inter action

MAGAZINE

SIERRA SPORTS

INTRODUCING THE NEW GENERATION OF SPORTS SIMULATIONS

HARDWARE REVIEW MAKE YOUR GAMES SCREAM WITH A 3D CARD

IN 1997, over a million people went to HELL

Now it's time to go back.

"Hellfire is simply an excellent addition to Diablo."
—Mark Asher, GamePen

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Special thanks to David "The Hammer" Senan. Most of you don't know what that means, but it is *very deep* and *very heavy*. Way to go Pushpendra!

Play

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LORDS II
OF THE REALM

ULTRA
MINIGOLF

ACRO
PHOBIA

YOU DON'T KNOW
JACK
the netSHOW
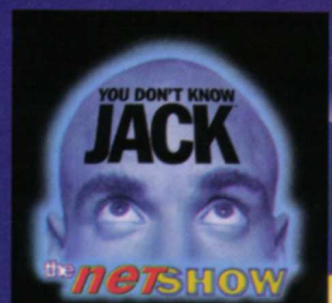
* Games are Internet-only versions

Faster.

Picabo First in Split-Second Finish

American Alpine skier Picabo Street wrote yet another page in the history books by winning the Gold Medal at the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan. The Women's Super-G (downhill slalom), which Picabo won by a mere 0.01 seconds, featured the closest finish in Olympic history: just 0.07 seconds separated the top three finishers. Our congratulations go out to this fantastic athlete.

An inspiration for many, Picabo has battled her way through several travails in her racing career, including what could have been a career-ending knee injury in 1996. In January 1998, after her successful return from knee surgery, she suffered a severe concussion in a high-speed crash just weeks before the Olympics. But, through all her ups and downs, Picabo never wavered from her plans to take Olympic Gold.

Picabo is the second straight American to win the Women's Super-G in the Winter Olympics. Diann Roffe, now a TV commentator, took the Gold at the 1994 games in Lillehammer, Norway.

Now you can experience Picabo's excitement firsthand with *Sierra Sports Ski Racing*. Feel the wind whipping past your face, snow crunching under your feet, and gravity pulling you deeper into your turns. For more information on *Sierra Sports Ski Racing*, please see page 36.

AP/WORLD WIDE PHOTOS

Battle on, Picabo: Not even a concussion can stop this girl.

The Best Play Power Chess '98

International Chess Grandmaster Yasser Seirawan fell in love with the game of chess at the age of 12. By the time he was 19, he had risen to International Grandmaster status. Additionally, Seirawan was instrumental in the development of such computer chess games as *ChessMaster 2000*. So what does the man who is the best play in his spare time? *Power Chess '98*.

"There are several things that all chess computer products should offer—good play, multiple-level functions, solving and analysis modes," Seirawan explains. "*Power Chess* does all these things well, but where it really shines is in the multimedia presentation and having the Queen go through your games, pointing out your errors.

"The tutorial instruction on the doubled-King-pawn opening is an incredible effort. Written by International Master Eric Tangborn, the tutorial alone is worth the price of *Power Chess '98*," he adds. "The sound and instruction combine for a visual and challenging experience. I'm a visual person, and I just love the graphics."

One of the biggest questions surrounding *Power Chess '98* is "Can it really make you a better chess player?" The answer, according to Seirawan, is unequivocally, "Yes! and the amazing thing is, most of the time, you're not aware that you're working hard and your skill is improving," he says. "The presentation is so enjoyable, you end up spending hours playing. That's the whole point—practice makes perfect." Hey ChessMaster...checkmate!

Chess Grandmaster Yasser Seirawan

The Legend of Krondor Lives On

Sierra proudly announces that we're once again teaming up with Raymond E. Feist, science-fiction fantasy writer and creator of *Betrayal at Krondor*, to bring you the eagerly anticipated sequel— *Return to Krondor*. Feist, author of *Magician: Apprentice* and *Magician: Master*, a powerhouse in the world of fantasy literature, has had more than a dozen books translated into 13 languages.

Return to Krondor will be a fantasy role-playing game set in Feist's world of Midkemia. You'll assume the roles of the five main characters: Squire James, a reformed thief; a Keshian sorceress named Jazhara; William ConDoin, the son of Pug the Magician; Brother Solon, the roughhewn warrior/priest; and Kendaric, a reluctant wizard. Your mission: reclaim the most sacred relic of the Ishapian Church, the Tear of the Gods, which was stolen by a band of pirates. With real-time, motion-captured 3D characters, turn-based combat, spectacular special effects, and the legendary imagination of Raymond Fiest, *Return to Krondor* promises to be a role-playing adventure you will never forget!

Science-fiction fantasy writer Raymond E. Feist

Expansive settings will make Return to Krondor the RPG genre leader.

THE TOP FIVE
Sierra Games • Winter '97

1 **Hellfire**

Diablo Add-on

Developer: Synergistic

2 **Sierra Pro Pilot**

Flight Simulator

Developer: Dynamix

3 **Red Baron II**

WWI Flight Sim

Developer: Dynamix

4 **Lords of Magic**

Strategy

Developer: Impressions

5 **NASCAR 2**

Racing Sim

Developer: Papyrus

Games for Every Budget

Sierra's Hoyle® family just got bigger. Along with its current value Hoyle titles (*Hoyle Classic Games*, *Hoyle Poker*, *Hoyle Solitaire*, and *Hoyle Blackjack*), Sierra's introducing *Hoyle Battling Ships* and *War*, *Hoyle Hearts and Spades*, and *Hoyle Bridge and Euchre*— each for only $14! Containing two complete games, each product features several variations on some of the games: *Battling Ships* has seven variations, *Bridge* has four, and *Euchre* has two. As an added bonus in each product, you get Internet-ready versions of some of Hoyle's most popular games. As well as being Internet playable over WON, all of these games feature the same great characters, versatile gameplay, and all the fun of Sierra's original Hoyle titles—for a very competitive price.
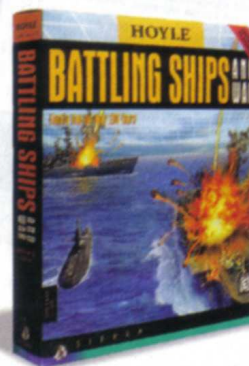
All for WON...

Good news, gamers! Sierra has hooked up with World Opponent Network (WON—**www.won.net**) to bring you the best in online competition. Created by Cendant Software, WON is the premier online game-matching service, linking gamers with common interests, strategies, and the thirst for competition online. Officially going live on April 1, 1998, WON features Game Rooms where you can meet up with other fans of your favorite game; Game News, which provides the latest in industry news; Game Search, where, using a sophisticated search engine, you can find reviews, articles, patches, downloads, and strategies for all kinds of games; Downloads & Demos of WON-enabled games; and Tournaments and Leagues, which lets you test your skills against other competitors for prizes and

World Opponent Network

glory. Combine all this with an exciting online community complete with updates, chat rooms, message boards, developer profiles, player game reviews, and links to demo areas, and you have the

only online gaming site you'll ever need—and, oh yeah, it's completely free!

