

# SYZYGY

## MAGAZINE

Summer 2001  
(Pronounced sīz' ə-jē)

STILL THE  
ONLY  
HARDCORE  
ECLECTIC  
VIDEO GAME  
MAGAZINE

**ONLINE GAMING SPOTLIGHT**  
**UNREAL TOURNAMENT:**  
**STILL GOING STRONG**

**PLAYER SPOTLIGHT:**  
**XAVIER | HV**  
**OF TEAM**  
**HIGH VOLTAGE**

**SYZYGY TAKES ON**  
**CLASSICGAMING.COM**  
**THE TOP-10**  
**ARCADE GAMES**  
**OF THE '80S**

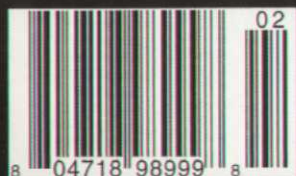
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Summer 2001  
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Display until Sept 2001





**Jason W. Cody**  
**JWC**

jwc@syzygy-magazine.com



**Jon Jamshid**  
**Evil Exidy**

exidy@syzygy-magazine.com



**The Guy on the Couch**



**Punchy**

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**The Leprechaun**



**Brian Deuel**  
**Atari**

atari@syzygy-magazine.com



**Danielle DiPuma**  
**Lewdakrisp**

krisp@syzygy-magazine.com



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## Editorial Director

Jason W. Cody  
jwc@syzygy-magazine.com

## Managing Editor

Jon "Evil Exidy" Jamshid  
exidy@syzygy-magazine.com

## Associate Editor

Brian Deuel  
atari@syzygy-magazine.com

## Coordinating Assistant

Danielle DiPuma  
krisp@syzygy-magazine.com

## Contributing Writers

Richard Gould  
John Palamarchuk

## Cover

Xavier|HV in Metal Guard

## Syzygy Logo

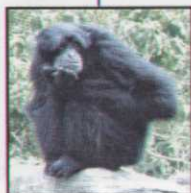
Michael Thomasson

## Comic Strip

Marcus Gray  
Jim Watt

## Special Thanks

Scott Evans  
Tim Ferrante  
Richard Gould  
Tom Keegan  
Kevin Mockel  
John Palamarchuk  
Brian Rittermann  
Michael Thomasson  
Steve Wallace



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**Syzygy Magazine PO Box 512 Flagler Beach, FL 32136 Tel: 904.439.4512 Fax: 904.439.5252**

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## SqUeal likE a sTuCk PiG

### FreeFall value...

I read your review of FreeFall. You seem to recommend it strongly, and the game seems awesome from the screens I saw. But is it worth the price of a Nuon system?

John Marley

*No, I don't think any game is worth \$250. But it's certainly worth its price of \$20 if you already have a Nuon. And it's certainly a better value than most Next-gen games at double the price. Nuon still has a few games due out soon. And as I've always said, Nuon isn't worth its price if you already have a DVD player. If you're getting ready to buy a player, however, and you don't buy a Nuon, then you're retarded.*

### Warehouse location...

The photos of the warehouse on p.19 are amazing. How many Star Wars were there? Where is this place? Any info is appreciated.

Kevin Racco

*MUUU hahahahahaha. Step off, Kevin. Actually, there were 12 Star Wars machines there. The stuff is mostly gone, now, courtesy of JWC and Exidy's raiding prowess. There was also a Bubbles duramold that we didn't get a pic of. Also, I forgot to print this picture of Pole Position 2 (right). Have you ever seen one of these before? Look closely before you answer. It's dedicated! It's about a foot shorter than a normal Pole Position cabinet and of course the sideart is completely different. It's still the only one I've ever seen. As for the location, well we posted some pictures to the internet last year when we first raided it and a huge mess ensued. Some greedy dealer wanted the place for himself, so he cooked up a story about missing games and hired a local private investigator to try and scare me into giving him the location. No, I'm not kidding. But did it get him anywhere? <hahahhahahahaha> Yeah, right! It got him to be the laughing stock of the arcade collectioning community, but that's about it. And even though it's been raided, we still keep the location pretty much a secret out of general priciple.*

### Helena Bold...

Yes! I love the idea of Syzygy having its own goofy strip! It beats the pants off the one in Electronics Monthly with the MTV humor and the chinese guy. More Helena!

Bill Hampton

*Bill, you ask and we deliver. Two pages of Helena this issue! Get some. Check [www.hypnoray.com](http://www.hypnoray.com) for more on Helana and the work of Marcus Gray and Jim Watt. Also, I think someone needs to watch The Big Lebowski! "Chinese guy" is not the proper terminology, Dude.*

---

*Also, I can never get a clear answer on the Pole Position 2 question. If you have seen another dedicated machine like this, tell me! Send pics! Send us pics of all your rare game finds!*





## —REMAIN SILENT: *JayDoubleyouL.A.*—

Fresh off **E3**, with a new perspective, it's time for an update on the **Console Wars**. My **PS2** is collecting dust, to be perfectly honest, and I don't see myself very interested in buying PS2 games after this fall. I've been pretty much a "Dreamcast and PC" type of guy for the past few months, and because of 2 or 3 launch titles on each system, I will be getting both the Gamecube and X-Box. This doesn't leave much room for the PS2, and I'm happy to say "I don't care." I never particularly liked the system, and other than GT3, it's a useless black box in my apartment at the moment. Good game, PS2.

**X-Box** is a little shakier than I thought it should be at this stage. The E3 buzz had little to do with X-Box. I know it had already debuted at CES in January, but it seemed like there should be a little more excitement for it than there was at the show. It should start to gear up soon, though.

**Dreamcast**. It's now just a slow death for this awesome console. I love this system to death, and its demise is one of the saddest things in the gaming world since the Jaguar finally lost support from Atari in 1996. Sega were at E3 and had quite a nice area, but it was all software, of course. Brings a tear to your eye, doesn't it? I'm going to continue to support it for as long as it keeps putting out games. I still play Phantasy Star Online when I get the chance, and so do a lot of other online gamers, as you can see from logging onto the servers. It's going to be very weird and uncomfortable to be playing Crazy Taxi 2 on the PS2. Something about that is just inherently wrong. That game is too creative and cool to be a PS2 game.



**Gamecube**. This was E3 this year. There were three times as many people per square foot in the Nintendo areas than at any other place at the event. Of course, this was its debut, so it's not entirely fair to examine the attention it got when all of the other consoles have been seen by gamers before. However, this system is definitely the current front-runner in the battle for home console dominance. X-Box is close behind, and with both systems planned to launch 3 days apart, it's going to be a wild first week of November. Buckle up, compadres.

**Indrema**. It's dead. Sadly, this thing is never going to come out. I had hoped that the release of this system would sort of confirm the gaming renaissance we are currently experiencing. But they just have no money, and barring some sort of bread from heavenly skies this thing is nothing more than a sick trivia question 5 years from now.

**Nuon**. It's dead. No third party support at all. Which isn't surprising. Nobody has a Nuon player because they were never given a reason to purchase one. A few DVD movies, like *Bedazzled*, were released with special Nuon features, but that isn't what it needed. It needed a special *Godfather* or *Terminator* DVD, didn't it? It needed some mainstream killer appz to go along with its few nice games, which were more geared towards the hardcore gamer. It was released too late, and other than some neat games like *Freefall 3050 A.D.* and *Tempest 3000*, didn't have a lot going for it. It will still have some games released for it soon, like *Iron Soldier* and *Monopoly*, but nothing that will turn things around. The powers that be at Nuon never could seem to pull the right strings to get this thing going (not surprising since they can't even update their website or answer any emails). This isn't hindsight 20-20. I said most of this in our very first issue last year, if you remember. It's sad because it never really had a chance. R.I.P Nuon.

So, after all is said and done, it's mainly going to be a race between Microsoft and Nintendo. This was predictable. The only thing I didn't foresee last year was the rapidness of the Dreamcast demise. Everything else has proceeded according to my predictions. Would you expect anything else? I'll read your fortune for a buck, if you want. Better than that Jamaican lady, too.



## This Issue's Hardcore Gamer: Micah Rowe

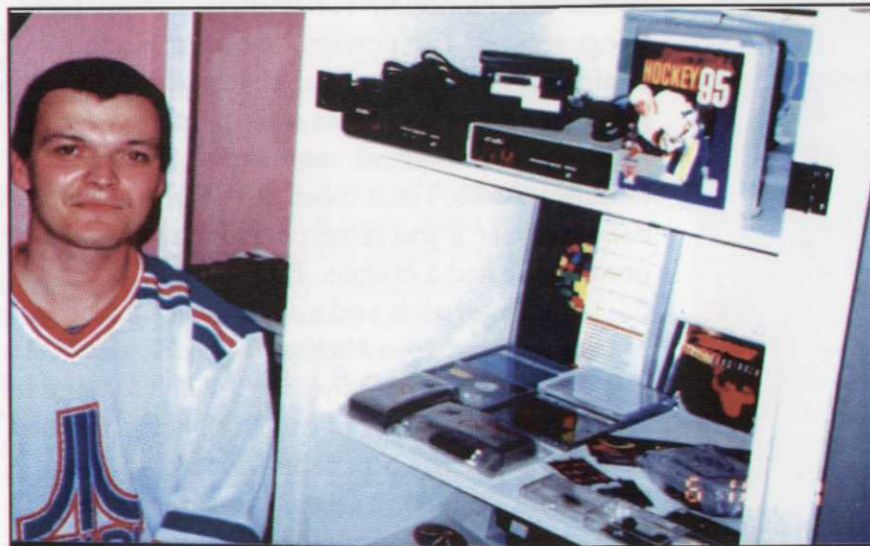


**Syzygy:** What was the first video game you remember playing?

**Micah Rowe:** The first video game I owned was the 1977 Mattel Football I handheld. I thought it was so cool at the time running by those red light defenders, I must have played it for several years growing up. Scoring 80-100 points was quite common.

*You're known for being a Jaguar fanatic....what led you to love and support the Jaguar?*

It was the idea that eventually the next "Aliens vs. Predator" or "Tempest 2000" was going to be released. Those games blew me away when I saw them for the first time and the expectation of more of the same kept me hooked. It may have taken longer than expected to get those great games, but as they say, 'good things come to those who wait. Something also has to be said about the great group of gamers in the Jaguar community. The enthusiasm and fun chat (most of the time) about the Jaguar at Jaguar Interactive ([www.atarihq.com/interactive](http://www.atarihq.com/interactive)) makes this system hard to let go.



*I remember seeing a sickly comprehensive list of Jaguar items you have. What all do you have? You have every game right?*

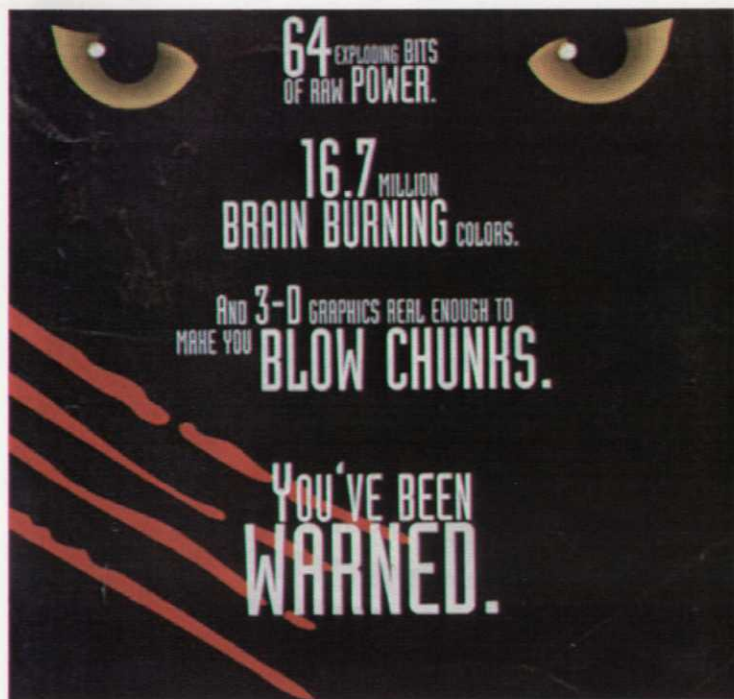
Yeah, I've gone pretty nuts with my Jaguar hobby getting prototype items such as Brett Hull Hockey for the Jag, 2 Jaguar Voice Modems (which are a lot of fun!), early beta version of Zero-5, pre-launch Jaguar press kit, couple Catboxes, Jag stereo card proto, Phaze Zero, promotional disk Atari released introducing the JagCD, variety of game soundtracks on CD, Phear literature and I saved all the magazine articles about the Jaguar to make a nice binder of Jaguar goodness, about 250 pages big. Still have yet to get WORMS to complete the collection... something always comes up when I'm about to buy it!



