I think your April cover was very spontaneous and completely appropriate.
THE DEADLIEST CREATURES IN THE UNIVERSE ARE ABOUT TO MEET THEIR MATCH...
The three most ferocious species in the universe are pitted against one another in a bloodthirsty battle for the ultimate prize — survival. Take your stand as a Marine, a Predator, or an Alien, where one wrong move turns you from hunter into prey.

- **SCALE WALLS** and elevator shafts as an Alien and advance with frightening speed as you attack to devour your opponents.
- **STALK YOUR PREY** as the deadly Predator using wrist blades, shoulder cannons and invisibility as you surprise attack your enemies.
- **LOCK AND LOAD** as a Marine using motion trackers, pulse rifles and flame-throwers to eradicate these vile creatures.

- **AVP DELIVERS** the most shockingly realistic first person and multi-player action with heart-stopping suspense and shocking realism.
- **OVER 50 LEVELS** of enormous, terrifyingly realistic game environments offer virtually unlimited replay to let you hone your combat skills to a razor-sharp edge.
- **FEATURING THREE OF THE BADDEST BEINGS** in the science fiction world — who is supreme warrior? Cooperate or compete with your friends using the full multi-player networking option.
“This game could be one of our all time favorites!”
— Computer Gaming World

“Scaring the crap out of the big boys.”
— PC Accelerator

“Is there anyone that doesn’t want to play this one?”
— PC Gamer
for your readers. Please don’t let a few angry parents intimidate you or your staff and stop you from doing what you think is best. Parents are not the only ones reading your magazine, and younger readers such as myself should be heard also. I hope you won’t be intimidated or pressured into changing the way you select your covers.

Zovik Ishayev

I can understand how some people would get upset when they saw the April cover, but I saw something in the May issue that put it into perspective: an ad on page 135 for the ATI Rage Fury shows two eyes in a bag. Now if I was a parent, that would send a chill up my spine and make me wonder about the current state of humanity, not some beautiful woman dressed as a vampire.

To all of those who wrote to complain about the April issue: It was one issue out of 12 this year. It’s gone now. Get on with your lives.

Jason Allen

The April CGW cover was disturbing. The makeup and the blood on the model was unsettling. I didn’t like it, my kids (including a teenager) didn’t like it, and my wife hated it. I ended up tearing the cover off the issue and tossing it. That was a first—for any magazine in the house.

Mike CastabOMB

I cannot believe the outrage over your April cover. Every one of those letters referred to the size of that woman’s breasts. What the heck does that have to do with anything? It sounds like they are saying, “I don’t mind my child swearing or being exposed to simulated killing in PC games, but PLEASE, OH, PLEASE don’t let them see part of a woman’s breast, especially if they are big.”

What a bunch of hypocrites! You’re all doing a fine job; please keep it up!

Randy Millard

MAC MAKES A COMEBACK

I am writing in response to Johnny Wilson’s Editorial in the April issue (“Ole Mac is Back”). I’m glad that someone in the PC world has something nice to say about the Mac. Last April I converted to the Macintosh after using a PC for more than 10 years. I have to say it is by far the best computer I have ever used. The only problem is that good games are sometimes hard to find. I solved that problem by sticking Orange Micros’ high-end PC card in my Mac, so basically I have two computers in one box. Helps save desk space. It works great and plays almost all the latest games great.

As for the iMac, this is not a gaming computer. To get a good gaming computer you have to get one of the desktop or mini-tower G3 models. I have been a subscriber to your magazine for a long time, and I will continue to do so, as you always have great coverage of upcoming games, whether PC or Mac.

Kevin Kelly

I am an avid reader of CGW and a Mac user. Obviously I don’t read CGW for the in-depth Macintosh product reviews or all the snide remarks that sneak in where ever possible (though I do find them amusing). I read CGW because where else is there a Mac guy going to get the dope on all the great new titles that might someday make it to his computer?

I just purchased my Apple edition, flipped through the first few pages and there it was! An almost fair article on Apple and how it is finally getting its act together! Who would have thought I’d see such an article in the “PC or die” game mag of them all. The article was very fair, though it’s obvious that you still don’t get it, but it is a start. Then to top it all off you went and listed the Mac system requirements for MVN III! Keep it up and you might end up with a few thousand new subscribers.

Matt Mabry

The Mac is indeed a viable gaming platform again. The iMacs are hot sellers, and the new G3s are solid gaming systems (see our review on page 132). The only problem remains a lack of titles. Apple isn’t doing (as they have for years) that this time they’re really going after the gaming market. We hope they put their money where their mouths are and help developers convert more new games to the Mac.
All aboard in war-torn Europe! In WWII, the great responsibility of securing supplies and transporting troops for the Allies is yours. The war years rely on the services of the iron steed. Be a patriot and do your part!

EXPANSION PACK FOR THE 1998 STRATEGY GAME OF THE YEAR.

RAILROAD TYCOON II
The Second Century.

"Man, woman, and child who enjoyed the pleasures of an afternoon well spent with the smash PC hit railroad tycoon II has anticipated the arrival of this ultra modern expansion pack. Eighteen all-new campaign scenarios divided into three distinct historical eras are sure to delight today's modern PC gamer.

life the Rails Back in Time!

In the passage from 1939 through 1950, top along the way to do your part for the war effort. Deliver troops and supplies to the besieged Allied front. Rebuild the British rail system after its destruction in the Blitz. Protect Mother Russia from the advancing Germans. Only a foolproof rail system can spell victory for the Allies!

Modern times require progressive thinking!

Next stop, the Modern Era. Solve the transportation problems facing the modern world from 1930 to 2003. Help build a modern Metra passenger system for Seattle. Manage the subsea Channel system between England and France without drowning in debt. Be the visionary who builds two of America's greatest cities, Los Angeles and San Francisco, with long-awaited high-speed rail.

Last stop, the future!

From 2003 to 2030, worldwide flooding and melting ice caps wreak new havoc for the modern railroad tycoon. The United States is a watery wasteland. The Mediterranean is an empty basin with a blossoming Eden. Antarctica is a promising agricultural center. The heady task of providing rail systems for this strange and exotic new world falls upon your shoulders. No doubt only the most ingenious solutions will do.

One of the wonders of the world:

- This fine game boasts new buildings! Weapons plants...
- Armored car...
- Distillery.
- Metro, Antarctica... Robotic United States...
- World of Mediterranean...
- These and other new landscapes abound!

Follow-up to the 1998 strategy game of the year!

Computer Games Strategy Plus

- New engines! The French TGV bullet... the German DB18
- 201 modern steam trains... the British Railways
- Enjoy them all.
- Presenting new cars such as Metra Passenger cars... troop transports... and weapons flatbeds!
- Over 15 exceptional stand-alone scenarios... most are multiplayer ready. Be the first on your block to try them!

Today's urban dweller calls for efficient and effortless travel. The all-new Metra scenario will challenge you to create a passenger light rail system for the citizens of Seattle.

In the future, the GeoCore power plant taps the Earth's core for energy. You must implement the rail system that supports this unusual industry.

Tomorrow's EXPANSION PACK Today!

Go to #121 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink
GET READY TO COMMAND THE FUTURE

THE STUNNING SEQUEL TO THE
"THE CHAMPION IS BACK."

Computer Gaming World

COMING SUMMER '99
In 1982, he terrified a generation of arcade players and became a cult figure.
Sinistar
Unleashed
He's Back.

Run, Coward, Run.

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FORGET ABOUT THE SECOND COMING. PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE THIRD.

QUAKE III ARENA™
GET READY TO REARRANGE YOUR LIFE.
QUIT YOUR JOB, SELL ALL NON-COMPUTER-RELATED POSSESSIONS, SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR LOVED ONES AND GIVE AWAY YOUR PETS. QUAKE III: ARENA™ IS COMING, AND THOSE CAUGHT UNPREPARED WILL FEEL THE ERROR OF THEIR WAYS. QIIA FEATURES AN ENTIRELY NEW SINGLE-PLAYER EXPERIENCE. AND WHEN YOU'RE READY TO REACH OUT AND TOUCH SOMEONE, THE ARENA WILL SEPARATE THE WARRIORS FROM THE GREASE SPOTS. IT FEATURES NEW PLAYER CLASSES AND THE FASTEST ENGINE YET, SO RELYING ON YOUR OLD TRICKS WILL GET YOU FRAGGED. QIIA'S ORGANIC, INTENSELY REALISTIC GRAPHICS WILL MAKE YOU LOOK GREAT AS A SHOWER OF GIBS IF YOU ENTER UNPREPARED, WELCOME TO YOUR NEW LIFE.

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AND ON THE 7TH DAY, THEY RESTED...

Interplay

BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™ SINCE 1983.

PAUL DOUGLAS
Confounding Factor
• Last game - Tomb Raider
• Next project - Galileon

TOBY GARD
Confounding Factor
• Last game - Tomb Raider
• Next project - Galileon

GREG ZESCHUK
BioWare Corp
• Hit Title - Baldur's Gate
• Next project - MDK 2

FEARGUS URQUHART
Black Isle Studios
• Latest release - Fallout 2
• Next role - Planescape Torment

RAY MUYKKA
BioWare Corp
• Hit Title - Baldur's Gate
• Next project - MDK 2

ALAN PAVLISH
Tantrum
• Legacy - Wasteland
• Next Tantrum release - Descent 3

RUSTY BUCHERT
Tantrum
• Last voyage - Star Trek: Starfleet Academy
• Next game - It's Top-Secret. :)}

BRIAN CHRISTIAN
14° East
• Coming Soon
• Star Trek - Starfleet Command
• Star Trek - Klingon Academy
• Star Trek - New Worlds

DAVID PERRY
Shiny Entertainment, Inc.
• Big Hit - Earthworm Jim
• Upcoming release - Messiah
SHOT ON LOCATION AT INTERPLAY WORLDWIDE HEADQUARTERS

DREW MARKHAM
Xatrix Entertainment
• Last game - Redneck Rampage
• Upcoming - Kingspin: Life of Crime

STEVE CHAPLIN
Celeris, Inc.
• Latest release - Virtual Pool 2
• Next title is on a need to know basis

NICK BRUTY
Planet Moon Studios
• Latest game - MDX
• Next project - Giants: Citizen Kabuto
CGW Does E³

Your Fearless Editors Roll Up, Tune In, and Turn On for the Biggest Gaming Event of the Year

By the time you read this, the CGW editors will have dogpiled into the company 1972 VW van and gone on their way to Los Angeles for the annual headache-inducing gaming extravaganza known as the Electronic Entertainment Expo. Yes, like taxes, or a bad rash, E3 is upon us once again, and it’s our job be there and soak it in. Hype, parties, booth bimbos, and the occasional computer game are what E3 is all about, and we’ll do our best to cover it all for you. Check www.gamespot.com for up-to-the-minute coverage, and be sure to read our upcoming, humongoid, post-E3 Fall Preview issue later this summer, once we’re back at the office and sober again.

In the meantime, here are 10 of the games we’re most anxious to see at this year’s expo:

Black and White
Is it a game or an elaborate Rorschach test? About all that’s clear about the flagship title from Peter Molyneux’s Lionhead Studios is its sweeping ambition. Incorporating elements from Molyneux’s groundbreaking POPULOUS games, this god game could shatter the real-time strategy mold by responding uniquely to every gamer's style of play. The game’s magic system will encompass pure good, pure evil, and everything in between, allowing players to play as they wish. The hook here is that the physical world and everyone and everything will reflect the tenor of your play, with the earth chartering and splitting under evil rule or thriving under benevolent guidance. BLACK AND WHITE has the potential to be truly revolutionary.

Command & Conquer 2: Tiberian Sun
We want to see TIBERIAN SUN simply because we’re champing at the bit to play it. While we were hoping the game would ship in time for last Christmas, we're encouraged by the designers taking the time to balance and tweek it properly. We’ll wipe the anticipatory drool off our chins long enough to check the progress of the dynamic, problem-solving AI, the new units, and other game revisions before relaying the information to you, our beloved readers, in a future issue.

Deus Ex
Of the initial Ion Storm lineup, the one title we anticipate the most is also the one that is getting the least hype. The fact that it's an action-RPG using the UNREAL engine is already intriguing, but the setting and involvement of designing legend Warren Spector (SYSTEM SHOCK, ULTIMA UNDERWORLD) is
what makes this title stand out. No fairies or magic pixie wands here: Instead, you get spies, conspiracies, and locales like the White House and the streets of Shanghai. Think James Bond meets the X-Files—with the Unreal engine and the creative energy of an industry veteran—and you can see why we can’t wait to declassify this game at E3.

**Diablo II**
Merely the sequel to one of the best games of the last decade. Blizzard’s been working on this title for so long now, and we’ve been anticipating it for so long, that it’s easy to forget to be excited about it. But make no mistake, this display is going to be one of the most crowded, popular ones at E3, and we’ll be there too. Remember how much better Warcraft II was than WARCRAFT? And remember how awesome the original Diablo already was? Don’t start underestimating Blizzard now.

**Flight Combat: Thunder Over Europe**
Finally, Looking Glass has taken its talents for developing realistic looking and flying flight sims and added a much-requested feature: guns. Takeoff at E3, FLIGHT COMBAT will have you flying over European terrain with the quality of the company’s Flight Unlimited titles. But those who aren’t interested in practicing for a real pilot’s license will find a highly detailed damage model, realistic flight physics, and AI pilots of varying bravery levels more engaging than pretty scenery. A flight recorder will let you savor your kills, and there’s even apparently a chance there will be a flyable Me-163 rocket plane.

**Force Commander**
In an effort to make sure George Lucas can still afford to buy groceries after the release of the Star Wars Episode I this summer, LucasArts will be showcasing this real-time strategy title. Shown at last year’s E3, FORCE COMMANDER has been MIA for a year and has been the subject of more rumors than Area 51—is it set in the classic Star Wars universe or the prequel? Why is it taking so long? We debunked some rumors in our special Episode I preview last month, but we hope to bring you more info when LucasArts lifts the Cone of Silence in L.A.

**Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine**
Harrison Ford may be getting too old to make another Indy movie, but at least gamers will get the chance to play his digital avatar in this third-person action/adventure title. Set

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**Reality Check**
Van Halen’s David Lee Roth once said that the reason that all rock critics loved Elvis Costello was because they looked like him. This same theory explains why all the gaming critics love Half-Life: We all look like Gordon Freeman. In any event, here’s the latest roundup of 10 recent games and their corresponding review scores in the major gaming mags and Web sites. All scores use each pub’s own scoring system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game</th>
<th>PC Gamer</th>
<th>PC Gamefa</th>
<th>PC Strategy Plus</th>
<th>CGW (Out of 10)</th>
<th>GameSpot</th>
<th>GameCenter</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baldur’s Gate</td>
<td>4 stars</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>5 stars</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>5 stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmageddon 2</td>
<td>3 stars</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.5 stars</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>5 stars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close Combat III</td>
<td>3.5 stars</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3.5 stars</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>4 stars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gangsters</td>
<td>2.5 stars</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.5 stars</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>4 stars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Myth II</td>
<td>4 stars</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4 stars</td>
<td>9.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SM’s Alpha Cent.</td>
<td>4 stars</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4 stars</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>5 stars</td>
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<tr>
<td>SimCity 3000</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>6 stars</td>
<td>8.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC: Brood War</td>
<td>5 stars</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4 stars</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>4 stars</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4 stars</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>4 stars</td>
<td>9.6</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4.5 stars</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.5 stars</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>5 stars</td>
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*no rating available at press time. red indicates editor’s choice games
after World War II, INDIANA JONES AND THE INFERNAL MACHINE will stay true to the spirit of the movies as Indy races against time and around the globe to thwart a group of nasty Russians out to rebuild an ancient device capable of generating incredible evil.

Jane's USAF

From the creators of ISRAELI AIR FORCE, USAF will feature a new terrain engine and campaigns ranging from historical Vietnam missions in an F-105 Thunderchief to future scenarios in the F-15C and F-22. It will also introduce Jane's new World War II simulation multiplayer support. We're anxious to get some hands-on time in this sim, and we're also hoping to hear more news about the F/A-18 sim under development by Jane's Baltimore team.

Panzer General 3D

PANZER GENERAL's record as the best-selling computer wargame is in jeopardy, now that AXIS & ALLIES has sold more than 350,000 copies. So, the retail wars should only escalate when SSI ships PANZER GENERAL 3D this fall—especially since it's one of the few turn-based games to actually utilize Direct 3D. Aside from the typically tough SSI computer opponent, PANZER 3D should be more playable over the Internet than its storied predecessors, if only because SSI Online should actually function more like Battle.net than a standard Web site. Wargaming could really use a spark, and PANZER GENERAL 3D should cause a big explosion as the original did five years ago.

Ultima Ascension

With a significant amount of playable code ready, Origin should be rolling out ULTIMA ASCENSION in a big way at the show. We hope this will help answer the big question: Can this much-discussed RPG successfully make the shift to 3D? We think so (see page 60 in this issue for our exclusive sneak peek), but the masses have yet to speak.

THE GOOD

- **TEAM PLAY** After spending years killing each other randomly (and repeatedly), CGW has jumped on the team-play bandwagon in a big way, thanks to the awesome TRIBES and TEAM FORTRESS CLASSIC. It's been an uphill battle to learn how to work together; thank goodness we still get to kill the other guys. Welcome to real role-playing.

- **STAR WARS EPISODE I RELEASE** May 19, baby. Don't even bother calling us that day. We won't be here. A new Star Wars movie? What a way to end the millennium!

THE BAD

- **GDC BLOW** The Game Developers Conference is turning into a victim of its own success, with lots of hype and bluster, but not a whole lot of content. Hey—that's what E3 is for: And what was up with those semicircular boxed lunches?

- **NO STAR WARS EPISODE I PRE-SALES** Great. Right when we get all excited about the movie, 20th Century Fox announces that there won't be advanced ticket sales. Don't bother calling us the entire week before opening day.

THE UGLY

- **WING COMMANDER MOVIE** Ok. So we weren't expecting CITIZEN KANE or STAR WARS EPISODE I anyway, but this steaming pile isn't even rental-worthy. Memo to game designers: Stick to computer games.
Console Wars: Start Again?

on the Other Half of the Gaming World

The first shots have been fired in Game Console War IV, with Nintendo and Sony answering Sega's DreamCast salvo not with hardware, but with psyche warfare. The DreamCast, out now in Japan and set to ship in the United States before Christmas, is certainly an impressive system. But even with its next-generation PowerVR graphics, it's not a big enough jump to have you trading in your older PC anytime soon.

At the Game Developers Conference in March, Sony showed off a number of dazzling PlayStation 2 demos, with real-time workstation-quality graphics wowing even the jaded developer crowd. That machine, however, won't ship in the U.S. until the end of 2000—at the earliest. Meanwhile, Nintendo announced that a group of ex-Silicon Graphics engineers known as Art-X were developing a next-generation machine for that company—but Nintendo won't even make specs available on the unit until the end of the year.

These early announcements by Sony and Nintendo break with the companies' usual tradition of keeping things under wraps until the last minute. The companies likely want to defray any excitement about the DreamCast, in hopes that the machine will die in Sega Saturn-like obscurity while gamers await another year for the Sony and Nintendo machines.

So how does all this affect PC gamers? While many have commented that prototype games on the PlayStation 2 blew away anything currently available on the PC, the same could be said in 1993 about games for the original PlayStation. By the time the new Sony and Nintendo machines reach U.S. shores, PC gaming technology will likely have caught up or surpassed them. So look at these new systems not as technological threats, but as previews of computer gaming to come.

The more significant effect will be the continued popularity of low-cost, high-quality game machines. These new units may serve to keep PC gaming in its niche, but that's a better thing for both the market and the product. There are few console games with the depth of their PC cousins, the units' low price and ease of use means the mainstream will find them an attractive alternative to the PC market, with its higher cost of entry and cavalier "fix the game after it ships" attitude. —Denny Atkin

PC Data Best-sellers*

1. Medal of Honor (Eidos Interactive) 9 $39
2. Medal of Honor: Allied Assault (Eidos Interactive) 7 $34
3. Duke Nukem 3D (3D Realms) 6 $29
4. Quake II (id Software) 5 $25
5. StarCraft (Blizzard) 4 $24
6. Netscape Communicator (Netscape) 3 $19
7. The sims (SimCity) 2 $18
8. Quake II (3D Realms) 1 $16
9. Unreal Tournament (Silicon Graphics) 1 $15
10. Microsoft Flight Simulator (Microsoft) 1 $15

* The top-selling games as of February 26, 1999, calculated by PC Data (Reston, VA).
For years, gamers on tight budgets have had to resort to buying their PCs from the huge, impersonal business system manufacturers that don't know jack about gaming.

Glad that's over with.

An aggressive new gaming system by Falcon Northwest with guts by 3dfx. Priced to move.

Summer '99

www.falcon-nw.com
Bioware’s Dr. Ray Muzyka

Up Close and Personal With the Good Doctor Behind BALDUR’S GATE

1. With BALDUR’S GATE behind you, what are you working on now? I wear several hats. I’m BioWare’s joint-CEO and CFO (we now have about 55 employees). I also am the executive producer of our animation division and co-executive producer of our other two video game titles, one of which is MDK2 for the DreamCast and PC, and the other a super-secret online project.

2. You’re a doctor...so what’s the coolest operation you performed in medical school? I always found assisting neurosurgeons kind of cool: I was surprised to see the array of tools they use—quite a few looking like melon-ball scoops, not surprising considering the consistency of the human brain. I actually wanted to be a general surgeon for a few years. It’s kind of neat to stick your arm into someone’s abdomen to feel their liver to rule out potential metastatic tumors. I now mainly practice rural emergency and family medicine.

3. Which character in BALDUR’S GATE is most like you? Daevorin, a 10th-level mage, is my personal character from my pen-and-paper role-playing days—except my character was chaotic good, rather than lawful evil.

4. Okay, my union contract obligates me to ask the standard “If you were stranded on a desert island” question. What games would you want with you? WIZARDRY: PROVING GROUNDS OF THE MAD OVERLORD (yup, the first one, in all of its black-and-white vector graphic and text glory) is something I never really got out of my system. I’ve always wanted to play SYSTEM SHOCK again, as well as ULTIMA UNDERWORLD...QUAKE, STARCAST, WARCRAFT, HALF-LIFE (gotta love that sniper crossbow). Maybe some of the great classic strategy games as well—CIVILIZATION, POPULOUS, SIMCITY.

5. If your team works late and you spring for pizza, do you always get Canadian bacon as a topping? Usually, at least on one. I’ve never actually understood this “Canadian bacon” thing you American blokes come up with. Is Canadian bacon somehow different? The hogs are better up here somehow?

want to search for Web sites dealing with a particular game, this is a good place to start.

TOM’S PICK
www.classicgaming.com/
Cool (and extensive) emulator site with lots of ROMs.

TC’S PICK
http://reagan.tkhblack.com/Diplomacy/
If you ever wondered what all the fuss is about, here’s the place to start learning about the Diplomacy gaming phenomenon. Plenty of great links to other Diplomacy sites as well [note that there is no www in the URL].

PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDER May Leave You, Er, Saddle Sore

And now, in the Truth Is Stranger Than Fiction Department, from the press release for PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDER, the latest "sports" game from Sierra Sports.

"The 2,000 pound virtual bulls are rank and ready to rumble. Perhaps the most unique feature of PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDER is competing in single events or throughout a career as the cowboy OR the bull. As the bull, you’ll give cowboys the ride of their life."

Insert joke here. On second thought—maybe not.

Tchotchke of the Month

With any luck, this month’s Tchotchke of the Month will be smashed into small chunks of plastic by the time you read this. Why? Because the “Rowdy Rocker,” as it is called, is an unbelievably annoying tamagochi-type toy that plays randomly generated heavy metal songs and periodically screams out rock-and-roll clichés like “Alright!” and “Are you ready to rock?!?” thanks to our equally annoying managing editor, Joe Vallina, who leaves the dang thing on all day long.


We don’t know who sent this to us, or why, but whoever you are: We hate you.
Redefining Real-Time Strategy

Research over 400 technologies which enable you to customize over 2000 unique battle units

“This game should find its way from the shelf, to the register, to your computer.” Game Center

“A battle field worth fighting on.” Game Pro
OUT NOW!

90% PC Gamer
"This is the RTS game."

"Warzone 2100’s numerous innovations and sharp 3D graphics may change a few minds." — EGM

WARZONE
2100
Strategy By Design

Play the DEMO
the heat is on...
Key features

- Includes all 22 cars, 16 circuits and official data from the 1998 Formula One World Championship Season.
- Fantastic graphics and speed. Plus 3D card and Force Feedback support.
- Accurate simulation and fun-to-play arcade modes.
- 20+ camera angles and ability to create your own new camera positions.
- Multiplayer support for up to 12 players.
- Informative helicopter fly-over of each circuit.

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Go to #153 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink
LET FREEDOM REIGN

Follow in the footsteps of Scottish hero, William Wallace, as you unite clans, overcome the might of the English army and guarantee freedom for all future generations of Scots.

Based on the award-winning motion picture starring Mel Gibson, Braveheart combines a free-flow, real-time strategy engine with an expansive global management system.

In this historically accurate epic, there are no consolation prizes in the battle for freedom.

- Allows individual control of on-screen warriors going far beyond the traditional limits of unit management.
- Historically accurate 3D battlefields, using satellite data to 50 square meters, tests tactical and strategic skills.
- Seamlessly combines real-time gameplay within a turn-based, build an empire world.
- Choose among 16 historically accurate clans in your battle to restore freedom to Scotland.
- Multiplayer scenarios for up to 8 players on LAN or internet in both co-op or competitive modes.
BRAVEHEART

Go get a taste of clan war at www.eidosinteractive.com
DESTROYING YOUR ENEMIES

ISN’T ENOUGH...

“The elaborate architecture within these 3D environments is some of the best Next Generation has seen on the PlayStation.”

—Next Generation

As Raziel, stalk the shadows of Nosgoth hunting your vampire brethren. Impale them with spears. Incinerate them with torches. Drown them in water. No matter how you destroy them, you must feed on their souls to sustain your quest — the ruin of your creator, Kain.

Morph onto the spectral plane and confront unique enemies and gameplay challenges

Shift real-time between the material and spectral planes

Dark gothic story

“...the completely revamped sequel to Legacy of Kain promises high immersion factor.”

—Spin
...you must devour their souls
Ultima Ascension

by George Jones

ULTIMA ASCENSION begins with a jolt—literally. One evening, the Avatar (the virtuous hero who has saved Britannia at least eight times prior to now) dreams of a towering column of fiery stone rising from the earth, killing an old farmer in the process. Knowing that this is a sure sign something is wrong in his alternate reality, he rises from his bed, and the game begins.

You don't fiddle with menus or waste time with text-filled screens. After you install the game and witness your dream, you get right out of bed, put on your clothes, amble out of your bedroom, and jump into the heart of ULTIMA ASCENSION's gaming environment.

The Earth Moves

The popularity of the ULTIMA series comes from the unique blend of a highly developed universe, a well-paced plotline, and an unparalleled moral complexity that doesn't emphasize brutality. For the first time, however, ULTIMA ASCENSION is set in a 3D environment with an over-the-shoulder perspective. Before you worry that ASCENSION is some TOMB RAIDER action/adventure clone, however, ask yourself this: When was the last time Lara Croft had to save the world from eight pillars that are slicing her world apart like an orange, all while making sure she walks the proper moral path?

Also, interactive is more than just a buzzword in this game. As you move around the house after you wake up, you'll find that most everything in it actually works: from the alarm clock to the big-screen TV to the light switches. There's even a bread maker in the kitchen and a grill in the backyard that you can use to make steaks.

The backyard also functions as a training ground of sorts that allows you to practice combat skills, maneuvering skills, and yes—jumping skills. Settle down: ULTIMA VIII veterans; jumping is not a frustrating experience this time around. Instead of needing impossibly dexterous arcade-style reflexes, you jump onto rocks and over rivers in this game simply by moving your mouse to the spot you want to jump to and then clicking the mouse button. Combat is also a snap; you maneuver the Avatar around with the mouse or keyboard and press the appropriate key to attack. And the spellcasting is easier than ever. Once you discover a spell, you can easily incorporate it into your spell book by mixing the appropriate reagents for it a single time.