Featuring games from Sierra, Dynamix, Headgate Technologies, Impressions, and Berkeley Systems, WON allows anywhere from two to 25 people (depending on the game) to compete at one time. One of the best features of WON is its online tournaments. To win and win big you'll first need to follow five basic steps before you can participate in either a league or ladder tournament. First, go to www.won.net and check out the event calendar and then pick your event. Second, sign-up for the tournament at the appropriate time. Third, PRACTICE and practice some more against other people on WON. It's a good way to see what the competition might be out there. Fourth, meet at the designated time and play by the rules. Fifth and the best part of all — win and wait for the prizes to show up at your house. Currently, WON is hosting tournaments for *Football Pro '98, Sierra Sports Golf, Trophy Bass 2, Trophy Rivers, Red Baron II,* and *Civil War Generals 2: Grant, Lee, Sherman.* A complete tournament schedule is available on the website at **www.won.net.**

...and WON for All

WON supports these Sierra Titles:

- 3D Ultra MiniGolf
- Acrophobia
- BIRTHRIGHT
- Civil War Generals 2: Grant, Lee, Sherman
- Sierra Sports Golf
- Football Pro '97
- Football Pro '98
- Trophy Bass 2
- Trophy Rivers
- Hoyle Casino '98
- Hoyle Classic Board Games
- Hoyle Classic Cards
- Lords of Magic
- Lords of the Realm II Siege Pack
- MissionForce: CyberStorm
- Outpost 2: Divided Destiny
- Power Chess '98
- Red Baron II
- Shivers II
- The Realm
- Time Warp of Dr. Brain
- YOU DON'T KNOW JACK: the netshow
- YOU DON'T KNOW JACK: Sports the netshow
- Larry Casino!
- SWAT 2
- CyberStorm 2

Sierra's Got Your Home Covered

Having a hard time mustering up the energy to do some much-needed work around the house? Well, during March, April, and May 1998, Sierra is offering a healthy incentive. When you buy one of our popular Sierra Home titles (*Generations Deluxe, Complete LandDesigner, CompleteHome, Print Artist 4.0 Platinum*, or *USA '98: Streets and Destinations*) during any of these three months, you will find a $20 rebate included in the box. How's that for motivation? Fact is, nobody makes more fun, helpful, ingenious tools for more parts of your house and life than Sierra Home. They've got your home covered!

THE TOP FIVE
Home Productivity Titles
Winter '97

1 Print Artist Platinum
Home
Publishing

2 Complete Home
Home
Productivity

3 MasterCook Suite
Cooking
Software

4 Cooking Light
Cooking
Software

5 LandDesigner
Home
Productivity

It Doesn't Even Take a Stamp

Sierra wants you to win tons of our games! Every time you purchase a Sierra game—including titles from Blizzard and Berkeley Systems—we give you the chance to win 20 free games. "How?" you ask. Inside each product box is a yellow and white registration form. By filling out this form, you register your product with us, earn a free, one-year subscription to *InterAction*, and enter a monthly drawing for 20 free Sierra games of your choice. Just fill out the registration form completely, drop it in the mailbox, and you're automatically entered in the drawing. It's that easy. Just ask Mary Goodman, Lisa Rhodes, and Carl Spillane—our most recent winners. All are looking forward to choosing the games of their choice.

Carl Spillane won 20 free Sierra games, just for registering.

Mask of Eternity Treasure Hunt

Recently, Sierra hosted a 13-week Internet treasure hunt promoting *Mask of Eternity*, the exciting new installment of Roberta Williams' *King's Quest* series. Participants visited different websites each week looking for missing pieces of the *Mask of Eternity*. Once each piece of the Mask was located, a riddle was triggered that contestants had to solve and register on the contest website. Over the course of the 13 weeks, we had more than 10,000 participants, with several hundred of them completing the contest and becoming eligible for the grand prize drawings.

Kevin Buikema, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, won the first grand prize—dinner for two anywhere in the continental United States. His prize includes round-trip airfare, overnight hotel stay, and dinner for two at the restaurant of his choice.

The second grand prize went to Donald Perkins, of New Haven, Kentucky. He won 100 Sierra games of his choice.

Tommy Rutledge of Temple, Texas, won "Music in the Wind" by Bev Doolittle—one of 43,500 signed by the artist and consecutively numbered.

Tricia Fredrickson of Omaha, Nebraska, won lunch in Seattle, Washington, with Sierra co-founder and *Mask of Eternity* creator Roberta Williams. Congratulations to our winners.

Aside from the grand prize winners, more than 100 people won free Sierra games, *Mask* T-shirts, or *Mask* backpacks. Look forward to another Internet treasure hunt prior to the launch of *Mask of Eternity* later this year.

Sierra Pro Pilot—Beyond Real Sweepstakes

Now you can become part of the elite aviation community with an authentic *Sierra Pro Pilot* flight bag. All you have to do is enter Sierra's "Beyond Real Sweepstakes," and you become eligible to win official *Pro Pilot* gear. As a grand prize winner, you will soar to new heights with a rugged, 1940s-modeled, classy collectors-edition flight bag. Second-prize winners receive an official *Pro Pilot* flight cap. This adjustable flight cap is embroidered with the *Pro Pilot* logo.

The "Beyond Real Sweepstakes" is subject to certain official rules. To obtain the official rules, click on the official rules icon at **www.sierra.com/pilot** or send a 3 x 5 card with your name, address, and phone number to: Dynamix, Inc., c/o Sierra Pro Pilot "Beyond Real Rules," 1600 Millrace Drive, Eugene, Oregon 97403.

Enter to win the Beyond Real Sweepstakes by submitting your email in the area provided on the *Pro Pilot* webpage. Please read the Rules & Regulations before submitting your email.

Who Doesn't Know JACK?

On Saturday, October 11, 1997, Kamil Dubinski of London, Ontario, Canada, was reading the comics section of the *Windsor Star* when he spotted a humorous installment of Bill Amend's *Foxtrot*. The comic's theme focuses on Jason, a 10-year-old techno genius. Jason has created some games (spoofed off of popular real-life games) for his website. One game, *PAIGE DON'T KNOW JACK* is a parody of Berkeley's *YOU DON'T KNOW*

JACK. For his winning entry to the Sierra Sighting contest, Kamil wins the Sierra game of his choice. Rock on, Kamil!

If you have seen a Sierra-family product anywhere (on TV, in a newspaper, in a book, etc.), enter our Sierra Sighting contest. Just send us the reference or a description of the reference, and you're automatically entered. You can enter as many different sightings as you want. Send entries to: *InterAction Magazine*; ATTN: Sierra Sightings; PO Box 50038; Bellevue, WA 98105-3008 or email them to **interaction@sierra.com**.

Red Baron II—The Baron Is Back

Enter the "Baron Is Back" sweepstakes, and you may be eligible to become part of WWI history with your very own *Red Baron II* genuine leather fighter jacket. Complete with the Aces logo and the *Red Baron II* insignia, this distinctively rugged masterpiece will make

you stand out as a true *Red Baron* fan. You can check out the official rules by tuning your browser to **www.sierra.com/rb2** or by sending a 3 x 5 card with name, address, and phone number to: Dynamix, Inc., c/o Baron Is Back Sweepstakes, 1600 Millrace Drive, Eugene, Oregon 97403.

Flight Sim Patch Update

Dynamix will be releasing a *Red Baron II* Super Patch sometime in early summer 1998. This patch will contain the much-anticipated 3D acceleration support for *Red Baron II*. Support will include Glide and Direct3D. These formats support 3D graphic acceleration cards such as Diamond's Monster 3D. A full listing of 3D acceleration card support will be listed on the *Red Baron II* website at **www.sierra .com/rb2** in the very near future.
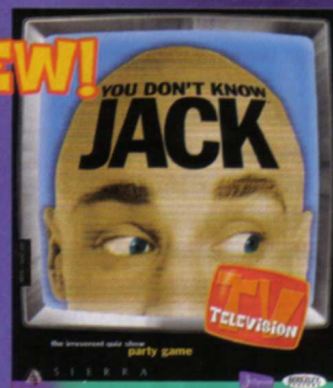
DESTROY MORE.
✠
DISMEMBER MORE.
✠
DISEMBOWEL MORE.