*What do you think is the Jaguar's greatest game?*

Tough question! I got to go with BattleSphere, though. Some would argue Tempest or Aliens vs. Predator, but BattleSphere has it all, networking, great Jaguar graphics, variety of playing modes, addictive gameplay...and if that isn't enough, the number of obstacles overcome by 4Play/ScatoLOGIC to get it released to their fans makes it a little more special than anything else.



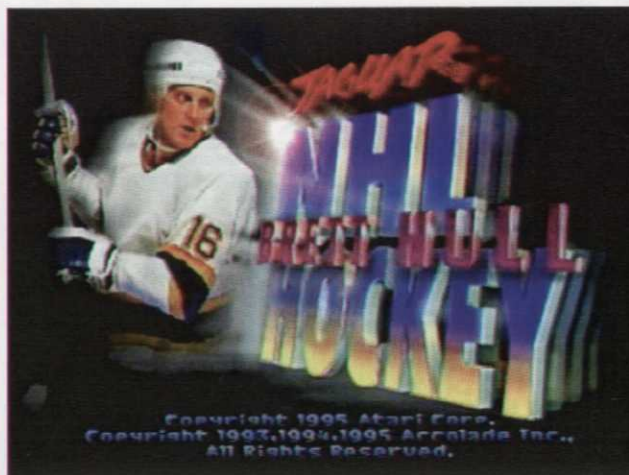


*Did you also buy the other console's in the mid 90's? If so, which ones?*

I bought the 3DO, Genesis, SNES, SegaCD, 32X, Sega CDX, Playstation and N64. I never got the Saturn and have yet to get the DC or PS2.

*Bring us up to date on the current Jag community... where is Jag Fest this year? And are there any games the community is trying to get published?*

It still is a very exciting time for the community! The 5th annual JagFest is happening in Milwaukee, WI. Goatstore, who is organizing the event is doing a great job to make sure it is very successful. Games like Protector SE, Eternal Darkness: Scent of the Spider and Gorf Pluz are on the horizon and with the CD encryption bypass included with Protector SE, it will open up the opportunity for many hobby developers to release their games for quite a low cost. One can only hope more "lost" games will surface and make it into everyones hands with the help of Songbird Productions



*Left: Early teaser ad for the Jaguar. Above: Title screen from the never released Brett Hull Hockey cd game. Opposite: Micah posing out with a few of his favorite Jag possessions.*

*In our second issue, everyone saw the vanity plate submitted by a Jag fanatic. What is the extent of your fanatacism? Vanity plates? Charcoal and red themed bathroom? etc?*

Hehe. Some would say this is a tad overboard, but I named my daughters middle name Skylar, after the first Jaguar game, Cybermorph. We just couldn't think of any name that had any meaning to us, and with my love of the Jaguar reaching 7 years and counting, it just seemed like the right thing to do. So the full name is Megan Skylar Rowe. I'm sure she'll just love it ten years from now!



*Is this guy out of control or what? Hehe. But in a good way, right? Keep sending us pics and your stories of fanatacism. You might be hardcore and overly sick when it comes to your fanatacism over a certain system or game, but you're among friends here.*



# SYZYGY MAGAZINE

Special  
Report



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(Pronounced siz' ə-jē)

Syzygy's  
First  
Annual  
Best of  
Show  
Awards

touch the future



Jon Vamskid @ Los Angeles 2001 E3



Wishing you were here!

ON assignment at E3



# On the Road: Syzygy goes to L.A.



Below: Yes, that's your scruffy, lovable, huggable JaydoubleyouLA somewhere between LA and Vegas.



Well, let me first say that this was my first E3. I wasn't sure exactly what to expect, although I had of course seen all kinds of pictures and reports from past E3 events. Even so, Exidy and I were throwing all kinds of weird scenarios back and forth, like only Exidy and I can do: "I hope they have Gary Coleman there to check your badges," or "I heard that Pauley Shore was gonna be in the Blizzard booth dressed as a court jester." Anticipating a plethora of B-level celebrities in ridiculous scenarios, our conjecture got even sicker: "It'd be cool if Pauley Shore put Gary Coleman over his knee and gave him a spanking on his bare bottom." Yes. It's a long flight from Florida to Los Angeles.

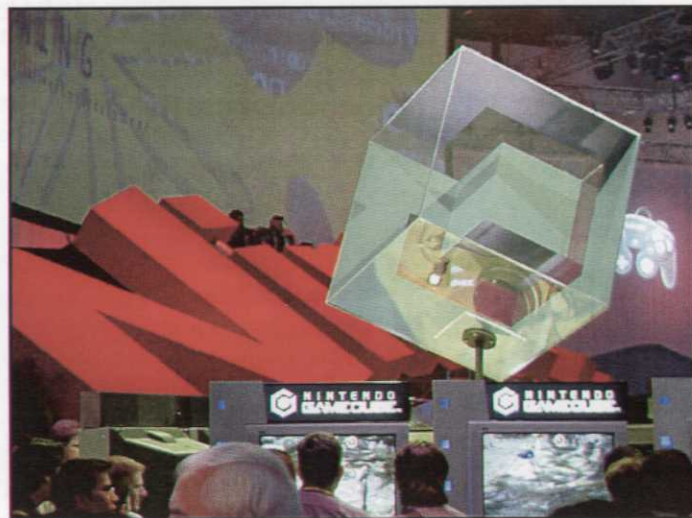
We got there a little late on Thursday morning, the first day of E3, and saw huge check-in lines everywhere. The amount of people filing in and out of every doorway and around every corner was a little disturbing. You were supposed to check-in and get a badge holder, so that your badge would be visible to everyone around your neck. We simply went to entrance, showed our badge to the door guy, and walked in. Screw waiting in line for 45 minutes to get a badge holder. (In case you haven't guessed, the badge on the opposite page isn't mine. I lost mine in LA somewhere and had to doctor up one. "P5 Green" was like what managers from Electronics Boutique get registered as. Our badges actually had "Mr. Light Blue" in that spot, which signifies some sort of bottom-rung media, I guess).

Inside the main building, it was simply packed. In the isles between Sega and Activision's booth, you

could barely walk! (Nothing compared to Nintendo's booth, though, as we'll see later).

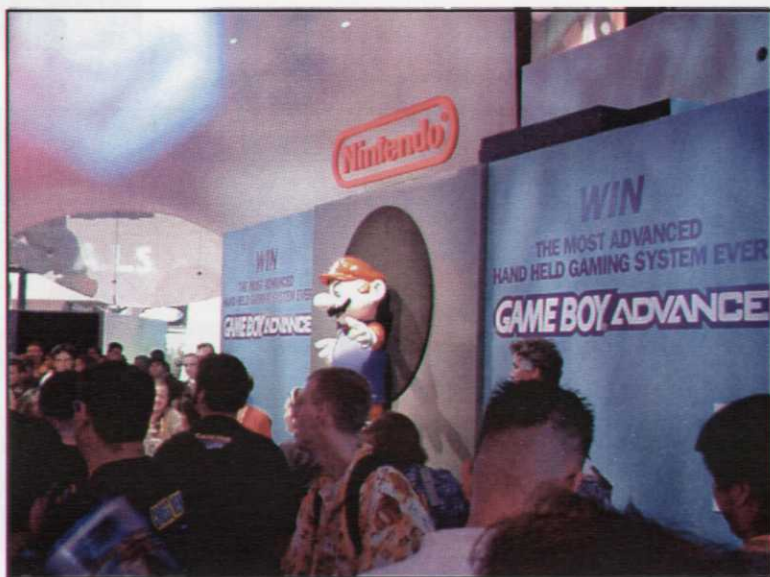
Everything at E3 was set up with one main goal: to get gamers in the booth and keep them talking about it once they leave. Whether it be strippers in Army fatigues (*Return to Castle Wolfenstein*) or elaborate stage sets (*Twisted Metal Black*) or celebs like Tony Hawk and UFC fighters signing autographs, companies pulled any trick they could to gain attention.

Now, we're going to give out the awards. Some good, some bad. Some meaningless. We weren't necessarily impressed by many things at the show, to be perfectly honest, so...well, you'll see. Without further adieu, let's get it on!





# Biggest Disappointment: Game Boy Advance



Nintendo totally drops the ball with the new GBA screen...



Let's start off on a down note. Yes, why not? As you can see from the above picture, Nintendo is boasting loudly (and incorrectly) about their new color handheld system **Game Boy Advance**. I had really high hopes, but they were shot down in a nanosecond, the moment I laid eyes on an actual GBA in action. What you have here, basically, is a slight upgrade to the Game Boy Color. It's sad. You know why? The year is now 2001, and the 1989 Atari Lynx is *still* the best looking handheld system on the planet. That's a shame, and Nintendo should be embarrassed. I'm embarrassed for them, if that counts. The graphics are very detailed, and I guess they are trying to keep with the screen their Game Boy fans ave grown to like, but the result is simply a rough-looking little screen that isn't backlit and is very hard to play if you aren't in a very bright area.

Everyone is doing it, and it was done to some degree with the NG Pocket and GBC, but this time it just annoys me to no end. What I mean is that you honestly cannot find a true picture of the GBA screen anywhere. They want you to believe that you are going to get a nice, bright, crisp display. Nice and crisp? Yes. But so dark and low contrast that it's depressing. *EGM* in my opinion went way too far by putting "fake" screens on their cover, and *on the GBA screen itself!* *IGN* is doing the same thing, as you can see to the right. I'm quite certain this is the only publication (at least the only one I've seen) that is putting a picture of the actual screen on the product you are buying. Personally, I am not buying one. Not until Nintendo comes to its senses and releases one that's backlit. But the biggest problem I have with the GBA media is I want them to at least show consumers what they are going to get! If they still want it (and I'm guessing they do, from the success of the Game Boy and GBC) then fine. But why not speak your mind? Everyone that I have talked to is disappointed in the GBA. I mean everyone. So say that! Don't just show a lame picture of Mario holding a picture of what the GBA *should* be! Grow a pair, and show us what it *really* is. A small, sleek turd, available in multiple colors with a wide selection of quality software. *What software?* you ask. Well, I refuse to get one until they fix the screen. So you'll have to read GBA reviews somewhere else for now. And I digress...

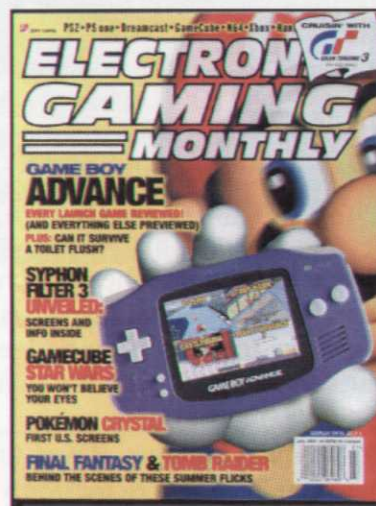
Massively!