A Radical Departure?

ASCENSION features the traditional elements that made the ULTIMA series famous. Character creation, for example, still occurs with the help of a gypsy fortuneteller, whom you'll find in the park behind your house. You answer a series of moral questions (You encounter a beggar. Do you give him food or do you just walk on by?) to determine your game character's attributes and moral standing.

In what some may view as a move to attract the mainstream masses, the designers are simplifying some of the more stats-oriented aspects of traditional role-playing games. Instead of tracking scores in 4,835 different attributes and skills sets, this ULTIMA is a bit more intuitive. Numbers have been turned into descriptions with tangible benefits. As you gain experience, for example, you may find yourself becoming a journeyman and gaining an extra attack type.

It's the End of the World

Everything has gone screwy in Britannia. This once virtuous land has done a moral about-face. After completing the game's opening puzzles, we entered Britain, the capital city, and approached a flock of citizens listening to the mayor speak. After pushing our way to the front of the crowd—and being scolded by an older woman for kicking dust on her in the process—we were taken aback to hear the mayor praising himself for moving the homeless out of Britain and over to the swampy city of Paws. Britain, renounced city of compassion, eulogizing the unfortunate? There's something wrong here.

Such chaos is brought to you courtesy of the Guardian, an evil presence with whom the Avatar has clashed in two previous ULTIMAS. Worse, the fiery pillar you dreamed about is only one of eight, each of which is being pulled through the earth by the gravity of the moon. The pillars are pulling the moon out of orbit and into a collision path with Britannia. Complicating matters even more, each of the pillars is associated with...
one of Britannia's eight virtues, explaining why the people of Britannia have become so damn selfish. Your task, in a nutshell, is to get to the bottom of the nature of the land's moral about-face and permanently fix it. You'll travel the lengths of ASCENSION's gorgeously rendered world to do so.

Alive and Living

Britannia's living, breathing environment features lush terrain types that make wandering through the game world much like moving across North America in accelerated time. Flat plains, hilly forests, and even snow-capped mountains are all a part of the landscape, and you'll even witness varying weather patterns in different regions. We saw an evening lightning storm (day becomes night in about two hours of real-time) in the mountains that left us convinced that outdoor environments are the best way to showcase a 3D engine.

As you move about the land, you'll encounter all manner of AI creatures and characters. You'll even find a love interest... of sorts. At one point during our play session, we were wandering through a hilly part of the world, and a thief startled us by sprinting out of the trees at us in an attempt to knock us out. And once you get into the dungeons, well... let's just say that the underground monsters are a bit larger down there. Conversations unfold naturally. To speak to someone, you approach them and, if they don't try to knock your head off, you start chatting. When you have specific questions, you select from a conversation menu.

The End of an Era?

It's entirely appropriate that ASCENSION will be released at the end of the millennium, given its grand scale and creator Richard Garriott's intentions of tying up all the loose ends that eight previous ULTIMA games have created. In ULTIMA's past, the Avatar has bailed Britannia out of whatever mess the country is in. But this time around will be different.

As you make the transition between our world and Britannia, you're told that this will be your last adventure there. What does this mean? Richard Garriott most definitely isn't telling (and neither are we). As ASCENSION unfolds, however, you will start to piece together answers regarding the very nature of the Avatar, his relation to Britannia, the significance of the eight virtues and three principles, and the meaning of the various events over his previous eight adventures. If this is his last adventure, our hero has better come up with a solution that will not just patch up Britannia's problems, but teach the folks there how to help themselves.

Contrary to anything you may have heard, ULTIMA ASCENSION is alive and very well, thanks to some stellar 3D graphics, evolutionary gameplay elements and—finally—the kind of living, breathing story-telling environment gaming has desperately needed.

Fight Fans, Fear Not

ASCENSION will have plenty of real-time 3D combat. While in combat mode, you'll use the mouse to orient yourself, the keyboard to move left and right, and a single key to execute an attack. At first, you'll only have a single move as you grow more experienced, you'll add three other possible moves that can be accessed by holding down the Ctrl or Alt keys while pressing the attack button. One nice touch: Each weapon has its own repertoire of moves. With an axe your options might be chop/gore-sweep/roundhouse/uppercut, but with a staff you'll be able to pole-sweep/pole-kick/spin. Wearing the Eavander Holyfield's can also resort to fistcuffs.

Ranged combat is just as easy. Simply line up your target by moving the targeting reticle onto it. If the cursor is yellow, you can fire away and be assured of striking the mark. If the cross-hairs are red, you'll have to aim a little higher to compensate for the distance.

One area where ASCENSION won't deviate too much from the RPG norm is in the weaponry category. In addition to run-of-the-mill swords, axes, and bows, you'll also be able to get your hands on magical weapons. Flaming swords, magical hoes that do extra damage, and all sorts of unique weaponry lie in wait for the avid adventurer.

Finally, borrowing a page from Diablo, the game interface features 12 handy, combat-friendly hot-keys that you can assign weapons, spells, or any items to. Perfect when you need to summon a quick lightning strike or a fast two-handed sword.
Blood of the Sacred, Blood of the Damned

Gabriel Knight 3

by Johnny Wilson

The Jacobites might have thought a bit differently of Bonnie Prince Charlie if they had known the mystery underlying GABRIEL KNIGHT 3: BLOOD OF THE SACRED, BLOOD OF THE DAMNED (GK3). Designer Jane Jensen is no longer content with drawing us into mysteries that are tied into wodoo and werewolves. Now, she is deftly pulling together the rumors and conjecture, the theories and the shocking speculation that surround the most mesmerizing conspiracy of all time: the Holy Grail. GK3 has everything: a kidnapping, a treasure, a cover-up, a secret society, a reunion, and some of Jensen's classic use of the supernatural. Gabriel, our hero, is still the lugubrious, drawling bookstore owner and novelist by chance, who has inherited the title of schattenjäger—a shadow-hunter of the supernatural. He is still assisted and occasionally accompanied by Grace Nakamura, and he also runs into his old pal Mosely. Plus, there's a new supernatural adversary: the night visitors, Jensen's fresh take on vampires.

Like its predecessors, GK3 features terrific puzzles and an extremely well written story. It differs mainly in that you don't have the graphic novel effect of the first game (although there is a graphic novel introduction to the game) or the interactive video experience of the second. Now, the entire environment is 3D, and gameplay is friendlier as a result. You no longer have to walk Gabriel all over the screen in order to get him into position to see something. You can fly the camera independently, then, when you're ready, you click on the floor or an object and Gabe immediately walks into the picture from off-camera. We also like the fact that the cursor lights up whenever it crosses a hot spot, thus doing away with those annoying "hunt the pixel" puzzles. Another improvement is that there is no on-screen toolbar unless you decide to call it up by right-clicking your mouse. This gives you a full-screen perspective at all times with a pop-up interface only when you really need it.

In addition to using a pop-up toolbar, the interface also has the capacity to grow. Want to talk to the innkeeper? Icons show up for each topic, reminiscent of the Interface in another Holy Grail game, CIRCLE OF BLOOD. Want to attach an item to a verb for regular use? You handle everything with an easy click. The new 3D engine and improved interface make everything about GK3 easier, except the puzzles themselves.

Another major difference here is that instead of being divided into chapters (as in the first two games) GK3 is divided into days with several time blocks within each day. Each time block has several "must do" actions before you can advance to the next time block—and each time block has enough optional actions that it's highly unlikely that you'll be able to do them all in your first playing of the game.

Glastonbury Heir

The story itself begins with an invitation for Gabriel and Grace to meet an heir to the Scottish throne. Grace believes that this is because of Gabe's position as heir to the venerable Ritter heritage. Naturally, because of Gabe's heritage, the schattenjäger tradition comes into play. The principal characters meet in Paris and, after a sinister series of events, a chase sequence takes Gabriel to the South of France. There, in Rennes-le-Château, a small village in the Languedoc region, the mystery begins to be decoded. Languedoc is a province noted for heresy,

Exclusive Hands-On Look

Gabriel Knight 3

GENRE: Adventure
RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Jane Jensen
PUBLISHER: Sierra

ONE SCREEN FOR ALL MANKIND GK3 gives you a full-screen perspective with a free-flying camera view, a pop-up command toolbar, and occasional cinematic cutscenes within the 3D engine.

TOPICAL FRUIT Conversations throughout the game are driven by icons that reflect dynamically the topics that Gabriel has uncovered during the course of his investigation.
**Digital Divination**

Fortunately for Grace and Gabriel, they are not on their own in figuring out this mystery. Since some of the mystery has to do with strange geometrical clues in paintings and natural landscapes, they are assisted by SIDNEY, a computer interface. SIDNEY will not only assist in following up on basic clues, but will also provide a rich, searchable database on Egyptian mythology and the ties to Isis and Osiris that you are likely to uncover in the search for the treasure.

Certain items have to be "scanned" into SIDNEY in order to solve the mystery. Indeed, you will have to superimpose geometrical shapes over these images in order to reach the proper conclusion. Naturally, this is no problem for gamers who are familiar with the literature concerning Rennes-le-Chateau. Books such as Henry Lincoln's *The Holy Place* and David Woods' *Genesis* feature diagrams superimposed over topographical maps all the time. Both researchers note that there is both a pentagon and a hexagon construction that overlay the geographical area.

For those who are into the mystery, placing points and shapes on a map has a real ring of truth. For others, this will still be an intriguing puzzle, since it hinges on other vexing elements. Jensen has taken a poem called "Le Serpent Rouge" and built a series of riddles around the wordplay in the verses. If you can figure out the secondary meanings and obscure references, then you'll have no trouble solving the geometrical puzzles.

Once out in the countryside, you'll face a timing puzzle or two. Think of it as basic surveillance. Indeed, you'll occasionally have to direct Gabriel to hide and observe in order to get the clues and answers you'll need to get to the endgame. This section has a very different look to it, but in effect, the overhead map recalls the New Orleans map in the first game and the U-bahn map in the second.

All of this sleuthing serves as preliminary to the scenes in the underground temple, however. The temple contains puzzles based on paradoxes, chessboards, and more. Think of the motif as a mixture of Egyptian mythology, alchemical symbolism, and Gnostic philosophy. Nothing is what it appears. Considering the Arian and Cathartic heresies that flourished in the Languedoc region, the mixture is perfect for the mystery.

With all of the conspiracy, heresy, treasure, and crime abounding in GABRIEL KNIGHT 3: BLOOD OF THE SACRED, BLOOD OF THE DAMNED, you could almost assume that the supernatural elements so prevalent in the first two games would be missing. You would be wrong. Jensen has weaved a vampire plot into the game (isn't this logical, given the emphasis on blood in the Grail legends?), and you're not likely to forget the antagonist in the final showdown. There is also an intriguing supernatural connection to the kidnapped baby that initiates the action.

As with the previous games, G3K won't frighten you with gore and nightmarish creatures, but it will mess with your mind. In any game in which Jesus, conspiracy, magic, and vampires intermingle, you'd expect to be more than a little disconcerted. As well-crafted as any of its ancestors and, if anything, even better written, GABRIEL KNIGHT 3: BLOOD OF THE SACRED, BLOOD OF THE DAMNED seems destined for controversy, if not pretentious success.

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

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

Coming Soon!
Dreamforge Takes PANZER GENERAL Into Eldar Space—With Attitude

Warhammer 40,000: Rites of War

by Samuel Baker II

Games Workshop's Warhammer 40K (affectionately known simply as 40K) has for many years offered a dark, compelling, and competitive science-fiction universe for board and miniatures enthusiasts. PC games based on this universe have yet to fully capture the flavor—or the sales numbers—of the original. Part of the reason for this has been a failure to re-create the stunning, if sometimes bizarre, graphics of the tabletop game.

WARHAMMER 40,000: RITES OF WAR (RITES) suffers from no such handicap. The graphics are delightful: Each unit has its own idle, attack, and death animations. The effects of weapon fire are appropriately depicted; troops with heavy flamers, for instance, graphically roast their targets.

But there's more to RITES than just pretty explosions. The game deals in detail with the trials and constant battles of the Eldar—essentially space elves with attitude—a once-great race now wandering space in huge starships. As a lord of the Eldar you are tasked with recovering a number of artifacts thought to exist on the fringes of the former Eldar Empire.

RITES steers you through three story arcs of eight scenarios each, featuring more than 30 different Eldar, 20 Tyranid, and 20 Imperial units that include Eldar Avatars, Tyrannic Hive Tyrants, Imperial Terminators, and Blood Angels Space Marines. In addition to the full campaign, there are five multiplayer scenarios and seven for solo play. The single-player scenarios are split into micccampaigns for the Imperial and Eldar forces. The game comes with a complete scenario/campaign editor that allows full editing of objectives and scripts. If you really want to play the Tyrannid (think Aliens with technology), you can roll your own campaign once you tire of the canned missions. Any slot is available for multiplayer games.

WARHAMMER General

RITES uses a simplified version of SSI's classic PANZER GENERAL engine, with each unit rated for life, armor, melee, leadership, ranged-attack strength, initiative, range, spotting, and movement. As you proceed through the campaign, your units' abilities develop, adding a nice RPG element. Units don't lose experience when taking on replacement points—which should lead to looser, more risk-taking play. Units may also be held in barracks until needed.

According to producer Sam Clifford, SSI chose the standard-size Warhammer 40K army sets rather than the Epic scale used in FINAL LIBERATION (SSI's most recent PC Warhammer) to make the game more personal. In RITES, the four arms types—air, infantry, armor, and artillery—all seem to be well integrated into the design. Eldar infantry, for example, can become increasingly specialized, with many different paths of advancement that aren't open to vehicles. As commander, you choose the aspect of the particular Eldar god you want your infantry to emulate, giving your troops greater power in one area but less in others.

You'll buy units and upgrades by expending glory points, which work much the way prestige does in PANZER GENERAL, except that RITES is more forgiving. If a unit is completely eliminated, its experience is lost, but the points expended on it are returned so that you may recover from defeat without hitting the reload button.

Even in this early version, the computer opponent does a credible job on the battlefield. Once contact is made, enemy units advance quickly to pick out and engage targets. Units don't always fight to the death, but engagements are typically Warhammer-bloody, and every turn usually involves the elimination of some units, even in the smaller battles.

Given the talent that's involved here, this seemingly bizarre marriage of the popular PANZER GENERAL system and the quirky Warhammer 40K universe could create the mass-market hit that Games Workshop fans have been looking for. Better yet, the game should be enjoyable even for those who don't know the difference between a Tyrannid and an Ork—or a Zerg...
AGE OF EMPIRES II
THE AGE OF KINGs

Knights.
Castles.
Joan of Arc.
Oh my.

www.microsoft.com/games/age2
by Johnny Wilson

The Kennedy clan played it in the White House. It was Henry Kissinger's favorite game. Generations of college students played it in their dormitory lounges. Hundreds of fanazines have carried the results of play-by-mail games using its system and hundreds of variants. In fact, it has been played by email since the days of Dow Jones' Source and CompuServe. Russell Sipe, founder of CGW, began the earliest games on both information services.

The game, of course, is Diplomacy. Its popularity is due to the fact that there is no luck involved. There are no random die rolls, no spinners, no "get coprophagic and die" cards, and no random-effect charts. You get what you play for. It is a social game in which you must negotiate, compromise, and improve, as well as strategize, in order to win. If you can manipulate your opponents and do unto them before they can do unto you, you win. If not, you can get even with them in the next game.

Remembrances of Games Past

The boardgame is set in pre-World War I Europe. Each of seven players represents the head of a country (England, France, Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Turkey) during a negotiation phase, order-writing phase, and execution/resolution phase. In other words, you try to get your friends to do what you want them to do. Then everyone writes down what they are actually going to do in secret. Next, the moves are read and the referee determines what happens from the orders, including resolution of any conflict. Each country tries to capture as many resource centers as possible, in order to build enough armies and fleets to ensure that the player's motherland becomes the last country standing.

It's always hard to get seven people together at the same time for several hours of gameplay—no matter how social the game. For that reason, a play-by-mail approach to Diplomacy has long been a popular option, as has a play-by-email version. The downside of these versions by mail is that they often take more than a year to complete. What about the person who wants to play Diplomacy now?

World War Fun

The original C-64 and PC versions of Diplomacy were failures due to poor computer opponents and poor graphics. It was impossible in these computer games to see what you could easily see in a face-to-face boardgame: Who was negotiating with whom. And if you could get friends over to hotseat the game in front of the computer, you were better off playing the boardgame.

In this game, we finally have a playable computer version of DIPLOMACY. It features an elaborate interface that enables you to negotiate alliances, nonaggression pacts, and detailed plans for invading support with other countries. In the version that we played, it was still impossible to spell out some of the complex quid pro quo terms that you'd be likely to hammer out in a human game, but the good news is that you can make simple deals with the artificial heads of state.

Even better news is that finally you can play the multiplayer game on the Internet with all-human leaders or with a mixture of human and artificial heads of state—so you don't have to mound up exactly six of your buddies for the best possible seven-player game. Better yet, you don't have to lose one of the players as a refugee anymore, and you don't have to worry about other players changing the orders of their allies as they read them (an old canard in the face-to-face game). The program adjudicates each move, and the orders must be saved before you get to the resolution phase.

The bad news is that no artificial head of state can be as sneaky or conniving as a human opponent. Further, the computer game doesn't permit you the joy of concocting propaganda, as you do the face-to-face or play-by-mail and email games. Still, even though it's unfinished, this version of DIPLOMACY looks like it could make you a Kennedy or a Kissinger (if you pardon the anachronism). Rest assured that CGW supports Hasbro's latest assault on the retail channel.

Diplomacy

GENRE: Strategy RELEASE DATE: Q3 '99
DEVELOPER: Meyer-Coblitz Interactive
PUBLISHER: Hasbro Interactive

NO ALPHABETICAL ORDER In play-by-mail and play-by-email games, the order phase consisted of alphabet-soup directions (F-A-N-K, and so forth). Here, you use the map and the icon interface to input orders.
YOU'RE GONNA DIE
Built on the revolutionary QUAKE II ENGINE, KINGPIN: LIFE OF CRIME™ includes
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The ability to jettison parts is crucial to METAL FATIGUE's strategy. Several weapons, mostly energy swords and power saws, are built to be amputating instruments. Equipping a combat with one of them introduces the possibility of severing an enemy's arm. Should you do that, you can simply drop your old arm, snap the enemy's arm on, and presto! You've got a whole new combat. Even better, you can then take the new arm back to your base to research it so that your forces will be able to produce it themselves. Besides letting gamers expand their faction's technology base beyond the 20 or so technologies they start with, it forces gamers to fight for upgrades instead of sitting back, mining resources, researching, and building up for a humdrum game-ending rush. It's a great design element that should ensure almost constant engagement and action.

METAL FATIGUE is definitely a title to watch out for when it ships later this year.

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**This Real-Time Strat Title Is Anything but Tired**

**Metal Fatigue**

by Robert Coffey

---

Build the Ultimate Killing Machine

METAL FATIGUE's unit mix will include familiar fare, such as tanks and jets, but the real focus (and the key to winning) will be on the combats. These earth-shaking warriors will have technology unique to each Corporation; one race will rely on stealth and cloaking technology, while another will just have great big guns that shoot great big bullets.

Each combat is made of four distinct body parts: right arm, left arm, torso, and a set of legs. Combats are built individually by selecting components and then combining them to create a working unit. For example, you could construct a combat with missile-firing legs, a cloaking torso, a chain-gun arm, and an arm with a power shield. The mix-and-match nature of combat construction means that you can adjust your combat design—and therefore your strategy—more or less on the fly.

---

ROBO-RUMBLE Different technology means each faction will sport its own look, as evidenced in this free-for-all.
ONLY A SELECT FEW IN THE GALAXY
HAVE FLOWN THE MILLENNIUM FALCON.

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

A rival family imposes peril on the
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Your only hope for survival is to
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missions. Finally, if you're worthy, you will find yourself in the
cockpit of the legendary Millennium Falcon, flying against
the massive Imperial fleet in the climactic
Battle of Endor. Ultimately, it will be your
agility, resolve and combat skills in these
maneuvers that will determine your destiny.
Not to mention, the fate of the entire galaxy.

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

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by Robert Coffey

Sporting a brand new MLB license, a 3D engine, and improvements in almost every facet of the game, HIGH HEAT BASEBALL 2000 (HH2K) is the baseball title to watch this year. HH2K could be the first sports game in years to give the EA Sports dynasty a real run for the money.

Building a Contender

The design team has made a real effort to address last year's shortcomings, and it appears to be paying off. The horribly animated 2D players of last season have been traded for a roster full of 3D polygonal players. The animations are much more lifelike, with believable swings and relief pitchers who drop down and sidestream the ball. Incidental animations such as pitchers throwing up their arms in frustration at a bad call or batters who stumble across the plate after lunging out of the way of an inside fastball give the game a real major-league feel. Once Team 366 smooths out the somewhat jarring transitional player animations present in the pre-beta version we played, HH2K could be as good looking as TRIPLE PLAY.

3D has wisely shelled out the bucks for an MLB license, so that gamers will finally be able to play with the big boys. A draft has been added and players will have the ability to play seasons of 16, 81, or 162 games. Regrettably, there currently are no plans to let you create custom leagues. Why, with the wild popularity of rotisserie leagues, designers continue to downplay the appeal of a custom league utility is beyond me, but, hey, I'm just an enormous fan who knows at least eight other guys that would love play in a custom league. Still, should you decide to run a league with your buddies, HH2K should support hotseat, LAN, and Internet play.

Franchise Player

The best news is that the gameplay looks to be even better than last year, (which, despite its flaws, played more like real baseball than any other game). Managerial options have been expanded, letting wannabe dugout geniuses guard the lines or set up for the double play, and a real bullpen has been implemented so you'll actually have to manage your pitchers. Anyone who played the first game will also be glad to hear that game speed is now adjustable, letting you keep CPU-controlled pitchers from quick pitching you into oblivion.

The statistical model has been beefed up, keeping track of split stats as well as rating every player in various batting, fielding, and pitching abilities. If the game's stat engine works as promised, gamers should see the realistic ebb and flow of major league baseball over the course of a season, as unhittable pitchers suffer through occasional rocky starts and homer-launching sluggers endure cold spells. The most promising sign that Team 366 is onto something came in one game I played. Down by four runs with two out in the bottom of the ninth, I hit what seemed to be a game-ending ground out when the opposing team made an error that let the hitter reach first. A series of singles followed and I won the game.

If HIGH HEAT BASEBALL 2000 can consistently capture the intangible Bill Buckner quality that makes baseball baseball, then it could well be the title that computer baseball fans have been waiting for.

The Other Boys of Summer

While Accolade's HARBALL series stagnates and Sierra's FRONT PAGE SPORTS BASEBALL line has been killed, there still will be plenty of competition for HIGH HEAT BASEBALL 2000 this season. A new TRIPLE PLAY game will once again flex EA Sports' considerable muscles in another steroid-enhanced arcade version of America's pastime. Last year's VR BASEBALL showed promise and takes the field this spring as BASEBALL EDITION 2000, sporting even better graphics and a revamped, friendlier interface. Finally, Microsoft is going after the crowd in the cheap seats with the budget-priced MICROSOFT BASEBALL. Think of it as the journeyman utility player of the group—perhaps not the best player on the field, but still able to make the routine plays and blessed with a nice low contract.
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★★★★★ – Computer Gaming World

(5 out of 5)

“Alpha Centauri is unmistakably the rightful heir to the Civilization throne. It's also the best strategy game ever made.” – PC Gamer

“Meier has again set the gold standard for strategy.” – Newsweek

XXXXX – Cnet Gamecenter

(5 out of 5)

“Civilization meets Star Wars.” – TIME Magazine

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Seven Kingdoms II

by Terry Coleman

Trevor Chan is one designer who can never be accused of insulting the intelligence of his fans. booting up Chan's CAPITALISM, for instance, is as close to a crash course in high-end cutthroat economics as you're likely to get this side of Harvard Business School. But if you aren't careful, dealing with anything near that kind of depth in a typical real-time strategy game can quickly have you longing for the comparatively modest tech tree of AGE OF EMPIRES.

With that in mind, we thought it was time to take another look at Chan's upcoming SEVEN KINGDOMS II. My main concerns have always been that the look of SEVEN KINGDOMS II might have trouble competing with more graphically delectable fare like STARCAST, and that the interface wouldn't sufficiently help you keep track of the wide range of activities you can perform.

Fryhtan Dreams

Well, in the latest build from I-Magic, the interface is cleaner, the crisp new buildings tower over the landscape, and you can actually tell a Mongol soldier from a Viking. The Fryhtans, those pseudomythical beings born from the darker warlike recesses of Chan's fertile mind, have an even greater role here than in the original game. Not only do they sport more arcane technology and new magic spells but you can also play the Fryhtan Empire, driving puny humans before you. The variety of scenarios and campaigns is staggering, and Chan is trying to pull off a random campaign generator that could be the most dynamic we've seen. There are four new human civilizations—Carthaginian, Roman, Indian, and Celtic—with a number of new abilities: ninjas for Japan, Druid Magic for Celts, and the like. Heroes make their first appearance as well, though these don't seem to overwhelm play in the manner of MASTER OF MAGIC. Having Hannibal, Genghis Khan, and Richard the Lionhearted combine forces to drive out the Fryhtan menace may not be historical, but it's a total kick—and it requires that you master the arts of diplomacy as well as combat.

Like its predecessor, SEVEN KINGDOMS II is more sophisticated and thus more difficult than the usual real-time dickfest. In addition to new battlefield tactics such as formations, there are a number of new research paths in the rich technology tree. I particularly liked using espionage, and the enhanced military tech available really enhances gameplay—but I'm not yet sold on the advanced axe-throwing ability of the Vikings, especially when facing the Fryhtan ant hero Bregma, Master of Insects.

All in all, I found plenty to enjoy here. Amid the overcrowded real-time strategy field, SEVEN KINGDOMS II has its own identity depth to spare, and maybe even graphics that are polished enough to convince the skeptical.

Seven Kingdoms II

GENRE: Strategy
RELEASE DATE: Q3 '99
DEVELOPER: Enlight Software
PUBLISHER: Interactive Magic

Go To #080 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink
It's only a water drop but it's going to cause a tidal wave among PC gamers.

See the first splash at www.outcast-game.com
Anywhere New to Fight?
The Operational Art of War II (TOAW II) will reportedly cover many of the principal military engagements waged during this turbulent time frame, including America's ill-fated involvement in the Vietnam War, three Arab-Israeli wars, the protracted Iran-Iraq conflict, and Operation Desert Storm. What's more, TOAW II will depict several hypothetical, "what if" scenarios, including a 1962 invasion of Cuba by the United States, a supposed Sino-Soviet confrontation in the late 1960s, several different NATO-versus-Warsaw Pact showdowns in Europe, a second Korean conflict (circa 1999), resumption of hostilities between India and Pakistan, and even an invasion of Taiwan by Communist China.

As in TOAW, the units and maps in TOAW II will vary in scope and scale, with units ranging in size from individual companies to entire corps, and hexes measuring anywhere from 2.5km to 50km across. In addition to a simplified (and welcome) play option that will enable players to issue default orders to their units, TOAW II will contain a much more detailed treatment of nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons, including the incorporation of certain triggering events that may escalate their usage.

Anything New to Blow Up?
Beyond some subtle graphical improvements, the game will feature new rules that will give gamers much more control over the employment of their artillery forces. In addition, TOAW II will more realistically portray the military concept known as command, control, and communications (C3) by introducing command, support, and civilian groups to each side's military hierarchy. While these specialized personnel will attend to various supply and maintenance functions for each combat unit, there may be instances when the unit in question will be parceled out for a turn or two if its staffers are killed in battle. And although the unit may still be operating at 100 percent readiness, it may not be able to resume normal military operations until its cadre of specialized personnel has been totally re-formed.