Taking Aim at Half-Life

Can't wait for the year's hottest action game? InterAction writer Paul Quinn hacks through a level—and takes you with him.

By Paul Quinn

WHO KNEW? WHO could have foreseen the accident? Nobody. That's why they're called accidents. The disaster has fractured the fabric of space and time, and now hordes of creatures are running rampant in the complex—clomping, oozing, and slithering through the damaged Portal that appears to lead to some arcane world. I am a doctor, not a Green Beret, but apparently I am the only one around here with his wits in the vicinity of his head. With a scavenged 9mm and a crowbar as my only negotiating tools, I must find my way out of this Drooler-infested silo.

OK, take a deep breath, push the elevator button. The doors open to a headcrab chewing on a scientist's corpse. NASTY! It drags the corpse down the hallway as I exit the elevator. The monster seems happy with its meal, but growls threateningly. It must actually

So much for re-load time. These guys are working together!

OH &#%@$&@%!!!!

I freeze. There is nothing I can do for the poor fool, just watch him disappear through a hole in the ceiling, dragged kicking and screaming by some hideous, slobbering thing into the acoustic tiles. His pathetic, terrified screams are cut short by a wet munching, followed by… "gulp!" Whatever it is, it's a messy eater. I'm outta here!

[**Skeletal animation—Ken Birdwell, Developer:** *The result of Half-Life's skeletal animation system is very smooth, realistic motion for our characters. This system also lets us do several additional things that you won't find in other games: monsters can turn their heads to look at you, deathmatch opponents show proper weapons, and we've created scripted sequences that help tell the story and make the world seem much more alive.*]

Back in the corridor, I take a turn and start toward the door at the other end. There is a large green metal box here, but I am wasting no time with it. As I draw near, a cooing/croaking noise gets louder. Without warning, the ceiling tiles crash down and three creatures looking like a cross between a

think I'm approaching it. "No worries, Crabthing! I won't mess with you, if you don't mess with me."

To my left is a single door and a window. Nearer and to my right are double doors. I'll try those. Locked. I can see another scientist inside, rigid with fear. It has been no use talking to these lab boys. I think their minds were twisted by the accident. Maybe I will find someone later on who can help me, but for now, I'll just move on.

At the other end of the corridor stands another door next to a large window. Locked. Down the corridor I see a scientist screaming—pulling and pounding at a door. What's his problem? He turns and runs out of sight.

"The environs of the base are **crawling**, sometimes **literally**, with activity, and the **game's plot unfolds** partly through the use of strategically placed **story-driving sequences**—not uncontrollable cinematics in the vein of Resident Evil nor a bunch of crappy [full-motion video], but **real-world, real-time scripted events** that happen **around the player**." —*PC Games*

Maybe some of the guards survived. I break out the glass in the window and crawl through. The corridor goes off to the left for a bit, then turns right, out of sight. There is a table with a small metal box in front of me and a green door to the left. I'll try the door. It's unlocked! Let's see what I can find.

demonic crab and a roasted chicken come tumbling down and advance toward me. I could blast them, but I am low on ammo. I better look for another way out. Yow! There are three behind me too! I charge toward the door, dodging these "crabs"—they're not as fast as they are ugly—and try to open the door.

Visualize Worldcraft

So you wanna play God? You want to create your own levels for *Half-Life*? Levels that will smite the unbelievers and cause your fellow gamers to prostrate them-

selves before you and offer a tribute of Cheetos and Mountain Dew? Search no longer. We've included *Worldcraft 2.0*, the actual game editor the designers use, with *Half-Life*. *Worldcraft* is an easy-to-use program loaded with tools and textures for building your own alien-infested cauldron of may-

hem. Best of all, you don't have to be a Portal scientist to use it. You can manipulate character behavior and game AI (artificial intelligence) with *Worldcraft 2.0*. So, you're not just designing your own levels, you're creating your own

gzme. A four-way split screen shows not only dif-ferent wire-model views of your evolving world but an actual textured rendering as well. This means you don't have to go into the game to check out your handiwork. In the beginning there was dark-ness. Now there's *Worldcraft 2.0*.
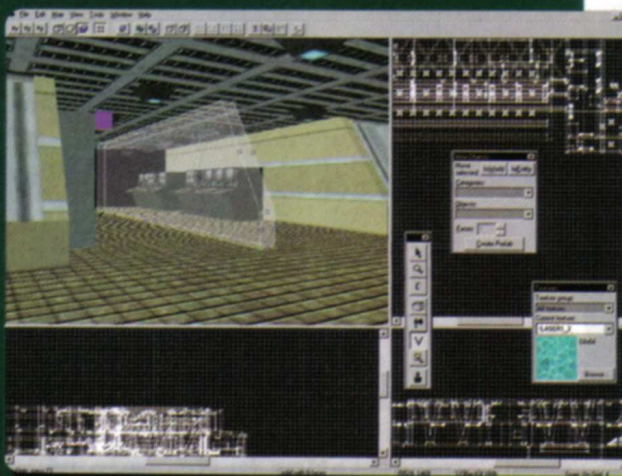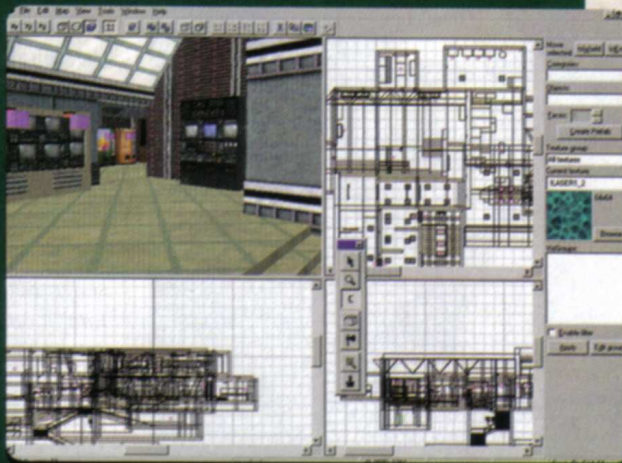
"Personally, I think it is the combination of Worldcraft 2.0 and the Half-Life engine that is coolest. Worldcraft lets level designers control por-tions of the Half-Life AI—not just build architecture and lighting. Basically, Worldcraft 2.0 and Half-Life let level designers be game designers."

—*Gabe Newell, Managing Director of Valve Software*

NOT!

What is it with all the locked doors? Oh yeah, disaster protocol. All doors lock in the event of an accident to contain all personnel for easy consumption by twisted alien flesh chompers. Dandy.

Well, if sideways doesn't work, how about up? I see a ladder up where the tiles caved in, but I can't reach it. How about standing on the green box? I probably should deal with these critters first. I pump a few rounds into the near-est one, dodge another as it tries to leap up and rip off my face, and bolt back the way I came. The big box is too tall to get up on, but how about that smaller one? I slide the small box off its table and move it toward the big box. Hey! The crabs are following me! These things are smarter than I thought. OK, slide the big box under the ladder and slide the small one next to it. In two bounds I am on the ladder, climbing up into…yikes! Headcrab!