**Warning:** this isn't what it looks like!



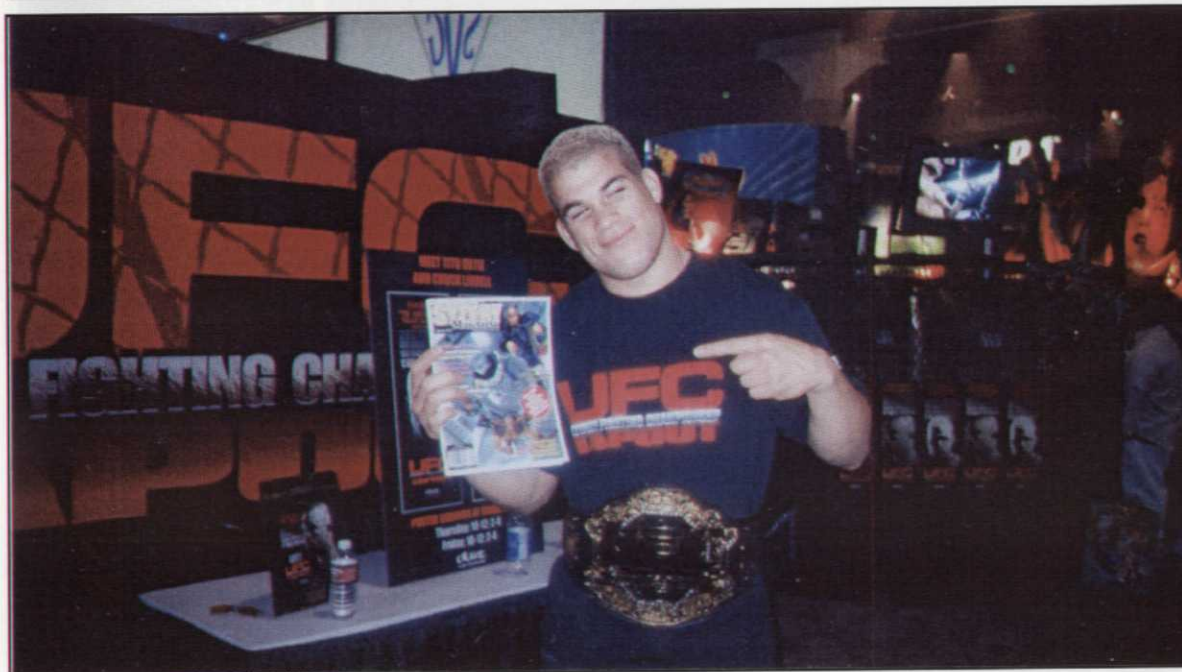
This is the actual screen...



...but you wouldn't know it from reading the other mags!



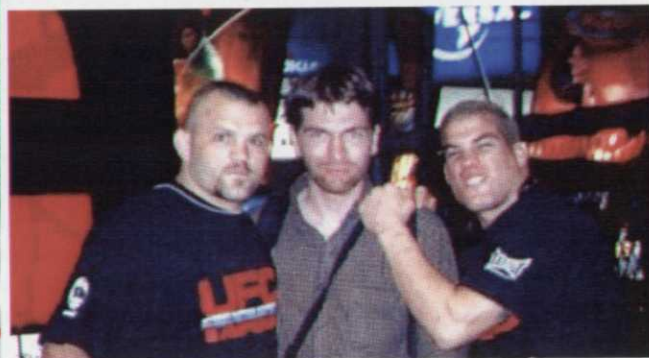
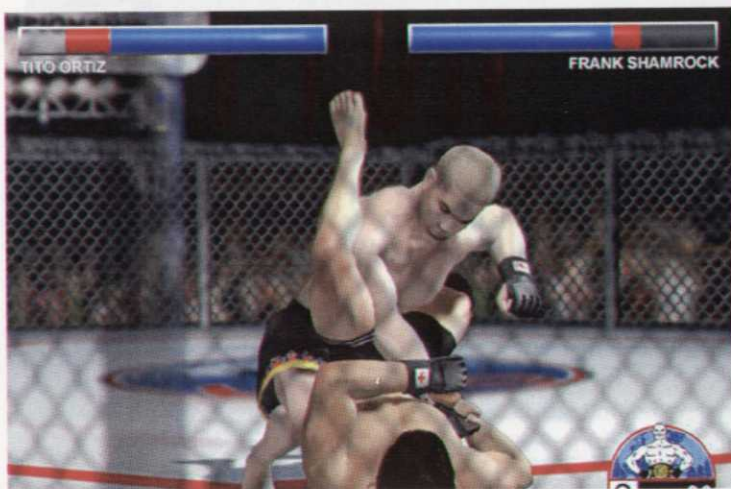
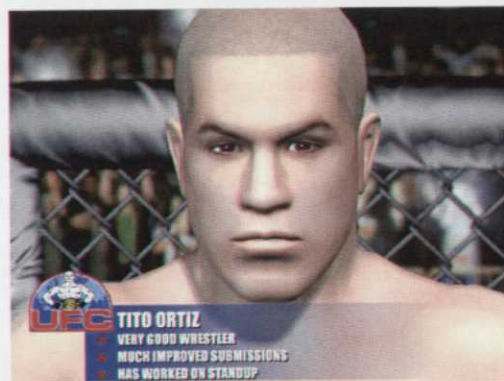
# Cooler Celebs: UFC Tapout



Left: Exidy asks Tito to pose out with last issue. Tito hands it back when he spies Jeremy Horn's name on the cover. "No, come back when it says 'Tito' on the cover." We got him to pose out anyway. Bottom right: This is right before I had to take Tito down and choke him out for getting too rough.

There were many celebrities at E3 this year, but none were as cool as Chuck Liddell and Tito Ortiz. There to promote the future X-Box title **UFC: Tapout**, both signed autographs and hung out with the fans. Exidy and I seemed like the biggest UFC and Pride fans in attendance. Americans aren't so into Mixed Martial Arts though, so it was basically myself, Exidy, and a lot of Asian guys hanging out around there. Tito is the poster boy for the UFC, and its current middleweight champion (yeah, that's why he's wearing the belt). Also known as "The Bad Boy of Huntington Beach," Tito was very humble and cool in person, in stark contrast from what you see inside the octagon on the pay-per-view events when he's in fight-mode.

The game itself looked to be very similar to the current UFC game, although I am told the final version will have fighter specific moves and be more true to the fighting styles of the individual fighters. I hope this means no more Muay Thai kicks from Keven Randleman! And of course, the graphics are much improved. The fighter positions and match flow looks a little more realistic as well. And don't forget to watch Tito on June 29th as he defends his title on pay-per-view at UFC 32.





# Biggest Attraction: Gamecube



attention at the show, be it other systems, games, babes, etc. Of course, this was mainly because of this year's E3 being its debut, several months after X-Box had already appeared at CES. Otherwise, I'm guessing the battle for attention would have been neck and neck between the two (as the imminent console war between them is likely to be).

The whole Nintendo area was chaos. On the morning of the first day, you couldn't get anywhere near a Gamecube. Most were playing **Luigi's Mansion**, which looks to be the perfect Nintendo-styled 3D platformer we all know and love. Things began to get a little rough in the Nintendo area the later the day became. It began to smell like sweat and old socks. Too many sausage-fingered gamers all packed together can become quite malodorous.

One other thing to mention is the controller. This was my first time using it and although I was a little worried from the photos I had seen of it, it's all good. The controller fits nicely in your hand and every button is right where you'd like it. Nintendo, clueless at handheld system progression, is a master of the home console, and it looks like they are doing everything right so far with this Cube. Shouldn't be much longer and Japan will be getting their Cubes, with us soon to follow. I can't wait.



# Biggest Sigh of Relief: Warcraft III



I can't begin to tell you how worried I was about this game, judging by the screenshots we have been systematically leaked over the past 2 years. I was sure they were going to change the action of the game and maybe make it like **Starcraft** (which I never liked) or possibly like **Command and Conquer** (characters on the screen were too small)...or maybe even make it like ..well, the plethora of other real-time medieval strategy games. **Warcraft II** was absolutely the best game of its kind. And still is. It was done perfectly, the control, the characters, the maps, the balance of power....everything. It is the perfect real-time strategy. And from the looks of things, a long overdue sequel is going to pick



Blizzard had quite a booth. Gamers were waiting in line behind multiple kiosks to get their chance to play possibly the most eagery-awaited, long-overdue sequel in years.



Visitors to Blizzard's booth were also treated to an awesome cut-scene trailer from the game. I stood in awe and watched it play through about 4 times. Buckle up. This game is going to be huge!



# Most Anticipated: Unreal Championship



In one of the smartest exclusive licenses of the year, Microsoft nailed down rights to bring the next incarnation of Unreal to console gamers. **Unreal II** is going to be a PC-exclusive, and won't be released until IQ 2002 (and was noticbly abesnt from this year's E3). **Unreal Championship** was very visible, however, and looks to be the drawing card to bring FPS gamers out on X-Box launch day, November 8, 2001. While trying to please gamers, yet scared to death of having their prized console labeled a PC, Micorsoft has announced they will not release a keyboard and mouse for

the X-Box. This is absolute stupidity. There is no way to sugarcoat it. It's just pure foolishness. The only way to play FPS's is with a keyboard and mouse. I have heard that 3rd parties are going to make a keyboard accesory to be used with the X-Box usb ports, but will the games be coded to utilize this? I'm guessing the launch games won't. And sadly, that will probably include Unreal Championship. We'll see...



*Someone make a brass plate of this moment and carve it into a mountainside. It's sZ|Leprechaun's first game of Unreal Championship. I had never used the X-Box controller before, but it actually didn't do too bad at controlling a FPS, once I got used to it. The weapon's looked to be totally different. I hope there is some form of shock rifle in the final game or I'm gonna boycott it.*



# Best Booth: Twisted Metal Black



There were some incredible stages and booths this year.

**Metal Gear Solid 2** had a nice one. **Return to Castle Wolfenstein's** was also tight, complete with a half-dozen strippers in modified-to-be-skimpy G.I. clothing. But nothing matched the set of Twisted Metal Black. As you can see to the left, an armed truck was placed busting through a cinder block wall. If that picture doesn't do it for you, then you aren't an American. Go away.

The only bad part: Twisted Metal Black is going to be a PS2 exclusive, just like its predecessors in the series. You know how I feel about the PS2, after reading my editorial, so that places a small cloud over this game. However, on the upside, 989 Studios isn't going to be allowed to mess up this one, like they did TM3 and TM4. I never even bought TM4, even though I thought TM2 was the best PSX games of 1997. The franchise is supposedly revamped now, going back to its original storyline and development.





## Best Day: Day 2, Las Vegas

That's right. Sometime in the afternoon of the first day of E3, Exidy and I combined to come up with the following whacked-out idea: "Anything worthwhile that is going to happen is going to happen on Day 1 or Day 3. Day 2 will be boring." So, what are two wanna-be "rounders" to do? Go to Vegas. Vegas, baby. Vegas! That's right. Late in the evening of Day 1, after a quick stop at National Rent-a-car, our pockets \$50 lighter, Exidy and I were off to Vegas. Two and a half hours later we were at the Excalibur playing some Blackjack (double-deck only).



View from our room at **Excalibur**. The best casino on the strip, by far. Above left: Host to some of the best prize fights in recent years, the **MGM Grand**. Above right: **New York, New York**, another favorite casino of ours.

Yes, of course. The downside. Driving back through the desert, down \$500, on our way back to the Nintendo booth to smell some more armpits.





# Gamecube vs. X-Box

by John Palamarchuk

## Graphics:

As an industry follower, and interested in all next generation consoles, it's time to take a look in-depth at the 2 new systems on the road to their release. Through extensive research the obvious winner is the Nintendo GameCube. Why? First off, *hardware*. The cpu's are 485mhz (GC) vs 733mhz (Xbox). So Xbox wins? No. Lets look back at the N64 (93.75mhz CPU) and the PSX (33mhz cpu). The PSX ended up *killing* the N64 (I'll admit it even though I am a die hard Nintendo fan). Obviously CPU means nothing but how you make the polygons look, which PSX did the best. On that note the most important feature other than lighting and high resolution textures which both systems can do especially well, is that of texture effects. PS2 can do 1 effect per texture, Xbox can do 4. Gamecube can do 8. If you don't know what it means as far as effects, imagine a mirrored wall in a first person shooter game, for instance, that's one effect. That kind of stuff is what makes games look extra polished.