Loads of new units and equipment will be featured, too, such as attack and transport helicopters, man-portable antitank and antiaircraft weaponry, surface-to-air (SAM) missiles, mobile artillery batteries, and jet aircraft. While the equipment database will reportedly be twice that of TOAW, all of the weapons capabilities have been completely recalculated, taking into account the effect of high-explosive antitank (HEAT) rounds versus kinetic armament, and different grades of armor, from laminate and composite shielding to steel outer coverings and reactive cells. Moreover, TOAW II will utilize an all-new antiarmor combat resolution system that is based upon a single shot-single hit algorithm rather than on the massed-fire methodology employed in TOAW.

Civil and military police detachments will actually play a vital role in the game, reducing a unit's movement cost whenever it attempts to pass through densely populated areas such as towns and villages or along roads choked with refugees. Several types of transport helicopters will also be modeled, based upon their airborne lift capacity (1 ton, 3 tons, or 8 tons) and subjected to certain lift radius restrictions. In fact, each ground unit will now be rated according to its transport weight (measured in metric tons), with some units, such as armored forces, requiring heavy-lift transport helicopters to move from one area to another.

What About That Editor?
The scenario editor is being streamlined as well and will boast a variety of new editing tools and other player-requested features. Finally, many of the scenarios being designed for TOAW II will feature specially designated exclusion zones that will temporarily prevent gamers from moving their forces into or out of the region. Although gamers will be able to examine friendly units within an exclusion zone, they won't be able to move them until an external event triggers their release.

While TOAW II may look and feel remarkably similar to its award-winning predecessor, the mechanics of play have been refined, and now more than ever the game provides players with a poignant and ingenious look at the vagaries of modern-day combat.
Welcome back to the battlefields of the 31st Century. MechWarrior 3 is back with the most immersive BattleMech experience yet! MechWarrior 3 gives you over 20 missions. 18 different "Mechs", and enough weapons to blow the enemy back to the stone-age. And with fully customizable controls, target acquisition, and new Mech combat animation, it's a whole new war.

New targeting system helps you blow 'em away!

Weapons powerful enough to make even Mother Nature envious!

Destroy buildings and rain rubble down on unsuspecting enemies!

Fight alongside your teammates, or send them off to wreak havoc!

Microsoft
Welcome to Sigil, the "City of Doors," a place with gates that lead anywhere in existence, provided you have the proper key. It is a neutral ground and watering hole for races across the multiverse, all under the watchful shadow of the Lady of Pain, the enigmatic ruler of the city. It is a place where the word is mightier than the sword, where thought defines reality, where belief has the power to reshape worlds and change the laws of physics.

Character creation is just the beginning - throughout the game your character adapts to fit your own personal gaming style.

The Planescape universe is a setting you've NEVER experienced before, filled with sharp-edged visuals, bizarre adversaries, and strange magics.

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When most people think of cheating, they picture themselves looking across a poker table at a loaded derringer. Well, this ain't poker, friends. It's your game, you bought it, and you can do whatever you want with it. Cheat codes and Easter eggs can get you through a tough spot, grant access to a secret level, provide a peek behind the curtain, or give insight into a programmer's twisted mind. We've sifted through all the junk out there and given you 501 cheats that actually work. Just keep in mind that we're not responsible if you use them in a multiplayer game and get yourself shot.

**AGE OF EMPIRES**

These codes also work in *Rise of Rome* so we thought they were worth repeating. As above, just type these codes in the chat window.

- **diediediedie** All units die; you win
- **restart** You resign
- **reveal map** Reveals entire game map
- **pepperoni pizza** Gives 1000 food
- **coinage** Gives 1000 gold
- **woodstock** Gives 1000 wood
- **quarry** Gives 1000 stone
- **no fog** Removes fog of war
- **hari kari** Commit suicide; you lose
- **medusa** Villagers become medusas
- **galla** Lets you control the animals, but you have to give up control of your human units; good when used with **king arthur** and **grantlinkspence** in *Rise of Rome*
- **flying dutchman** Changes jagger-nauts into flying dutchmen that can soar over the land
- **steroids** Gives instant building ability (which wears off over time)
- **home run** You win
- **kill7** Eliminates player in starting position X
- **big daddie** Gives you a black Chevy Camaro with rocket launcher
- **big momma** Gives you a white Chevy Camaro with rocket launcher

**TIPS**

- Ever wonder about the black outline around a resource in the base display? It's a signal that you haven't discovered the requisite technology to maximize that resource. The technologies are: *Gene Splicing* to maximize Nutrients, *Economic Engineering* to maximize Minerals, and *Environmental Economics* to maximize Energy.
- If you aren't getting the full benefit of sea improvements, just raise the sea level in that square.
- Though it's easy to miss, you can build aircraft carriers in *Alpha Centauri*. Flight decks aren't a module but an ability, like deep radar. Once you have the required tech, put a transport module on a ship and click on Abilities. You can even make submersible aircraft carriers if you like.
- You can't build a borehole next to one that already exists. But you can build all the boreholes you want next to each other if you start them at the same time.
- If you select a unit and it hasn't moved this turn, you can hit Ctrl-U to upgrade. This is the only way to upgrade any designs with *Unity* in the name.
- Go to the design screen and find a unit you want to upgrade. Click on it to put that unit in the main window. Click on Upgrade. You'll be presented with a choice of units to upgrade to. Choose one and click OK. This will upgrade...
Age of Empires: Rise of Rome
Age of Empires Alpha Centauri
Baldur's Gate
Battlezone
Blood 2: The Chosen
Caesar III
Carmageddon 2
Carnivores
Civilization: Call to Power
Commandos: Beyond the Call of Duty
FIFA 99 Fighter Squadron: Screamin' Demons
Over Europe
Forsaken
G-Police
Half Life: Heretic
2
Incoming
Indipendence
War
Jane's WW2 Fighters
King's Quest:
Mask of Eternity
Microsoft Combat Flight Sim
Myth II: Soulblighter
Need for Speed III
NHL '99
Populous
Quake II
Redguard
Railroad Tycoon
2
Rainbow 6
Star Wars:
Rogue Squadron
Shock
SimCity
3000
Sin
SpecOps: Ranger Team Bravo
StarCraft
Brood War
Thief: The Dark Project
Trespasser
Tomb Raider III
Turok 2
Unreal
Viper Racing
X-Com
Interceptor

Cheats: DrizztDefends() Creates a friendly Drizzt
Cheats: CriticalItems() Gives you all important items
Cheats: Hands() Moves your party to a tree adjacent area
Cheats: ExploreArea() Marks entire area explored

Battlezone
Hold down the Shift and Ctrl keys and type in one of the following:
bzbody Unlimited shields
bztree Unlimited pilots and resources
bzradar Full map
bztnt Unlimited ammo

Blood 2: The Chosen
To enter these cheats, just type them in the chat window (press T, then type the cheat, then hit Enter).

Mgrod God mode
mpkta Gives you a variety of weapons
mpbeantsooliness Gives another variety of weapons
mpamo Gives you full ammo
mpglaive Changes the daily mode
mphealthy Gives you full health
mpvheracole Shows your coordinates
mpcridele Hides your coordinates
mpcraedul Makes your weapons more powerful
mpcraedini Kills all the bad guys on the level
mpspeakup Increases your speed
mpstronger Increases your strength
mpcaheal Changes your character model to Caleb

Civilization: Call to Power
The following cheats are accessible from the interface:
A. On the Command Line bar, there is a button called Cheat.
B. To access the button, hit the tilde (~) key, then the space bar. Click the Cheat button.
C. Cheats can be used with fog toggled on, but they are more easily used with fog turned off.
D. The main map and game are disabled while cheat mode is on. To resume playing, close the Cheat tools.
E. Cheats will destabilize network multiplayer games.

- To activate the City cheat, click on the City button. Select a city. To change the name of the selected city, click on the text box with the city name displayed. Edit the text so that the name reads as you would like it. Hit the Enter key when you are finished editing.

- To change the population of the selected city, click on the text box with the population displayed. Edit the text so that the number is the population size you would like. Hit Enter when you are finished editing.

Advances Cheat
Click on the Advances button. Select the player to whom you would like to give advances; player 2 is the Human player; players 1, 3, and so forth are AI players.
- From the "All Advances" list, highlight the advance or advances you would like to give to the selected player. Then click the < [less than] button.
- To take advances away from a player, highlight the advancement advances from the list of "Current Advances," then just click on the > [more than] button.
(Note that the arrows aren't aligned correctly, so click the upper-left corner on the > key, and the upper-right corner on the < key.)

Cheats
After starting a game, press Ctrl-K to access the Map Editor and Scenario Commands.

Y-Reveal map
Shift-F1 Create unit
Shift-F2 Technological discovery
Shift-F3 Switch
Shift-F4 Change/set
sides/set view
ergy credits
Shift-F5 Change year
Shift-F6 Kill opponent
Shift-F7 View replay
Shift-F8 View movies
Shift-F9 Edit faction
diplomacy

every unit of one type to another whether they've moved or not. You have to have a design the program considers superior before this will work.
- When recruiting mind worms it pays to be outside your borders. Any units that are found/captured beyond the colored border of your faction are independent and don't need support from any city.
- If you're tired of fighting indigenous life-forms, activate the Scenario Editor (under Scenario under the menu window). Go to Scenario Rules and click on the top box to turn off the planet. Save the game as a scenario. Deactivate the Scenario Editor. Then start a new scenario, making sure to load the scenario you just created.
- Once you have a selection of base facilities it can be tedious to take over or start a new base. To minimize tedium, find (or make) a production queue that you like (including the item currently being produced) and right-click on the queue area. Choose Create, then pick a slot and give it a name. Next time you take or build a base, right-click on the production queue and load the file you created. Close the production screen and close the base screen. Admire your work.
- There are more choices on the base governor's list then are readily apparent. If you click on the down-arrows on either side of the governor button, you get a list that lets you tailor the governor settings to your liking.
HALF-LIFE

CHEATS

To gain access to the cheats in HALF-LIFE, the first thing you have to do is activate the console.
First, create a shortcut to the game. If you haven't already, right-click on it and select properties. In the shortcut properties, you can modify the shortcuts target. It should look like "C:\HalfLife\halflife.exe", depending on where you installed it, of course. Just add "--console" to the end. So the example would then look like "C:\HalfLife\halflife.exe --console" (The space after the .exe is important). Now when you start a game from this shortcut, you can press the tilde (~) key to access the console. For some of the cheats to work, it is first necessary to type /sv_cheats 1 to activate cheat mode. To turn off the first three cheats listed, simply retype them. To deactivate all other cheats, you must quit and restart the game.

god
Flew, no clipping
notarget
Makes you invisible to enemies

/give X (where X is from the following list) gives the corresponding item (For example, give weapon_handgun gives you the crossbow. Don't forget the space and the underscore.)

item_healthkit
item_longjump
item_suit
weapon_367
weapon_9mmAR
weapon_crossbow
weapon_crowbar
weapon_agon
weapon_gates

mpophelia Changes your character model to OpHELIA
mpishmael Changes your character model to hbmual
mpgaully Changes your character model to Gabriella
mpberetta Gives you the Beretta; type twice for John Woo-style
mpsubmachinegun Gives you the submachine gun; type twice for two
mpflauregun Gives you the flare gun; type twice for two
mpshogun Gives you the sound-evf shotgun; type twice for two
mpsniperifle Gives you the sniper rifle
mphowitzer Gives you the howitzer
mpnapalmcannon Gives you the napalm cannon
mpgunfire Gives you the minigun

massaurifle Gives you the assault rifle
mphasub Give you the Bugbust
mphlawg Gives you the Cyber laser rifle
mphsacannon Gives you the Tesla cannon
mpvoodoo Gives you the voodoo doll
mpthorn Gives you the orb
mpgoshopping Gives all items
mpnicunurse Adds 25 to your health
mprealnchnurse Adds 300 to your health
mpward Gives ward that adds 25 to your armor
mpnevercrowd Gives you nocrowd that adds 200 to your armor
mpcarbonfiber Gives you power-up
mpopoffshoes Makes invisible
mpferkermur Gives triple damage

CAESAR III

Right-click on a water well, type Alt-K, followed by:
Alt-V Instant victory
Alt-C More cash (if you have less than 500000)

When you can go into the Senate following procedure can get some serious cash. Click the Emperor icon in the Senate. Give yourself a wage of 5000. When you accumulate about 3000, go back to the Senate and press the Give to City button. Click the All button in the dialog. Then press the Give button. Press the Give to City button again. Do not press the All button again or you will have problems! Give the same amount as before. Press the Give button again, and your account will go into the negative. Now you have unlimited credit! Repeat as necessary.

CARNIVORES

Type debug while playing to enable debug mode (your in-cubator will come on while you type, but don't worry). In this mode dinosaurs will ignore your presence until you shoot. Plus, you'll have unlimited ammo, and laco does not

TO CHANGE THE GRAVITY

/level_gravity 150 600 is the default. If you set it to around 150 it's like walking on the moon.

TO CHANGE CAMERA mode or MOTION

/thirdperson Switches you to third-person mode
/firstperson Switches you back to normal
/-cammousemove Mouse moves the camera in third-person mode
/-cammousemove Turns camera control back to normal
/-chase_active 1 Activates chase mode in third person
kill you. In debug mode, you can also use the following cheats:

**Ctrl** Makes you run really fast
**Shift+S** Switches on/off slow mode
**Shift-T** Switches on/off timer indicating polygons per frame and time used to render this frame (in milliseconds)

**COMMANDS: BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY**

These codes are for the English version only:

Type CDNZ01982 during the game. Then you can activate the following cheats:

**Shift-V** Invisible to enemy
**Shift-X** Teleportation (use the mouse to place your commando)

**Ctrl** Invincibility
**Ctrl-Shift-N** Finish the mission

**FIFA 99**

- To get the Winter introduction, type win repeatedly while game is loading.
- If you are close to goal and there are no teammates to pass to, you can tap the pass button to sidefoot a shot into the corner of the net.
- If you are close to goal and there are no teammates to pass to, you can tap the lob button to attempt a chip shot.
- You can fake out defenders who are waiting for you to shoot a ball by holding either skill move key while the ball is in the air. At the last second your player will shoot out of the way and the ball go by.
- You can pull off some spectacular volley moves by double tapping the shoot button. Volleys are more likely to score but require more time and space.
- If you face your player away from the net and double tap the shoot button, he will attempt a bicycle kick.
- To execute a 360-degree spin move, just hold down a skill move button and press shoot (or just double tap a skill move button). This leaves you wide-open for a vicious slide tackle, so be careful.
- As a last resort against players who have no obvious chance on net, press L1 and your player will feed the opponent, often in a spectacular fashion.

**FIGHTER SQUADRON: SCREAMIN’ DEMONS OVER EUROPE**

Go into the steamers.ini file and make the following changes:

**ShockRadio**

This enables the few cheats that are available. Once this cheat is enabled, enter the aim and open up a chat line (with —) and then type the following:

**FS:LookAtHimSillyMonkey** — Bows up everyone’s plane but yours

**FS:HaveACow** — Draws a cow out of everyone’s plane

**FS:Decompose** — Causes everyone else’s planes to break apart

(Notice that the above cheats will not work in simple or multiplayer games unless you have previously entered the ShockRadio1 cheat.)

Other ini file changes:

**EnableCalibrate** — Will turn on the calibrate button in the Options screen.

**DisplayCoordinates** — Will display your current FS coordinates in the overlay map (in the upper-right corner of the screen). This will aid you in object placement when building missions or new terrain.

**PutStewBehindVehicle** — Causes you to be placed behind the vehicle you just left by hitting $.

**TextureCacheInitMax** — Where *x* is a number (in bytes) for the maximum size of the on-disk texture cache (new file). If cache grows larger than this number, it will be cleared. The default is 500MB.

**TextureCacheSize** — Where *x* is a number (in bytes) for the maximum size of the on-disk texture cache. The default value is 10MB. Setting this cache to a higher number may improve game performance on machines that have memory to spare.

**NetMaxPlayers** — Where *x* is the maximum number of players allowed in a network game (only the server machine needs to have this set). This number may not be greater than 28 and has only been thoroughly tested with 8 players.

**FORSKEN**

Typing the following codes at any menu. To turn them off, just type them again.

**BUBBLES** — Turns on cheat mode

---

**CHEATS**

**HERETIC 2**

To activate cheats, first access the console by pressing the tilde (~)

**playbetter** — Toggles god mode

**twoweeks** — Toggles power-ups

**meatwagon** — Kill all monsters (except for the boss)

**victor** — Kill all monsters (including boss)

**angermonsters** — All monsters get angry

**crazymonsters** — All monsters go crazy

**kite** — No-clip mode

**showcoords** — Shows coordinates

**weapprev** — Go to previous weapon

**weapnext** — Go to next weapon

**suckitdown chicken** — Turns you into a chicken

**suckitdown all** — Gives you all (useful) items

**suckitdown health** — Gives you maximum health

**suckitdown mana** — Gives you maximum offensive and defensive mana

**suckitdown armor** — Gives you silver armor; type again to get gold armor

**suckitdown powerup** — Gives you a Tome of Power power-up

**spawn item_weapon_hellstaff** — Gives you the Hellstaff weapon

To spawn the desired item just type in `spawn x` where *x* is from the following list:

- **item_weapon_firewall**
- **item_weapon_maceballs**
- **item_weapon_magicmissile**
- **item_weapon_phoenixbow**
- **item_weapon_redrainbow**
- **item_weapon_spheresmash**
- **item_weapon_defensebarrier**
- **item_weapon_defensepolymorph**
- **item_weapon_defense_powerup**

**IAMEUS** — God mode

**FULLMONTY** — Level select

**LUMBERJACK** — Missile toggle

**JIMBEAM** — Laser beam toggle

**G-POLICE**

Enter these cheats at the main menu.

**STAFF** — In-game info

**WOODOO** — Have skills

**SUPACAM** — Switches to enemy cam, when you shoot them down

**BENILL** — Benny Hill cam

**PANTALON** — All secret missions (in Training Menu)

**DOOBIES** — Gives you infinite shields

**MARTICK** — Gives you infinite weapons

(Note: You won’t be able to progress past the current mission when these last two codes are enabled.)

**Here are the passwords for every level:**

- **DOLMAN** — Level 2
- **SONAGAV** — Level 3
- **ACEDUF** — Level 4
- **JOJOGUN** — Level 5
- **WENSKI** — Level 6

**ITEMS**

- **item_defense_ringofrepulsion**
- **item_defense_shield**
- **item_defense_teleport**
- **item_health_full**
- **item_health_half**
- **item_mana_combo_half**
- **item_mana_combo_duagon**
- **item_mana_defensive_full**
- **item_mana_defensive_half**
- **item_mana_offensive_full**
- **item_mana_offensive_half**
- **item_puzzle_canyonkey**
- **item_puzzle_cloudkey**
- **item_puzzle_cog**
- **item_puzzle_crystal**
- **item_puzzle_dungeonkey**
- **item_puzzle_highpriestkey**
- **item_puzzle_highpriestsymbol**
- **item_puzzle_hive2amulet**
- **item_puzzle_hive2gem**
- **item_puzzle_hive2pearl**
- **item_puzzle_minecartwheel**
- **item_puzzle_minecartspikes**
- **item_puzzle_plazamachine**
- **item_puzzle_polon**
- **item_puzzle_renditore**
- **item_puzzle_shield**
- **item_puzzle_slamcontainer**
- **item_puzzle_tavernkey**
- **item_puzzle_tome**
- **item_puzzle_townkey**

---

**/chase_active 0** — Deactivates chase mode

**REALISTIC GUNNERY:**

You can only take so many bullets in real life. To make combat with the marines more interesting, you can make the .mp3 more powerful. You can set the numbers for whatever you want, but I tested the following and it is pretty realistic and balanced. The first three are for you, the second three are for the marines:

- **/sk_pie 3mmAR_bullet1 20**
- **/sk_pie 3mmAR_bullet2 20**
- **/sk_pie 3mmAR_bullet3 20**
- **/sk_9mmAR_bullet1 30**
- **/sk_9mmAR_bullet2 30**
- **/sk_9mmAR_bullet3 30**

In case you’re curious, you can modify all the weapons in a similar fashion. There are too many variables to print here, so look for a complete rundown in a future CGTips.
KING'S QUEST: 
MASK OF ETERNITY

Press Shift-Ctrl-7 to get access to the console. You can conveniently ignore the password prompt. After typing in the desired codes, hit Shift-Ctrl-7 again to return to the game.

collide turns off clipping mode
con collide turns clipping mode back on
set first person first person mode
set third person third person mode
god/ungod
Toggles god mode on and off (some things still can kill you but not many)

In case you have the urge to play naked:

Teleport lets you click on the world map and be transported to the desired spot

Give X (where X is from the following list):

Dagger SmallerSword BroadSword Mace LakeSword SkelKingSword BattleAxe WarHammer Pike LongSword FlameSword TempleSword SmCrossbow AzrielHammer SmCrabClove Sword Bow LongBow CrossBow CndCrabCrossbow FlameBow IceCrossbow WeepEyes DemonRocks

invisible
Invisible
Strength
RingOfDeadHero
Ashes
Candle
SilverCoins
MagicMap
RopeAndHook
RingOLight
KeyToDeathMaze
Mold
BrokenShield
RustedBrokenShield
HearingHorn
Antidote
GreenMushroom
Rock
IronLock
OakRoot
LodeStone
CrystalPyramid
BlackDiamond

AmberGlow
BasiliskTongue
FireGem
PipeCap1
PipeCap2
DragonKey
RockKey
BlueAdamanT
JailKey
DecipheringAmulet
Paddle
Shell
GoldSkull
BadSkull
RoundKey
SquareKey
Ladle
hmmhnd
Mask1
Mask2
Mask3
Mask4
Mask5

Piece1
Piece2
Piece3
Piece4
Scroll
LadySel
RustedLock
KeepKey
StoneOrder
Clockshaft
HookDown
HookUp
SpinningMask
Orchow
Spear
IceShard
IceLever
LucretoFire
NoRanged
NoArmor
BirthdaySuit
Logo1
Logo2

SAEGGY Level 7
MAZMAN Level 8
DAZMAN Level 9
DELUCS Level 10
ANDOGO Level 11
KIMBCHS Level 12
ANDYMAC Level 13
YERMAN Level 14
OLIEIL Level 15
THEYOLK Level 16
TORYMASH Level 17
ANDYCROW Level 18
BIONIC Level 19
TSLATER Level 20
IANTHOD Level 21
JONRITZ Level 22
CLAIREC Level 23
STEVEBOT Level 24
ANGUSF Level 25
EUANLAC Level 26
EDIFIRE Level 27
STUBOMB Level 28
THONBOY Level 29
JIMMAC Level 30
PUGGER Level 31
ROSSCO Level 32
CAKEBOY Level 33
NIKNAK Level 34
SAILOERD Level 35

INCOMING

Just hit the following function keys to get these cheats:
F2 Makes hitting targets easier
F3 Makes player invulnerable
F4 Gives infinite lives
F5 Gives infinite weapons
F6 Gives a smart bomb
F7 quit
F8 Quick save
F9 Saves quick save
F10 Shows the frame rate (hit again to turn off)
F11 Restart the level

INDEPENDENCE WAR

Type in darkgaur during flight to activate cheats.
Left Shift-k Allows you to dock with any vessel
Left Shift-o (zero) Kill targeted ship
Left Shift-s Force next scripted event
Left Shift-t: Freeze target
Left Shift-i Makes you invulnerable
Left Shift-j Jump to lagrange point
Left Shift-b Jump to target
Left Shift-o Match the velocity of a targeted ship
Left Shift-a Gives you superspeed

Long-awaited Drinking Party

To access this hilarious secret level, start a game on the second mission. The mission calls for you to escort a peasant into a friendly

SAEGGY Level 7
MAZMAN Level 8
DAZMAN Level 9
DELUCS Level 10
ANDOGO Level 11
KIMBCHS Level 12
ANDYMAC Level 13
YERMAN Level 14
OLIEIL Level 15
THEYOLK Level 16
TORYMASH Level 17
ANDYCROW Level 18
BIONIC Level 19
TSLATER Level 20
IANTHOD Level 21
JONRITZ Level 22
CLAIREC Level 23
STEVEBOT Level 24
ANGUSF Level 25
EUANLAC Level 26
EDIFIRE Level 27
STUBOMB Level 28
THONBOY Level 29
JIMMAC Level 30
PUGGER Level 31
ROSSCO Level 32
CAKEBOY Level 33
NIKNAK Level 34
SAILOERD Level 35

INCOMING

Just hit the following function keys to get these cheats:
F2 Makes hitting targets easier
F3 Makes player invulnerable
F4 Gives infinite lives
F5 Gives infinite weapons
F6 Gives a smart bomb
F7 quit
F8 Quick save
F9 Saves quick save
F10 Shows the frame rate (hit again to turn off)
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INDEPENDENCE WAR

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Left Shift-t: Freeze target
Left Shift-i Makes you invulnerable
Left Shift-j Jump to lagrange point
Left Shift-b Jump to target
Left Shift-o Match the velocity of a targeted ship
Left Shift-a Gives you superspeed

Left Shift-backspace
View the most recent movie
Left Shift-w Win the mission

JANE'S WWII FIGHTERS

(A CCG Exclusive Cheat)
In Quick Mission mode, if you shoot down seven enemy fighters yourself, without using a vanguard and with both triple ammo and invulnerability turned off, there is a 20 percent chance that a UFO will be created.

MICROSOFT COMBAT FLIGHT SIM

Flying Pig
Open a game at coordinates NS1*10.88" W1*50.42'. Fly around and look for the cloud. Directly under the cloud at about 7,000 feet is a large pink pig, hovering in midair.

Secret Mission
Look in the mission directory for a file called team.mi. Rename it to team.mis. Once you've done this, an interesting new mission called "Combat Flight Sim Team Outing" will appear in the single missions list.

ColdFront MarbleTablet1
MarbleTablet2
MarbleTablet3
GriffRoomKey
GriffCageKey
ClockShaft
HookDown
HookUp
SpinningMask
Orchow
Spear
IceShard
IceLever
LucretoFire
NoRanged
NoArmor
BirthdaySuit
Logo1
Logo2
village. Before you reach the town, send some troops north, along the path on the west side of the form. When you get to the river, you will see some tiny islands. On one of the islands sit three frogs. Kill the frogs and then proceed with the mission as planned. When you proceed to the next mission, you will be treated to some shots of the Bungia team in the intra, and then get to take some poshers with blunderbusses out for a hunting trip.

**Limbs, Heads, and Smoking Crater**

This level is truly spectacular, especially if fireworks are what you are looking for. The level teams with Whights and hula pills of satetal charges. To get to it, you have to finish The Murder of Crowes level. At the end of that level, The Deceiver walks down a path to the exit. Normally you would follow him, but this time, turn around and go north, clear across the level, to the alternate exit. Then you will proceed to the secret level.

---

**NEED FOR SPEED III**

Type the following codes at any menu to activate the cheat:

- **RUSHOUR** Increases NPC traffic
- **EMPIRE** Opens up Empire City track
- **ELNOR** Gives you the secret EI line car
- **MERCO** Gives you the Mercedes
- **GOFAST** Allows you to drive super-fast in single-race mode
- **ALLCARS** Gives access to all cars

Type any of the following codes right before you click the Race button in order to drive these secret cars:

- **GD1** Mazda Miata
- **GD2** Toyota Landcruiser
- **GO3** Cargo truck
- **GO4** BMW M series
- **GD5** '71 Plymouth Barracuda
- **GD6** Ford pickup with camper shell
- **GD7** Jeep Cherokee
- **GD8** Ford full-size van
- **GD9** '64-'65 Mustang
- **GD10** '66 Chevy pickup
- **GD11** Range Rover
- **GD12** School bus
- **GD13** Caprice Classic taxi
- **GD14** Chevy cargo van
- **GD15** Velo station wagon

---

**QUAKE II**

To activate these cheats, press the title (~) key and enter the following codes in the console window:

**god**

**notarget**

**noclip**

**give all** (items, weapons, 999 ammo)

**give jacket armor**

**give shotgun**

**give super shotgun**

**headbone**

Gives players big heads

---

**REDGUARD**

To activate the cheats you first must hit F12 to access the console and then type the following: **Item add X** (where **X** is from the following list)

- **2** Gold
- **42** Silver boot
- **43** Silver loret
- **44** Silver loret
- **45** Torch
- **46** Monocle
- **47** Flag
- **48** Silver loret
- **49** League
- **50** Silver key
- **51** Flask of the dead monk
- **52** Hendons
- **53** Izara's locked journal
- **54** Feather
- **55** Kihral's journal
- **56** Folks
- **57** Imprint paper
- **58** Star stone
- **59** Key to warehouse
- **60** Key to Izara's house
- **61** Spell
- **62** Glass bottle
- **63** Iron weight
- **64** Glass bottle
- **65** Glass bottle
- **66** Glass bottle
- **67** Strength
- **68** Bandage
- **69** Bandage
- **70** Sabre
- **71** Sabre
- **72** Sabre
- **73** Sabre
- **74** Bone key

---

**NHL 99**

Create a player and type one of the following names. You'll see the message: "Player is already in the database," and you should click the check mark. The new player will have full stats.