[Realism—John Guthrie, Level Designer: *We really want the world of* Half-Life *to behave like the real world. For instance, you can duck behind boxes or crates and then push them along the floor to use them for cover. Half-Life is also a continuously evolving world, so you don't have to sit around waiting for level tran-sitions. And things happen in the environment—even when you're not there. When you return to an area where you think you've killed all the creatures, there may actually be more creatures waiting to greet you because they've been breeding while you were gone.*]

That was close. I don't want to find out what those things can do with those four claws. OK, through the ducts, pry open a grate, and I see a scientist behind a window, frantically pointing at a bullet-riddled corpse and something I can't quite see. Something awful!

What is *that* noise? It sounds like a…Mini-Gun!! OW! OW! OW! Thank heaven for these crates, otherwise

This Is Your Half-Life

By Marc Laidlaw

Deep in the bowels of the Black Mesa Research Labs, a decommissioned missile base, a top-secret project is underway. Information about the project is strictly on a "need-to-know" basis, and as a low-level research associate you "need to know" very little. Each morning you ride the train to work from the employee dorms, you put on your environmental protection suit, you enter the test chamber, and you run stress-tests on whatever odd devices have been delivered from some other nameless part of the Black Mesa compound.

But this morning is different. This morning, your test lab is suddenly the most important place on Earth—because something is going seriously wrong. Maybe it's sabotage—maybe it's an accident. Whatever the reason, reality is getting all bent out of shape. One minute you're doing your job, pressing buttons. The next thing you know, you're staring into an alien world. Something huge with too many arms is taking a bite out of your partner's face. An explosion of unearthly light...then darkness. Disaster. Sirens wailing. People screaming. And everywhere you turn, people are dying—being eaten.

Monsters are everywhere. Monsters—there's no better word for them. You head for the surface, to get the hell away from ground zero, but the usual routes are unpassable—damaged by the disaster, infested with headcrabs and houndeyes and increasingly larger and hungrier creatures. Madness is the order of the day. You enlist the help of traumatized scientists and trigger-happy guards to get through high-security zones, sneaking and fighting your way through ruined missile silos and Cold War cafeterias, through darkened air ducts and subterranean railways where you must ride a missile transport sled straight into the jaws of a slavering nightmare. When you finally come in sight of the surface, you realize the aliens aren't your only enemies—for now the government forces have arrived with heavy-weapon goons, squadrons of ruthless containment troops, and stealthy assassin gals. Their orders seem to be that when it comes to the Black Mesa labs, nothing must get out alive...and especially not you, the guy who made it all go bad. So much for the cavalry.

When your own species turns against you, where do you turn? You've uprooted a bunch of nasty government secrets. You've found the portal to another world, and an alien light comes shining through. Can it get any worse over there? Some things you just have to see for yourself.

Marc Laidlaw is a Half-Life Game Designer/Writer, as well as the award-winning author of several novels including Dad's Nuke *and* The 37th Mandala.
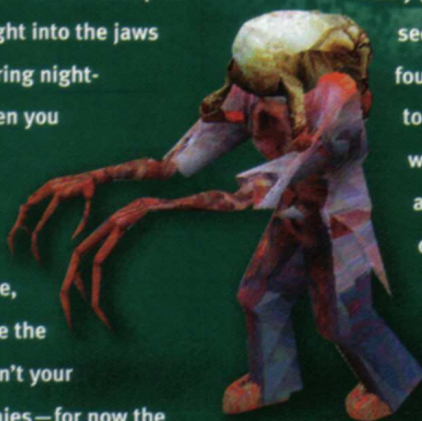
I'd be toast! Who is that guy, and where did he get a Mini-Gun? Well, I'm not hanging around to chat. Stairs! Two flights up to another set of offices. While pausing to scrape my wits off the floor, I hear a familiar noise. A couple of shots into the ceiling drops another headcrab through the tiles. Several shots spatter it across the floor, but I am nearly out of bullets. If I had a more powerful weapon, I might give myself better odds of leaving this place breathing. But this is not about raw firepower, it's about staying alive. If that means running like a gazelle on steroids every time something moves, so be it—I'm not proud. OK, corridor ahead, doors on either side, let's go left.

Eww!!

Those scientists have got to stay away from those vents. He held on to the edge for a few tugs, but I think that tentacle got the better of him. This place has more giblets than a McNugget.

> "...monsters have enough brains to retreat, go rally some homies up and come back to fry your ass."
>
> —Gamer's Zone

Remember the days when you only had to look left and right for oncoming danger?

Let's Take It Outside...

Think action games are always set in dark caverns and dungeons? Think again.

[Scripted Sequences—Doug Wood, Animator: *It's not always best just to kill everything that moves; sometimes you'll be rewarded if you try to save someone's life. For example, imagine walking down a hallway and seeing a screaming scientist being pulled into an open vent by some terrible creature. If you choose to save him, he might open up a secret door for you that has a medkit inside, or give you important information. Plus, we just want people to occasionally catch themselves screaming, "Watch out!" to other characters in the game.*]

Let's try that other door. As I open it, a muffled voice shouts "Stop!" and I am sprayed with machine-gun fire. I dive back into the corridor. Grunts! These guys are supposed to be on our side, but now they'll blast anything that moves. Down the corridor to... MORE GRUNTS! Not waiting, I pump two shots into the first soldier. Shouting, "Medic!" he ducks behind a pillar. Man, these guys seem a lot smarter than before. Hiding, following me, working together, something has changed.

[Advanced AI—Steve Bond, AI Developer: *Half-Life's AI (artificial intelligence) system isn't based on hard-coded "if-then" decisions. Rather, it uses a more flexible module system, which means we can create a huge variety of behaviors for individuals and for groups. That means monsters are both smart and unpredictable. Small monsters can perform a threat assessment, for example, and go recruit others if they think they can't beat you. Your human adversaries can coordinate their movements, so some may provide cover fire while others advance or lob grenades at you.*]

I charge through while a second Grunt clips me with automatic fire and find myself in an office waiting room full of headcrabs. Terrific. A quick move to the right avoids the leaping organic Cuisinart. I run to the back; I can see a security guard through a window. Some crowbar action gets me in. "Come on, Barney! Let's blow this place!" The terrified guard follows me out. We find we are able to loop back behind the Grunts. Wow, I think that's *my* blood on the wall. There's another nail in the coffin of my mood.

One soldier is watching the lobby where I disappeared, the other is... oh, so that's what happens when a crab doesn't miss. Barney draws his gun and shoots the Grunt, the Grunt starts shooting Barney, I run like hell toward a flashing exit sign, bleeding, out of ammo—but still breathing. Sorry, Barney.

So much blood, so much terror, and enemies abound: *Half-Life* is better than no life at all. 🖝

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Dynamix

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By Eric Carlton

If YOU'VE BEEN ANXIOUSLY awaiting the release of *Sierra Pro Pilot*, take a deep breath—the sky's no longer the limit. In fact, it's only the beginning. Even if you're not yet one of the millions of flight sim fans out there, you're not going to believe the rush as the frigid waters of San Francisco Bay, which dauntingly mark the end of the runway, come rushing at your Cessna CitationJet at 115 knots. Once you lift the nose and are airborne—you own the skies.

Since a truly realistic flight sim should be every bit as challenging as flying a real aircraft, I'll be taking you step by step through a normal takeoff and landing. After you have accomplished this, you will have all the skills you need to go out and explore the skies on your own.

Choose Your Weapon

Start by picking your aircraft. *Pro Pilot* has five sophisticated flying machines from which to choose. The default plane is the Cessna 172 Skyhawk; others include the Beechcraft v35 Bonanza, the Beechcraft Baron 58, the Beechcraft Super King Air B200, and the Cessna CitationJet. For beginners I would recommend the Skyhawk due to its slower speed, which gives you a little more time to correct yourself if you start falling out of the sky.