So Gamecube wins on the graphics scale.

## Controllers:

Gamecube uses a new technology in controllers, such new things as different levels of sensitivity and a design that fits in your hand like the N64 did, only better. Xbox uses a standard style of controller like the X-terminator for PC. I haven't tested either but from what people from E3 have said the Gamecube wins that battle. Not to mention Nintendo has always been the leading company in controller technology. They invented the rumble pack and tilt controllers. They will continue to invent the best, as Miyamoto, the best game developer in the world, is their head of game development.



## Parts that come with the systems:

GameCube - Controller and system.

Xbox - Controller, system, 8 gig hard drive, cable modem, keyboard, mouse, and DVD player.

Does the Xbox sound like a PC? Sure does to me. Why would I want to buy a 733mhz PC when I've got one that already kills it, not to mention a cd burner and surround sound.

So what about polygon power? Xbox claims it can produce 125 million per second while the Gamecube only 6-12 million a second?

Yes, that's true. Nintendo being humble stated 6-12 million and they were speaking of real in game poly's fully playable. Microsoft (Bill Gates) claims theirs can do 125, what they didn't mention was they can get 125 with zero lighting, in a white room with no textures, music or sound. Basically a white room of nothing. Isn't that great? Recent information has leaked from a developer that they are running their game at 20-22 million poly's a second. Seems like Nintendo is pretending the system is not as good as it really is. Obviously they'll let the gaming experience sell the system, not specs and celebrity endorsements.

## Design:

The Gamecube, partially ugly, purple for main color but others are optional (gold, silver, red, blue, and black). Not much to look at but according to Nintendo, IBM and ATI technologies there is a reason for the "cube" style. Each chip inside is closer than on the traditional more rectangular console system. With closer chips that means faster access data rate and in the end better games and gaming graphics. The Xbox uses this traditional style, gives specs like 733mhz and 125 million polygons which impress people that don't know what they really mean. 733mhz and 125 mill polys is almost like bending the truth, but take it for what you want. If you like playing in white rooms with no light, music sound or textures then buy an Xbox! So Gamecube wins the hardware by a close call.



# Gamecube vs. X-Box...

## How about the software?

Nintendo with over 20 years in the business has countless amazing franchises for first party software. Zelda, Mario, Metroid, Pokemon, F-Zero and Donkey Kong to list only a few. Each of those has produced several games that have been amazing in the past, on nearly every Nintendo system. They look to only get better on the Gamecube. We turn to Microsoft...hmm...Age of Empires, Microsoft Flight Simulator, Motocross madness...3 really sweet games, just imagine how good they will be on console. <insert rolling eyes smiley here>

## In conclusion...

If you want a sleek looking machine, endorsed by "The Rock," running at 125 million polys a second in white rooms with no sound, music or textures/lighting...if you want the same games that are coming out for PS2 and Gamecube...if you want another hard drive, DVD player, keyboard and mouse (basically another computer) then buy an Xbox.

If you want the most powerful and amazing graphics ever seen, the best franchises (like Mario, Zelda, Metroid and Donkey Kong), an incredibly versatile machine that can link to Game Boy Advance and exchange data between both. All the same 3rd party developers that PS2 and Xbox are getting (minus Squaresoft probably for PS2) then buy a Gamecube.

Gamecube clearly wins the battle, not to mention it costs \$199 whereas the Xbox costs \$299 (both at launch). Xbox comes out 3 days after the GameCube launch. As far as Squaresoft goes, you can imagine how much Square is dying to get their grimey hands on the Game Boy Advance. They were also quoted saying "We are extremely impressed with the Gamecube as shown at E3." So they want in badly to the Nintendo world. Can someone say "Final Fantasy back to Nintendo once again"? Odds are in favor of it, but Nintendo denied Square after they asked to join. Hopefully Nintendo will let the ego down abit and make the gamers happy. Even if they don't GameCube is still the most amazing system ever built. Built for developers. Built for Gamers. Built for fun.

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*Tell us what you really think, John! Hehe. This highly opinionated piece doesn't reflect the view of this magazine, other than the general notion that Gamecube will win the console war. Xbox will have their own segment of hardcore fans, no doubt about it. They are also making some smart licensing moves, such as the Unreal Championship exclusive. But software sells systems and as John said, Xbox will find it tough to battle all of Nintendo's games which feature household names. The console war will be won with game titles, not polygon pushing power. -JWC*

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# Spotlight: Online Gaming

*If you aren't familiar with online gaming, I'm about to give you a crash course... Beware, it's a completely different animal from playing Conker's and eating Fritos at the same time. It's a whole nother world, Fredo...*

**PING:** This is the single biggest source of arguments in online gaming. It's the measure of delay you have from the server you are playing on. A zero ping is no delay, the same as playing offline. A 50-100 ping or less is considered very playable and is the most common ping for broadband users. 56K players must endure 200+ pings and can get monstrous delays. When you compete online with top teams (as the SuperZappers recently did in the Shockwave Tournament on Teamplay.net) you can forget about playing unless the other team has a distinct ping advantage. For instance, I won't mention the name of the clan we played, but before the match we each offered a server to play on. Their ping was the same on both servers. We have two 56K players and they had a 170-190 ping on our server, compared to 200-240 ping on their server. Well, this team saw this, and would not play unless it was on their server, even though they were all pinging identically on both. At the start-up screen, when you are in tournament mode awaiting everyone to click ready for the match to begin, it shows the ping of all the players in the game. However, the latest trick is to say "Yeah, it says 100 on the screen but when I hit F6 I am pinging 150." F6 ping is always a little higher, and none of the other players can see another's F6 ping. So everyone fabricates a high F6 ping to ensure playing on a server where they have a ping advantage. Matches have been known to stall on for hours in the start-up screen, everyone watching each other's ping and fighting for a better server. And sometimes, the match just never starts at all. It's definitely the downside of online gaming. However, bitchy clans like the one I mentioned get a reputation for being just that, and other teams avoid them, try to screw them over by challenging them at inopportune times, pick obscure maps to tick them off, and basically a stigma is placed upon your team in the online community. Ping arguments are often valid, but usually just posturing to try to gain an unfair advantage over another team.

**AIMBOTS:** Aimbots are simply little add-on mods for the game which zero in on your opponent. For instance, with the sniper rifle, the crosshairs never leave your opponent if you have an aimbot. This used to be a huge problem, but CSHP (Client-side Hack Protection) is now loaded on every server, a client verification that detects illegal aiming devices. However, of course, as CSHP gets more popular, so do the people that write code for aimbots that can squeeze by it. The only thing that saves the community from aimbotters are the stiff penalties. If you are caught using an aimbot on any server, public or private, even just as a joke, messing around with some friends, you are banned from competition on all the ladders indefinitely. I know what you're thinking. *Who cares? I will just make up a fake name and use an aimbot whenever I feel like it.* No, you won't. The server you play on logs the IP addresses of the players. This can be traced right to your living room. So once you are found as a cheater, your IP address and ISP are noted. So basically, you have to move to the other side of town and get a new connection if you want to play again. The Aimbot Police are all over, too. A well-known player named Shifter (formerly of The Chosen Ones) was messing around with an aimbot a couple weeks ago and happened to be doing it in a server that was being watched. He is now banned indefinitely and was removed from his team's roster on all the ladders.

**RINGERS:** Obviously this is getting an extremely skilled player to pose as another player who isn't as good, to help you win the match. The same penalty as with aimbots, and the same techniques behind discovering both are used. It usually isn't much of a problem since players that are extremely good aren't into helping other clans, because they belong to a top clan themselves. However, some online tournaments have been held with prize money exceeding \$25,000. This type of money can tempt even the best sportsman to try and cheat. It's all part of the game.

**CLAN LOYALTY:** This has even been a problem in the SuperZappers. When you get a team together and one player is extraordinarily good, then he will be tempted by clans at the top of the ladder. Sometimes this can work well and is beneficial for everyone involved. But often you see top players with different clan tags on each week (^CNU^Shifter, Shifter-CI, Shifter[PL], etc.). These are known as "clan hoez." And after awhile, it becomes hard for them to find a clan, because everyone knows they won't stay with the team very long.

*Below: Kravnos isn't just an exceptional player, he is also a writer! It wasn't so long ago that I needed this book, myself!*

The image shows a game ladder at the top and a book cover for 'UT FOR DUMMIES' below it. The ladder lists players like 'If this is you...', 'Damage Inc.', and 'Deliciously Malicious'. The book cover is for the 6th edition, titled 'A Reference for Boxed Newbies!' by Mr. TOO EZ™ - Kravnos. It features a cartoon character pointing at the book and various promotional text like 'Get the Information You Really Need' and 'Your First Aid Kit for Fast Relief and Stunning Results'.

Available soon at a  
book store far away from you!



# Spotlight: Online Gaming: Unreal Tournament CTF

## Proving Grounds (www.provinggrounds.com) 97 teams

Rung	Team	Record
1	High Voltage	22-0
2	Supreme Mercenaries	14-5
3	Team z2	7-3
4	oD for Fun	9-0
5	Zenkai	15-2
6	[PSX] PSXcopy	19-8
7	exodus	10-1
8	The Criminal Element	12-5
9	Weekend Warriors	20-14
10	Clan Radium	10-0
25	SuperZappers	7-1

Online gaming is bigger than ever. There are three main organizations that hold and organize online gaming events: **Teamplay**, **Proving Grounds**, and the **World Online Gaming League**. It's gotten so big that Syzygy even sponsors its own team to compete on these ladders, the **SuperZappers**.

There are many games on these ladders. First Person Shooters are their main focus. And no game has more participation than Unreal Tournament (in fact, it's not even close). And no team game is more popular than **Capture the Flag**.

## World Online Gaming League (www.worldogl.com) 88 teams

Rung	Team	Record
1	exodus	11-1
2	Death and Horror Incorporated	30-8
3	the syndicate	20-5
4	Weekend Warriors Xtreme	9-10
5	OverDose	15-2
6	[DS] DarkShadows	25-9
7	PSXcopy	21-8
8	The Prophecy	9-3
9	Drunk Jedi	26-14
10	The Criminal Element	16-3
32	SuperZappers	5-2

Some called it an upset, some called it inevitable, but long time #1 OGL rung holder, **Death and Horror Incorporated**, was finally ousted recently by **exodus**. Below: Final screen shot of the exodus bid to take the #1 rung.

## TeamPlay (www.teamplay.net) 95 teams

Rung	Team	Record
1	High Voltage	78-12
2	The Chosen Ones	32-6
3	MurderDeathKill	26-6
4	OverDose	12-3
5	Dark Shadows	19-11
6	Death and Horror Incorporated	16-5
7	PSXcopy	31-13
8	Natural Born Killas	16-11
9	Mighty Mighty Smiley Squad	35-11
10	exodus	14-5
42	SuperZappers	3-1





# Spotlight: Online Gaming: Unreal Tournament CTF

## Player Spotlight: Xavier | HV of High Voltage

Nickname: Xavier

Real name: Brian Rittermann

Location: Ellicott City, MD

Age: 22

Team: High Voltage

Website: [www.clanhighvoltage.com](http://www.clanhighvoltage.com)



I first encountered Xavier|HV on the old SwineOnline server. The map was McSwartley's Base, and he must have killed me 20 times in that game. In fact, at one point, he was in my base, and I would die, and before I could even get a weapon, he had already killed me! Cursing him, I immediately signed onto [irc.enterthegame.com](http://irc.enterthegame.com) and found him in channel #highvoltage. I jokingly told him I wanted to strangle him for killing me so much in that last game. He told me a couple of the things I did wrong, and gave me a few pointers. So, after that, I would notice him whenever he would enter a public server I was playing on (and I would try to steer clear of him, if he was on the opposing team!). From reading match recaps on Teamplay.net and forum posts on various message boards, I quickly came to realize Xavier was considered the powerhouse of High Voltage, the team that owns the top position on 2 of the 3 main ladders. From this, one could argue High Voltage is the best UT CTF team on the planet. And if Xavier is one of their top players, then... Well, you decide. Either which way, I tracked him down on irc again, this time for our first Player Spotlight..