- **Dave Petrofi**
- **Funky Swedling**
- **Corv Yip**
- **Bryce Cochrane**
- **John Rea**
- **Jeff Dack**
- **Trent Shumay**
- **Jeff Mair**
- **Paul Martin**
- **Andy Harris**
- **Chris Daas**
- **Lance Well**
- **Mark Lesser**
- **Hong Chin**
- **Trent Shumay**
- **Bruce McMillon**

Type these codes anytime during the game:

- **mantis**
- **insects**
- **homeland**
- **awayteam**
- **penalty**
- **injury**
- **zamboni**
- **victory**
- **flash**
- **spots**
- **check**
- **grab**

Exit the game and, while in the Credits, select Programming and type any cheat from the following list:

- **warp**
- **battles**
- **buff**
- **1988**
- **quickly**
- **paw**
- **goodies**
- **nobody**
- **crafter**

Unlock all resolution options for D3D.
give machinegun Machine gun
give grenade launcher Grenade launcher
give rocket launcher Rocket launcher
give shells Shells
give bullets Bullets
give cells Cells
give grenades Grenades
give rockets Rockets
give slugs Slugs
give quad damage Quad damage
give invulnerability Invulnerability
give silence Silent

give rebreather Rebreather
give health 100 health

give weapons All weapons
give ammo All ammo
give armor Body armor

Level Skip Cheat
Go to the console by pressing the tilde (~) key, then type map x (where x is the level number—for instance, map boss2) for a list of level names, go to Multiplay/Host Game from the main menu.

RAILROAD TYCOON 2
To activate cheats, first press Tab to bring up your cursor and then type in one of the following:
BigfootGold Win with gold victory
BigfootSilver Win with silver victory
BigfootBronze Win with bronze victory
BoBo Lose scenario
King of the hill Gives your character $100,000
Powerball Gives company $100 million
Slush fund Gives company $1 million
Let me in Gives access to all denied territories
Speed Racer Doubles maximum train speed
AMD103 Converts all engines to AMD-103s at expense of profits
Show me the trains Gives all engines
Viagra Increases city sizes

RAINBOW 6
To activate cheats, press “C” in the game and then type in one of the following:
TEAMGOD Team god mode
AVATARGOD Player god mode

Salt on
Salt off
Terrain one up
Terrain one down
Terrain ten up
Terrain ten down
pay tribute to your king
I love red tape
let’s make a deal
nerdz rool

Changes the sea to salt water
Changes the sea to fresh water
Raises the terrain
Lowers the terrain
Raises the terrain
Lowers the terrain
All rewards become available
All ordinances become available
Neighborhoods and business deals offered
Gives you high-tech industry

STUMPY Stumpy mode on
CLOTHOPPER Enhances player’s feet and hands
MEGANODOLL Mega head mode
BIGNODOLL Big head mode
SPIDERDISCOUNT Gives full ammo
NOBRAINER Turn off
DEBUGKEYS Debug keys enabled
TURNUPCHICK Changes players from 3D to 2D
1-999 Heavy breathing
EXPLORE Toggles the victory conditions on/off

STAR WARS: ROGUE SQUADRON
To enter the cheats, click on Settings from the console, then select General. There you will see a blank space labeled “Enter Passcode Here.” Click on it, and press Shift-Del to disable the cheat.

CREDITS Star Wars-style credits
LEAKWORKS Activates force feedback for PC joysticks
GUNBANK Modifies force feedback control for PC joysticks
CHICKEN Allows you to play as an AT-ST
IAMBDOLL Gives you unlimited lives

To activate any of the cheats, first press the Ctrl-Shift-Alt-C keys all at the same time. Then type in one of the following cheats in the window.

I am weak

call cousin Vinnie

Xyzxvux

garbage in, garbage out
power to the masses
water in the desert

SIMCITY 3000

Makes buildings, utilities, zoning, transportation, planting trees, and creating surface water free
Go to the Meet window to the Local Fundraising Event. Once there, Vinnie will offer you some cash
Use the call cousin Vinnie cheat and refuse his offer. Then use the xyzxvux cheat and the beautiful SimCity Castle will appear in your Rewards menu.
The castle boosts land value, aura, and does some other good stuff
Makes all garbage buildings available
Makes all power buildings available
Makes all water buildings available
ATTENTION ALL INTERNET USERS:

Start talkin'

Talk n' Play is the best way to speak with up to four people over the internet. Combine that with 25 Internet games from World Opponent Network and a sweet headset and you've got internet gaming, baby!

So now you can connect with your family and friends and challenge them to a game of Poker, Golf or Red Baron, even if they live thousands of miles away!

Start Playing!

www.talknplay.com
**STARCRAFT: BROOD WARS**

These cheats are identical to the codes for the original STARCRAFT. First hit the Enter key and type in the cheat, then press Enter again to activate it. The codes that affect gameplay conditions can be toggled by typing them a second time.

**ToughGuy** Gives you all power-ups in the game.

**Shogo**
To access the cheats, press T (or whatever you have the message button mapped to), type the code, and then hit Enter.

mpcleans Gives you unlimited ammo
mgood God mode
mpkita Full ammo, armor, and health
mhealth Health full health
mpammo Full ammo
mparmor Full armor
mpclip Toggles clipping mode on/off
mpcross Toggles coordinates on/off
mpcamera Toggles camera mode on/off
mlight Toggles lights and editor mode

**Spec Ops: Ranger Team Bravo**

- Move the savedata.txt file out of the specious directory, and you'll gain access to all missions.
- Hit Alt-Shift-V, go to your items list and select the YoshiFinder, and your ranger will be invincible.

**Trespasser**
To change levels, hold Ctrl-Shift-Q-W, then release the V key.

If you're stuck with this game, here is how to activate some cheats that might ease the pain. Press Ctrl-F11. A cursor will appear in the lower left of the screen, then type in any of these codes.

After typing the code, press Enter and hit Ctrl-F11 again to activate.

**Tux** Transports you through important locations on the level

LOC Gives coordinates on the world map

**Tomb Raider III**
To skip a level in the game: Draw the pistols; walk one step backward; walk one step forward; crouch and stand; spin around three times; then jump backward.

- To find a secret room: Go to the pool in Lara's mansion. Behind the diving board, there is a switch. Flip the switch to open a door in the main room of the mansion. Behind there is another switch. Pull that switch, turn around and run to the open door that's across the hall. Once in there, you'll find Lara's treasure room.

**Turok 2**
Select "Enter Cheats" in the Options menu. An onscreen keypad appears on which you must type the names of the cheats you want available to you during the game. To turn on a cheat (or off), you must then go to Cheat Select Menu and select the particular cheat you want.

**Unreal**
Hit the title (→) key, which brings up a console, then type any of the following cheats:

- **Allammo** Full ammo
- **Fly** Fly mode
- **Ghost** Fly mode plus no clipping
- **God** God mode
- **Walk** Normal mode
- **Invisible** Makes you invisible
- **Invisible** Toggles invisibility off
- **Killall** Kills all enemies on level
- **Playersonly** freezes all enemies
- **Suicide** You die
- **Summon X** Gives the desired weapon or item where X is the name of the item

Enter the following names to play the corresponding level:

- **vertex2** Vortex Riders
- **nylove** Nylove's Falls
- **dig** Reajjagi Mine

**Viper Racing**
Press Shift-F12 to activate a blimp camera that flies around using DESERT-style control.

**X-COM Interceptor**
Press Ctrl-W when you hear a double beep tone, cheat mode is active.

**BONUS**
Here's a secret bonus cheat the folks at Fox Interactive put in just for CGW readers.

While playing a game in Easy mode, activate the console by typing a title (→) and then type RINLEY WAS HERE for a special surprise!
EVICTION NOTICE
YOU ARE NOW ON MY LAND

Feeling constrained by limited lands and resources in Europe, you've staked a claim in the New World. If the natives rebel, your next message will be pinned to their backs.

Ultimately, your goal is to become Europe's greatest power. To do this, you'll have to parlay New World resources into Old World dominance. Develop what you can, trade for the rest. Deploy spies to help stay ahead of the technology curve and build a formidable military.

And that arrogant queen who wouldn't acknowledge your land claim? It won't be long before she's serving you tea in the morning.

* The richness and depth of game play is reflected in 40 military and civilian units and 100 technologies from over 300 years of history (1500s-1800s)
* Advanced artificial intelligence considers nation-specific personalities, strategies and diplomatic agendas
* High-resolution graphics set in an engrossing baroque style
* Intuitive interface and extensive game play tutorial makes it easy for first-time players to get up and running
* Go head-to-head against other world leaders in multiplayer mode supporting up to 6 players

IMPERIALISM II
THE AGE OF EXPLORATION

* Begin with global economic and diplomatic policies to gain power and prestige at home and abroad
* Fully exploit the New World on unlimited historically based and randomly generated maps
* Immerse yourself in tactical battles with an engine that enables greater player control

WWW.IMPERIALISM2.COM
EVIL, WICKED, MEAN AND NASTY.
Jane's A-10 Warthog takes you into the brutal world of frontline air combat! It's like piloting a flying tank! The A-10 encases your cockpit in a 4" thick titanium bathtub that acts like a bullet-proof helmet for your butt. So don't worry about getting hit...worry about turning enemy tanks into scrap metal! After all, you're armed with the most devastating ground attack weapon ever built: the Avenger Cannon. With a recoil that shakes the entire plane, this 30 mm, 7 barrel cannon turns titanium armour into tin foil. The A-10 is so devastating, Desert Storm pilots saw enemy commanders evacuate their tanks and run at the sight of it! Jane's A-10 Warthog is the meanest, nastiest flight sim we've ever made! Prepare to get down and dirty!
Building 17 loop-the-loops in a row seemed like a good idea at the time...

Thrills, spills, and chills have never been so much fun! You'll get to sculpt your park's terrain, hire the employees, and build the rides. You'll have an unlimited combination of roller coaster designs and landscapes to build the coolest 'coasters imaginable. You'll get to manage the entire park, from building and maintenance to research and development. And you'll wind up hopelessly addicted to creating the amusement park of your dreams.
...is done out of a church. But the Gathering of Developers aren't choirboys—considering that they have titles like MAX PAYNE, HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K.², and KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS in development. Who are they, and why do they think they're out to save gaming?

by Ken Brown
It's anything but business as usual for the Gathering of Developers. The brash new Dallas-based game publisher—otherwise known as G.O.D.—has shaken up the industry by shaping itself as a developer's collective. Their strategy: fund good games by successful developers, pay higher royalties, and give game makers more credit and creative freedom. If the G.O.D. strategy pays off, it could result in healthier independent developers and better games. It may also serve as a hedge against the kind of publisher consolidation that has occurred in the console-game sector of the industry.

To fulfill their vision, G.O.D. cofounders Mike Wilson and Harry Miller set out to create the gaming industry's version of the film world's United Artists. UA was formed in 1919, when Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford got fed up with the way the big studios were exploiting people. They formed a company that rewarded their talent and put more of the decisions in the hands of those who understood movie making. With that in mind, Wilson and Miller formed a collective with eight developers, including 3D Realms, Ritual Entertainment, and Terminal Reality, all of which have a say in the titles G.O.D. publishes.

The strategy has been controversial. Early critics claimed that G.O.D. wouldn't have the marketing muscle to put enough of its titles on mass retailers' shelves. Others said putting the lunatics in charge of the asylum would lead to blown deadlines and kitchen-sink game design.

But the evidence is beginning to mount that G.O.D.'s plan is indeed working. In the first eight months since G.O.D.'s inception, it has helped develop 10 games, published JAZZ JACKRABBIT and RAILROAD TYCOON II (both of which sold well), and has a string of impressive titles lined up that include FLY!, MAX PAYNE, HEAVY METAL: E.A.K.K.², NOCTURNE, and others (covered in the following pages). G.O.D. also appears to have made an impact on the way publishers structure developer royalties, which have grown from the low teens to 20-30 percent.

That's not to say G.O.D. is taking over the world. Since the company is so lean, with a skeletal marketing and management crew, the Gathering can't fund more titles before shipping a top seller or raising outside capital. In addition, G.O.D. still hasn't attracted a top-tier, high-profile developer like id Software, Ensemble Studios, or Valve. Even 3D Realms, arguably the highest-profile member of the Gathering, hasn't committed wholeheartedly, allowing only certain titles to go out under the Gathering label (and DUKE NUKEM FOREVER isn't one of them).

WHAT'S G.O.D.'S PLAN?

So where is all of this leading? No matter how successful the Gathering is, it probably won't threaten the long-term hegemony of publishing powerhouses like EA and Microsoft. But Wilson believes it's important for someone to act as a counterweight to the big boys. He wants the Gathering to "keep the balance of power weighted in the direction of the creators rather than the financiers; before consolidation makes things really scary."

Of course, G.O.D. could become a big boy itself. It happened to United Artists and, more recently, to Electronic Arts, which was founded on some of the same ideals. G.O.D.'s founders have said that they expect to grow with the addition of other development companies, and they hope to take on more titles when they have the money. And what if they get an offer for $50 million to sell out?

"I'd take it," Wilson replied. "Then I'd buy one of my other partners out and get back in. It's still too much fun shaking things up in this ridiculous industry to walk away completely, and I don't know how anything could compare to the Gathering in that area."
Max Payne is in a world of hurt. As an undercover DEA operative in New York City, he's not in the easiest of professions. Three years ago his wife and child were brutally murdered by the New York Mafia, and he now finds himself undercover and up to his neck in the biggest organized crime family in the city. It seems that there is a new, deadly drug on the streets, Valkyr, and Max is getting close to the source. But just as he gets onto something big, his superior officer is killed and the murderer is pinned on Max. This of course hits all of the local papers, blowing his cover in the mob. Quickly he finds himself being chased by the cops and the Mafia. Welcome to the world of Max Payne.

MAX PAYNE is being developed by Remedy Entertainment in Helsinki, Finland, under the watchful eye of the game's publisher, Gathering of Developers (G.O.D.). Remedy isn't very well known (the company's biggest hit to date was the driving title DEATH Rally, a lackluster seller), but with G.O.D.'s help, the company hopes to hit the big time with MAX PAYNE.

In the Gritty Underworld
Max's trials will take place in areas ranging from down-and-dirty industrial settings all the way to palatial, upscale havens where the "real evil dwells," according to MAX PAYNE's Game Designer Sam Lake.

Some of the game's interiors sport amazing detail. The designers have created realistic environments that are unmatched by anything else we've seen. It's one thing to conjure up alien environments, but quite another to accurately and believably render the real world.

The game will use dynamic radiosity lighting to ensure that the environments are as believable as possible. Realism and beauty do have their price, of course. MAX PAYNE will be 3D-accelerated only (supporting Direct3D along with native support for many 3D cards); there will be no software rendering for the Luddites among us.

For that extra sense of realism, the Remedy team is sending a group of artists, armed with cameras, into the streets of New York City to gather scenes that will be incorporated into the game's environments. The designers intend to take the real world New York City scenes down a notch into the gritty underworld of film noir — and just when New York's image was starting to improve, Rudy Giuliani won't be pleased.

What a Character
But it's not just interiors and exteriors that show the designers' ambition. Max and his adversaries are also rendered in great detail. The game's skeletal animation system wraps several layers of player "skins" around a simulated skeleton, resulting in characters whose clothing and motions are very realistic. Capes and coats flap in the wind, and roll-and-dive moves border on the cinematic.

The traditional downside to detail in computer games has been the unavoidable slowdown in frame-rates at higher detail levels. Remedy has solved this problem in MAX PAYNE by using what Project Lead Petri Järvelähti calls a "level of detail" system. This renders objects in the distance with relatively few pixels, and uses progressively more pixels as the object...

by Joe Vallina

MODEL THIS!! MAX PAYNE's ballistics model is impressive. In this shot you can clearly see each individual pellet — and you'll feel them too.

Genre: Action • ETA: Q1 '00 • Developer: Remedy Entertainment
comes closer and fills a greater portion of the screen. In this way, the computer has to perform fewer of the complex calculations that slow down scene-rendering. Another trick the design team is using to maintain high frame-rates is something called “exit optimization.” In this technique, the computer draws only what the player sees, instead of everything in a specific area, whether or not the player is aware of its presence. For example, if you’re looking through a doorway, only the objects and portions of walls in your direct line-of-sight will be rendered.

Cinematic Action

The Remedy guys are major movie buffs, and it shows in MAX PAYNE’s design. Remedy hopes to let the gamer have a cinematic experience while playing the game, all the better to draw him into what Remedy promises will be a deep plot. That’s why they decided to show Max in the third-person perspective. The designers felt that a first-person perspective just wasn’t an option to fully show off all of the great moves Max has at his disposal.

If you’ve seen any John Woo movies, you already have a good idea of the kinds of moves Max is capable of performing in the game. From the standard crouch to the supercool sideways jump while opening up with both barrels to falling backward into a rolling getaway move, Max will execute moves other game characters can only virtually dream about.

Of course, Max isn’t invulnerable by any means. If all that dodging and jumping doesn’t quite get him out of danger and he ends up taking a bullet or two, he’ll accurately reflect the injury. If he’s shot in the leg, for instance, he’ll limp his way through the rest of the game. And if he takes one through the chest, well... be sure to check out that exit wound coming out of his back before you reboot.

SPLATTERFEST 101 This shot demonstrates the particle rendering that the Remedy team is building into MAX PAYNE (notice the splattering blood).

"If Max takes one through the chest, well... be sure to check out that exit wound coming out of his back before you reboot."

Super Slo-Mo

One of the more novel aspects of MAX PAYNE is its use of slow motion. Throughout the game, the gamer will see many sequences play out in John Woo-style slo-mo action scenes that let you fully appreciate the level of detail while you experience that ever-so-important movie feel. The slow motion will be scripted into the game, so that it will kick in at predetermined times. Slow motion will also be

LIGHT UP THE NIGHT These two shots demonstrate the impressive lighting effects in MAX PAYNE. Notice how the shooter’s face and body are realistically lit by the muzzle flash.
used as a reward of sorts for a well-placed shot on an enemy. If you score a difficult head shot, for example, a slow-motion instant replay will show the exchange from a different angle. Järviöhe says that Remedy is considering letting the gamer toggle the slow-motion mode on and off, but at present it is always on.

The designers also plan to make a fully slow-motion multiplayer mode to provide a whole new dynamic to the standard deathmatch. According to Järviöhe, this option will let you take more time to plan your moves—and to savor your enemy’s destruction. It remains to be seen how this element will appeal to gamers, but the Remedy crew is very excited about this newest twist on the multiplayer theme.

You Will Now Die, Bad Guy

Weapons in MAX PAYNE will be strictly real-world stuff. If you’re looking for alien death rays and plasma bombs, you’re in the wrong place. However, that doesn’t mean that the guns available in MAX PAYNE will be without cyborgs. Take, for example, a fully automatic shotgun that Remedy dubs “The Jackhammer.” After seeing this thing in action, I was ready to trade in my BFG on the spot.

To enhance the realism of the guns, all weapons will be rendered using volumetric particle systems that model the weapon’s muzzle exhaust and flash in great detail. To put things right over the top, the particles are randomized in each passing frame, resulting in a superrealistic lock and feel. The bullet trajectories are modeled with real physics that take into account the effect that gravity has on each projectile—all the way down to that last shotgun pellet ripping through your victim’s temple. And if you run out of ammo? Then it’s time to pull out your trusty Louisville Slugger and the fresh can of whup ass that comes along with it.

Comic Book...er...Graphic Novel Flavor

In designing MAX PAYNE, the Remedy team decided to incorporate one of its favorite pastimes, reading graphic novels, as a reward to gamers for completing a level. Instead of a boring “Level Loading—Please Wait” screen, graphic novel panels will round out the storyline while the next level loads.

As an aside, there are even rumors that a MAX PAYNE movie project may come out sometime after the game debut. Through his connections with G.O.D., Gene Simmons of KISS has secured the rights for any such MAX PAYNE film. No word yet as to who would play Max—Gene himself, perhaps? Nah.

Grow Your Own

Remedy will include an impressive package of editing tools with MAX PAYNE. The level editor, MaxEd, is the most user-friendly editor we’ve ever seen. It’s a true drag-and-drop, WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor that actually easy and—get this—fun to use. After having slugged through some simple room design with DeathMatch Maker and WorldCraft, I was amazed at how easy it was to create a level with MaxEd. If all goes according to plan and the editor does indeed ship with the game, home-grown level designers will be in heaven.

The Bottom Line

The danger in making a very cinematic game is that it will be pretty to look at, great to read about, and boring as hell to play. By adding new, experimental elements like slow motion, the Remedy designers are going out on a long, precarious limb. But if they succeed—and it looks as though they very well might, in spectacular fashion—they will take action gaming to the next level. Here’s hoping they do. Watch upcoming issues of CGW for updates as MAX PAYNE nears completion.

For more info, check out the MAX PAYNE Web site at www.maxpayne.com.
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Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K. 2

Heavy Metal is the ultimate teenage fantasy come to life: mind-bending animation, intense violence, and hard-driving rock. The 1981 movie was an electrifying ride across 11 unrelated (and inconsistent) stories linked by a mysterious green orb. Spawned by the fantasy magazine that featured some of the world's most psychotic illustrators, it became a cult classic.

Now, two all-new, wildly stylized Heavy Metal projects are heading our way. A new movie, coming this fall, will combine bizarre 3D animation with an epic story and a sexy female heroine (based on B-movie queen and former Penthouse Pet Julie Strain). Meanwhile, Ritual Entertainment is working on a game using the Quake III engine that will blend action, adventure, and innovative combat control in the Heavy Metal universe. Eager to see how the game is taking shape, we flew to Dallas to get the world's first look.

What the Hell Is F.A.K.K. 2?

Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K. 2, the movie, is the brainchild of Kevin Eastman, co-creator of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (hey, at least the cow-abundances are helping to subsidize something interesting). The story behind the movie evolved from the 1993 graphic novel The Melted Pot, by Eastman, Simon Bisley, and Eric Talbot. After The Melted Pot, Eastman wanted to do an epic film with a strong female lead and an evil nemesis.

"I always wanted to create a heroic adventure with a female star," says Eastman, "thriving in a backdrop that would combine the desperation of Road Warrior, the intensity of Aliens, the visual feel of Blade Runner, and the magnitude of Akira Kurosawa's Ran. It's intensely violent, very fast-moving, very fast-paced."

In the futuristic story, F.A.K.K. stands for Federation Assigned Kettogenic Killzone, a biohazard warning to interplanetary explorers. F.A.K.K. 2 indicates a biohazard so dangerous that nothing can survive it. F.A.K.K. 2 is also the name of an idyllic world and the woman who is trying to protect it. But the real reason Eastman coined the term is because he wanted his female lead to have a name that sounded like "F-- you!"

With love in her heart and two automatic, four-barreled blasters in her hands, F.A.K.K. 2 sets out to free her sister from a ruthless monster (Lord Tyler) who ravaged their planet. The $15 million movie is coming this fall from Sony & Columbia Tristar. (If you want to see how it's taking shape, check out the Heavy Metal site at www.heavy-metal.net/Default-2.htm, and click on "Animation Background.")

What About the Game?

The game's story picks up where the movie leaves off. Players control F.A.K.K. 2 (a.k.a. Julia, a.k.a. the StarStrider), who must now defend her homeworld from invasion by a Borg-like collective known as Gith Industries. (Who writes this stuff?)

Julie Strain provided the inspiration for the heroine in HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K. 2. Oh, and she's Kevin Eastman's wife.

by Ken Brown

Genre: Action/Adventure • ETA: Q4 '99 • Developer: Ritual Entertainment
HEAVY METAL'S QUAKE III engine can handle large outdoor spaces, curved surfaces, and 24-bit color.

Gith—think Microsoft meets Mussolini in an H.R. Geiger nightmare—has been roaming around the galaxy in a spaceship strapped to a conquered, decimated planet. The company is looking for an upgrade and has discovered Julia’s world. Time for our heroine to break out the four-barreled blasters again.

Ritual describes the gameplay as TOMB RAIDER-esque: third-person perspective with equal parts action and adventure. As with TOMB RAIDER, the designers chose the third-person perspective to show off their female character. But there is a more intriguing reason: Two-handed combat will allow both ranged weapons and melee weapons simultaneously.

“You’ll be able to outfit your character with different combinations of swords and guns and be able to use both at the same time,” said Project Manager Steve Hutchins. “Picture Braveheart-type slashing while wading through an onslaught of enemies. Right now we are looking at right- and left-hand attack buttons to keep things simple; that coupled with off-screen outfitting should reduce the overall numbers of keys you have to learn. You’ll thank us later when you see how many enemies you can encounter at one time,” Hutchins added rather ominously.

In addition, combat should be more grisly and realistic than in previous games. The game’s QUAKE III engine allows body parts to be swapped or removed instantly, enabling such effects as blown-off limbs, gaping holes, severed parts that still move, and more. Expect new warnings about playing too soon after eating when the game ships.

Sights & Sounds

There are a couple of things for which Heavy Metal is known—both the film and the magazine—and those things tend to raise more than a few eyebrows. Judging by the early artwork, audiences can expect to get an eyeful in the movie, which will likely get a PG-13 rating. Nudity in games, however, is a sensitive matter, given the availability of games to minors. Developers are often caught in the middle between their desire to build visually interesting games and their need to sell those games to large retailers. What does the team from Ritual plan to do?

Art director Rob Atkins says, “We are going to make a fun game based around an adult movie/magazine with a sexy female hero. If we sneak in a nipple or two here or there, I doubt that anyone will give a shit. Wal-Mart and the other retailers are more concerned with what the box looks like on their shelves than the content.”

Heavy Metal is also known for its hard-driving soundtrack. Since Ritual has full access to use the characters, voices, art, and music from
Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K.²

the movie sequel, it's likely the game will
have a kick-ass soundtrack. At press time, we
were unable to obtain a complete list of
songs, but Kevin Eastman has been talking
with a number of music groups, including U2,
Smashing Pumpkins, Hole, Metallica, KISS,
Sammy Hagar, Alice in Chains, and Aerosmith.

With all of the assets of the movie at its
disposal, plus the QUAKE III engine, Ritual
has a very good chance of producing a
standout game. Whether the company will
or not depends on many factors, not the
least of which is learning from the mistakes
it made with SIN. To their credit, the
designers have changed the way
they work and affirm that they
will perform whatever bug-testing is neces-
sary in the future to ensure quality prod-
ucts. We sure hope so, because if they get it
right, this game will rock in more ways
than one. ECW

(G.O.D. feature continued on page 113)

SWAMP THINGS Ritual wants the game to have an organic, otherworldly look.

GROUND ZERO Julia's peaceful city will soon be overrun with Gith invaders.

Heavy Metal Links
www.heavy-metal.net.
www.ritual.com
www.tongue-zine.com/issue/words/eastman/

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KISS: Psycho Circus

KISS is back with a vengeance.
The original line-up (Gene Simmons, Ace Frehley, Peter Criss, and Paul Stanley) is back on the world stage, touring in the United States and Europe and raising a new KISS army. Their licensing arm is also on the march, spinning off KISS masks, KISS guitars, KISS Wrestling, and even a KISS computer game. Is it too much? It always is; that's why it's KISS!