Next, select the airport you'd like to take a spin around. I flew from LAX since I know the layout, but the list of
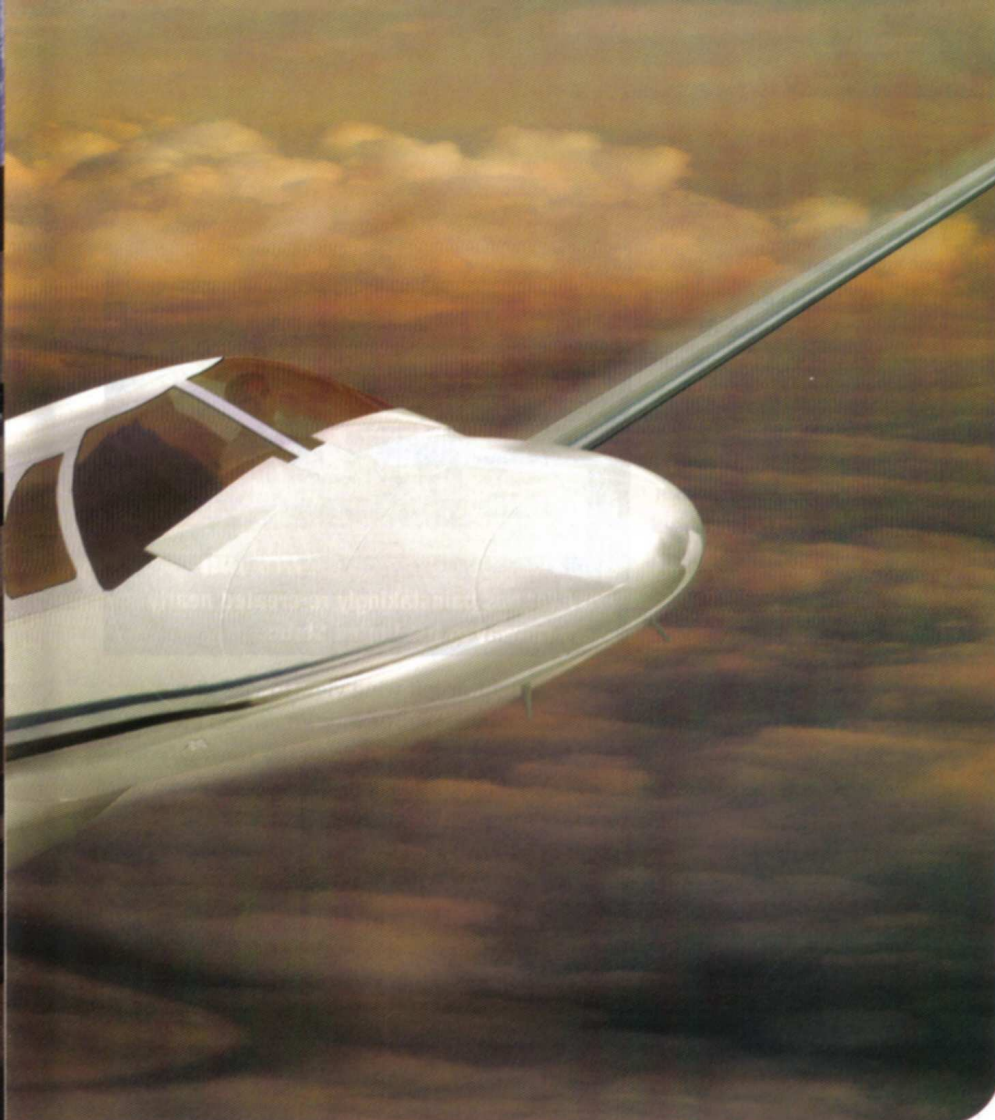
and very easy to follow. In fact if you view them all and understand them, I'm sure your ability to complete a real flight training program would be greatly improved over someone who hadn't had any simulation training at all. I found a wealth of information that I understood much better after playing this sim because of the clarity of the video clips.

I would review the following clips before attempting your first flight unless you are experienced with simulators or already have your pilot's license: Normal Takeoff, VY Climb, Level Off From Climb, Constant Altitude Turn, Constant Airspeed Descent, Level Off From Descent, and Final Approach. These are only a few of the clips and they contain the basic information necessary to maneuver.

Takeoff

I'll lead you through the basic steps necessary to accomplish a takeoff and landing (in a training flight pattern) from any airport. In a training flight pattern we are taking off from a runway, making a large rectangle, and coming back to land on the same runway. There are terms for this (as I found out in one of the video clips and had verified by my friend who flies a Lear Jet); the takeoff is generally in the direction of the wind (imagine the wind coming at you parallel to the runway), called the upwind leg. Make a hard 90-degree turn across the wind and this is called the crosswind leg. Make another 90-degree turn so you are flying with the

airports seems to encompass every runway in the United States. I was amazed at the accuracy of the view outside my window as I lifted off and saw the familiar landmarks that make up the vast city of Los Angeles.

Preflight Checklist

Once you are on the runway, you can view a preflight checklist. And in this

sim it's not a bad idea to take the time to read the background materials and view some of the instructional video clips that come with the game. The First Flight video is very instructional for beginners and even taught me several things I didn't find out from playing other sims. You can view a clip and then jump into a situation that helps you train specifically for that maneuver. All of the clips are very well done

CLEARED FOR TAKEOFF

PRE-FLIGHT CHECKLIST

Brakes on, throttle full, engine instruments checked, brakes released. Stay on the center line using the rudder pedals, and pull back at 55 knots.

SIERRA PRO PILOT

wind and this is called the downwind leg. A third 90-degree turn perpendicular to the wind in the direction of the runway is called the base, and a fourth 90-degree turn lines you up directly for your final approach.

On the Tarmac

First select your fuel tanks; on the Cessna Skyhawk, select "B" for both. Next turn on the battery, which supplies power to the magnetos. Turn the magneto selector to "S" to start the engines. You should see and hear the plane respond as the engines come to life. Get ready to maneuver and push the throttle control to full power. You will slowly start down the runway. Watch your airspeed indicator; when it hits 55 knots, pull back on the yoke (or joystick) to lift off.

Keep your eye on the altimeter (you'll know all your instruments after watching the First Flight clip). When you get to 1,000 feet you'll be high enough to start a safe turn. Check your heading and make a note of it. This heading will

be the same on the upwind leg and final approach, with each leg having a heading 90 degrees from the last until you come back to where you started.

Constant Altitude Turn

If you have Other Air Traffic turned on, check for traffic in the direction of your turn. To start your maneuver, turn the yoke and push the rudder pedal in the direction of the turn. When you reach a medium bank angle of 30 degrees, center your yoke and rudder controls. Increase back pressure (pull back on the stick or yoke) to keep the craft level and trim the aircraft. Once you are in your turn you will have to roll out of the turn halfway through to align properly with the next leg. In this case we will roll out at 45 degrees since the turn is a 90-degree turn. To roll out, simply turn the yoke and push the rudder in the other direction. Increase forward pressure (push the stick or yoke forward) to level the craft and retrim if necessary. This is a constant altitude turn and you will use this same maneuver in the three remaining turns of the trip.

Crosswind

You should now be on the crosswind leg. Keep your eye on the altimeter to make sure you are at a safe altitude (if you completed the turn properly, you should still be at around 1,000 feet). Fly straight and level for awhile, making sure that you are at cruising speed (110 knots for the Cessna Skyhawk), and then complete another constant altitude turn to begin the downwind leg.