**JWC:** OK, Xavier, tell us when HV began? And who were the founders?

**Xavier|HV:** HV started January 11, 2000, founded by Everlast, Nubis, and GrimDeath.

**JWC:** What's the origin of the current formation? Friend of friends? Net recruitment?

**Xavier|HV:** Well, half the team are personal friends and half are friends met on the internet. In fact, four High Voltage members live in the same town.

**JWC:** What about you? When did you join?

**Xavier|HV:** I joined in November of 2000, after playing HV in another clan. They were impressed with me and asked me to join, and I accepted.

**JWC:** How long have you been playing UT? Did you start with Unreal, like so many of the UT elite did?

**Xavier|HV:** I've been playing UT since it came out, but no, I never played Unreal.

**JWC:** So was HV #1 when you joined?

**Xavier|HV:** Pretty much. With all the movement on the ladders, it's hard to pick a #1 clan, but if you look at the overall picture, HV has been #1 on Teamplay for as long as i can remember, and is 20-0 now on Proving Grounds. We're #6 on OGL and challenging for #1 this weekend [They ended up losing this challenge, more later about this. -JWC].





## Player Spotlight: Xavier|HV of High Voltage (cont.)

**JWC:** The #1 challenge is against famed Death and Horror Incorporated on OGL. OGL allows DHI to give you three maps to pick from, and you select the one which will be played in the match? Which 3 do you expect to get?

**Xavier|HV:** We have already gotten our maps, and chosen the battleground. They gave us Terra, Hydro I 6, and NovemberCE to choose from. We chose NovemberCE, and the match commences this Saturday at 10pm.

**JWC:** HV just defeated DHI in the Invitational tournament (UT13) for TeamPlay. I was watching on UTV, and there was some confusion about what DHI roster was eligible? Can you clear up that controversy?

**Xavier|HV:** Sure. DHI][Butcher joined DHI after the rosters were locked for the UT13 playoffs. Since DHI had plenty of other members to play us, we didn't see a reason why we should allow him to play in the match. So, HV decided not to allow Butcher to play.

**JWC:** Ah, not much of a controversy then. What makes you all so good at the big open maps? From what I have seen and heard, that is your specialty...

**Xavier|HV:** Well, you might have heard wrong. Hehe. HV does excel on Lava Giant, but also on Coret, Orbital, and some other unnamed maps we're saving for the opposition. As long as we practice a map long enough, we'll be one of the best on that map. HV's specialty is really teamwork, and we have arguably the best teamwork in UT CTF to date.

**JWC:** So...what makes you guys excel? Give us some insight into your success...

**Xavier|HV:** There are a number of reasons. First off, HV has good teamwork as I've said, but we also pour over the maps and try to figure out the best way to play them. For example, on Lava Giant, we realize that pistoning is a great way to confuse the defense, and we utilize that. Not to say that every run we piston, but enough that we keep the defense guessing. It really works well. We play the maps, not just the other team.

**JWC:** What about other UT mods? Do you guys compete in any others, or plan to in the future?

**Xavier|HV:** HV has really stuck to CTF for the most part. We dabbled in TDM and Assault, and really sucked. Hehe. We might consider Domination in the future, but as of now we're strictly CTF.

**JWC:** The first time I ever saw anyone piston from a lower level to the top in Lava, it was Spill|HV... the first person I ever saw piston across the Orbital central area was Grimdeath|HV... do you guys look at maps and find piston jumps and plan the offense around them?

**Xavier|HV:** Well, that's really two questions. Hehe. To answer the first, we do scrutinize every map for shortcuts or other nifty things. We've spent a lot of time on Lava Giant just screwing around with the piston. You can find a lot of neat things you'd never think possible if you only try.

To answer the second part, no we do not usually plan the offense around them. We think of them as helpful shortcuts for quick runs or to try to outrun the defense, but don't rely on them. Our offense is planned on teamwork, and we always have someone backing up the flag carrier. The pistoning on Lava Giant and other maps are just helpers to the final goal of capturing the flag.



**Live shot of Xavier in the UT13 playoffs from UTV. UTV is a mod you can download for Unreal Tournament which allows anyone to watch the games as a spectator, live as they happen. Xavier has the flag, here on Lava Giant and captures it one second later. HV won this game 4-1 over The Chosen Ones.**

**JWC:** Browsing your record, I saw all Lava Giant victories, and most were blow-outs! Have you guys lost on Lava Giant since you joined?

**Xavier|HV:** Actually, yes we have. As far as I can remember, the only two times we've lost it since I joined were to Drunk Jedi, a long time ago, and more recently to MuderDeathKill... but we're looking forward to a rematch with them in the UT13 finals.

**JWC:** What is your personal specialty as a CTF player? Your main role in the clan?

**Xavier|HV:** Well, it really depends on the map. On Lava Giant, I'm offense, on Orbital, I'm defense... on Coret I play offense or defense depending on who else in our clan is playing that match. Mainly, though, I'm a defensive player for HV. I joined HV as an offensive player and they "forced" me to play defense, as they already had a very potent offense. Since then, I've played a bit of both, but mainly defense. I've always loved running the flag though.



## Player Spotlight: Xavier|HV of High Voltage (cont.)

**JWC:** I know each weapon has its time and place, but what's your 'desert island' favorite weapon?

**Xavier|HV:** Well, that's a hard question to answer. It's certainly changed as I've grown as a player. Early on in my UT "career," I loved the flak cannon, then developed into a shock whore. At one point I was convinced that the rocket launcher was the best thing next to sliced bread... but right now I'd have to say the sniper rifle and the shock rifle are my two favorites right now.

**JWC:** Hehe. Desert island. One weapon...

**Xavier|HV:** Hah. OK, if it has to come down to one, I'd go with the shock rifle because it's more versatile.

**JWC:** Me, too. Hehe. OK, what about your tech setup...I'm sure everyone would like to know the preferred equipment of the best UT players on the planet. And you never know, could lead to sponsors! Hehe. What's your favorite mouse, video card, etc.?

**Xavier|HV:** Well, I've used both the Voodoo5 and the GeForce2 Pro, and I'd have to give the thumbs up on the Voodoo for UT. The GeForce2 is raw power, but UT runs nicer in Glide. I'm sure that in Unreal 2 the GeForce family will be king, though.

As for the mouse, I use a Razer Boomslang 2000, and I absolutely love it.

**JWC:** Ah, the ever-popular Boomslang! I use it, too.

**Xavier|HV:** Its aiming is so very precise and smooth, and I hardly have to move my hand to shoot around 180 degrees.

For keyboard, nothing beats the Microsoft Internet Keyboard. It's cheap, the keys are nice and springy, and it's hands-down my favorite keyboard. I actually just spent a load of cash on a new computer. I bought an Athlon 1.333Ghz processor, Asus A7M266 motherboard with 256MB PC2100 RAM (266mhz fsb), and the Geforce2.

**JWC:** How much did that cost? Nevermind, I don't want to know!

**Xavier|HV:** Haha.

**JWC:** What about other players? Any particular ones that give you or HV the most trouble? A personal nemesis?

**Xavier|HV:** Well, there are a few players out there that deserve some mention. Manglor{187} (of MurderDeathKill) is an awesome player and friend, and I hate it whenever I have to play him. He really kicks ass. Another kickass player is DHJ[BladeRadius (of Death and Horror), he really packs a punch with his sniper prowess. Kravnos-CI- is of course always a threat, and we have to take him into account whenever we play The Chosen Ones.

Now my personal nemesis would have to be MIM'Esco(FAT). It seems that whenever I run up against this guy it's on the receiving end of a shock combo. Very frustrating. Hehe.

**JWC:** Did you ever play against mEChsLAVE, one of the early DHI members? He was sort of my nemesis when I first started playing. I was useless against him.

**Xavier|HV:** I dimly remember playing mEChsLAVE and SteelGun, but very dimly. I hear that they have been playing Everquest faithfully ever since they left. -fin.

**Epilogue:** As you can see from the tables on page 20, High Voltage still holds the top rung on two ladders, but are not in the top OGL picture. That's because immediately after losing their challenge to DHI for the #1 spot, they split into two OGL teams. Therefore, they had to start over at the bottom of the ladder. As I'm typing this, both teams are in the 60's. Dangerously close to your own SuperZapper team in the 40's (we just started at the bottom not long ago, as well). We are crossing our fingers we don't get challenged by either HV OGL team on their way back to the top. When I asked Xavier about the split, later, he simply said, "We want to take over #1 and #2 on the OGL."



Above: Yes, that's your lovable, huggable editor playing as sZ|Leprechaun, and thankfully on Xavier's team for once! This was a pickup game which had all kinds of top players in it, High Voltage, The Chosen Ones, Death and Horror, etc. Below: Even the top players get smacked down! This is another live shot from UTV, where Xavier got killed with the flag by Kravnos-CI- in the UT13.





# Just Leave Me Alone

By Richard Gould

I used to manage a video shop for the second largest video rental retailer in the U.S. Now, I'm just unemployed and bitter. Well, actually I was bitter then, too. Anyone who works in a video shop long enough learns to hate one section of the store and one particular breed of customer. We hate video games, and we hate gamers. Even the gamers that work in the shop hate gamers.

It begins like this...

When you come in to open the shop, and you're relaxing, listening to George Carlin recite the seven dirty words, and you look up at 9:59 a.m. to see three cars in the parking lot, each piloted by a male, aged eighteen to twenty-eight, their eyes glazed over and drooling, then you know they have arrived.

As you scowl and eject Carlin, replacing him with a Disney Animated Classic to play from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. as per company guidelines, you curse Sony, Sega, Nintendo, Neo-Geo...heck, even ColecoVision. Damn them all. You open the door and they fly in, jumping out of their low-riders, mud trucks, and spoiler-having, custom-rimmed VW Rabbits, mumbling something like: "...*Mario Tennis!* Hot Damn!"

These are the vermin that transform the natural pastoral atmosphere of the shop into the abyss from which all hope flees.

Why? Why do we (and when I say "we," I mean "I") hate them so much? It begins when a six year-old kid picks up the *Rainbow Brigade* game from a Dreamcast row and runs to his father in the N64 section to beg to rent it. Dad says, "No," and the kid slips it behind *Madden '99*. And it's all downhill from there.

"Hey. Dude. Wanna rent *Final Fantasy IX*?... Oh? We ain't got a Playstation?" And there it goes, back on the shelf, behind *Superman* for the N64.

Before long a guy will walk up to the counter with a *Yoshi* game. After he pays the five dollars and forty cents that will ensure his five full days of existential bliss, he leaves the store. When he returns after a mere two hours, his expression tells me his bliss has expired.

"Man, I ain't happy. I ain't happy at all. Somebody done handed me the wrong game. I ain't even got a Nintendo to play *Yoshi* on. All I got's a Playstation. I wanted *Jeremy McGrath Racing* and somebody done handed me the wrong damn game."