Now in development, the computer game—KISS, PSYCHO CIRCUS: THE NIGHTMARE CHILD—is based on the KISS, Psycho Circus comic book series by Todd McFarlane, the creator of Spawn. Developer Third Law Interactive, a start-up group comprised of Ion Storm refugees, is using a modified version of Monolith's Lithtech engine, which was used for SHOGO and BLOOD 2. Third Law plans to rev the engine extensively and throw down a hail of nasties your way.

"We're an unproven group, so we want an intense, action-filled experience," says Sverre Kvernom, game designer for Third Law. Gamers will have to contend with large groups of demon-spawn, the creations of an unborn evil that is somehow altering reality. As the game progresses, the gamer advances from mere mortal to a creature of godlike powers, based on McFarlane's characterizations of The Elder (alter egos of the members of KISS).

Gameplay will vary as you control each of the four Elders, with different environments, powers, and challenges. You'll need to assemble the five parts of each KISS member's costume to give you the power to defeat the Nightmare Child, since each item holds special powers. The platform-boots, for example, will increase your jump height; the breastplate gives you better protection, and so on. (We wonder what Gene Simmons' tongue will do.)

Watch for this interactive oddity to come out early next year.

Rune

Take Me You Viking

Play Out Your Nordic Fantasies in Rune

Genre: Action/Adventure
ETA: Q2 '00
Developer: Human Head Studios

admit it, you've always wanted to put on the Viking helmet and go bash some heads. Here's the game that will let you fight battles with Viking weapons and explore a strange world where mythical creatures and gods exist. You'll play Ragnarok, a 10th-century Scandinavian warrior. You venture out to battle with warring tribes, angry gods, and giant snakes that breathe fire. If you can stop whatever seems to be annihilating the Viking population, you'll prove worthy of entering Valhalla, the great beer hall in the sky.

RUNE is being developed by Human Head Studios, composed of former members of FASA Interactive and Raven Studios. For RUNE, Human Head has teamed with Epic and is using a modified version of the UNREAL II engine.

"Visually we're going to be on par with UNREAL II," says Human Head biz guy Tim Genrison. "Some of the features we're building in include enhanced physics, more natural level design, curved surfaces, and ambient light. We want to make each level memorable. Our goal is to make a game that is epic in feel rather than scope."

Gamers will be able to equip themselves with armor and use an assortment of Viking weapons, such as axes, swords, and hammers. Ragnarok may also have a few magic spells up his sleeve. The game will be designed with single- and multiplayer levels, so that you can cross swords and bash skulls with your friends.

Watch for RUNE's mystical take on action.
Ken Slater
8:07 a.m.
April 9, 1999
Northbound Terminal #3

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Firewire's Uncertain Future

Licensing Squabbles and USB 2.0 Announcement Cloud Horizon

by Dave Salvator

Given its peer-to-peer abilities, high data rate, and relatively low cost, Firewire seems a great candidate for someday connecting your PC to your home entertainment center with a single wire. But between Apple's greed and Intel's control fetish, Firewire looks as though it may suffer serious setbacks.

Apple recently announced that it was going to charge $1-per-port licensing fees for the manufacture of Firewire application-specific integrated circuits (ASICs). These fees, viewed by many industry types as excessive, could cause the price of Firewire (also called IEEE 1394) and Firewire-based products to be pushed up. As a result, Intel and other concerned companies may decide to engineer another version of Firewire, called 1394B, that dances around Apple's patents. Apple's licensing move also angered many in the PC universe, including industry heavyweights Microsoft and Compaq. And while Apple has since rethought its position, it's still unclear as to what the final arrangement will be.

Intel muddied the waters even further with its announcement at the Intel Developer's Forum of USB 2.0, which the company claims will have a top-end data rate of 240Mbits/sec—20 times the current top-end speed of 12Mbits/sec—thus making USB 2.0 potentially a more direct competitor with Firewire. The move marks something of a departure for Intel, which until recently was an avid supporter of Firewire.

There's big money at stake here, since the winner of this standards war will have its product not only in nearly every personal computer shipped (Mac or PC) but also in many home entertainment components, including DVD players, amplifiers, and TVs.

Firewire is currently better suited to be this universal connector, primarily because it's here now but also because, as a peer-to-peer technology, it doesn't need a root-hub to control all devices on a network—a limitation that USB has. At this point USB 2.0 is little more than a paper tiger, but unless Apple is willing to define licensing terms that are more reasonable, its current stance may well stifle widespread adoption of Firewire and force the computer industry to devise an alternative, which could take more than 18 months.

TNT2 Comes Out Swinging

Last year, graphics chip rollouts were spread pretty well throughout the year. But now, with new ships from Matrox, 3D, nVidia, and 3dfx all shipping within weeks of one another there's one hell of a rumble taking shape in the marketplace. And judging from early numbers on Diamond's Viper 770, nVidia definitely won't be accused of bringing a knife to a gunfight. We got our hands on final hardware and beta drivers for the Viper, and what we saw was a very fast, very stable board that should keep nVidia at or near the top of the heap.

In comparison tests against a current TNT board using nVidia's reference drivers, as well as against ATi's Rage Fury, the TNT2 chip clearly took no prisoners. In 3D GameGauge testing, the TNT2 proved to be 40 percent faster than Rage 128, 30 percent faster than the TNT.

Diamond has put a fan on the TNT2 chip so it could clock the board up to 175MHz, and this 17 percent overclock certainly helps this TNT2 board post its impressive scores. While nVidia has stated that the standard clock speeds for TNT2 will be 125MHz and 150MHz, Diamond's part seemed to run cool, generating little heat.

Just for fun, we booted up GT Interactive's Powerslide, a good-looking driving title, and cranked the resolution up to 1600x1200x32, expecting the TNT2 to have a decent frame-rate. To our pleasant surprise, frame-rate was still very smooth, and image quality was very good, thanks in large part to running at the higher resolution.

Matrox's G400 and 3D's Savage4 have yet to weigh in, but from early demos we've seen they're going to be solid parts as well. So between these guys, nVidia, and 3dfx, we're most likely facing a wealth of graphics card choices this summer. As soon as we can, we'll bring all of these guys to OK Corral and see who's the new fastest gun.

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<td>RIVA TNT wDetonator driver 667</td>
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<td>Viper 770 (TNT2) 162.4</td>
<td>Viper 770 (TNT2) 865</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>597.2</td>
<td>583.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“European Air War’s outstanding gameplay and wealth of features make it the current leader of the WWII simulation crop” - PC Gamer, 89%, Editor’s Choice Award

“This World War II simulation captured the feeling of being in a living, unpredictable combat environment better than any other sim released this past year” - Computer Gaming World, 4 stars

“European Air War succeeds at providing the experience that makes arm-chair fighter pilots believe they’re truly leaving their mundane surroundings behind” - Gamespot

RACKING UP

“No previous sim covers so many different weapons and so many tasks in detail... it’s all here and it’s all beautifully executed” - PC Gamer, 95%, Editor’s Choice Award

“Falcon 4.0 is the deepest, most complex air combat sim yet... The campaign also creates the greatest sense of playing a small but important part of a huge battle” - PC Gamer

“Thoughtful gameplay design and the effort to bring players a sense of the true fighter pilot’s experience can be felt throughout the game” - Computer Games Strategy Plus
“European Air War combined huge dog fights, a great campaign system and realistic physics to make a game that was very hard to put down.”
-IGN PC.com, Sim of the Year

“The care and attention to detail that went into every aspect of European Air War, from the hefty manual to the bomber nose art, represents a serious achievement.”
-CNET GameCenter

THE KILLS!

“Bottom line: this sets the new standard in flight sims”
-Washington Post

“Falcon 4.0 is an incredibly detailed simulation that in many ways exceeds training systems in military use.”
-Computer Gaming World

www.microprose.com
Murphy's Field Day

A Lesson in Following My Own Advice

by Loyd Case

This column was originally going to be about fifty little utilities I use, and how they can help readers tweak or improve their systems. Maybe I'll still do that one some day. However, my research for the column was interrupted when Murphy's Law, coupled with my innate ability to overreach, got me in big trouble. It's such a good cautionary tale that I can't help writing about it.

It all began with Winalign, a little utility that ships with the Windows 98 Resource Kit. It supposedly restructures Windows programs so that they load more efficiently, speeding up software loading. It sounded like a good idea. In the help file for Winalign was a blurb suggesting that performance may not improve until you defrag the hard drive after running Winalign.

Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch

I decided it was time to rearchitect my production system. I've been wanting to get more serious about learning 3D modeling and digital video, but being the kind of person I am, I wanted the production system to be the best performing system I could build. Although my priorities are different from those of most users, I'm still budget-constrained—I couldn't go out and build a hotrod DV rig without wrecking my marriage. Then I realized that the system I use every day had an UltraSCSI controller and two 7200RPM SCSI drives. That's big-time overkill for running Word, surfing the Net, and playing a few games, so I thought I'd make that my 3D modeling learning rig. I'd recently upgraded one of the several mounting brackets. So I thought I'd swap trays. Did I mention it was CGW's deadline week?

To recap, I decided to run some new utilities on my main machine, build a new system, and swap motherboard trays on the power rig, all during deadline week. This is the point where someone with some common sense (my editor, maybe) should have showed up on my doorstep and told me I was nuts. My reach was definitely exceeding my grasp, but I didn't realize it. Then Murphy came a-knockin'.

A Few Simple Rules...

There are some rules of thumb that I use when tweaking or changing systems. Rule number one. Always test a new utility on a small scale until you know it's safe.

So, of course, when I ran Winalign for the first time, I ran it on the entire Program Files folder on my main production system. Strike one.

Rule number two: Never, ever make multiple changes without testing each change first.

The next thing I did was run Norton Utilities Defrag Utility. As I was perusing the defrag utility, I came across a seemingly helpful item: the Norton Optimization Wizard. It stated, seductively, that my system would run better if I optimized the swap file. So I ran it. After a reboot, defrag came up and started running. Note that by now, I'd run Winalign on all my critical applications, run the system optimization wizard, and was defragging the drive.

Someone should have showed up on my doorstep and told me I was nuts.

I'm a huge amount of time. But wait, there's more....

Cut to Scene Two

I thought I'd take a shortcut with the new system I was building and just boot off the Windows 98 full-install CD. At that point, the right thing to do would have been to copy the contents of the win98 folder from the CD to the hard drive (after the drive had been formatted) and install from there. Instead, I ran setup direct from the CD (after having booted from the CD). Now, bootable CDs are wonderful—no more boot floppies with missing DOS drivers—but they aren't perfect. There's an annoying bug in the Windows 98 setup process that causes weird things to happen.
during the setup process if you leave the CD in its bootable state—which of course I did. Normally, if I'd been focusing on just installing this system, I would probably have remembered that quirk, but I was also trying to troubleshoot my production system and swap motherboard trays on the big rig. After several tries, I remembered the problem with the bootable CD and copied the files to the hard drive. Then Murphy struck again—the mouse wouldn't work. After three installation processes and a couple of mouse swaps, everything was hunky-dory.

Meanwhile, the big rig was having its own set of problems. The tray swap went fine, but after rebooting, the SCSI hard drives would lock. Again, instead of focusing on the problem, I was also trying to install a new system and troubleshoot my production system. After much mauling and gnashing of teeth, I found some bent pins on the SCSI cable. Roughly $120 in SCSI cables later, the larger SCSI drives would still lock.

After a night's sleep, I remembered that I'd recently done a clean reinstall of Windows 98 on the big rig. The ASUS P2B-LS motherboard uses an Adaptec 7895 Ultra2 SCSI controller chip, and Windows 98 has built-in support. But there's a bug—either in the driver or with the motherboard BIOS—that causes the CD drive to get confused when you copy big files from one hard drive to another. Installing an updated driver that I'd downloaded much earlier from the ASUS Web page cured the problem.

Mea Culpa

So here I sit, out roughly $600 in hard drives and cables, and having had to painstakingly relearn lessons that I'd learned before. So this leads me to the last and final rule of computing:

Rule number four: Just when you get good enough to be arrogant about it, the gods of computing will make you pay.

Next time, I'll remember... CGW

---

**Tech Tips**

**Q.** When playing first-person shooters (UNREAL, HALF-LIFE), my system spontaneously reboots. I have dual Monster 3D IIIs in SLI mode, a hardware DVD decoder, a SCSI controller card, two SCSI hard drives, a DVD drive and a CD-R. What could be the problem?

**A.** There are two possibilities. First, your power supply may be inadequate for the heavy load you're placing on it. Many off-the-shelf systems from companies like Dell and Micron come with measly 200W power supplies. You may need to upgrade your power supply to something beefier, like a 300W unit.

The second problem could be heat related. Add an additional cooling fan to the case. You might even consider adding specialized Voodoo2 coolers. Also, clock back the Monster II's a bit, which could help reduce any potential heat issues.

---

**Q.** I tried to install TalonSoft's West Front recently in my spanking new Gateway system, but when I try to run the game, it keeps asking me to insert the CD. But the CD is in the drive! What gives?

**A.** This isn't TalonSoft's fault. TalonSoft—and many other game companies—are moving to CD-ROM based copy protection mechanisms. In some cases, we've seen incompatibilities with certain CD-ROMs and DVD drives. However, the Gateway problem specifically lies with their BIOS. You need to get a BIOS update from the Gateway Web site and update your system. If this makes you nervous, have a Gateway technician walk you through the process.

---

**Q.** Help! I just tried to download and install Internet Explorer 5.0, and my graphics card no longer works properly. It's a Diamond Viper 550. Is there anyway to fix the problem?

**A.** Diamond discovered a problem in certain cases where installs of new drivers somehow interacted with IES. Diamond's now got a new driver on their Web site that fixes the problems with IES.

---

**Q.** I recently tried to add a 3Com PCI ethernet card to my system. It has an ABIT BH68 motherboard. The system refuses to install the drivers. How can I fix this?

**A.** Try putting the NIC in one of the middle three slots. The two outside slots (the one next to the AGP slot and the other next to the ISA slots) share IRQs. However, the 3Com cards aren't happy about sharing IRQs.

---

**Q.** I have a joystick connected to my sound card. I just got a new, USB gamepad. When I install them together, the gamepad shows up as the top device in the Game Controller Control Panel, and the joystick as the second device. All my games refuse to recognize the joystick. Is there any way to use both devices?

**A.** Unfortunately, you may be out of luck. In the days of DirectX5.0, there was actually a bug in DirectInput that prevented the second joystick from being recognized—so no games really took advantage of it. Now, that "tradition" has continued, although a few games are supporting multiple controllers. Microsoft is trying to evangelize game developers to support multiple controllers, but it may be some time. Meanwhile, the only thing you can do is manually move the joystick to the top slot when you want to use it.

---

**Q.** I have seen the terms "OEM" and "white box" on discounted video cards. What do these terms mean? Is it OK to buy these video cards?

**A.** OEM stands for "original equipment manufacturer," which is an oxymoronic term that means a product was neither manufactured by nor originated within the company that shipped it. White box hardware is essentially the same. Both terms refer to hardware that is sold to dealers who are theoretically supposed to build it into whole systems. OEM hardware typically comes without software, except for drivers. In a few cases, it may also have fewer features. (TV output capability is a feature often left out of white box hardware, though not always.) In the past, you really had to watch out, as some white box hardware may actually be less capable and perform poorly, despite the same name, but that's not as prevalent. Some memory configurations may only be available in OEM hardware (for example, 8MB TNT boards).

Send your tech questions to Loyd at CGW_Letters@zd.com.
CONGRATULATIONS!
IT'S A GAMER!

DEAR HEAVENS, NO.

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# HARDCORE SYSTEMS FOR HARDCORE GAMERS

Award-Winning Micron® Millennia® Systems. Now available with the New Intel® Pentium® III Processor 500MHz.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Name</th>
<th>Millennia MAX 450</th>
<th>Millennia MAX 500</th>
<th>Millennia MAX 500</th>
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<td>Intel Pentium III processor 500MHz</td>
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<td>512KBInternal L2 cache</td>
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<td>256MB 100MHz SDRAM</td>
<td>256MB 100MHz SDRAM</td>
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<td>Hard Drive</td>
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<td>1666 Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*</td>
<td>1666 Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*</td>
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<td>Monitor</td>
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<td>17&quot; Monitor (800x600)</td>
<td>17&quot; Monitor (800x600)</td>
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<td>DVD/CD-ROM</td>
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<td>8X max speed DVD-ROM (drive)</td>
<td>8X max speed DVD-ROM (drive)</td>
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<td>Graphics</td>
<td>Diamond Viper 550 Ti2 2X AGP Graphics</td>
<td>Diamond Viper 550 Ti2 2X AGP Graphics</td>
<td>Diamond Viper 550 Ti2 2X AGP Graphics</td>
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<td>Sound System</td>
<td>PCI 128-bit sound interface</td>
<td>PCI 128-bit sound interface</td>
<td>Soundblaster LIVE!® Value Multi-card</td>
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<td>Speakers</td>
<td>2 x 25W speakers</td>
<td>2 x 25W speakers</td>
<td>2 x 25W speakers</td>
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<td>Warranty</td>
<td>3-year limited warranty</td>
<td>3-year limited warranty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>1-year free training @ Micron online</td>
<td>1-year free training @ Micron online</td>
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| Software Included | Microsoft Windows 98  
Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition  
Free* Office 2000 upgrade  
Norton AntiWhee  
1-year EarthLink Total Access | Microsoft Windows 98  
Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition  
Free* Office 2000 upgrade  
Norton AntiWhee  
1-year EarthLink Total Access | Microsoft Windows 98  
Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition  
Free* Office 2000 upgrade  
Norton AntiWhee  
1-year EarthLink Total Access |

| Also Included    | Miniflow case  
106-key enhanced keyboard  
3.5" floppy drive | Miniflow case  
106-key enhanced keyboard  
3.5" floppy drive  
Logitech 3-button mouse | Miniflow case  
106-key enhanced keyboard  
Mitsubishi Interactive  
3.5" floppy drive  
SuperDisk LS-120 |

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<th>Factory Direct Price</th>
<th>$2,099 '96/mo.</th>
<th>$2,399 '96/mo.</th>
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<td>Upgrade to:</td>
<td>Upgrade to:</td>
<td>Upgrade to:</td>
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|                      | 20GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*  
 업그레이드:  
20GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*  
 업그레이드:  
20GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*  
 업그레이드:  
20GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*  
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20GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*  
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20GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*  
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20GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*  
 업그레이드:  
20GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*  
 업그레이드:  
20GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*  |
| Factory Direct Price | $2,299 '96/mo. | $2,779 '96/mo. | $3,699 '96/mo. |

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If you live for gaming, you owe it to yourself to play on the very best – the Micron Millennia. Everything about these speedsters is designed to maximize power, minimize cost, and give you the competitive edge. The Millennia offers Intel's latest Pentium III processor, NSSL Y2K certification, and a one-year subscription to Micron University, an incredible new online training tool offering over one hundred free online classes, seminars and self-paced tutorials. Plus, you’ll receive Micron's free* upgrade to Microsoft Office 2000. When you choose Micron, you’re getting more than a powerful system – you’re joining the gaming elite. So, if you want to play hard, play on a Micron.


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## YOUR TWO RECIPES FOR THE ULTIMATE GAMING MACHINE

## POWER RIG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT</th>
<th>PRODUCT</th>
<th>PRICE</th>
<th>THE SKINNY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motherboard</td>
<td>ASUS P2B-4S</td>
<td>$350</td>
<td>And it's cheaper than a standalone Ultra2 SCSI card.</td>
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<td>CPU</td>
<td>Pentium III 450</td>
<td>$605</td>
<td>It's the top of the heap, for now.</td>
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<td>Memory</td>
<td>256MB Corsair PC100 SDRAM</td>
<td>$570</td>
<td>And think, a quarter-gigabyte.</td>
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<td>Disk Controller</td>
<td>Built-in Ultra2 SCSI</td>
<td>$139</td>
<td>Stability, speed, and cooling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Graphics</td>
<td>Hercules Dynamite TNT</td>
<td>$349</td>
<td>The ultimate, single-slot Voodoo² card.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Graphics</td>
<td>Quantum/3D Obsidian X24</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>You still have to have room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floppy Drive</td>
<td>Iomega Zip 2</td>
<td>$95</td>
<td>It's big, it's fast, it's loud...two out of three ain't bad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Drive</td>
<td>Maxtor 7200 8-4GB</td>
<td>$595</td>
<td>2GB of backup.</td>
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<td>CD-ROM</td>
<td>Pioneer 6x SCXI DVD</td>
<td>$240</td>
<td>Cool it, baby.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitor</td>
<td>Sony F500</td>
<td>$1,750</td>
<td>Perfectly flat, just perfect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Audio</td>
<td>Diamond Monster Sound MX3000</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>For four-speaker DirectSound, 3D, and EAX.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speakers</td>
<td>LFT-11</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>Beautiful imaging, clean sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear Channel Speakers</td>
<td>James CS-5</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>Ultimate rear channel powered speakers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>modem</td>
<td>Copper Rocket DSL modem</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>DSL at last.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>Built-in Intel 10/100 Ethernet chip</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>For bagging my buddies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case</td>
<td>In-Win Q500 full-tower ATX</td>
<td>$115</td>
<td>New improved model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Supply</td>
<td>Turbosil 380</td>
<td>$129</td>
<td>More power, Scryv!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyboard</td>
<td>Logitech Newtouch</td>
<td>$54</td>
<td>In love with the Newtouch, out with the Natural.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mouse/Pointing Device</td>
<td>Logitech Cordless Wheel Mouse</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>Off the mouse...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Game Controller</td>
<td>ThrustMaster Fusion Digital</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>Comfortable USB gamepad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flight Joystick</td>
<td>ThrustMaster F22 Pro</td>
<td>$129</td>
<td>It just feels right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flight Throttle</td>
<td>ThrustMaster TQS</td>
<td>$115</td>
<td>More control than anything else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudder Pedals</td>
<td>ThrustMaster Elite RCS</td>
<td>$70</td>
<td>Neatly perfect foot placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving Controls</td>
<td>ECCI 4400</td>
<td>$1,129</td>
<td>For the serious sim drivers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL:** $8,666

## LEAN & MEAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT</th>
<th>PRODUCT</th>
<th>PRICE</th>
<th>THE SKINNY</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motherboard</td>
<td>Abit R8G rev.2.0</td>
<td>$139</td>
<td>Five PCI slots, Soundblaster 4400X—ready for Katmai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPU</td>
<td>Celeron 400</td>
<td>$165</td>
<td>Effectively the same at a PIII 400.</td>
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<td>Memory</td>
<td>64MB Corsair PC100 SDRAM</td>
<td>$121</td>
<td>The only thing better would be 128MB.</td>
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<td>Disk Controller</td>
<td>Built-in UDMA/33</td>
<td>$9</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>Primary Graphics</td>
<td>Hercules Dynamite TNT</td>
<td>$139</td>
<td>Stability, speed, and cooling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Graphics</td>
<td>Guillemot Manj�.2</td>
<td>$99</td>
<td>Voodoo² for those Glide games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floppy Drive</td>
<td>Iomega Zip 2</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>Still gotcha here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Drive</td>
<td>Maxtor 4200 8-4GB</td>
<td>$175</td>
<td>Fast and more affordable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD-ROM/DVD</td>
<td>Pioneer DVR 104</td>
<td>$69</td>
<td>Price and cheaper to boot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor</td>
<td>Optiquest VHS</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td>Solid 19-inch monitor at a budget price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Audio</td>
<td>Diamond Monster Sound MX3000</td>
<td>$89</td>
<td>A3D and clean audio for under a C-note.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Audio</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speakers</td>
<td>Yamaha Y57-M20s</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>The best damn 5.10 speakers. Period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modem</td>
<td>Diamond Super 5fe</td>
<td>$106</td>
<td>Solid performance, good price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>$82</td>
<td>The case for upgraders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case</td>
<td>Elant Vial T10-AB</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Supply</td>
<td>Built-in, 235W</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyboard</td>
<td>Logitech Newtouch</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td>In love with the new, out with the Natural.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mouse/Pointing Device</td>
<td>Logitech PS/2 Wired Mouse</td>
<td>$18</td>
<td>More frames per second???</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Controller</td>
<td>ThrustMaster Fusion Digital</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>Solid USB gamepad.</td>
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**TOTAL:** $1,837

The Fine Print: All recommendations based on actual evaluations.

Prices listed are average low quotes from Web price search engines like [www.computershopper.com](http://www.computershopper.com) and [www.pricewatch.com](http://www.pricewatch.com). You can also check prices at online stores like [www.neck.com](http://www.neck.com), [www.esc-tech.com](http://www.esc-tech.com), and [www.buycom.com](http://www.buycom.com). — Lists compiled by Dave Salvator and Loyd Case
Gratuitous Violence is 200 Times Faster With a D-Link Network Than With Online Games.

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Go to #265 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink
CONGRATULATIONS
to the Spring ’99 PGL Finalists!

Here’s a complete list of the 16 survivors of the Spring ’99 Regular Season, who will be battling for fame and fortune at the upcoming championships — with a few factoids thrown in. For interviews and full bios of all 16 finalists, along with loads of other info on the live Spring ’99 championships, check out the PGL Web site at www.pgl.com!

QUAKE II

Alex “bad-bad” Popolezski
Favorite Saying: “Next time I’ll play with my monitor on.”

Eric “DH-SaboTej” Montreal
Hobbies: Table Tennis, Tango, and Reading

Hordon “K0-Gloucester” Luk
Hobbies: Table Tennis, Tango, and Reading

Bon “KuIn” Donnan

SEASON WINNERS

Dave “Boo” Newell
David “DeepBlue” Magro
Hultaine “Brrrr” Petry
Hullain “分心” Petry
Season 3 finalist! (aka “TheInsaneFrog”)

Imperial

Kurt “Immortal” Shimada
Season 1 Strategy Champion!

Imperial

Kurt “Immortal” Shimada
Season 1 Strategy Champion!

Patrik “Kain-the-Feared” Filipkowsky

Christopher “Pillars” Page
Hometown: Andover, Mass.

Wayne “Sesso” Chiang

Sebastian “Sybek” Lenart
Hometown: Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Erik “Verdor” Spoon

Check out the PGL Spring ’99 Championships:
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Visit www.pgl.com For All the Details
Flat 'n' Noisy

by Dave Salvator

A flat-panel display is quite likely in your future. The question is, when? We’ve seen so-called 15-inch flat panels (whose viewable area is more on par with a 17-inch CRT monitor) hitting the streets for under $1,000, and as these prices continue to drop, flat-panel starts to look more appealing. But look before you leap.

Because of bandwidth limitations, analog flat-panel displays’ image quality is often inferior to that of their CRT counterparts. One such example is KDS’ new VSF15 display. Its image quality is decent in games but not up to snuff for Windows 98 and command-prompt viewing.

The VSF15 is a breeze to install, and its power cord and VGA signal cord are integrated into a single strand, making for less behind-the-PC clutter. The VSF15 is a plug-and-play monitor, and Windows 98 recognized it on boot-up.

The first sign of trouble came when the onscreen display (OSD) information reported the unit was displaying 1024x768x16 at 70Hz refresh rate. This is a letdown because most CRTs can easily display 1024x768x16 at 85Hz. Four OSD buttons are mounted on the back, forcing you to have to feel around, braille-style, in order to tweak the monitor’s settings.

The first visual glitch I noticed was that onscreen text in Windows 98 was blurry and often shadowed. The effect got worse when I brought up a DOS command-prompt window. While running the VSF15 through a series of monitor test patterns, I encountered a lot of visible “noise” that looked similar to what you get on TV when a station isn’t tuned in correctly. Color photographic test images (24-bit) fared better, looking pretty good at times in spite of some flaws.

The news for games is better. HALF-LIFE, JANE’S WWII FIGHTERS, and VR BASEBALL 2000 all looked pretty good, though even there I occasionally saw shadow effects caused by the display.