You will be flying parallel to the runway for most of this leg, and you should check your right or left wing view often to verify this and to check to see when you should begin your next turn. When you are a safe distance past the other end of the runway, complete another constant altitude turn to start the base leg.

Once again, frequently check your

Pro Pilot has painstakingly re-created nearly every runway in the United States.

right or left wing view to visually acquire the runway. When you are still a short distance from the runway, complete another constant altitude turn to prepare for the final approach.

Final Approach

You will be reducing power as you come in for the landing because you will be gaining speed from the descent; apply carburetor heat before reducing throttle. Reduce power until your RPM gauge reads 1700. Keep the runway centered in your window. The threshold of the runway should be just above the nose of the plane; don't let it rise too far above or below the nose.

Use shallow turns to correct your approach posture. Extend your flaps to full and maintain your airspeed at 65 knots. Control your speed by adjusting throttle. When you are at an altitude of 20 feet above the runway, reduce your power all the way to idle; pull back on the yoke, keeping your nose slightly elevated. Once you have touched down, hit your brakes slightly to halt the aircraft.

If everything went well, you should be safely back on terra firma. If not— well, don't feel too badly. Remember—this is as close to flying as you can get while still remaining safely on the ground. Pro Pilot has earned a place in my software library as much for the informative training clips as for its fantastic terrain effects and hyper-realistic flight model. This is a flight simulation program that shouldn't be missed. *i*

TWIN ENGINE TERROR 101

One of the most challenging training procedures student pilots must master before receiving their Twin Engine Rating is recovering on takeoff when they lose one engine on a twin-engine aircraft. Try this:

- Apply full rudder in the opposite direction to the lost motor (to keep the aircraft flying somewhat straight).

- "Feather" the prop (change the pitch of the prop to a position where it produces no lift or drag).

- Attempt to get down in one piece! This is the hard part, because you're operating on 50 percent power, and that power is asymmetrical. You have to carefully maneuver down and try to land.

FIRE
in the
SKY

Chris Hudak shares some notes, tactics, and dicta for Red Baron II, aerodeliria, and the laws of gravity: Always Remember Where the Hell You Are.

Red Baron II

www.sierra.com/**rb2**

Developer
Dynamix

Preferred Minimum Requirements
Pentium 133+, 24MB RAM, WIN95

Format
WIN95 CD

Price
$54.95
(Order #83680)

Available: Now — 1.800.757.7707

By Chris Hudak

Like most simple, obvious points, this one has to be delivered through a megaphone: Missions in *Red Baron II* have a high degree of what the military coyly calls "fluidity," which means that things and situations can come unstuck in unfunny ways quickly, instantly boosting the Dire-O-Meter from zero to extremely hairy. So hairy, in fact, that it's alarmingly easy to forget (amid the air-raid sirens, machine-gun fire, hissing rockets, jinking dog-fights, and general avionic ballyhoo) the raw fact that you're way up in "bird land" where your God never intended you to be in the first place. Not to mention you're strapped into a rickety, creaking, temperamental death-machine and wrestling a small constantly inter-acting quartet of forces: gravity, lift, drag, and thrust—any of which could rear its ugly Newtonian head at a moment's notice and kick your aviating ass through the Big Goal Posts in the sky. Before moving on to the specific, jutting-chin arenas of actual dogfight tactics, a few basic considerations should be stored securely in the forebrain.

Speed

Quickness kills. It's all very well and good to assume a nice, slow approach as you coordinate your attack, but you must commit as you come within range of the enemy's guns. Keeping your speed high will allow you to instantly trade your velocity for altitude, which

is needed in post-bombing or post-strafing attacks. Then, there's the fun-o-rama of stalls: when the flow of air over your plane's wing is interfered with, a decrease in lift results, and you've suddenly got a dive on your hands. If your plane stalls out, the speed that results from its subsequent dive is the only thing that's going to save it—provided you have time. Which brings us to…

Altitude

Altitude is crucial for getting the literal upper hand in attacks. In general, if you attack from above an enemy pilot, you will be able to conduct the attack on your own terms, trading altitude for speed, if needed for a pursuing dive or even for an escape maneuver of your own. The lower enemy must, conversely, give up some of his speed and/or maneuverability if he is to meet your attack and in the meantime will be in danger from your guns if he does not literally rise to your challenge (see Boelcke's Dicta sidebar).

Keeping a good buffer of altitude between you and the ground will also help by giving you the necessary time to pull out of dangerous spins and stalls. Remember, it's not the howling, flailing fall from 1,300 feet that kills you; it's the sudden stop.

Easy…Easy…

Overenthusiasm can be your worst enemy in *Red Baron II*—rushing into attacks, blowing right by an opponent who calmly arcs around and stays on your Six, overfocusing on targets and forgetting to watch your back, and especially overcompensating maneuvers. These old birds are fragile and twitchy. Isn't it enough to have enemy guns flakking you from the ground and some tenacious Ace-hole trying to machine-gun your rudder from the rest of your aircraft, without sealing your own fate by yanking into a harsh nose-up and tearing your airframe to shreds? Not only will such hair-trigger actions endanger your plane, but they'll make keeping an eye on your prey—often little more than a dark speck against the

glare of the sky—much more difficult than the use of cool, steady maneuvers.

Combat Tips

Some general combat tips to keep in mind:

▼ The cockpit view, realistic but cluttered with aileron, prop, gun-mount, and other visual impedimenta, isn't for everyone. Try experimenting with the chase-plane view, and if it works better, use it. You may even find yourself toggling back and forth between them. This is also a good way to find the ground if you become disoriented in a climb.

▼ The ultimate heart of the dogfight is who can out-turn whom; to facilitate tight turns, bank hard to one side and keep the nose of your aircraft aimed just above the horizon.

▼ Take advantage of the autopilot features between engagements, especially the "alt-A" command, which will take your plane smoothly to successive waypoints—just remember to disengage the autopilot (strike "A" again) if trouble shows up.

▼ Do not evade an attacking pilot, but make every attempt to engage him. This sounds like so much macho crap but, in fact, it's a way of saving your own skin. While you're running…you're running, and you're not only leaving your opponent unmolested, you're taking gunfire in the tail where the enemy can keep a nice, easy bead on you.

▼ Machine guns jam. To lessen this possibility, refrain from long, extended bouts of gunfire and instead squeeze off shorts bursts when you have the enemy clean

UNDER SIEGE

Red Baron II returns you to that bygone era when man and machine first took to the skies in a face-to-face battle of skill and tactics.

"Isn't it enough to have enemy guns flakking you from the ground and some tenacious Ace-hole trying to machine-gun your rudder from the rest of your aircraft, without sealing your own fate by yanking into a harsh nose-up and tearing your airframe to shreds?"

in your sights. You can, in fact, use such shorts burst of gunfire as a kind of tracking mechanism, to see where your initial tracers go and thus develop a better way of homing in on a target. In the event your guns do actually jam, hit the "U" key repeatedly and hope. Profanity also seems to help.

Disengagement: He Who Fights and Runs Away

Okay—sometimes, thing just go horribly, horribly wrong, and the best thing to do is just leave. The hell of it is, you can't always "just leave," at least not without getting shot full of holes by an attacker who's not willing to break off. So, it's a good idea to bear in mind some points of disengagement: if some Fokker is really wailing on you (or worse, if you've managed to catch fire), you can, given altitude, execute a steep, speed-building dive to escape and/or put out the flames. Your foe may give chase, or he may not, but in either case give yourself gradual room to pull out of the dive.