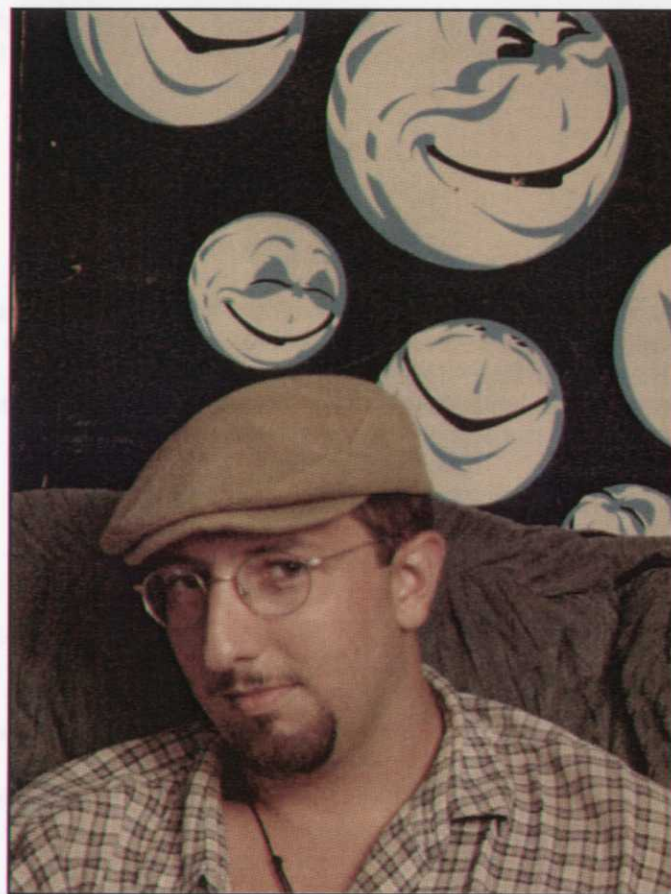
*You walked over to the games, picked this up and handed it to me. Are you saying I switched it on you? Like a magician? Did you look at the box you picked up? Did you pay any attention at all?*

"Well, maybe thissun was behind the wrong box?"



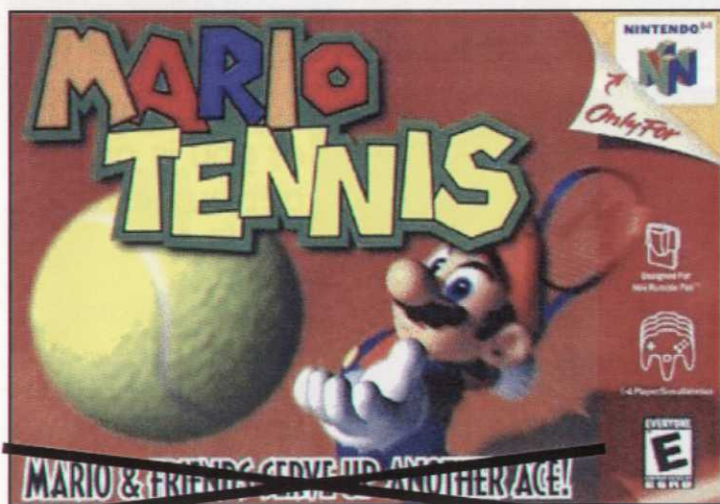
If this situatuion only happened once a week, it might be different, but five or six times a day can tend to grate on one's neves.

Before long, besieged by six year-olds and other equally menacing saboteurs, the six rows of games are in shambles. The games aren't in the right section. They're out of order, and God himself has no idea where the one copy of *Mario Tennis*, that the computer swears is in stock, is.



**You like my beige hat?**





## Mario & Friends Serve Up Video Game Rental Madness!

So, by this time, the morale of my employees is so low they're just returning the games anywhere and getting out of the games section as quickly as possible.

"Man, I couldn't find nuttin' over there. Them games is screwed up."

*Yes, yes. I know that. Thank you.*

Every other week we must pull every game off the shelf, re-alphabetize, re-space and replace all of the games properly. It takes about ten man hours to do it right. But knowing that the saboteurs will return causes existential despair.

The video portion of the store gets inventoried four times a year. The games, however, are inventoried twice a week. Damn theives. You know who you are. So, when I arrive to do the game inventory at 7a.m., I turn on Richard Pryor or Chris Rock to soothe my nerves. But I know the peace won't last. Soon, there's that early morning I-stayed-up-all-night-smoking-weed-and-drinking call: "Hay man! I heard y'all got that Mario Tennis. Man, I heard that game was bad-ass. Hey. Hey man! Y'all got that one?" And so, pregnant with anticipation, he waits, as I decide what to do. I know if I answer with a *No* straight off that he will beg me to "...look it up, man!" If I tell him the truth, that I can't look it up in the middle of an inventory, he will call back. I never ever want to talk to him again, so I decide to use the standard gambit. My right hand holds the phone next to the keyboard as my left hand types random keys. I raise the phone back to my mouth and after twenty patient seconds I inform him that we don't have it. Sorry.

"Aww, hell, man. When ya gunna get them back in?"

Knowing everything we rent is for five days, and I never want to talk to this guy again, I explain that we only have two copies (a lie) and they aren't due back until Sunday (probably a lie). So, now he will try again on Sunday (my day off). Of course, from where I am sitting, I can clearly see 2 of the seven copies of Mario Tennis sitting

on the shelf. But I also know that those copies will be gone fifteen minutes after we open for business. So, if I had been honest on the phone, he would have come in at eleven o'clock, with his happy little buzz totally worn off, and sworn at me because "...I just drove thirty minutes down here for nuttin, a--hole!" But this way he is slightly disappointed, but polite.

When gamers reach behind my counter to sift through my carefully alphabetized stack of video game returns, it's clear they've grown tired of the burden of life and are begging me to extinguish their candle.

*How can I help you?* I snarl politely.

"Oh...I didn't mean to..."

But it's too late. I've already crushed their skull with my computer monitor. *No, Mario Tennis is not in.*

Some of you may be thinking about reserve lists. No. Reserve lists don't work.

"What do you mean Mario Tennis isn't in? I can see it behind you on the counter."

*Yes, but that's for someone else. They put their name on a reserve list. If you want, I can add your name to the list of one-hundred and fifty-four names. Seven copies, five days each, and I should call you in, say, three and a half months.*

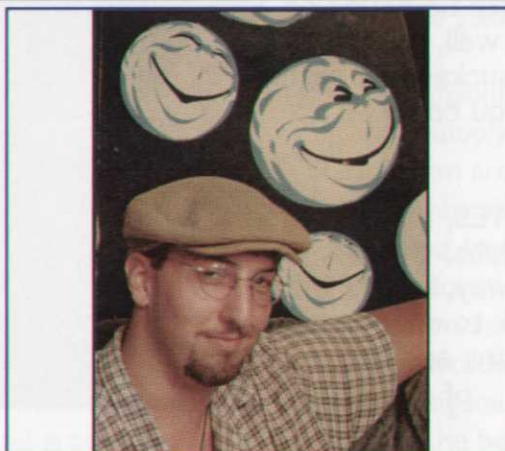
Is there any hope? Yes. It's but a momentary joy, but after days and days of dealing with gamers and their never-ending harassment, a small joy such as this can cause a furious spell of maniacal laughter. What am I talking about? Well, you can usually start to see it when a car load of glazed-eyed youths stumble into the shop and demand to know where the Playstation2 games are. The smile brightens up your face so quick that it frightens them.

*Sorry, we don't carry Playstation2 games. Blockbuster is two miles down on the left.*

---

*Richard Gould is currently no longer employed by this video rental chain. And his former regional manager can't, for the life of him, remember where he might have misplaced his favorite beige cap.*

---







Yo! Step back  
or you is gunna  
get burned by  
DA FLAME!

I be the fastest  
rapper on 4  
wheels. the 2G+1!  
Spend my time  
blowing away  
foolz in my  
pimped out  
firebird.

Werd. In the past  
I did time for out-  
runnin' the 5-0  
and cuttin some  
punk sucka up.  
Peace.

Oh dayyum!  
FREEZE is in da  
house. Pimpin  
in front of his  
crazy sweet  
Ranger.

Man, I be gettin no  
love from EGM.

Why you fools  
gotta be hatin? oh  
well, guess you  
suckas just wish  
you could be like  
me.

and YES, I do roll on  
dubs, trust. any-  
way, I gotta get  
back to countin my  
millions and millions  
of ca\$h. late.





# The Top 10 Arcade Games of the '80s

Recently, William Cassidy of GameSpy's **ClassicGaming.com** put together a list of the best video arcade games of the '80s, by year. This is actually a tough assignment, because certain years have 10 great games and others have only 1 or 2. In this Top-10, a game that would lock down the top spot in a different year may get overshadowed by a slightly better game and omitted from the list altogether. So, yes, this is a tougher list to make than you'd think. William did a fair job, but now, friends and neighbors, brothers and uncles, lawnmower-men and pizza delivery boys, it's time for **JayDoubleyou McLaughlin** to give you the real answers. These are the best games from each year. And no, the "best" game is not always the "biggest." If we wanted a list of the biggest games, we could just look up production numbers, couldn't we? Good day, sir.



## 1980

**ClassicGaming.com: Pac-man**

**WRONG!**

**The Correct Answer is: Defender**

So, yes, in the spirit of friendly debate, I'm going to list William's picks before mine, just so I can pretend to be John McLaughlin and smugly blurt out the "correct" answer. *You still love me, don't you William?*

William went with the obvious choice in one of those years that's simply stacked with great games. **Battlezone**, **Star Castle**, **Missile Command**, **Armor Attack**, and **Berzerk** are all in contention, but in the end, **Defender** wins out. The sounds, the effects, and of course the control panel that made little kids cry and run away, it had it all.



**Pac-man** itself is certainly a valid pick, however incorrect it may be. It's also a gutsy pick, as most scoff at the whole Pac franchise for being so corporate and over-done. However, Pac-man is one of those under-rated, over-rated games (if you know what I mean). Something that spawns so many blatant clones has to get some greatness points, simply for that alone. The gameplay of Pac-man is smooth and simple, as is the single-joystick control. And of course, Pac-man was fun. Every one of you reading this enjoyed Pac-man the first time you played it. It's the whole "gobble-gobble" simplicity. But that grows old after awhile, and the game stalls out and becomes redundant.

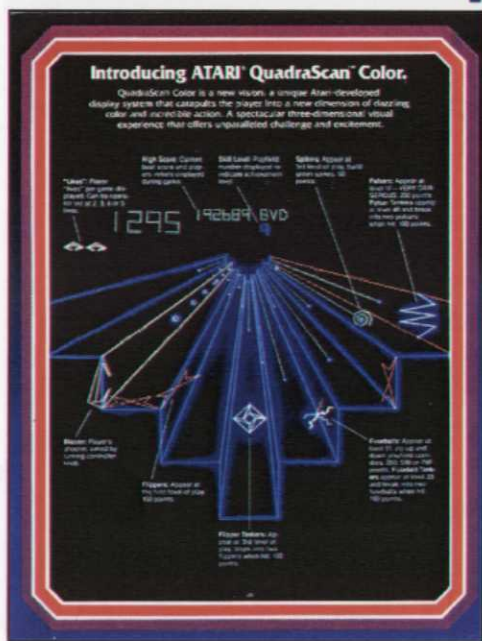
**Defender**, on the other hand, is madness. The enemies keep changing and multiplying and blowing your mind. They swarm around you from all sides, your Smart Bombs all gone and your Hyper-drive disabled, leaving you with nothing to do but to cry for mama. This game has a great learning curve, and just had so much more than its video arcade brothers and sisters did in 1980. Ingenious and ground-breaking, Defender is the best game of 1980.



# 1981

ClassicGaming.com: **Satan's Hollow**  
**WRONG!**

The Correct Answer is: **Tempest**



OK, William went off the beaten path a little with this one. And yes, that's cool. But c'mon. Let's not kid ourselves. 1981 was the year of the **Tempest**, son.