Flat panels are still in their infancy on the desktop. Digital flat-panel displays will go a long way toward solving analog’s current shortcomings, but until a final standard is hammered out, the choices for digital flat-panel lie you to graphics chipsets that you as a gamer probably won’t want. In the meantime, KDS’ offering is passable for games, but for that same money you could get a 21-inch CRT (if you’ve got the desk space) and have enough dough left over to pick up two new games as well.

---

Mac Gaming Revivalist

A Solid Performer, but Not Without Drawbacks

by Dave Salvator

Recently, CGW's ringmaster Johnny Wilson opined that the Mac was on the comeback trail. I'm sure many of you initially reacted the same way I did by asking, "Okay, what has Wilson been smoking, and can I have some?" But Apple has indeed been revived by iMac sales, which at last report were still going strong, and after pouncing on a new G3, I'm here to report that Apple's got a pretty good gaming box on its hands.

Basically, a Well-Hung iMac

The new G3 touts Apple's now-standard sleek design, but the improvements go much deeper than its case. The new G3 has an available 400MHz G3 PowerPC CPU and a built-in ATI Rage 128 graphics chipset—not bad. It also sports other cool features like FireWire, USB, Ethernet, and Ultra-SCSI 2 storage components.

But the news from Cupertino isn't all good. Despite getting more right than ever, Apple has still left a few things out of the G3s. The obvious omissions include a modem, a floppy disk drive, a pair of stereo speakers, and a decent mouse and keyboard.

I'm writing this review on the G3, and as with its kid brother the iMac, the only way I can transfer the text from this machine to my usual rig is to email it to myself. Apple worked very hard to drive down cost on these G3s, and to its credit, the baseline 300MHz system starts at around $2,000, including monitor. But come on, Apple, be it ever so pedestrian, users still need removable media built into the system.

The 8.1.1 version of the Mac OS has several interface improvements; Internet configuration is easier, for example. But it's still missing a game-controller control panel.

Many game controller makers, including ThrustMaster, are making Mac drivers for their USB devices, so there are some decent options out there. But getting them working isn't as easy as it should be.

Gotta Call That Progress...

Apple has finally pulled its head out of its ...umm... out of the sand when it comes to gamers, and the G3 sends the message loud and clear. Apple's gaming woes are no longer hardware-related. But the Mac platform is still dogged by game scarcity—mostly due to past Apple strategies, which frequently left game developers in the lurch. If Apple wants to be any kind of player in the "consumer market space," it needs to realize that its future is inextricably linked to gaming.

Steve Jobs recently stated that Apple's new mantra is "games, games, games." Let's hope that the company has the wherewithal to translate this new mantra into sustained action.

So, Should I Buy One?

The 400MHz Mac G3 we tested comes in at $3,500. Meanwhile, Dell's latest 500MHz Pentium III rig comes in at only $2,800. Gamers have to ask themselves if the aforementioned trade-offs, coupled with the wait for top-shelf Mac games, is worth a 75 percent price-tag premium for their next system? The answer, more than likely, is no.

Gentlemen, Start Your Benchmarks

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On the performance front, the G3 is a solid contender. Between its 400MHz G3 PowerPC CPU and its ATi Rage 128 chipset, this machine is ready to rumble. Although it couldn't get Apple or ATI to confirm, I've heard that the Rage 128 chip is being clocked at 75MHz, which, given Rage 128's twin-pipeline design, yields a peak fill rate of 150Mpixels/sec—the equivalent of about one and a half Voodoo2s.

Running 2D's MacBench, this G3 was solid across the board, and the Rage 128 rips through MacBench's graphics tests. Turning to games, we ran MACQUAKE's three TimeDemos and compared the results to the RV/TNT-based STD Velocity 4400's QUAKE numbers (in our March issue). We tested the Velocity 4400 on a Pentium II 400MHz with 128MB of system memory, so the test systems are comparable. Unfortunately, MACQUAKE only runs at 640x480, which these days is pretty low-res, but G3 posted an average of 65.8fps. The Velocity 4400, on the other hand, running at 800x600, posted a frame-rate of 74.5.

There's no provision for disabling V-sync in G3's Rage 128 driver, so monitor refresh may have skewed the G3 somewhat. But still, in this case, the PC outpaced the G3. But to be fair, other games, including UNREAL, TOMB RAIDER II, MYTH II, and DARK VENGEANCE, all looked good and played well.
Dreams Die Hard

by Loyd Case

The Holy Grail for today's controller makers seems to be to develop the perfect 3D game controller. Unfortunately, the Titan's Sphere isn't it.

When I first saw prototypes of this unique 3D game controller, it looked promising. The way the controller worked resembled controllers used for Wolflos (those robotic controllers used to handle highly radioactive materials). The grips fit comfortably in your hand, and the whole affair rests in your lap. Additionally, the Titan's Sphere is very easy to configure—it operates like a standard, four-axis, four-button Windows controller (which means it also works in DOS).

In practice, it's quite awkward to use. This first becomes apparent when you try to calibrate it. Due to the sculpted grip and the button placements, it's damn near impossible to calibrate the thing without accidentally pressing a button. Pressing a button in the middle of calibrating a Windows game controller jumps the control panel to the next step.

Once you get past that process, you move to gameplay, where the awkwardness continues.

In some games, the Titan's Sphere seems quite natural—BATTLEZONE and DESCENT II come to mind. But even in those cases, it took a good half an hour to get comfortable. After extended gameplay the sculpted grips became slippery with sweat. Additionally, my arms got pretty tired—even though the controller rests in your lap, there's a tendency to pick it up as you're trying to rotate the grips. Button placement is awkward, too—it increases the chances of pressing buttons at just the wrong time. On some other games—notably 3D shooters like QUAKE II—the controller is hopeless.

So if you're looking more for a conversation piece than a great controller, the Titan's Sphere may be your bag. But don't expect to become a great 3D game player with it.
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RAGE FURY and the latest
32-bit true color 3D games

QUAKE II FRAME RATES

32-BIT COLOR | 1800x660
ATI RAGE FURY (RAGE 128 XT) | 66 fps

STB VELOCITY 4400 (RIVA TNT) | 46 fps

STB Voodoo 3 3000 | Not Supported
DIAMOND MONSTER FUSION (BANSHEE) | Not Supported

Fastest 32-bit color performance

http://www.atitech.com/ad/cgw
Perfectly Flat and Nearly Perfect

by Loyd Case

Face it, monitors are just not sexy. But if there ever could be a sexy monitor, the PT795 would qualify.

This new 19-inch monitor from veteran manufacturer ViewSonic is a member of the new generation of "perfectly flat" displays. Although it uses a (relatively) standard aperture grill tube, the PT795 achieves its flatness by first adding a layer of glass that optically corrects the underlying curved image—it's essentially a weak lens. Flat glass is then added on top of the curved glass, and that's what you see. At first glance, the display appears almost concave, because we're all used to seeing curved images.

You'd think that adding two layers of glass like this would distort the underlying picture, but during image quality tests, the only defect I could find was a bit of corner moiré distortion. Color registration was precise and the overall image quality was sharp.

To sweeten the pot, ViewSonic adds a USB hub to the PT795. There's a slight twist, though. In addition to registering a standard USB hub, Windows 98 also finds a "USB Human Interface Device." In other words, the hub is an active device. It enables ViewSonic's monitor control software, which allows you to set up the monitor more easily than if you used onscreen displays (although it was unavailable for testing). However, at least one game with a subtle DirectInput bug crashed on startup—until the monitor's USB hub was disconnected from the PC. Most games shouldn't have this problem, however, and the hub worked great with several USB game controllers. The PT795 also has a high bandwidth and can support an 87Hz refresh rate at 1600x1200; it maxes out at 1920x1440 resolution.

So if you can afford its hefty price tag, then the PT795 is a gorgeous display that will do justice to any of today's graphically intensive games.

---

PROS: Ultra-flat screen, bright image, high bandwidth.
CONS: Pricy.
Price: $975 (estimated street price)
Manufacturer: ViewSonic

www.viewsonic.com

---

Ravishing sorceress.
30-22-34.
Intuitive, intelligent, and deadly.
Perfect physical specimen.
Legs inspire lust in knights, rogues, and warriors.
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Rebukes all suitors.
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Will morph into a werewolf if provoked.
Interests include decoding secret messages and experimenting with arcane spells.
Meditation promotes luminous complexion.
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Who says you can only conquer one world at a time?

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- Three Epic Games: The Original, Fantasy, and Sci-Fi.
- Players interact on all sides, even above and below, through linked, multi-layered worlds for new challenges, new strategies, and new dangers.
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- Science transforms reality as you begin on a terran planet before you colonize the moon, the abandoned space station, and the deadly gas giant in the futuristic Sci-Fi game.
- And you can still play the classic Civilization II, now extended into the unknown with new challenges and perils.

In stores August 1999
6x Slot Drive Sizzles

by Loyd Case

Snap! Doh! These were the sounds made when I leaned against a PC with an open CD-ROM drive not long ago. It was the sound of the CD tray breaking, and it meant shelling out money for another CD drive, a trip to the store, and some time spent with a screwdriver. That's why I really like slot-loading CD-ROM drives. With one of these, all you do is slip the CD into the front slot (much like a car CD player), and the drive sucks the CD in. There is no protruding tray to break off (or serve as a place to put my coffee while I work).

Now Pioneer is shipping a low-cost slot drive—the DVD-103S—that delivers a sizzling 6x DVD-ROM speed and acts as a 32x CD-ROM drive to boot. In CD WinBench 99 testing, the drive posted a score of 1,430, easily outpacing the Creative Labs 5x DVD drive that we reviewed several issues ago. The Pioneer's access time was better, too, at a quick 90.4ms.

Pioneer's drive comes in two flavors, IDE (with Mode 4 DMA support) and Ultra SCSI, so you even have a choice of interfaces (we tested the IDE drive). It may be hard to find the bare drive, but resellers like HiVal carry the drive as a part of a DVD kit (check out www.hival.com).

If you think DVD drives are slow when it comes to running your game CDs, think again. The current third-generation DVD drives are more than fast enough for CD-ROM chores, and you get the added bonus of DVD.
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3. Toss over your shoulder.

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How Do We Rate?

Outstanding
The rare game that gets it all right. A must-play experience.

Very Good
Worthy of your time and money, but there are drawbacks.

Average
Either an ambitious design with major flaws, or just vanilla.

Weak
Seriously lacking in play value, poorly conceived, or just another clone.

Abysmal
The rare game that gets it all wrong. Pathetic. Coaster material.

Quote o’ the Month

I’m ready for my neural implant now. Crack open my skull and stab that little microprocessor deep into my medulla oblongata. At least as some unholy union of man and machine I’ll actually be able to play HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III my every waking hour. —Robert Coffey

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HEROES III
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THE RESTORATION OF ERATHIA
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THE SEQUEL TO THE
MOST POPULAR
GAME OF 1997
-CGW-
Battle Fatigue
The Return of the Other Little Green Men

by Tom Chick

A cute concept that was not fully fleshed out, the first ARMY MEN placed the little plastic figures from our childhoods in real environments: actual forests and canyons rather than the carpeted staircases and backyard flowerbeds that were the killing fields of our youth. Aside from featuring the occasional puddle of melted plastic, the game almost completely wasted its theme. ARMY MEN II continues this disappointing tradition by making only a few half-hearted nods to the true milieu of these little green men—the imaginary battlegrounds of our childhood bedrooms, our dens, and our neighborhood yards.

There are some clever maps set on places like kitchen counters and model tables. But these levels are too few and far between, serving as interludes between dull real-world environments. The developers of ARMY MEN II just don't seem to understand that this game is at its most interesting when the little green men play in our world.

The single-player campaign is a curious mix of arcade action and sometimes frustrating map puzzles. There are some fun touches, like magnifying glasses that try enemies with focused sunbeams, and suicide troops with M80 firecrackers strapped to their backs. There are also bits of humor, particularly the rifts on Apocalypse Now. But these feel more like diversions than the meat of the game, which is a silly story about warping plastic factions in an alternate universe.

The maps are much bigger and more interactive than in the first ARMY MEN, allowing you to burn trees, enter buildings, and destroy objects that aren't hard-coded obstacles. But there are problems: The graphics have a rough, low-res look that hasn't come very far since the last game. The logic of the action also seems somewhat flawed: Your troops can't so much as crawl over a butter knife, and a simple mushroom proves to be impervious to mortar fire, bazookas, and flamethrowers. The result is that many of the maps seem to be little more than glorified mazes.

Full-Plastic Jacket

Although it appears to have pretensions to real-time strategy, ARMY MEN II is very much an action game along the lines of CONTRA or RETURN FIRE. You take direct control of an infantryman whose gravelly voice makes Clint Eastwood sound shrill. Although you can command other troops, they really aren't useful as anything other than Keystone Cops-style bodyguards: They cluster around you and shuffle nervously, occasionally attacking enemies in range.

Luckily, gameplay in ARMY MEN II is primarily a matter of charging headlong at the enemy, because the limited choice of commands that you've got at your disposal doesn't lend itself to many tactical options. It would have been nice to be able to split your men into separate groups to cover a wider range of terrain, but there's no telling what these little bubble-headed troopers will do when left to their own devices. Give them a destination and sometimes they'll simply stop halfway there. ARMY MEN II could be accused of poor pathfinding if it actually got around to that more often.

In fact, ARMY MEN II has no real AI. The enemy reactions are either scripted, or they trigger when you enter an activation radius. You can set up multiplayer games against the computer, but the AI simply amasses troops and makes a bee-line for its objective. Perhaps even more disappointing is that the multiplayer games can be played only on real-world maps.

Fortunately, ARMY MEN is still a good multiplayer game with a strong online following. It offers several fun variations on Capture the Flag and a long list of option toggles. Multiplayer matches in the first game were almost fatally flawed by powerful air strikes and paratroopers, but in ARMY MEN II these attacks can be effectively trumped with antiaircraft guns.

Is it worse to completely miss the point of a game concept (ARMY MEN) or to tease players by not taking full advantage of it (ARMY MEN II)? At least 3DO is moving in the right direction. At this rate, ARMY MEN III should be the game we're waiting for.
the secret hides.
the truth consumes.

odi·um
n. def. - hate coupled with disgust

In a time of chaos, in a city on the brink of destruction, only you can discover the truth.

An RPG / Strategy game. Coming this Fall.
Zombie Jamboree

They’re Dumb, They’re Ugly, and They’re Hell-bent on Eating Your Brains!

by Jesse Hiatt

Resident Evil 2 will probably stand as one of the best console games of the 20th century. Too bad this isn’t a console magazine. More than a few developers who’ve passed through our offices have readily admitted their debt to the horror classic; however, those same developers have been able to complete their entire production cycles in the time it took Capcom to release this port.

Resident Evil 2: Platinum Edition is going to have trouble competing with all those more advanced made-for-PC titles. But RE2 is still a game worth playing, if only for its solid gameplay, its strange Japanese translations, and its wacky humor.

RE2 takes place in a universe so faithful to the plot conventions of the classic Night of the Living Dead movies that you could almost consider the game an unlicensed adaptation. Both are slim on characters and sets but are definitely thick with drama, tension, and humorous B-movie dialogue. RE2 uses all these techniques to great effect.

Twitch and Shout

Most of the gameplay centers on key hunts and puzzles, but along the way there’s a lot of zombie slaying to do. The presentation should be familiar to adventure gamers: 2D character models move about an eerie abandoned police station and secret lab.

The models looked great on the console version and have been improved for the PC. Zombies shuffle and twitch toward you, their cleaved torsos clawing across the floor to attack you. Heroes limp and drag their feet as they absorb increasing levels of punishment (although this realistic feature can be a serious pain in the rear when you have to limp clear across a level to get some health). The fixed camera angles can be a problem: They occasionally get in the way when you’re killing zombies—a definite downer since RE2 has more combat than the average adventure game.

One of the features that sets RE2 apart is its use of intertwining plot lines. You can play from the perspective of Claire Redfield (sister of Chris Redfield, the protagonist from the first game) or Leon Kennedy, a rookie cop in the Raccoon City Police Department.

After you play through a plot from one character’s perspective, you can go through the plot you just finished from the other character’s point of view. Some of the decisions that you make the first time through will affect what happens when you play the plot from the other character’s viewpoint: You’ll see the same rooms, but the puzzles, item distribution, enemies, and side quests will be different. This means the game’s two-plot-per-character format yields a total of four plot lines.

For the RE2 hard-core who wore out their console version, the PC edition has something new to offer: Extreme Battle Mode. Here all of the key hunts and puzzles have been thrown out the window, leaving you with a pure zombie-killing action fest. You get four different characters to choose from (including Chris Redfield), all armed to the teeth with special weaponry. The only other notable bone thrown to PC gamers is a still-image gallery and a Windows desktop theme.

Resident Evil 2: Platinum Edition holds its own as far as gameplay is concerned, but next to the latest and greatest PC releases it falls a little flat. The title probably won’t match the success of the console version, but gamers without PlayStations might still find much to enjoy here.

Knee-Deep in the Dead

Well, ankle-deep at least. Helping zombies return to their more traditional, nonambulatory dead state is all in a day’s work for cop Leon Kennedy.

Chipped Shoulder

RE2’s high-quality models and animations include dynamic bullet-impact effects like this.

Computer Gaming World

Pros: Plays exactly like the console game.
Cons: Plays exactly like the console game.
Difficulty: Intermediate.
Requirements: Pentium 166, 24MB RAM, 260MB hard-disk space.
3D Support: Direct 3D, Direct Draw.
Multiplayer Support: None.
Price: $34.95
Publisher: Capcom Entertainment
www.capcom.com
Going South

SOUTH PARK License Can’t Save the Weak Game Behind It

by Thierry Nguyen

Suck on my chocolate salty balls...put ‘em in your mouth and suck ‘em!” Either you recognized the South Park quote or you’re flipping to the cover and wondering if you bought the wrong magazine. Relax. You didn’t. South Park is one of those pop-culture phenoms that make companies hunger to snatch the license and whip up a quick game. In this case, unfortunately, the license is better than the game—in both its PC and console versions.

It’s Coming Right for Us!
The game’s campy premise gives you the feeling of playing a long episode of the TV show. Essentially, a giant comet of evil has landed in South Park and has generated many enemies ready to go on a rampage. The infamous four South Park kids must save the town. The game comprises five episodes filled with varying levels, and Chef gives the kids a briefing before each one.

SOUTH PARK perfectly captures the spirit of the show, both visually and aurally. Even though the game is in 3D, characters and settings remain graphically true to their TV roots. The sound is even better: All of the show’s actors did the voiceovers, and again, it’s a damn good use of the license. While you play the four main kids in the single-player game, the multiplayer mode lets you choose from any and all other characters, each with a set of witty quips.

The enemies are both from the show and created for the game; fans of the show will recognize the killer genetic turkeys, the clones, and the cow-slaughtering aliens. Finally, the weapons provide an interesting spin on tired, traditional FPS gear. Grenades are replaced with Terrance and Phillip fart dolls, and the infamous sniper rifle is now a chicken that you squeeze to shoot eggs. The best is a multiplayer-only weapon, an Alien Gismo that forces its victim to dance a little jig, clearing the way for fragging.

Oh My God, They Killed Gameplay!
Despite all the atmosphere, the game seems rushed and is very uninspired. The problems start with the level design: Everything looks alike, so you have to pay attention to the arrow signs to get through the linear levels.

There is no real AI to speak of; any difficulty comes from simply stacking the odds. The levels that make up an episode tend to focus on just one or two enemies and throw them at you in hordes. Quantity over quality is the level-design mantra here.

Multiplayer is slightly better, since you have a larger variety of characters/skins. The main problem is character imbalance, due to size. Ike is about the size of a football, while Mr. Mackey’s head is as wide as a goalpost. Sure, Ike starts with less health, but with a competent player behind him, he’s impossible to hit, while it’s impossible to miss when aiming at Mr. Mackey.

Graphically, the problems stem from residual N64 and general engine limitations. You’ll see the ever-present fog (a bit better here than in the N64 version), seams and cracks on the walls, bad texturing, and a fixed resolution of 640x480, regardless of your 3D card. Another console leftover is the fact that you can save only at the end of every level.

As the big South Park fan in the CGW office, I found the game disappointing. The only people I can see enjoying it are die-hard fans who don’t do much action gaming, so they don’t know what they’re missing. For the rest of us, though, it’s just one more licensing mishap, but with a twist: Instead of a bad game that misuses the license, we just get a bad game that uses the license well. Not even Mr. Hankey can save this game.
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DESCENT³
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Dinos in the Mist
The Follow-up to an N64 Hit Hunts for Some Respect

by Tom Price

TUROK 2 must have seemed like a good proposition to Acclaim; based on a popular comic book series, the original TUROK was wildly popular on the N64. But the PC port of the original was somewhat less than impressive, so PC gamers haven’t exactly been waiting on pins and needles for TUROK 2: SEEDS OF EVIL. That’s too bad, because in spite of some significant faults that keep it out of contention for a place among the HALF-LIVES of the world, TUROK 2 at least deserves a look.

TUROK 2 begins after the destruction of the Campaigner and the Chronoscepter at the end of TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER. This time you are Joshua Fireseed, the new Turok, and you must fight your way through six worlds full of aliens, zombies, and, of course, dinosaurs, defending the energy totems against the Primalgans.

Helping you in your quest is Adon, the requisite buxom-babe-with-an-English-accent, who announces all the weapons you pick up—and can’t be taken seriously at all once she says “flamethrower.” Too bad, because some of the weapons are quite cool. The aforementioned flamethrower sends out a nicely rendered arc of fire, while the firestorm cannon has a cool triple-spinning animation and a deadly rain of fireballs.

The most gruesome weapon (and therefore my favorite) would have to be the cerebral bore. No, it has nothing to do with William F. Buckley. Instead, it’s a brainwave-homing, exploding drill bit. The beastie lucky enough to get one of these locked onto his skull will die around while the bore whines away like a dentist’s drill, spraying blood and gray matter until the bore finally explodes inside the head of the creature, popping it like an overripe melon. Yum!

Unfortunately, technical glitches abound in TUROK 2. The most ridiculous example would have to be the bloodstains. If you kill a monster next to a wall, bloodstains actually hover a few inches above the wall itself, and if you’re near a corner, as much as 50 percent of the bloodstain bitmap will hang over the edge, in midair. While these aren’t exactly game-stopping bugs, they don’t do much to improve the game’s overall image.

Also problematic is the fogging, a cheap way of avoiding Z-buffering that’s a carryover from the N64. In sniper mode, the fog forms a hard edge instead of a gradual one that makes for pools of gray povi collecting in the nooks and crannies of the structures you’re looking at. It’s just one more amateurish touch that tarnishes the game.

The Lost World
The biggest downside to TUROK 2 has to be the level design. You run around, find the switch, hit the switch, find the door that opened, rescue someone, find the portal, go to the next maze of repetitive bitmaps, and generally operate in a confused state. Further dulling is the overlay map, à la DARK FORCES. It’s a serious pain trying to watch out for hazards in front of you while playing a game of Lock ‘n’ Chase at the same time. Worse yet, there is no static map that you can access while paused. What seems like an attempt to be challenging ultimately just makes the game boring.

So if you’re thinking about suggesting some TUROK 2 multiply the next time you’re meeting with your QUAKE clan, forget it; they’ll laugh you out of the group. However, if your 10-year-old cousin who got that new Celeron for Christmas needs a game to introduce him to first-person shooters, you could do a lot worse than TUROK 2. A whole lot.
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Extreme G2

Publisher: Acclaim Entertainment
Price: $29.99
www.acclaim.net

For scenery-smacking, speed-filled, oh-my-God-I’m-going-the-wrong-way confusion, EXTREME G2 is the epitome of Bad 21st-Century Motorcycle Gaming.

To be fair, the lightweight physics model is bearable and you get some interesting weapons. Gameplay modes include time trials and a drone-filled arcade thingy that seems a lot like a mobile SPACE INVADERS, but the basic idea here is to blast and race your way through a series of circuits to the “Extreme Contest.”

Of course your opponents are trying to do the very same thing, and the challenge often lies in deciding between a clean, fast run or picking up some of the many yet momentum-crippling power-ups littering each course. Upgrade shops and garages aren’t part of the equation, though you can choose from several uniquely performing bikes and win even bigger and badder machines as you progress.

Track structure, though at times repetitive, is as wild as I’ve seen, with loop-the-loops, jumps, and spiraling tunnels pairing with ridiculously high speeds to instill a perpetual sense of impending doom—one that unfortunately detracts from enjoyment.

The game won’t let you axis-map analog throttles and brakes, meaning that owners of four-button sticks and wheels must use two buttons for digital speed control while accessing the keyboard for camera views and weapons. Plus, only the N64 version of the game has multiplayer racing—one more reason why EXTREME G2 is best reserved for its original audience: the console crowd. —Gordon Goble

Rollcage

Publisher: Psygnosis
Price: $49.99
www.psygnosis.com

ROLLCAGE strives to load the congested combat-racing pack by offering reversible, gravity-defying cars that can ride up walls or along ceilings; yet somehow keep on ticking. Unfortunately, vertical and/or inverted ROLLCAGE driving is a wretched experience, one that toy with your equilibrium, screw with vehicle physics, and destroy any hope you had of winning a race.

But if you play it as a right-side-up drive ‘n’ shoot, it becomes one very attractive affair. ROLLCAGE’s intuitive menus, enormous options and settings area, awesome graphics, and skill-testing driving model show that England-based designer ATD (Attention to Detail) really put some work into this one.

The game has some of the most visually impressive weapons and power-ups ever to torture a 3D card, yet each is geared to a specific purpose. Just try pulverizing a building before you’ve scooted by the plummeting, flaming wreckage or launching a “Leader Missile” when that leader is you and you’ll understand.

The spectacular ROLLCAGE world teems with short cuts and unconstrained off-track spaces. Each undulating circuit is crafted to offer solace only to those who can adapt to its peculiarities and take advantage of its hidden rewards. And that’s where that car model comes in. Terrifyingly responsive and inordinately powerful at first, ROLLCAGE cars call for a surprisingly modulated, pseudosimulation approach and prove to be a joy to drive once you get the hang of it.

Split-screen multiplayer retards the otherwise smooth frame rate considerably and the game could do with a true cockpit rather than bumper view, but ROLLCAGE is nevertheless annoyingly addictive and a lotta bombastic fun.

Just ignore all that upside-down stuff. —Gordon Goble

Wages of Sin

Publisher: Activision
Price: $29.95
www.activision.com

MISSION packs have the dubious history of either reinforcing a bad game or taking a good one to another level. Fortunately, Activision has achieved the latter and come up with a great addition to the shooter SIN. Unlike other mission packs, WAGES OF SIN (WOS) also manages to play off and add to the SIN storyline.

This time Blade is up against a nasty local crime organization called, you guessed it, the Mafia. These baddies have been hiding mutants in the sewers, under the leadership of family boss Gianni Manero. After a band of hapless construction workers accidentally bump into Manero’s mutants in the sewers, Blade is called in.

WOS adds 17 new levels to the SIN universe (including multiplayer levels with cool hoverbikes) and seven new weapons. There are also 12 new enemies, plus two rather nasty end bosses.

The AI has also been improved, with enemies consistently trying to evade your attacks. You’ll find that this adds an additional bit of zip to the game; it’s just not such an easy affair to waste those monsters this time around.

Activision has included an automatic patch to WOS that will upgrade your SIN installation to version 1.03. The patch makes a really big difference in terms of performance. The excessively long loading times are history and the action is smoother as well.

WAGES OF SIN is a worthy addition to the original SIN, adding new goodies while rectifying some of the annoying flaws of that predecessor. It’s definitely worth checking out if you’re an original SIN-ner. —Jim Lynch
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Interactive Magic
Robots Rising
The Third Time's the Charm in the War Against the Cybrids

by Greg Fortune

A

n upstart has seized the throne. Dynamix's STARSIEGE has wrested the crown from the MECHWARRIOR 2 series, the long-time king of the giant robot hill. Where the company's earlier EARTHSIEGE games were also-rans, STARSIEGE comes to the party equipped with a deep back-story, a number of gameplay innovations, and enough unique flair to make for stiff competition for the upcoming HEAVY GEAR II and MECHWARRIOR 3. Only time will tell how long STARSIEGE will stay at the top, but right now, the view from here is spectacular.