▼ If you must flee, "jink" from side to side with the rudder (the rotation function on most joysticks) to make a less stable target of yourself.

▼ Be aware of the sturdiness of your aircraft as opposed to your enemy's—there may be maneuvers such as reverses or dives that you can pull off safely that he cannot. This can turn events in your favor.

Eighty Men Died Trying to End That Spree

Beating *Red Baron II* at its most realistic setting is tough— weapons malfunction, planes (and plans) fall apart, panic and inexperience are especially deadly sins, and sometimes even locating your opponent in all the howling emptiness of the airborne battlefield can be a trick in itself. Due to the very personal, low-tech nature of these early warbirds, a large part of conquering *RBII*'s challenge is first conquering your own ingrained sensibilities of what aircraft can and cannot do. When you think you're ready, the proving grounds of Internet play will introduce entirely new and uniquely human elements of treachery, cowardice, creativity, bravery, and even something like honor. Someday, during gameplay, when you're

OSWALD BOELCKE'S ADVICE to German pilots on aerial conflict became a formal combat-theory document known as Boelcke's Dicta, a list of core principles of dogfighting still largely applicable today:

1. Try to secure advantages before attacking. If possible, keep the sun behind you.

2. Always carry through an attack when you have started it.

3. Fire only at close range, and only when your opponent is properly in your sights.

4. Always keep your eye on your opponent, and never let yourself be deceived by ruses.

5. In any form of attack it is essential to assail your opponent from behind.

6. If your opponent dives on you, do not try to evade his onslaught, but fly to meet it.

7. When over the enemy's lines never forget your own line of retreat.

8. For the Staffel: Attack on principle in groups of four or six. When the fight breaks up into a series of single combats, take care that several do not go for one opponent.

Boelcke's Dicta

missing a considerable chunk of wing and your guns are jammed, you're liable to witness an enemy pull up alongside your plane within rock-throwing distance, give a jaunty waggle of his ailerons...and bank away. He won't get any points for it from the online ranking system...but he just might get a few from you. *ℹ*

User options allow players from all skill levels to enjoy this epic aerial battle.

DRIVE TOO LOOSE, THEY'LL CALL YOU WILD.
DRIVE TOO FAST, THEY'LL CALL YOU RECKLESS.
DRIVE TOO SLOW, THEY'LL CALL YOU GUTLESS.
WIN, AND THEY'LL SAY MUCH WORSE.
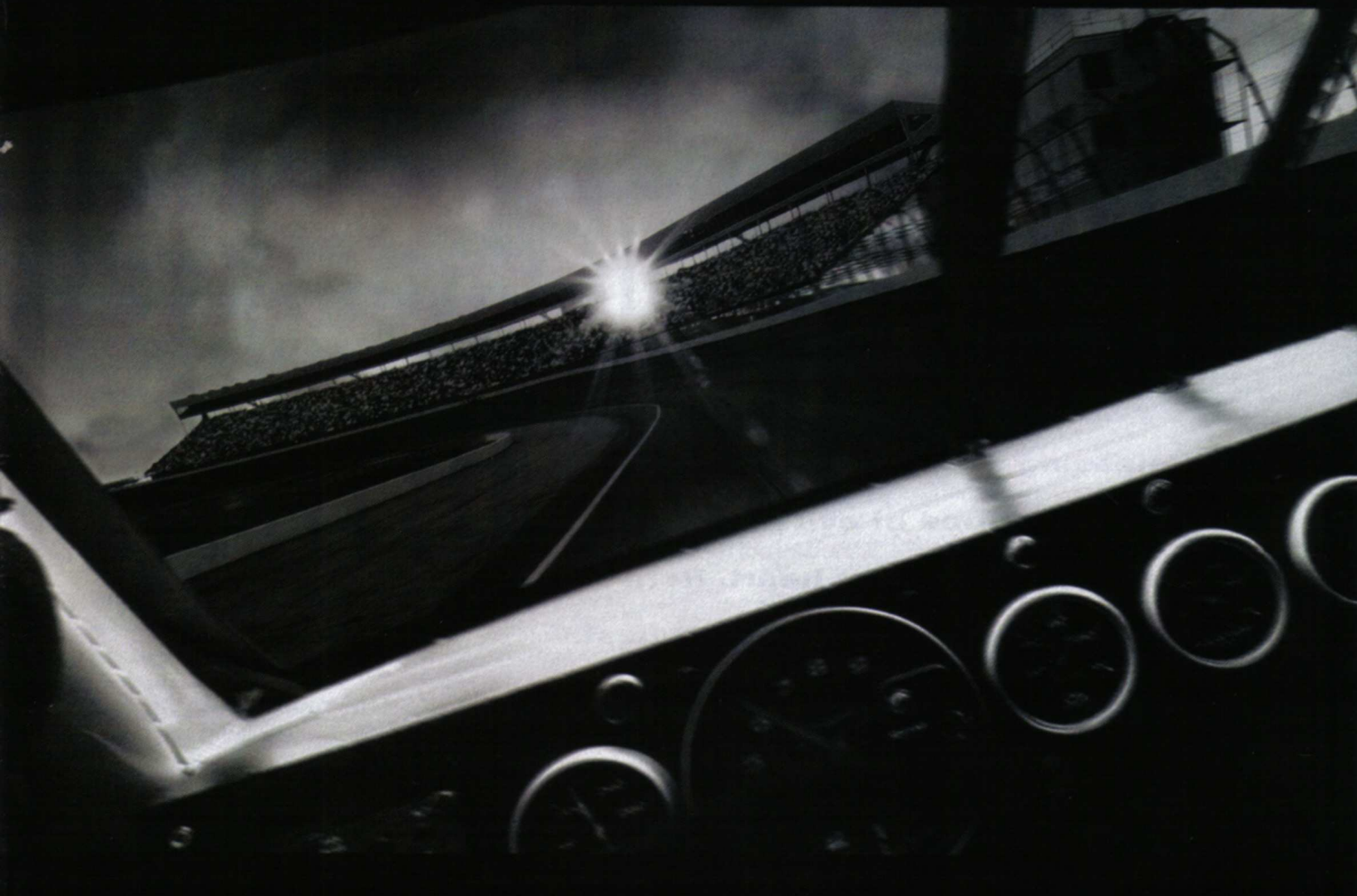
They'll draft you, bump you, steal your line. You'll try to return the favor. This is NASCAR Racing 2. Add the NASCAR® Grand National® Series Expansion Pack for 12 tricky new tracks and 30 crafty new opponents. Buckle up. www.sierra.com/nascar2.

SIERRA SPORTS

Order Today! NASCAR® Racing 2–$39.95; NASCAR® Grand National Expansion Pack–$29.95. Call 1-800-757-7707 or go to www.sierra.com/nascar2
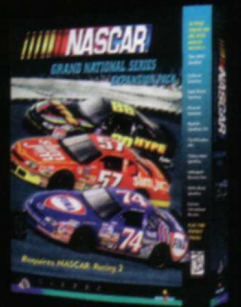
Lords of Strategy

Releasing the vast world of Urak from the dark throes of evil is not a task for the weak of mind or heart. Here are a few basic tips to aid in your quest.
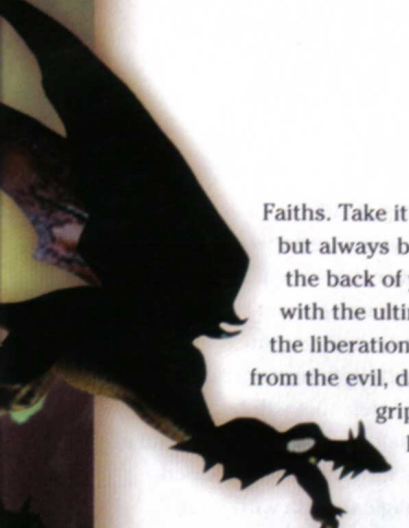
By Josh Demetrescu

When *Lords of Magic*, the intriguing new fantasy/strategy game from Impressions Software, opens, all of Urak is under the oppressive rule of the sinister Dark Lord Balkoth. You are merely one of many would-be Warriors, Mages, or Thieves (the choice is yours) who starts out with all but nothing—traveling the countryside with a few poorly trained military units in search of the respect and loyalty of the citizens of Urak. From these inauspicious beginnings, you must secure your homeland, fortify your defenses, and rise to a position of wealth and power by gaining the support and loyalty of the other citizens of your tormented world.