As I was browsing through the years in my mind, debating on the top game pick for each year, I was tempted to pick a less-popular personal favorite many times. But if I were to do that in 1981, **Warlords** would get my vote, as it had one of the most beautiful looking interiors of any game in the '80s. Also, the 4-player head-to-head action on the cocktail is simply tops. **Eliminator** is another great multiplayer game from 1981. Undoubtedly, many readers are now murmuring "**Centipede, Centipede...**"

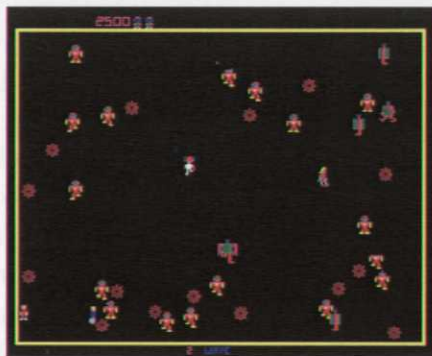
Yes, brothers and sisters, I murmur it with you. And I'm sure there are still others who are cheering for a Vid Kidz hat trick, and yelling out "**Stargate!**" as loud as they can (because we know what's coming in 1982, right?). All decent choices, but no. Sorry. It's **Tempest**. Rather than blabbering on for the next 2 pages, I will refer you all to my past writings of **Tempest's** greatness on my old, out-dated, never-updated website, **Superzapper.com**. 'Nuff said.

Also, I believe, from reading their article, that Classicgaming.com believes (wrongly) that **Tempest** was released in 1980. Sorry. As a matter of fact, it wasn't released until *late* 1981. Not only that, but from what I can tell, **Satan's Hollow** wasn't released until 1982. *Oops!*

# 1982

ClassicGaming.com: **Robotron:2084**  
**CORRECT!**

The Correct Answer is: **Robotron:2084**



1982. Lots of awesome games got screwed this time 'round, simply for being released when they did. Because **Robotron** is not only the best game of 1982, it makes a case for being the best game of all time. Period.

Let me mention a few of my personal favorite games which, while never achieving mammoth production numbers, are still the best games of the year. **Reactor**, **Looping**, **Zookeeper** and **Quantum** all fit this description. **Tron** is also over-shadowed by **Robotron**, and get's a whopping no-prize, even though it would have definitely grabbed the top slot in 1984 or later.

If you are one of the poor slobs that missed our second issue, which interviewed creator Eugene Jarvis, he summed up **Robotron's** greatness up best: "The goal structure, massive action and body count, and the physical demands of the dual joystick control, basically overloaded all available neurons and adrenaline receptors, leaving the player a sweaty, helpless dishrag after a few-hour session."

It's only downfall is the sideart. One of the reasons I had the cover to our second issue illustrated by Mike Manley is that I always hated the fact that **Robotron** had no sideart. That was my way of giving it some! See? See how I give back to the games? Keepin' it real up in here, aiiight!



# 1983

ClassicGaming.com: **Star Wars**

**CORRECT!**

The Correct Answer is: **Star Wars**



William gets another right! This is one that's easy to get wrong, too. Because 1983 is absolutely stacked. I'll quickly list off the contenders in no particular order other than the first 3: **Discs of Tron**, **Major Havoc**, **Food Fight**, **Crossbow**, **Lost Tomb**, **Crystal Castles**, **Mappy**, **Xevious**, and **Journey** (very underrated). Discs of Tron is probably the closest anyone came in a bid for an upset, but there's just no way to match the 3D speed and furious gameplay of **Star Wars**.

This game is pure 3D flight excitement. The ventilator shaft approach. Folks. Gents. Poseurs extraordinaire. It just doesn't get much better than that. Have you ever completed that trick where you hit Darth Vader's ship 30 times? Neither have I. I think it's a myth. Actual speech samples from the movie are the perfect added touch. Obi-wan urges you to

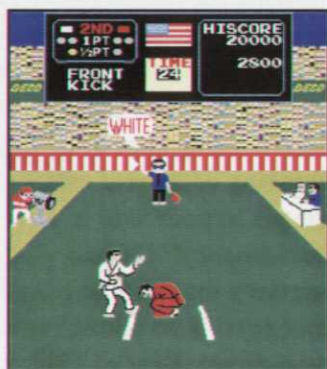
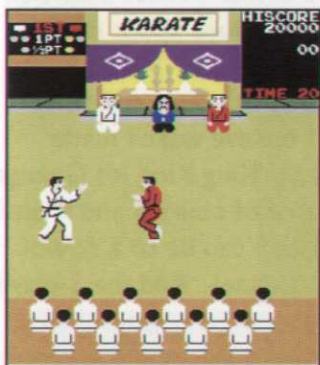
"Use the Force!" as you enter the ventilator shaft. If you make it through and destroy the Death Star without using your guns to make it through, then you get so many extra points. You can only do it on the early levels, though. It's impossible later on. This was a big year, with a lot of competition, but the vector powerhouse Star Wars takes it home.

# 1984

ClassicGaming.com: **Karate Champ**

**CORRECT!**

The Correct Answer is: **Karate Champ**



Well, William is on a roll, now! This one was surprisingly tough. One doesn't usually equate 1984 with great video arcade games. This is about the time that video arcade games turned into market-driven clones, and when gamers began to turn to home computer games for the wide-open frontiers of creativity. **I, Robot**, however, the first game with 3-D polygons, was wildly creative. **Paperboy** was also a blast! And let's not forget that 1984 saw the release of **Marble Madness**, an absolutely phenomenal game, and one that was very, very popular in arcades. You know what? I'm changing my vote! No, just kidding.

**Karate Champ** has to take it. It was just too cool. The cabinets weren't, however. This game put "conversion kits" on the map. So, these cabinets were usually hack-job eyesores. But with the **Karate Kid** blowing up theaters, and Americans filing into Martial Arts dojos at a record pace, this was the perfect game for 1984. Myself, I played this game to death. The positioning battle in this head-to-head game was awesome, and the attack variation seemed limitless at the time. The only thing it left out was the "crane kick." *If do right, there is no defense, Daniel son.* This game just never got old. In fact, I feel like playing it right now...



# 1985

ClassicGaming.com: **Gauntlet**

**WRONG!**

The Correct Answer is: **Space Harrier**



I can't complain much about William's pick, because there is no real competition for 1985. It's slim pickings.

I was never a huge **Gauntlet** fan, although I did play a lot of it in 1985-86, just because of the nice theme and the fact that you could sort of go on a little adventure with your friends. And I was going to pick it by default, then I thought: *Wait! What about Space Harrier?* Oh, nevermind. I think that was 1986. Actually, checking into it, I discovered it was released in late 1985. So, I can pick it! And really, what else was there in 1985? The **Empire Strikes Back** kit for the 1983 **Star Wars** game, was nice, but it doesn't really warrant its own slot.

**Gauntlet** was nice, but it got boring because of how limited your movement and options were. You would just get overwhelmed by enemies and hitting the fire button repeatedly, while cornered, seemed more like work than play.

**Space Harrier** was breath-taking to watch. And the feeling of movement while playing the game was superb. The level variety, the desolate, fantasy landscapes, the action, it just can't be beat. Not by **Gauntlet**, anyway.

# 1986

ClassicGaming.com: **Arkanoid**

**WRONG!**

The Correct Answer is: **Rampage**



I always hated **Arkanoid**. I don't know why exactly. But the mere sight of it still bothers me. So, forget **Arkanoid** being picked. Just wanted to admit my bias right away.

I was tempted to really rock the boat this time and pick **Joust 2**. I think there's a whole group of those rare games that will make up another Top 10 list in the future, though. It's the "in" thing among **Joust** enthusiasts to write it off by saying "**Joust 2** sucks!" That's stupidity, however. It's a phenomenal game. More about it in another issue. And I digress...

So, **Rampage** wins. Why? It's pure creativity made fun. This is a game I can't believe wasn't made before 1986. King King (not really King King, it's George the giant ape, for licensing reasons of course) and friends get points for how destructive they can be to a downtown metropolis. What a great theme! Add the 3-player, battle royale into the mix, and you've got something special. Being shot at by police helicopters and struck by lightning while you crush skyscrapers and eat people that get in your way is *what I'm talking about when I talk about America!* Of course, pounding one of your fellow monsters that gets uncomfortably near your high score point total is an added head-to-head attraction. Awesome game! Best of 1986 by a fairly wide margin.



# 1987

ClassicGaming.com: **Street Fighter**

**WRONG!**

The Correct Answer is: **Double Dragon**



I'm not all that vehement about this one. **Street Fighter** is decent. But I think the better choice is to wait until the '90s, when the game was fully realized, to give it a slot. There's not much call for a Top-10 of the '90s, however. **Street Fighter II** would definitely grab the top spot for 1991, though, if there were.

You might not think 1987 has much to offer, but you'd be surprised. **Xenophobe**, **A.P.B.**, **Dragon Spirit**, **Xybots**, **Roadblasters**, **Contra** and **Rastan** were all of the Class of '87. Rastan doesn't look like much. It looks like a simple side-scroller with a Conan rip-off main character. Well, actually, that's what it is. But it's still fun! I really loved Rastan and was tempted to pick it and simultaneously cause readers to go into convulsions all over the country. But then again, there may be convulsions over **Double Dragon**, too.

I first encountered Double Dragon when I was a teenager visiting an ice-rink in Orlando, next to which was a huge arcade. There were 7 of these machines in a row, all with a "New Game" sign above their marquee. With 24 year-old thugs in Metallica jean jackets lining up quarters all over the 7 control panels, it didn't look like JayDoubleyouSeventhGrader would ever get a chance to play it! I finally did and was completely hooked for awhile. You gotta love the "There can be only one!" ending, too!

# 1988

ClassicGaming.com: **Tetris**

**Correct!**

The Correct Answer is: **Tetris**



I can't argue with William on this one. He's right. **Tetris** is the best arcade game of 1988.

In 1985, a Russian named Alexey Pajitnov developed Tetris in Moscow. Later that same year, he adapted it for IBM-PC clones, to be played all over the world. Atari soon grabbed the license for the arcade and released it in 1988. The whole Atari/Nintendo/Tengen thing is very ugly and bitter, so I won't get into it. I'll just say it was so ugly that it dragged on until 1993!

Even though this game was very popular for a arcade game at the time, selling over 15,000 machines, it wasn't until it was packaged with the Nintendo Game Boy in 1989 that the world was truly impacted by this game. It's available for I believe just about every platform available after it's release.

The arcade version is the same Tetris you know and love. It has all the Russian buildings in the background, and the nice colorful blocks, which are all made of 4 small squares.

It's really an ingenious game, to be that simple and yet so addictive. I've long since kicked the habit, but I was known to rack up Tetris' for hours. I once had the entire screen full except for 2 lines at the top, and ended up working it back down to only a third of the screen and playing for another 20 minutes. Yes, in the arcade, too. Not sitting on the commode with my Game Boy. Get some, poseur!



# 1989

ClassicGaming.com: **Shadow Dancer**

**WRONG!**

The Correct Answer is: **Klax**



William gave two picks for 1989. **Shadow Dancer** and **Zero Wing** tied. I'm going to pretend like I didn't see the Zero Wing pick, because that's unforgivable. A lame game doesn't make the list because the programmers can't speak English, and a cool flash movie was made about it. Yes, the whole thing was funny...for about 2 days. 48 hours. Not one minute longer. *It's over, Johnny. Remember?*

Shadow Dancer is a side-scroller about a ninja and his white dog. Yes. Moving right along...

Now, I had a hard time choosing between **Stun Runner** and **Klax**. Stun Runner was brilliant, and very intriguing to play, and I don't want to pick puzzle games back-to-back, but I have to. Klax just offered a little more fun and replay value.