What's My Motivation?

Earlier games in this series were hampered by a lack of background. Where MECHWARRIOR had years of development behind it and hundreds of pages of documentation from the paper-based Battletech universe, the EARTHSIEGE games had about as much exposition as a Terminator 2 trailer. This time, Dynamix didn't just write a convenient excuse for you to get into a fight, the company actually laid out the timeline for an entire universe. This ties STARSIEGE in with not only the EARTHSIEGE titles, but with TRIBES as well. The story is presented to you through a very detailed compendium, as well as through opposite sides. This background plays into strategies and even the design of the game's units. The rebels, for instance, use HERCs (this universe's name for its giant robots) based on souped-up construction equipment, and this is reflected in those units' physical designs, capabilities, and paint jobs. Eventually, though, the long-dormant Hybrid threat reemerges, and changes humanity's priorities from conflict to survival.

In addition to the built-in back-story, you'll also find fan fiction at www.starsiegeplayers.com, and there's even a non-computer-based STARSIEGE game in the works (ETA as yet unknown).

The Next Dimension

The game engine is a beauty. STARSIEGE supports both Glide and OpenGL (officially, the RIVA TNT, but we had to work with the Rage 128 as well) 3D cards, and has a capable software rendering engine for those who don't have the cutting-edge club yet. Frame-rates are smooth even on a 3D-card equipped Pentium system, and the textures and lighting effects are beautifully done. Sound effects and music are also well done, with 3D audio support for those who have the hardware.

Input configuration is extremely detailed, allowing you to reconfigure every command in the game. There's even a drag-and-drop reconfiguration of your Heads-Up Display layout. My control setup—rudder pedals, CH Pro Throttle, and mouse—was easy to configure to work with the game, and it functioned flawlessly.

The game's interface is well designed, with little jumping around necessary. Configuration can be done from the main menus.

HOW ARTICULATE Despite the lack of torso twist, articulated weapons still give the HERCs a decent field of fire.

NOTE THE DIFFERENCE in scale between the tanks and the larger vehicles. Don't worry, the tanks give as good as they receive.

NICE DIGS Buildings look as good as vehicles in this game.
and from the cockpit of your HERC as well—a very nice touch. Several times I needed to map a command I had left out of my custom configuration while inside a mission and was able to do so easily.

Customization isn’t limited to controls—multiplayer fans will appreciate the ability to import your own custom skins, squad insignia, and character portraits for use in the game.

A Plot Twist

One design decision that worried MECHWARRIOR fans was the elimination of torso-twisting from the HERCs. The only vehicles that support rotating gun platforms are tanks, which are fast and small, but have no shields. At first, my predisposition to torso twisters as the basis for a set of strategies caused me some grief. I was determined, however, not to let this game based on my own prejudices. Eventually, I was able to adapt my tactics to the targeting pointer-based interface and had a blast piloting both the HERCs and the tanks.

If you must swivel, though, there’s always the tank. I’ll admit I still have a tendency to take Harabec’s Predator tank into the field more often than not, as old habits are really hard to break and this tank is really cool. It’s a real tribute to the design team that I can be as successful from the turret of a tank as I am from the cockpit of a HERC.

The missions in STARSEIGE are a definite highlight. There are 34 single-player missions, split between the human and Cyberid campaigns. Add to that the training and multiplayer games, and you’ve got more than 50 distinct missions to work through. Several of the missions I found myself playing repeatedly just to play out “what if” scenarios—they’re that good. The best thing about the missions is that, while they are scripted and not dynamic, you never feel like you’re on an endless series of combat patrols. Each mission has distinct objectives that often change midstream, and they flow together very nicely. Not once during all the countless hours I played STARSEIGE did I think to myself, “Great, another canned mission.” Dynamix plans to release a mission editor eventually, although they’re still working out the details on how that will happen.

The game has too many nice touches to mention them all. One example: Sitting in the cockpit of your HERC, watching Cyberid landing pods rain from the sky, you can feel the despair of knowing that an unstoppable force is bent on your destruction. The Cyberid units look decidedly alien and very menacing, and they are even more fun to pilot than destroy. The new cloaking devices, with their Predator-style shimmering effect, are also very cool, and add a whole new dimension to the battlefield tactics. Like a ghost, you can now slip in and out of the enemy formations wreaking havoc at will.

There numerous other gimmies to load into your vehicles, like ECM units, extra capacitors, sensors, and so on. All of this variety means that there’s little chance that you won’t be able to configure a vehicle to work with your fighting style.

Hate Your Friends

Multiplayer games are also supported using TCP/IP, IPX, or modem. While there was speculation that STARSEIGE would work in multiplayer games with STARSEIGE: TRIBES, that isn’t the case. Deathmatch and team-play games are supported, with two of the most notable variations being Capture the Flag and the amusing STARSEIGE Football. Dynamix provides a free Internet-based matchmaking hub, and if you’re in the mood for something a little more private, you can set up your own server. Server setup is absolutely painless, and if you have a spare machine, you can use the included nongraphical dedicated server process, which allows many more players in a game.

While STARSEIGE is a very solid effort in today’s world of patch-to-work games, it’s not glitch-free. AI units sometimes get stuck on objects, which causes them to stand in place, acting like a dog getting its belly scratched. Once time, I actually blew the feet of a unit I was sent to rescue because she wouldn’t move to the pickup point. This was after I had destroyed all the enemy units in the area by myself, which made for a particularly painful do-over. Also, don’t be too quick to reconfigure your controls. The training missions use the default key configuration and ignore any custom setup you’ve done, preventing you from practicing the controls you’ll be using in combat while you’re learning.

The annoyances I found were all pretty minor, and STARSEIGE is great fun to play. I didn’t find anything that would keep this off anyone’s play list, and I found a whole lot to like. It looks like the former also-ran is definitively now the one to beat. CGW

**Star Links**

- [www.starbaseplayers.com](http://www.starbaseplayers.com) The official STARSEIGE players’ site, with message boards and more.
- [www.planetstarbase.com](http://www.planetstarbase.com) Perhaps the most thorough site for news, strategies, add-ons, and links to all things STARSEIGE.
- [www.datamonde.com](http://www.datamonde.com) Another top-notch news, information, and squat site.
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Playing's Return

-Computer Games Strategy Plus

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

A stock-car racing game for the simulation-impaired, NASCAR REVOLUTION offers arcade action for casual drivers, with variety and flash galore. But you'll need an industrial-strength PC just to drag this beast out of the pits. Again, Electronic Arts has used Stormfront Studios, the developer that dumbed-down the IndyCar experience in ANDRETTI RACING. That game was laughably simplistic, but at least it screamed and was a blast to play. No such luck with NASCAR REVOLUTION, a game that promises not to tax your intellect or skill yet puts your hardware through living hell.

All That Glitters
At surface level, where even the dullest games manage to shine, this one sports some mighty impressive features. You get a whopping 17 accurately modeled real-world tracks—mostly oval variations, with two road courses—that include Atlanta, Bristol, Indianapolis, Michigan, Richmond, Talladega, and Watkins Glen. Three courses also offer nightly racing, which can be a kick. Further, the game lets you test your mettle against 31 of NASCAR's brightest active drivers, including Jeff Gordon, Dale Earnhardt, Rusty Wallace, Ted Musgrave, Bill Elliott, Dale Jarrett, and Hut Stricklin. You can also race against such legends of the tarmac as Cale Yarborough, Richard Petty, and Bobby Allison. They are all empowered with what Stormfront calls Thunder AI, which certainly sounds wicked.

Other potential goodies include a bevy of shop adjustments, such as wedge, downforce, gear ratio, fuel load, steering lock, weight distribution, shocks, and wheel cambers. A little overkill but understandable given the high level of simulation.

DIRECT3D: What a difference a month makes, folks. In issue 13, we told you that EA Sports was not going to use Direct3D. Since then, EA has changed its mind and will use Direct3D for this game. This is a major change for the better, as the game's graphics are much improved.

Pony Up Some Horsepower
EA Sports promises this game will push your hardware to its limits, and it will, but not in a good way. Despite a minimum system requirement of a Pentium 200, the game was sluggish as hell on my trusty old P233 MMX, with 64MB RAM and 12MB Monster 3D II. So I tossed it on a PI300, with surprisingly similar results. Turning down the eye candy helps, but visual flash is the game's only redeeming feature; without it, all we have are boxy graphics and a pathetic driving model. If you're determined to stick with this game, my suggestion is to use the Direct3D rendering option, in which you'll lose graphic glitz but gain a consistently playable frame-rate.

As you'd expect, the game's multiplayer performance is quite frightening. There's no Internet play, for obvious reasons, and even a direct serial cable (null modem) connection begins to shudder when more than four cars share the asphalt. LAN play fares best, but again, for the best performance, limit the total number of drivers in a single race.

I understand the market EA and Stormfront were aiming for with NASCAR REVOLUTION. What I don't get is how they managed to miss the mark so badly. The only revolution this game might incite will be at the return cursor of your local software store.
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Hog Heaven
This Racer Boasts Challenges and Thrills in All the Right Places

by Gordon Goble

There are games and there are classics, and in PC racing we are fortunate to have had our fair share of the latter. But whoever said a landmark racing game had to ride on four tires certainly didn't count on the latest release from the recently prolific racing stables of Electronic Arts.

Designed by Italian-based game developer Milestone (SCREAMER), SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP is an unexpectedly remarkable world-class presentation of world-class motorcycle racing. It's so good that it gracefully renders its only true arcade affair with simplified riding and enough stereotypical coin-op menu trappings to look like an explosion at a Sega factory. The second game-within-a-game, however, is the real reason SUPERBIKE will make everyone's short list for racing game of the year.

Let me put it this way—I spent my first two hours perfecting a single lap at Italy's Monza, enjoying every subtle moment and reminiscing fondly about my earliest experiences with MicroProse's GRAND PRIX II. Make no mistake, with its multitude of difficulty and realism options opened, SUPERBIKE is at least that involving and perhaps even more difficult.

First and foremost, there is little doubt you are astride a tenuous, temperamental motorcycle, one that differs from manufacturer to manufacturer. Accelerate too quickly and you'll wheelie and flip; brake too sharply on a downhill slope and you'll bring the rear wheel up and potentially take a header over the handlebars. Along the way, SUPERBIKE forces you to take an unsmooth approach and smart racing lines, with the believable crash-avoidance techniques and uncanny behavior of the AI compete an added bonus.

Should you go for a spill, however, it's a wild show to be sure, with detached riders doing their best rag-doll impersonations, and bikes tumbling and skidding to a stop. Sadly, crash-damaged bikes and races are not part of the equation, though at 100 percent realism you will have to run back to your overturned mount and manually get it pointed back in the right direction again before you can continue.

Looking Good

As impressive as the SUPERBIKE ride is, the game's graphics are even more so. Granted, you have to exceed the recommended system requirements to experience its true glory while maintaining a workable frame-rate; but if you do it's a knockout show, with brilliant detail, shadows, lighting, tire smoke, and a gorgeous rendering process that creates unbelievable, almost TV-like images.

It's not just the polish that shines—it's what's underneath, too. SUPERBIKE features a dozen of the finest real-life circuits ever seen in a sim. The game also never lets you forget that each rider is somewhat independent of his machine. You can see this best exemplified in the first-person perspective, in which the camera view actually bobs about in accordance with the position of the rider's head, not the handlebars, I, however, preferred the situational awareness of the third-person chase view.

A full garage facility and seemingly accurate telemetry readings will help you tune your beast, and the game offers several modes of play from preseason practice through a full championship (with real-time qualification sessions) and several multiplayer options.

SUPERBIKE doesn't pull any punches in the audio department either; superbly showcasing the unique engine notes of each of the five bike types on display and positioning the sound wonderfully across the stereo spectrum. Unfortunately, the game slowly unloads and reloads each track with every new session. Of course, this complaint pales against all that is right with the game.

SUPERBIKE succeeds on many levels, not the least of which is that it becomes more enjoyable the longer you play and the better you get. And yes, serious racers will continue to improve as their experience, ability, and knowledge increase—the true mark of a top-notch sim.
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Here on Mulligan's Isle

MS GOLF 1999 EDITION Is a Great Game but Only a Slight Upgrade

by Scott A. May

It seems like only yesterday that I was heaping high praise on MICROSOFT GOLF 1998 and applauding the veteran franchise for finally coming into its own. Wait a minute—that was yesterday. Well, almost. And now, a scant six months or so after the release of GOLF 98, Microsoft and Friendly Software are offering GOLF 1999 EDITION, an ever-so-slight remake of last year's model.

Packed with only three new courses and a few cosmetic changes, this release is basically an upgrade. In fact, Microsoft could easily have gotten by with a downloadable patch and expansion disc. Thankfully, a $30 mail-in rebate for owners of GOLF 98 takes the sting out of paying full price for a game you more or less already have.

Owners of previous MS GOLF products also qualify for a $10 rebate, which, all things considered, might be an even better deal.

With an engine licensed from Access Software, MS GOLF began as merely a watered-down version of LINKS, contractually crippled to always be one step behind the Carver mother lode. And the game has cowered in the shadows ever since. It wasn’t bad; it just wasn’t good—as if it had no soul.

A Bastard No More

Last year Microsoft finally ponied up the dough to hire Ohio-based Friendly Software to do an original, stem-to-stem makeover of the feeble franchise. Driven by an improved version of Friendly’s GREG NORMAN game engine, a sleek interface, and knockout graphics, GOLF 98 rose to the ranks of the genre’s top contenders, alongside its estranged parent.

The good news is, GOLF 99 delivers three new 18-hole courses—Donald Ross Memorial, Eagle Heights, and Medallist Golf Club. They join four holdovers from last year—The Links at Casa de Campo, Bay Harbor, and the Preserve 9—for a total of 117 holes. That’s a heap’ holes, which is nice, because unlike LINKS or JACK NICKLAUS GOLF, in GOLF 99 you can’t import courses from older versions of the game.

The bad news isn’t really bad; it’s just disappointing: Virtually nothing else about the game has changed. Microsoft claims that a few aspects of gameplay have been tweaked, like chopping dynamics, but after playing for three weeks—and comparing it back-to-back with GOLF 98—I could find few discernible differences. Again, this isn’t necessarily a bad thing. It just makes you wonder why Microsoft didn’t wait to release a bona fide sequel.

Same Old, Still Good

Highlights of returning features include excellent customization of your gaming environment, including player strength, club distance, ball size and type, pin placement, and weather conditions. Up to four players can compete in one of five game types—Stroke, Match Play, Skins, Bingo-Bango-Bongo, and Scramble.

The availability of four swing modes assures that players of almost any skill level (real or imagined) can participate, from club players to ball scrubbers. There are the standard dual- and tri-click mouse-button modes; an automated swing that virtually eliminates player input (not to mention all the fun); and Natural Swing, in which backswing and ball strikes are controlled entirely by mouse movement. This last method is touchy and difficult to master, to say the least, and not performed in realtime. Stick to the traditional click-and-twitch instead.

MS GOLF 99 doesn’t support 3D video acceleration, but it doesn’t need to. In terms of photorealism, the game element that everyone seems to clamor for, the graphics here can toe the line with any competitor; using a combination of prerendered backdrops and video-captured golfer animations. Screen redraws are zippy, with multiple views to choose from. Truth be told, as in many of today’s top golf sims, the landscapes here are so buffed and polished that they’re somewhat cold and lifeless, as if you’re playing inside a presentation slide show. Be careful what you wish for, people.

Redundant features and the lack of viable improvements make MICROSOFT GOLF 1999 EDITION best suited for fans who don’t already own GOLF 98. For the rest of us, the countdown to GOLF 2000 is still ticking.
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HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III • REVIEW

Rather than let a hero load up with every artifact in the game, HEROES III uses a paper doll model to limit how many artifacts a hero can use at once, forcing you to make strategic decisions.

The addition of sprawling subterranean areas in the adventure section of the game effectively doubles the size of many of the maps.

Killing Kendal and Capturing Steadwick

You'll need two waves of enormous armies to take out General Kendal, who guards Steadwick. The key to this limited-time scenario is to grab the dragon generator in the lower-right corner of the subterranean level. Load your best hero with units and then seize the generator before the end of the first week. Build up your dungeon town first, initially choosing upgrades aimed at creating black dragons. Above ground, secure resources quickly and don't waste any units in fights with creatures who want to flee. Raise gold any way possible. By the second month, break through the southern magic-inhibiting garrison, flagging the griffin tower and the lone gold mine. Load up your best heroes and then attack, using your first hero to take out Kendal's biggest stack and mopping up with your dragon-laden hero.

Storyteller Theatre

HOMM III breaks from its predecessors in its campaign mode. Instead of a pair of linear campaigns with a few branches, the campaign is broken up into six minicampaigns of three to four scenarios apiece. While this lets the game tell a more interesting story, the paralyzing feature blot that could have easily sunk the title. Unfortunately, they also deserve a slap on the wrist for a tutorial that requires players to either print out a huge manual or constantly toggle between the game and a separate text file.

Being able to gain a bonus when commanding certain troops—and there are lots of new abilities to acquire as well. One new ability, tactics, lets heroes move their forces within a limited range immediately prior to a battle—it's great for offense-minded heroes, letting them move ranged units into prime positions while cutting down the distance melee units have to travel.

All this makes for a game that is mind-boggling in its depth, and the designers deserve praise for adding so much while managing to dodge the gists scan the map and their towns during an opponent's turn; while you can't issue orders during your enemy's turn, at least it's better than just staring at your monitor. A problem with DirectX is the Internet HOMM III's sluggish experience, but that should be corrected in an upcoming patch.

Ultimately, the rewards of HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III far outweigh its few drawbacks. Hopefully most of those shortcomings will be patched, but even as it stands now HOMM III is a game that strategy fans should absolutely be playing.

Heroism 101

To protect your more valuable units, let your weakest creatures attack tough enemies first so they absorb the counterstrike. The AI almost always focuses its attack on the largest group of units, so build up hordes of cheap cannon fodder units to occupy enemies while your stronger armies pound on them. For inferno heroes, the second town. With one well-equipped hero you'll be able to win crucial early battles for resources that will eventually make additional heroes affordable and effective. Use your unit's special abilities. For example, since cavaliers and champions get 5 percent extra damage for every hex traveled, they should always charge before an attack, even if it means just circling an enemy that's already next to them.
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COMING THIS SUMMER
Imperialism with a Dash of Civ
Explore a Brave New World Set in a Bold New Era

by Loyd Case

Elizabeth I was lucky. If it hadn't been for an errant storm and the plucky courage of Sir Francis Drake and a few bold Englishmen, we might all be speaking Spanish today.

Playing IMPERIALISM II really drives this point home. Toward the end of one game, I found myself locked in a life-and-death struggle with Spanish invaders on English soil. The battle seesawed back and forth for some time, but ultimately I was ignominiously defeated. If only I'd had my own Drake.

It's the Same, but Different

As you might guess by the name, IMPERIALISM II is the successor to SSI's original turn-based empire builder. The original was set in an era—roughly the 19th or 20th century—when empires had already been established in the New World, and the objective was to become the world's first real superpower. IMPERIALISM II is set in an earlier time in which there is a completely undiscovered New World—a world with plenty of secrets to be uncovered by adventurous and glory-seeking explorers. A highly engaging game, IMPERIALISM II certainly has similarities to the original—especially in terms of interface—but there are some significant differences, too.

You'll notice the first difference right off the bat: The game map is hidden when you begin play. This hidden area is the undiscovered country, and it's up to you to send out explorers, sailors, and merchants to reap riches, resources, and living space for your country. You can play on a random map or, if you're historically inclined, one that reflects realistic geography.

If We Build It, They Will Come

IMPERIALISM II is a game of strategy, exploration, resource management, and combat. When you start a game, you can configure not only difficulty levels but also a host of other parameters. If you like a more building-oriented style of game, you can set that up. If you want lots of combat, no problem.

The graphics are solid-looking, in a classical kind of way, but they're mostly static, with a few minor animations. One nice touch is the zoom-out mode, which resembles an old parchment map. You begin the game with three land units and three carracks (small cargo ships). As in the original game, movement is abstracted. Except when building roads or railroads, you place your units where you want them, without worrying about paths and terrain. (I can imagine King Philip pointing to a location on the map and suggesting to Magellan: "Go there.")
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The nations that make up your world consist of six major powers and a handful of minor powers. You win by gaining control over 32 provinces in the Old World. While most of your acquisitions will be achieved the good-old-fashioned way, through combat, diplomacy is also a major factor.

Setting up trade pacts, embassies, and alliances is a key part of IMPERIALISM II's diplomatic game. You cajole minor powers to join your empire with careful application of trade subsidies and outright bribes, and you attempt to play different factions off each other. This aspect of the game is very similar to the original, but the computer opponents handle things better than before. Get a province taken away from you by force, and suddenly your friends will start to give you the cold shoulder. Fend off an invader, and all of a sudden you’re everybody’s best buddy. At times, it’s eerie just how much the AI mimics real life—or the fourth grade.

Here Be Dragons

Where this version of IMPERIALISM diverges from the original is in its aforementioned focus on discovering the New World, which adds an extra dimension of strategic depth to the game. To win, you have to capture provinces in the Old World. But you’ll never get enough money and resources to do that without commandeering provinces in the New World. More than a few times, I got carried away with uncovering hidden lands and setting up shop there only to discover late in the game that I’d fallen behind because I didn’t pay enough attention to expanding my old-world empire. If you act like the Dutch did historically, you’ll end up with the same results they did: You’ll get pretty rich but become an also-ran in the game of power.

As you uncover the New World, you’ll come across a new set of minor powers, which creates an interesting choice: Do you just roll in and suppress the natives, or do you try to deal with them in a more civilized manner? (Hint: Even if you’re playing in a more peaceful style, you can lock out the other powers simply by buying a piece of land in the new country. The AI can’t come in after that unless they declare war on you.)

The game requires you to balance two objectives. First, there’s the dance between managing your new acquisitions and paying attention to your homeland. Then there’s the resource ballet. The basic resources needed to feed and clothe your subjects lie mostly in your own domain, but the real wealth-generating resources, such as spices, diamonds, and gold, lie in the unexplored regions. In addition, luxuries needed to create a productive middle class, like tobacco, sugar, and fur, also lie in the New World. The difficulty is this: Just when you think you’ve gotten a handle on food, you find yourself running low on lumber and iron. You frantically build up those resources, only to find that you don’t have enough clothing to recruit new laborers.

It gets more challenging the further you get into the game, as your citizens move up the economic chain. Each new class of worker is significantly more productive but demands a new type of luxury to stay productive.

It all sounds a little dry on the surface, but it’s incredibly addictive. And if it does prove too much for you, you can always assign the AI to handle some of the micromanagement.

It’s the AI, Stupid

IMPERIALISM II boasts one of the stronger AI’s I’ve seen. Aggressive and smart, the computer opponents will send in a lone cavalryman to scout out your position, then return later with a much stronger force. The AI also does a good job of building a mix of units that can give you fits on offense or defense.

The strategic AI is no slouch, either, though it tends to be quite aggressive. For example, even if you configure the game to be peaceful and builder-oriented (rather than centered around combat), the AI tends to send in the troops to take over minor New-World countries.

IMPERIALISM II is one of those rare games that actually adhere to the truism that gameplay is the first priority. It’s not flashy, but as you dig into it you find that it’s deep, addictive, and challenging. And there’s no 3D accelerator or Pentium II required. This is one title that will live on my hard drive for quite some time.
Un-Civil War
The JULIUS CAESAR Engine Can’t Handle Rifled Muskets

by Jim Cobb

The first thing you need to know about NORTH VS. SOUTH (NVS) is that it uses the acclaimed GREAT BATTLES OF JULIUS CAESAR engine, which was designed to simulate ancient tactical combat. Problem is, a few things intervened between the times of Julius Caesar and Robert E. Lee—things like gunpowder, the disappearance of personal armor, and the decline of shock combat. Even so, the units of NVS resemble their ancient counterparts in their ratings for morale, strength, weapons type, range, and the like.

The units take up either one or two 330-yard hexes. Each turn represents basically an hour, and in that time, units can be ordered to move, turn, wheel, and change formation (column/line, mounted/unmounted, or limbered/unlimbered) individually or, if their commander is capable, in groups.

Units take cohesion hits (à la GREAT BATTLES) whenever they move through difficult terrain or suffer damage in combat. Eventually, enough hits will rout a unit, though hits can be removed and routed units can be rallied—provided they haven’t already retreated off-map.

Turn About
Also as in GREAT BATTLES, command is at the heart of NVS. Commanders have command ranges and initiative ratings, which equal the number of orders they can give to units; group movements, if successful, use up that leader’s allotted orders. The side whose commanders have the higher initiative ratings tends to go first and most often. The twist in NVS is that commands come from army commanders to corps commanders down to division level. The corps commanders can either spread orders between their subordinate division commanders or drive a crucial division multiple times at the risk of sustaining hits for the additional movement.

NVS applies this system to 10 engagements between the Union Army of the Potomac and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. Each engagement has an historical setting and up to six “what if” variants. The campaign game has all 10 engagements strung together, with the victor sometimes able to choose a different battle to shorten the war.

Turns great, but NVS fails to deliver. The graphics, for example, aren’t even up to the standard of the GREAT BATTLES series. Why, with the colorful assortment of kepis, butternutts, Zouaves, and other uniforms that colorfully filled the Civil War battlefield, are we subjected to a monotonous procession of blue and gray ranks? The terrain can conceal corps and division commands, causing you to waste time searching for them with the slow scrolling and touchy fly-by-window. The animation for battle is unintentionally funny when the defender leaves the hex and the attackers bayonet the air, and when routed units execute neat wheels and march smartly away. It can also be frustrating when the view switches to the next commander before combat is finished.

Blunt Bayonet
If the gameplay were good, the other irritants wouldn’t matter so much. But NVS is too much like
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Trevor Chan is the creator of advanced strategy games like Capitalism, Seven Kingdoms, and Seven Kingdoms Ancient Adversaries. Although only 25, Chan operates his own game design studio, overseeing all aspects of production at Hong Kong-based Enlight Software (www.enlight.com).

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SimCity 3000

Can’t Urban Plan Your Way Out of a Paper Bag? We Can Help!

by Marc Dultz

SIMCITY 3000 is unquestionably one of the most challenging simulations around, aptly modeling the growth of a city from its embryonic beginnings into a bustling metropolis. The first 25 years or so represent the most difficult phase of the game, because it is during this period that you must successfully lay the groundwork for your ideal city. At the outset, you must determine where to locate neighborhoods, workplaces, and industries; decide which city services you will provide to your inhabitants; and implement a plan of action that will ensure steady growth of the community. Here are some tips on accomplishing your lofty goals—without bankrupting the city coffers or turning your administration out onto the streets.

In the Zone

Obviously, the first item on the agenda is to decide where to set up shop. Early on, it makes sense to establish only light residential, commercial, and industrial zones instead of medium or densely populated zones, since these are cheaper to create. While you can cram more people into a medium or densely populated zone, these areas also take far longer to fully occupy and have far lower land values.

Plan on placing your industrial parks somewhere along the edge of the map, preferably close to your power plants and far enough away from your residential and commercial districts so that they don’t lower land value. Residential zones should be created near waterways, lakes, or atop hills, because these types of terrain will generally have a positive effect on their land value. Commercial zones should be placed nearby, with schools, fire departments, police stations, and hospitals in close proximity.

Once your residential, commercial, and industrial zones have been created, your next task is to provide both water and power to them. Start out by placing a pumping station near a body of fresh water (preferably along a river or on the shore of a lake), then construct a water main that leads from your pumping station to each of your newly formed zones. Pipes can be spaced at least seven tiles apart and still provide plenty of water to each of your zones. If it still appears as if some zones aren’t receiving their fair share of water, you may want to construct a few water towers nearby or perhaps connect one of your water mains to a neighboring community so that you can pump in additional water.

Unlike SIMCITY 2000, you need not erect power lines all over the map in order to keep the juice flowing. In fact, most buildings will draw power from distant power plants if the buildings are simply situated near another fully powered zone.
Have Smoke, Will Travel

During the early stages of the game, pollution is by far one of your most pressing concerns. Pollution generally comes in three forms—air, ground, and water. Depending upon where it occurs, pollution can lower the value of land, retard growth of the city, and turn away city dwellers by the droves.