I still play Klax on the Atari Lynx all the time. The one problem I had with the arcade game was the "kit" thing. I saw some really ugly conversions, and sometimes they were so ugly I would pass them by without playing, even though I wanted to play! Last issue we went in-depth with creator Dave Akers on the whole Klax saga. If you missed it, you are a certifiable dweeb, and you can now be on your way. *These aren't the droids you're looking for. 'Move along.'* **JayDoubleYouMcLaughlin** is signing off! Thanks for tuning in. **Bye-bye!**



*"Don't you just love the smug way I, JWMcLaughlin, shoot down Classicgaming.com's picks? Don't you just hate me?"*

*"What? Exidy wants to do his own list? There's no way I want to see Boulder Dash and WhoDunnit? on any Top-10 list. Fuggitaboutit!"*



*"You think Satan's Hollow still deserves to be in this list? I can then say with metaphysical certitude that you a fool, sir!"*

\*Note: I just listed Classicgaming.com's picks because it made it more fun to do this list! They are great guys, and all the WRONG! stuff was just tongue n' cheek. Except the Satan's Hollow part. I meant that. The foolish Shadow Dancer, Arkanoid and Street Fighter parts, too. Can I get a "Woo hoo!"? <maniacal laughter>



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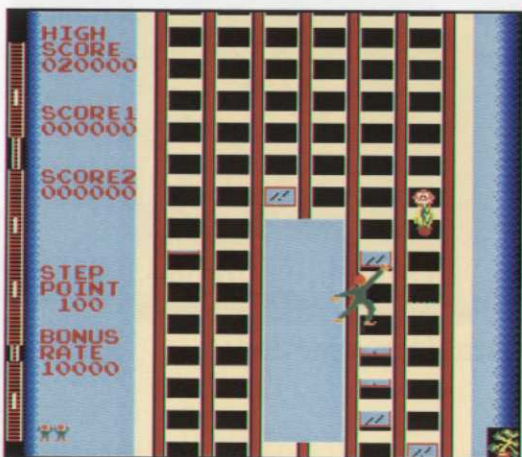


# This Issue's Featured Game: Crazy Climber

By Evil Exidy

**Crazy Climber** Designed by Nihon Bussan Co., Ltd - 1980

Imagine walking into a game room back in the early 80's, an arcade full of video games. So many different games to choose from! Which one would you play first? The newest game? The one with the best graphics and sounds? I was the type of person that always liked playing the odd ball games; games I had never seen before. This gave me a chance to explore and play games that were super rare like Pepper II, Devil Fish, Thief, Cliff Hanger, Gain Ground, Wild Western, Space Panic and many others. I didn't see many Crazy Climbers in arcades, as a matter of fact, I only remember seeing it once as a kid. So I would say it was a semi hard to find game.



## CRAZY CLIMBER

**PLAYING RULES**

Hold the opened window ledge firmly with both hands. Avoid the closing windows or you will fall. Right lever is your right arm, left lever is your left arm. Use levers as you would your arms. You will encounter many falling obstacles as you climb. If both your hands are on a window ledge, most of these small obstacles will NOT make you fall and just lose some bonus points.

**HOW TO PLAY**

1 Neutral position.

2 How to climb: Move right lever down, left lever up at once, then reverse procedure.

3 Climb diagonally. Can't go back and climb too quick.

4 Climb straddling by holding both levers to the extreme outside and then climb.

5 Move sideways by moving both levers to the side which you wish to move.

6 Trouble?: Move both levers up or down.

KEEP IN MIND: WHEN YOU MOVE, BOTH YOUR HANDS HAVE TO BE ON THE WINDOW LEDGE!!

Now, climb like crazy!, and reach the top where a helicopter will be waiting. Get rescued and receive a bonus. Now you are ready to challenge different building!!

**Nichibutsu**  
MADE IN JAPAN

### Game play:

The objective of Crazy Climber is basically to climb the building using a death-defying daredevil super fly character dressed in green, reach the top and grab hold of the helicopter, while avoiding various objects such as bird poop, pots, closing windows, apes punching, etc. Two joy-sticks are used to control the character, one controls the left arm and the other the right arm.





### Cabinets:

The game was imported in several different cabinets: Nichibutsu deluxe cabinet, standard cabinet, mini and the cocktail and it was licensed to Taito in America which released the standard orange cabinet, mini and cocktail designs.

### First Memory:

I remember walking into Chuck E Cheese (Boulder Colorado) back in 1980/1981 and seeing a Crazy Climber for the first time. It was in the big orange cabinet (the American Taito release). Some kid kept putting tokens in it every couple of minutes, because he wanted to reach the top of the building. Which never happened! I placed my token on the bottom right hand side of the video game bezel (right above the control panel), which meant I was next to play the game. Once the kid lost all his men, he gave me a dirty look and walked away from the machine. I thought to myself, "what a jerk. He sucks. I'll teach him how its done." My brother and I put our tokens in the machine and all hell broke loose. We couldn't control the guy at all. That crazy Crazy Climber character was getting stuck, birds kept pooping on me, windows kept closing on my hands! One arm on one window and the other in some other crazy place. Aahhhhhhhhhhhhhhh! Before you knew it, the game was over! I lasted a total of 50 seconds and my brother lasted about 2 minutes. That's it. GAME OVER! Needless to say, I really disliked Crazy Climber from this point on. The game play was too tough because of the two joysticks that controlled the characters movements on the screen.

Now, as a mature adult with endless wisdom and patience, I see the game through rose-colored glasses. The Nichibutsu cabinet is a freakin' masterpiece. Shiny white cabinet, beautiful logo and art work. Slick looking bezel and control panel. Even at night, I almost have to wear sunglasses just to look at it. The game play itself is not as hard as I remember it either. After struggling with it for a few minutes I finally managed to control that little human fly with ease. Basically getting the rhythm and climbing the building as quickly as possible was my first objective. That wasn't the only problem I had to overcome, figuring out the obstacles was the second objective. All the residents within the building don't like the Crazy Climber climbing the walls, so they open their windows and throw out pots and slam the windows on the characters hands. The annoying bird is a pain also, he follows the character across the screen pooping and dropping eggs like a maniac. I don't even want to mention the big ape, he grunts and tries to punch you off the building. Very frustrating, but now I have figured out the basic idea of the game and am able to enjoy the game much more.

-EE



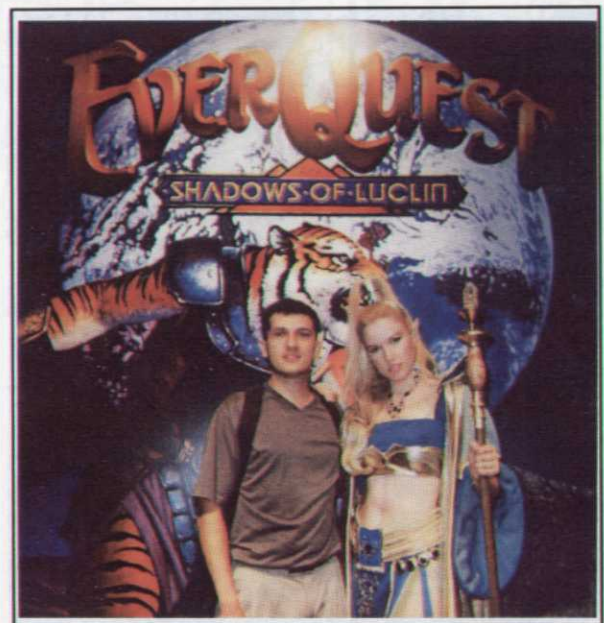








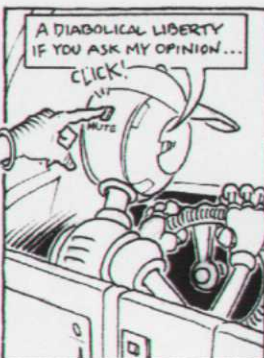
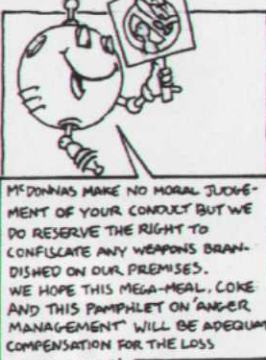
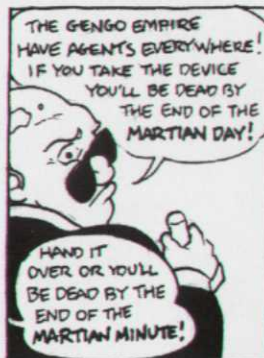
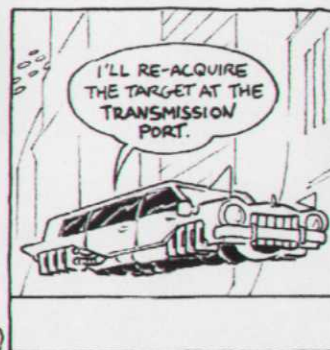
**EVIL EXIDY THE SUCKA...**





## HELENA BOLD

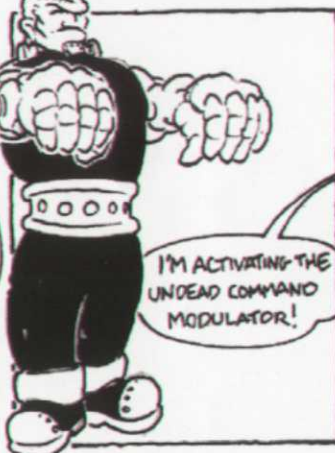
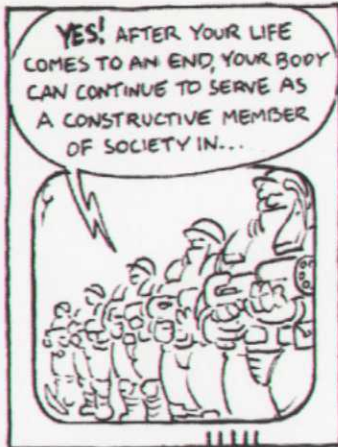
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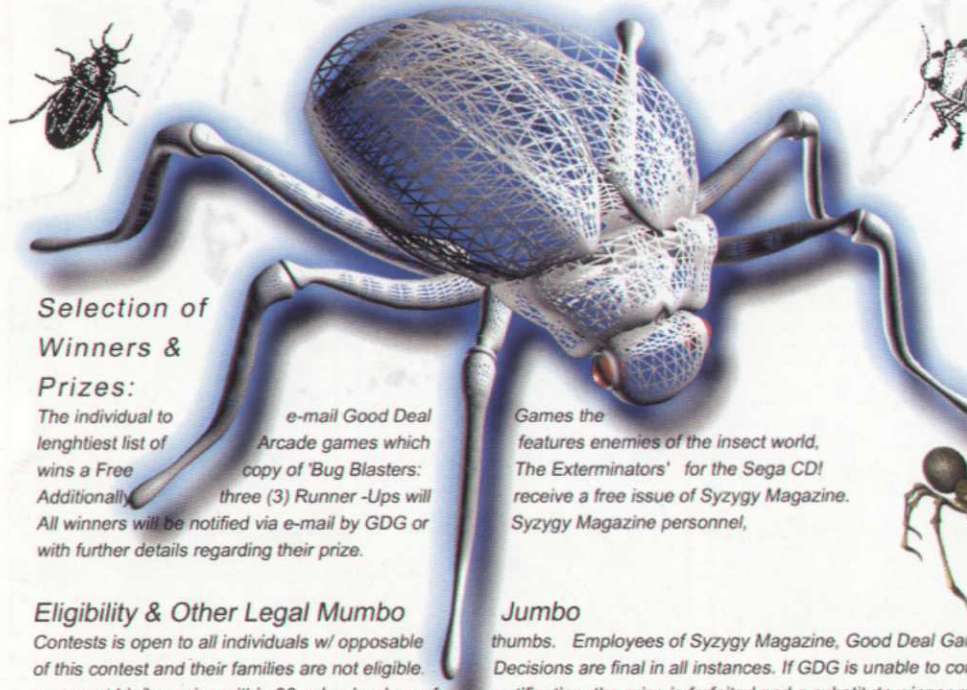
Sure, everyone remembers Centipede, but do you remember Stanley the Gardner of Donkey Kong 3 that guarded his vegetable garden from an endless swarm of insects? What about Gottlieb's Exterminator, or Anteater by Stern? There are more than you remember, and more than you think!

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Make your list of arcade games featuring those pesty bugs. Visit the GDG web page online, located at <http://www.GoodDealGames.com> and e-mail us your list. Then prepare for war with small arthropod animals of the class Insecta, and get your flyswatter ready!



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