From time to time, your neighbors will propose all sorts of deals to you, such as purchasing excess power and importing garbage. If you're in dire straits, they may even offer to pump in potable water, albeit at an exorbitant cost. Unless the terms of these arrangements are utterly outrageous, it makes sense to take them up on their offers as quickly as possible before they decide to rescind the proposal. The short-term benefits of these deals often will outweigh the long-term costs; besides, you can always cancel the contract at a later date if it looks as though the deal is starting to go sour.

Check with your financial advisor to see what types of ordinances you can enact. Early on, pass any ordinances that will generate income, such as parking fines and legalized gambling. While such ordinances tend to upset your populace and lower your popularity, your most immediate concerns are to stimulate growth and establish a positive cash flow. You can always strike down these ordinances later if they are doing more harm than good.

Although some legislation will end up costing you money, you should still enact these ordinances as quickly as possible, since they will generally allow you to build certain structures or hasten the availability of other ordinances. For instance, the passage of the shuttle ordinance permits you to build slightly larger residential, commercial, and industrial zones (one extra tile each), which means that you can create larger zones and far fewer roads.

Other ordinances, such as the passage of a junior reading program, will generally raise the education level of your populace and improve their happiness, making it more attractive for other sims to move into your community. The creation of a maximum-security prison makes sense too, since this will bring in additional revenue at a time when you can use it most. Because prisons and jails drastically lower neighboring land value, they should be sited in low-value areas along the edge of the map, where their adverse impact will be severely lessened.
Riding the Rails

In addition to a decent neighborhood, your sims require a viable transportation system so that they can travel from one destination to another. While some sims don't mind walking to the corner Quickie Mart every so often, most would rather drive or ride the rails than hoof it, since this will appreciably cut down their travel time.

Resist the urge to build an extensive network of roads, since this will only lead to higher maintenance costs and greater traffic congestion. Instead, create an above-ground rail system that parallels your most frequently traveled routes and intersects at key junctures. Place train stations at regular intervals alongside the tracks, locating them within walking range of each major residential, commercial, and industrial zone.

Make sure to leave ample room for the rail system to expand, so that it can efficiently and effectively meet the demands of your citizens. It's also a good idea to connect your rail system to as many neighbors as possible since this will enable more sims to quickly move into your community.

Later on, as land values rise and new modes of transport become available, it may be wise to build an underground subway system that mirrors your rail system. When subway ridership increases, you can then think about tearing up the above-ground rail system and replacing it with a network of roads capable of supporting bus traffic. Be sure to place bus stops at random intervals, as close as possible to any subway stations.

Knowledge Is Power

Early on, the only power sources available are coal and oil-based power plants. Although coal plants are cheaper to purchase and operate and produce slightly more power, they emit far more pollutants than oil plants. So, unless your city desperately needs power, stick with oil, at least until gas-powered plants come online.

Like landfill sites, power plants should be situated in the corners of the map or along its outer edges so that their pollutants "drift" off the map instead of into your community. At the map edges, power plants will also be ideally situated to supply unused power to nearby communities.

Finally, it should be pointed out that power plants start to decline with age, operating at less than peak efficiency as the years pass by. If they do break down, power plants spew even more waste into the surrounding region, which can lead to all sorts of problems. Every so often, it would be wise to check on the condition of your power plants, replacing decrepit plants with newer power sources.
Whose Trash Is This Anyway?

Unless you are prepared to export garbage to a neighboring community (not a good idea considering the cost) the next most logical recourse is to create a landfill, placing it in a corner of the map where it won't affect your main urban center. Landfills are some of the worst polluters, and left unchecked, can become serious blights on the urban landscape.

In terms of zoning costs, landfills are also fairly expensive, so keep your initial site small and well out of range of the nearest inhabitants. Try to allocate a large enough tract of land to accommodate any future site expansion, making sure to leave some space vacant for an incinerator when it becomes available.

While landfills are obviously eyesores, they do have their benefits. Neighboring communities will routinely offer to export their garbage into your community, paying a fairly handsome fee to rid themselves of their unwanted waste. So, while importing garbage may seem like a fairly unattractive option, the extra income will prove handy when expenditures outstrip revenues.

Later on, as your bottom line improves, you can always rescind those heartless waste management contracts. If things are going especially well, you can even dismantle your landfills and export garbage into someone else's backyard, reducing the pollution level and perhaps causing more sims to move into your community!

Break the Bank

If your city is in dire need of funding, or if an attractive opportunity presents itself, it makes good sense for you to turn to the banks for a low-interest loan. Since you can have only 10 outstanding loans at any one time, it's wise to borrow the maximum amount allowable ($25,000), although it'll cost you something on the order of $30,000 to pay it back in full.

Loans should be used as an immediate stopgap measure or to finance key projects such as the construction of a backup power plant or water tower, and should never be used to pay off other outstanding loans. It's easy to get into a situation in which you have multiple outstanding loans and no hope of ever digging out from under all that red ink.

While the advent of clean industry will lower pollution levels much later in the game, the planting of trees and the establishment of parks will have a much more immediate effect and will help to reduce emission levels throughout your city. Remember that even Rome wasn't built in a day. And while the first 25 years or so in SimCity 3000 are troubling times even for veteran players, overcoming this stumbling block means that you're well on your way to creating the ultimate utopia.
Myth II: Soulblighter
Applying the Principles of War for Online Success

by Raphael Liberatore

raw your swords, string your bows, prime your mortars, and prepare your spells, because we’re gathering around the war table to discuss Myth II multiplayer strategy and tactics. With Myth II’s fast-paced multiplayer options, victory depends on your ability to make quick tactical decisions, utilize fine-tuned skills, and employ surefire strategies.

The Importance of Unit Trading

Strategy starts with unit trading. One consideration is mix of units: Choosing the best combination of troops for your army is a factor of paramount importance for victory. Another is the game type and map being played: Choose units best suited for specific games and maps. Units in Myth II fall into four categories: Recon, Melee, Missile, and Special units. Units like Berserks, Giant Myrkridia, and Bre’Unor overlap two categories. Recon units like Gholis, Spiders, Myrkridia, and Berserks are the fastest units of the game. They’re used primarily for scouting, skirmishing, harassing or grabbing an undefended flag or ball. Melee units such as Berserks, Myrkridia, Giant Myrkridia, Hero Guards, Bre’Unor, Trow, Thrall, and Warriors are the

nucleus of your army. Melee units have three functions: Support missile and special units, defend a flag or ball, and strike the enemy when an old-fashioned infantry assault is needed. When a particular strategy calls for defensive tactics, melee units should make up the bulk of your force.

Missile units are probably the most underrated of the categories. They provide support for direct assaults and are perfect for protecting your army against Gholis, Wights, Dwarves, or Warlocks.

ATTENTION! Strategy starts with unit selection. Winning depends on having the right mix of units and the right units for the game and map you’ll be playing.

LOSING 101 Even though the archers are at a good elevation, the Warriors should be flanking them on both sides for protection. Here, the Gholis can claw past the archers to assassinate the poorly protected peasants.

WHAT’S A GIMBLE? With more than 21 multiplayer maps to choose from—in addition to single-player game maps—you must get to know maps like Gimble in the Wabe and the games they best support.

Depending on the game type, choosing a balance of melee and missile units provides a strong force for any task.

Special units like Dwarves, Mortar Dwarves, Warlocks, and Fetch are easily the coolest units. With their ability to inflict damage on massive areas, they make a nice complement to any army.

New players tend to load up on Dwarves, Fetch, and Warlocks, but they soon learn that there’s a downside: They’re the trickiest and hardest to master of all the unit categories, requiring an incredible amount of focus and energy. They also have a tendency to get killed easily. What’s more, their explosions can’t tell friend from foe;

while it’s not a good idea to let them wander too far from the main body of forces, it’s also unwise to let them huddle too close to your army.
MELEE GAMES

Body Count In this most popular of MYTH's multiplayer games, the player or team with the most kills and/or total damage wins. Start out with a mix of recon, missile, melee, and special units. Units that pack a wallop, like Dwarves, Wights, and Warlocks, are ideal. Try to pick a good balance of melee troops but keep the slower-moving Thrall to a minimum. Vulnerable to explosions, Thrall will give opponents the points needed to win. Take flag. Here's another good tactic: After gaining the flag in the waning seconds, send out small groups of units, a couple at a time, to slow down and prevent other units from contesting your flag.

King of the Hill The player or team holding the flag at the center for the longest period of time wins. It's a tricky game that requires constant maneuvering on an ever-fluid battlefield. Launch a wise to be flexible, so yield the flag to superior forces and regroup for another attack.

Assassin The object is to assassinate your opponent's unit or group of units (usually a hapless baron) while protecting yours at the same time. Assassinating a baron causes that player's army to disappear from the map. In addition to searching for enemy barons, your primary objective is to protect your baron at all costs, so keep defensive units nearby. Send an attacking force of recon and special units to scour the map for targets, assassinating an opponent's baron when their forces are locked in battle with someone else and aren't prepared for an assault.

SEARCH AND DESTROY Ghols make excellent recon units. In this game of Assassin, the Ghols quickly scouted a group of peasants trying to hide, with minimal protection, in the corner of the map. Farewell, peasants.

YEE-HAAW! In Stampede, move your herd to the flag before anyone else in order to secure the teleportation area and gain the upper hand.

Hunting The player or team killing the most neutral units (deer, birds, or peasants) wins. The strategy for this wild but fun game hinges on staying focused on your objective to kill neutral units. Don't get caught up trying to attack other units unless the opportunity exists. Trade for units that are fast but can protect themselves if attacked by an opponent's hunting party. Avoid spreading your units thin in search of prey; chances are they'll get killed. Form two or three hunting parties and multitask them in a counterclockwise or clockwise direction, each group within bowshot of the other.

Stampede You must successfully guide your herd of pigs to the center of the map for teleportation (some game types provide the enemy flag as the teleportation point). The winner is the player or team herding the most pigs off the map. In this game, quickly split your force into two groups, the first consisting of recon, missile, and melee units; the second, of slow-moving melee and special units. Charge your first group to the teleportation point so you can keep other players from herding their pigs to safety. This also gives you an opportunity to secure the teleportation point. At the same time, use your second group to quickly herd your pigs toward the point. The first players to herd their pigs to the center usually meet with little resistance. Remember to protect your pigs while killing as many of the opponents' pigs as possible.

Last Man on the Hill The player or team in possession of the flag at the center of the map when time runs out wins. Pick troops with good defensive posturing—special and melee units are optimal choices. Timing is everything here. Experienced players wait till the last possible minute before launching a well-planned assault, en masse, on the base of the flag while creating one or two quick-response teams, composed of recon and melee units, for added maneuvering. Use recon units to skirmish with advancing armies to slow them down. It's

MINED YOUR STEP You don't have to engage in hand-to-hand combat to protect a flag in Last Man on the Hill—just place satchel charges around the flag and wait for victims to walk into your trap.
FISH IN A BARREL Be on the lookout for opponents who bait you into traps. This player blundered badly, twice: He passed close to a deep body of water in which Wights were lurking and then got caught downhill from a force of deadly Archers and Dwarves.

FLAG GAMES

STEP RIGHT UP The Soulless are great missile units because of their ability to travel across impassable terrain. Deploy Soulless along the side of a hill near a heavily traversed corridor and watch the bodies pile up.

Flag Rally The player or team who touches all flags wins. For this fast-paced contest, stock up on recon and quick-moving melee units. Quickly take the offensive and send your recon units to touch all the flags. Move your army en masse to each flag, destroying resistance along the way while redirecting recon units to grab unclaimed flags.

You can also play defense by sending out your defensive units to grab other flags while at the same time you keep the bulk of your army behind in order to guard your main flag.

Capture the Flag The player or team capturing the most flags while maintaining possession of their own flag wins. Select a good balance of forces for multitasking. Split your forces into two groups, keeping defensive units behind to guard your flag while attacking with the rest of your forces. Recon the map in search of exposed flags and/or weakened opponents. Try sneaking your units past the defense of another player while he’s engaged in combat, and touch the flag.

Territories There are several flags scattered throughout the map, and the player or team controlling the most flags when time runs out wins. For this pure strategy game, a balanced force of recon, melee, missile, and special units is required.

The best overall strategy is to methodically capture and hold as many flags as possible without spreading your army too thin. For best results, it’s a good idea to split your army into three main forces for multitasking, but make sure you keep each force within supporting distance of each other, should a large enemy force attack. Send your recon units across the map to exploit enemy weakness and/or take unguarded flags. In the final minute of the game, make a concerted push to capture flags.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Keep your eye on the minimap for players engaged with other opponents, then exploit the situation. This single Warlock decimated an unsuspecting force while the player was busy fighting on the other side of the map.
HIGHPOINT AT THE OK CORRAL Position your missile troops at high elevation so that their attacks will go farther and be more accurate. Here, Archers receive an exploding gift complete with shards and fragments.

Steal the Bacon The player or team with possession of the “bacon” (an oversized mobile soccer ball) when time runs out wins. As in Last Man on the Hill, the key here is to conserve your forces till the end. Let others battle it out, and avoid combat at all costs unless an exposed flank looks tasty. Wait until the last minute before launching a focused attack on the ball holder’s forces. During the battle, maneuver recon units to sneak in and grab the ball. If you get the ball early on, dribble the ball to a defensible position. Depending on the terrain, sometimes you can dribble or blast the ball to Ghōls, Myrkridia, and Berserkers for stealing opponents’ balls.

Scavenger Hunt Several movable balls are scattered throughout the map. The first player or team to touch all balls wins. This game gets chaotic, so it’s smart to choose a balanced force. Load up with recon units, because opportunities to snatch unguarded balls will occur and you’ll need the fastest troops to get at them. Use small teams to get as many balls as possible before your opponents do. On defense, dribble balls out of your opponents’ grasp and keep them near your troops for protection.

Captures Several mobile balls are placed throughout the map. The player or team possessing the most balls when time runs out wins. The strategy is similar to unguarded balls as possible to a defendable, secured position. You should use your recon units to constantly roam the map in search of balls without engaging the enemy, but—as in other Bacon games—you should always keep a sharp eye out for opportunities to ambush the enemy. Make your big push just before the end of the game by maneuvering two or three groups of troops toward as many balls as possible.

Mapping Things Out Line up your archers, preferably on a hill or elevation, with soldiers in a protective encirclement. Load up your ghōls, shown in yellow, with satchels then send them in groups to saturate the enemy as deeply as possible with satchels (noted by the red arrow lines). Three preset ghōl groups, represented in red circles, work well for flanking and penetrating the enemy positions.

Once you’ve gotten the satchels in, you have three choices for setting them off: Bowmen (gold arrows) shooting flaming arrows; group of ghōls with wight bits or dwarrow mortars (though you risk having them cut down by archers or soldiers); or dwarrow mortar or a standard dwarf can set them off (riskier since dwarves are slow and cost a lot).

With practice, this can be a devastating maneuver. For movies of this and other MYTH II tactics, check out this month’s CG-ROM.

TIMING IS EVERYTHING Playing MYTH II requires not only strategy and skill but also cunning—and a bit of luck. In the final seconds of this team Steal the Bacon game, a skilled team member sneaked his Ghōl into the fray and dribbled the ball away unnoticed.

the side of a hill or onto deep impassable water for added protection.

Balls on Parade Each player or team begins with a mobile ball that must be that of Territories, but rather than spreading your army thin trying to capture that game’s flags, here you have the option of using fast recon units to obtain and bring back as many
Close Combat III: The Russian Front

Battle Tactics for the War in the East

by Marc Dultz

Spanning nearly four years, Germany's Russlandkrieg, or War in Russia, proved to be one of the longest and most ferocious military campaigns of the Second World War, locking two powerful armies in a life-and-death struggle to determine the fate of Europe. In CLOSE COMBAT III, you get a sense of what it was like to soldier on the war's inhospitable eastern frontier, dashing across the vast open steppes of the Ukraine one moment, only to inch your way through the thick defensive belts surrounding Moscow and Stalingrad the next.

It's easy to fall into the trap of using the same cadre of units and a similar set of battle tactics for every conceivable circumstance, rarely taking into account the enormity of the situation or the disparate forces under each side's command. Such a formulaic approach avails you little in the campaign's more formidable scenarios. To succeed, then, you must draw up a sound contingency plan for every type of engagement: a plan of action that will marry the right mix of forces with the correct battle tactics to produce the best possible results.

What follows then are some general guidelines and techniques for the copilot of offensive military operations in CLOSE COMBAT III, all drawn from the Wehrmacht's experience in the Russian campaign. Bear in mind that certain factors, such as troop strength, terrain, weather, and the disposition of the opposing forces, will have to be weighed and carefully considered before a definitive plan of action can be put into effect.

Armored Attacks

Armored forces (tanks, assault guns, half-tracks, and other mechanized units) play a much more vital role in CLOSE COMBAT III than in previous installments of the series. In many instances they are forced to shoulder the brunt of the fighting, Armored forces are typically employed to maintain the momentum of the attack, are often called upon to rupture a defensive line, and when the case warrants, are charged with destroying enemy armored concentrations on the battlefield.

During the war, panzer commanders deployed their mobile reconnaissance units well ahead of the armored advance in order to establish the proximity of the nearest enemy forces, fixing their positions, numbers, and composition in preparation for the main assault. Typically, motorcycles, fast-moving armored cars, or half-tracks were employed in this role, with two vehicles working in tandem to ascertain the enemy's whereabouts. Ordinarily one vehicle would move as swiftly as possible from one area of concealment to the next while the second stood off a few hundred yards to the rear ready to provide covering fire in case the first vehicle came under attack. If the lead vehicle happened to be destroyed, the second vehicle would withdraw in earnest, then assist with the screening of the main assault or in locating any nearby enemy armored units. Whenever possible, reconnaissance units would attempt to occupy the highest ground, such as a ridge line or a hill, thereby giving them the best vantage point to survey the surrounding countryside.

Once the composition and disposition of the enemy's forces had been established, the main armored force would assume a battle formation. Typically, light and medium panzers would spearhead the attack, with the trailing elements—mechanized units, assault guns, towed as well as self-propelled artillery, and trucks—forming the second and third waves of the assault group. The battalion commander, usually leading the assault at the head of the second wave, would determine each phase of the attack, based upon the outcome of the initial meeting engagement, the progress of the lead elements as they passed through the defensive line, and the overall mission goals. The vanguard, supported by artillery fire and field pieces, would either push on into the enemy's rear areas or would be ordered to encircle then annihilate the enemy in a bold pincer movement.
Units assigned to the second wave of the assault were charged with protecting the armored forces should any enemy armor appear on the battlefield. Towed antitank teams and heavily armored assault guns were deployed along either flank of the attack, ready to turn back local armored counterattacks. If infantry or antitank teams were harrying the lead elements, mechanized infantry units would immediately dismount from their vehicles and engage these units, forcing them to ground until the armor could destroy them. Generally, units in the second wave were used to mop up any remaining enemy resistance that the armor had bypassed. However, as the conflict dragged on, and never, much more lethal tank destroyers were introduced by the Red Army, units in the second wave were oftentimes held in reserve for extended periods of time, until the armor could outflank and eliminate these threats.

Prior to and even during the opening stages of the assault, a short yet intense rolling artillery barrage would be launched, targeted at both known and suspected antitank gun sites as well as mortar and artillery positions. When the attack commenced, friendly artillery batteries and mortar teams would fire smoke ahead of the armored units, screening their advance as they crossed the open ground. Meanwhile, field guns were usually sited along tree lines or on hilltops ready to provide standoff fire should the armored forces require further assistance. Once the enemy's antitank guns had been silenced, some of the armored units and field artillery would direct their fire against any enemy machine-gun teams or rifle squads in the area, so that dismounted infantry could approach, engage, and destroy these holdouts.

River Crossing Operations

In many respects, the seizure of a river crossing shares certain similarities with the attack on a fortified line. A specialized assault team must be created from several different types of units, a battle group that will usually consist of field artillery, armored cars, mortars, machine-gun teams, tanks, and both light and heavy infantry.

Typically, the enemy will attempt to defend a river crossing by withdrawing his forces over the bridge to guard the more defensible span. Since landing craft and other troop-transporting equipment aren't available in the game, the attacker must somehow attempt to get his forces across the bridge in the most expeditious manner possible and then establish a defensible lodgment. Again, speed, artillery, smoke, and overwhelming firepower are critical to the operation.

Prior to battle, reconnaissance units should immediately occupy any high ground that overlooks the river crossing. The recon teams, acting as artillery observers, will then be able to call in accurate artillery fire against any observable troop concentrations within the immediate area. Tanks and field artillery should also take up positions atop ridges, inside tree lines, or behind buildings, so that they too can support the attack. Finally, light and heavy infantry squads should be placed as close as possible to the bridge, preferably in concealed terrain, from which they can swiftly move out and onto the bridge.

Once everyone is in position, mortar teams should fire smoke canisters along the opposite riverbank, usually near the entrance to the bridge. Once the smoke screen thickens, machine-gun teams should immediately begin to rake the opposite embankment, keeping the defenders busy while the assault troops press forward. At this point in the battle, an armored car or half-track can speed down the road and over the bridge, stirring up as much havoc as possible on the opposite riverbank. Next, two teams of light infantry race across the bridge, then take up defensive positions on either side of the bridge. Finally, tanks and heavy infantry squads storm the bridge, fanning out in all directions once they reach the opposite riverbank, quickly eliminating any enemy forces still operating near the bridgehead.
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Urban Combat

During the war, armored forces were usually withheld from the opening phase of an urban assault because they were extremely vulnerable to close-quarter fighting. Antitank teams occupying the upper floors of a multistory building were ideally situated, able to fire down at an approaching vehicle's top, where its armor was the thinnest. Moreover, specially formed tank-hunting units were trained to infiltrate sections of town already lost to the attacker, then fire at a tank from behind. As a result, infantry units were generally used to spearhead the main assault, with tanks and other fighting vehicles accompanying the second wave to bolster the attack. Armored units were used to smash barricades and act as mobile artillery, supporting the infantry units as they cleared out each section of town.

German forces tended to employ flanking or encircling tactics to bypass a major stronghold, preferring to reduce them with withering artillery fire rather than attack directly. In some instances, armored cars and half-tracks would speed through a village in order to take up positions just beyond the town limits. The idea here was to block the defenders' retreat route if they attempted to withdraw.

The ultimate objective in urban combat was to divide the defending forces, then isolate them from each other, denying them any freedom of movement and reducing their overall cohesiveness. Assault troops were divided up into several columns, which would then make a series of coordinated attacks following parallel routes. Each column would be further subdivided into an assault group and a mop-up detachment, which were typically composed of reconnaissance troops, engineers, and various infantry squads.

When maneuvering, the Germans would attempt to avoid the streets as much as possible, infiltrating the enemy's positions via backyards, over roofs, and through sewers. Tall multistory buildings were always seized first because these dominating positions provided the men with key observation points from which to survey nearby streets and the widest field of fire should the enemy attempt to redeploy. When a section of town was finally surrounded, every exit and side street was quickly blocked to prevent the defenders from escaping. Mop-up detachments would then proceed house by house, clearing any remaining resistance while machine-gun teams and other units stood off to provide suppression fire.

Panzers Vorwärts!

The wedge, or "arrowhead" formation was most frequently adopted because it provided the platoon commander with the greatest degree of flexibility during the attack. Each tank in the platoon was responsible for watching a specific arc, ensuring that at least one set of eyes was covering each sector of the front. Unfortunately, the wedge formation wasn't always the ideal formation. Tanks on one side of the wedge were generally unable to engage any enemy units located on the opposite side for fear of hitting their own vehicles. What's more, the platoon commander rode in the lead tank, which was usually the first vehicle to come under attack.

The blunt wedge, or "crescent," formation was regularly used because it offered each tank a good field of fire and typically didn't expose the lead vehicle to as much enemy fire as the wedge formation. However, because the command vehicle was located at the rear of the formation, the other tank commanders were unable to observe what the command tank was doing.

The echelon formation allowed the platoon commander to place the greatest volume of fire on either side of the formation. While each vehicle had a clear line of sight, the lead vehicle was exposed, often times drawing the most enemy fire.

The line abreast formation was generally used when the platoon commander wanted to place fire on targets located in front of the formation. Unfortunately, the line abreast formation restricted each vehicle's line of fire, leaving them susceptible to flanking fire. Usually, this formation was adopted on the defense, where intervening terrain and other units could be used to protect each flank.
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For all persons who
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2. purchased a bundle containing MechWarrior 2's Windows 95 version 1.0 and the SideWinder 3D Pro and have experienced some noise or erratic limitations when using the SideWinder 3D Pro to play MechWarrior 2,

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- 1998 Top 10 Sports Games, PC Sports Games

"Top-notch arcade play; the best baseball game AI." - PC Gamer

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“...the single most realistic and exciting baseball game on the market.”

-Sports Gaming Network
A Real Grim Fandango
Such a Long, Long Time to Be Gone, and a Short Time to Be There

I take a lot to shut up a smart alecky loudmouth like myself, but this month I finally met my match. Yep, life's all fun and games here at Computer Gaming World (except for those annoying couple of days each month when we have to make this magazine), but this month reality gave me a Tyson-sized upper cut, cold and hard, right in the kisser. And boy, I'd give anything to be able to write about anything else right now.

One minute I'm at the Game Developer's Conference in San Jose, attending sessions like "Are Adventure Games Dead?" (short answer: yes), and the next minute I find myself driving home at midnight in the rain, furiously hoping to beat the clock so I could say goodbye to my cousin Suzy—36 years old and dying of ovarian cancer—one last time.

I didn't make it.

In the face of such inexplicable, horrifying, incomprehensible news, how does one write a dumb column about computer games? Good question. I can't do it. For a while, I tried focusing and writing about my hopeless addiction to Heroes of Might and Magic III. It was kind of funny, until I wrote something about needing an IV line and a bucket under my chair to take care of my bodily functions while I played. Then I thought about Suzy, and that line lost all its humor. Death—that heartless, stubbornly optimistic hippie Deadhead of a cousin—would have hated that idea. In her 36 brief years, Suzy never had the time to get maudlin like that. There was too much fun to be had. Not that she didn't work hard too; this is someone who actually chose, without someone holding a gun to her head, to teach social studies to the evil alien beings known as "7th graders." But she never lost sight of her main goal: Have as much fun as possible, all the time.

It's a good thing to remember. Actually, it's just good to remember that it's okay to want to have fun. Playing computer games, for example. This is a fun thing to do. We don't have to pretend that it's anything else, right? I hear people trying to justify their gaming habit all the time, but I'm here to tell you—don't even bother.

Just yesterday, for example, I learned that it's way easier to beat someone over the head with a crowbar in Half-Life than it is to keep reloading and firing the pistol. So I take it back. Games are very educational.

My point is this: Don't let anyone shame you into thinking that playing computer games is a waste of time. Because whatever they're doing to pass the time is no better—and it certainly isn't going to make them any less dead in the end. By all means, turn your computer off at least part of the day. Do your best to be a useful and responsible member of society, too. Plant a tree. Volunteer at a shelter. Help Ian Storm finish Darkatana. Just don't forget

With Fans Like These...

I've been reading your magazine for about seven years and it seems to tell the truth about a game. But the back page with Jeff Green seems to talk about nothing. I would, and perhaps a lot of other people would as well, like to read about the business and stock of some of the gaming companies out there. Who's getting rich and who's going out of business with perhaps some following about the companies—their stock prices and some news on software companies' IPOs, etc. Surely it would give some insight on why games sell and why games are shipped early. It can't be any more boring than Jeff. (Sorry Jeff.) It would be nice to read about who owns what in the business world. Surely one page is not too much.

—Ron Pierce via the Internet

Jeff Responds:
If you think I'm boring, you should read Denny Atkin's column.

What Jeff doesn't realize is that Jerry Garcia currently holds the high score on the Ms. Pac Man machine in Heaven. Send your favorite magic brownie recipes to Jeff at jeff_green@zd.com.
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