Faith in Yourself

You begin by choosing one from eight different Faiths. These Faiths define a player's characteristics. For example, players who choose the Life Faith are granted magical powers of healing and regeneration, while characters defined by the Death Faith are prone to inflicting death on unexpecting victims. Interestingly enough, both Faiths have the magical ability to raise the dead. Throughout your journey, you interact with a vast array of different types of characters from each of Urak's different

Faiths. Take it slowly, but always bookmark the back of your mind with the ultimate goal: the liberation of Urak from the evil, daunting grip of Lord Balkoth.

Out of the Darkness

Since you start out with a small band of low-quality military units and knowledge only of your immediate surroundings, the first step is to do a bit of exploring. Find your Faith's capital, and be on the lookout for your Faith's Great Temple. The Great Temple will be an important spot—eventually. Once you have done a bit of reconnoitering, begin to examine the various structures located around you. Many of them are occupied by the units of other Faiths. Relax—this is a good thing; your cause urgently needs the fame, experience, and items you gain from defeating these opponents—that is, if you're worthy.

One important thing to be aware of as you scour the countryside in search of your destiny is the level of your potential opponents. This number is given when you enter an occupied structure and tends to increase as you move away from your Faith's capital. Due to the weakness of your forces, begin by focusing exclusively on Level 1 and Level 2 opponents, leaving the

others to face your wrath when it becomes more mighty. Once you can take a Level 2 opponent with relative ease, it's time to visit the barracks, hire a couple of mercenary units, and liberate the Great Temple from those who have desecrated it. Succeed, and you'll be the toast of the town.

Home Is Where the Heart Is

You'll be so popular, in fact, that your co-religionists will declare you their champion and followers will begin flocking to your camp. So, you win, right? Not exactly—*Lords of Magic* is just getting started. You must establish your control of the reins of government in your region at the same time as you continue the liberation of surrounding structures in a search of experience, goods, and security. Prudent resource management, both life-critical and social, is paramount to your success.

When you first start your adventure, you are automatically granted one Champion. Your Champion is essentially your field general, and adding well-trained Champions to your military forces is critical to your success. You'll notice, upon liberating the Great Temple, that you now have two additional Champions under your control. Immediately put them to work as building stewards or military leaders. In fact, your town and all four of its outlying buildings—Barracks, Library, Mage Tower, and Thieves' Guild—should permanently be assigned resident units of some kind, even if they are just cheap reconnaissance units. This will allow

Put your toughest defensive units in the front and protect ranged weapon-bearing units (such as archers) and magical units in the back.

The frontline units that are good at defense or that move quickly will prevent envelopment.

you to interact with the buildings without having to directly visit them. You can rely on the reports of your unit leaders. Always be alert to the benefits of each building, and make sure throughout the game that each of your new followers is assigned a job.

Aside from the continued conquest of basic structures in the vicinity of your capital, you will now have an additional military objective: the liberation of specialized structures that will benefit your economy. These Gold Mines,

Outwitting Artificial Intelligence

Early in any military engagement, you are able to determine whether the computer thinks it has a good chance against you by the alignment of its forces and whether they are advancing against you. Move your forces into a secure position.

If you are expecting to have the burden of attack, keep an eye on potential avenues through which you can engage the enemy's units, specifically the computer's own weaker ranged units and magicians. Failing to knock these units out early could decide the battle against you if you allow them to pick off your troops from a safe distance.

Mounted knights on their warhorses engage a Barbarian party led by a warrior on his tiger steed. Chaos battles Order for control of this mine.

Branching Out

Eventually, you'll begin wondering what lies over the distant horizon. Remember, your opponents are also gaining strength as you do. Maintain steady growth in your magical and thieving abilities; this will become as important as developing your military abilities. As new spells are learned, send out magical units with your armies, and be sure to arm them with plenty of mana potions. Take the time to learn how to effectively use these new skills. This requires some experimentation, but the benefits reaped could mean the difference between ultimate victory and certain inglorious defeat.

Yes, the vast virtual world that is *Lords of Magic* is a dangerous place, but it's also a place peppered with the spoils of fame, fortune, and power. Build your empire, defeat your enemies, and don't forget to save your game often. That's the key to any strategy game, and when it comes to a sophisticated game like *Lords of Magic*, it very well could be the best advice of all. ↪

Breweries, Statues, and the like will add to your income each turn. You may not, however, be able to conquer them all immediately—anything Level 3 or 4 will probably have to wait.

Once your region is secure and operating effectively, you can explore the lands owned by your neighbors, and you will have to decide what type of relationships you will have with these potential rivals. If you successfully build a solid foundation with would-be allies around you, your odds of survival and eventual supremacy are greatly increased.

"...taking on the forces of Death by yourself is a little bit risky, not to mention stupid."
—GameSpot

Are You Experienced?

Perhaps the most important concept in *Lords of Magic* is experience. All facets of gameplay, from the effectiveness of military units to the ability of Mages and Thieves to the effectiveness of one's Champions, is based on the experience level of individual units. Most often gained through military actions, experience can be imparted to new units when they are formed and trained in a building that is under the stewardship of an experienced Champion. However, experience is

gained in battle, and military leaders who are always out campaigning cannot be home training troops. Therefore, through battle, try to grow the experience of a Champion until he or she can be sent home to handle training.

A second concern is that you not allow an experienced unit to be so injured it can't be healed and is in turn eliminated.

After all, eventually you will run out of Level 1-4 victims, and it will be more difficult to build experience. You need to balance the effectiveness of experienced units with the need to preserve them. There are a couple of good ways to do this. On a strategic level, include low-experience troops or temporarily hire-mercenaries to serve as "cannon fodder" in every battle you fight.

On a tactical level, carefully pick and choose the opponents for your better units, thus making sure they at least survive every engagement.

Sound Mind & Strategy

All of the *Lords of Magic* Faiths have units that correspond to a few basic military types: ground infantry, cavalry, and archers/slingers/spearmen. Identify these as soon as possible and use the early, easier battles to learn your units' strengths and weaknesses. Remember also to maintain a good mix of each type in your party. Responsible party and battlefield management will make you a more successful and more popular general.

Love the fish.
Respect the fish
Re-create for him the sense
that he is eating from
the hand of God himself.
Then quickly bury your hook.
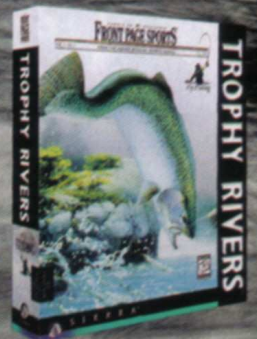
It's **Sierra Sports,** or It's Just a Game

By Steven Dale Greenlee
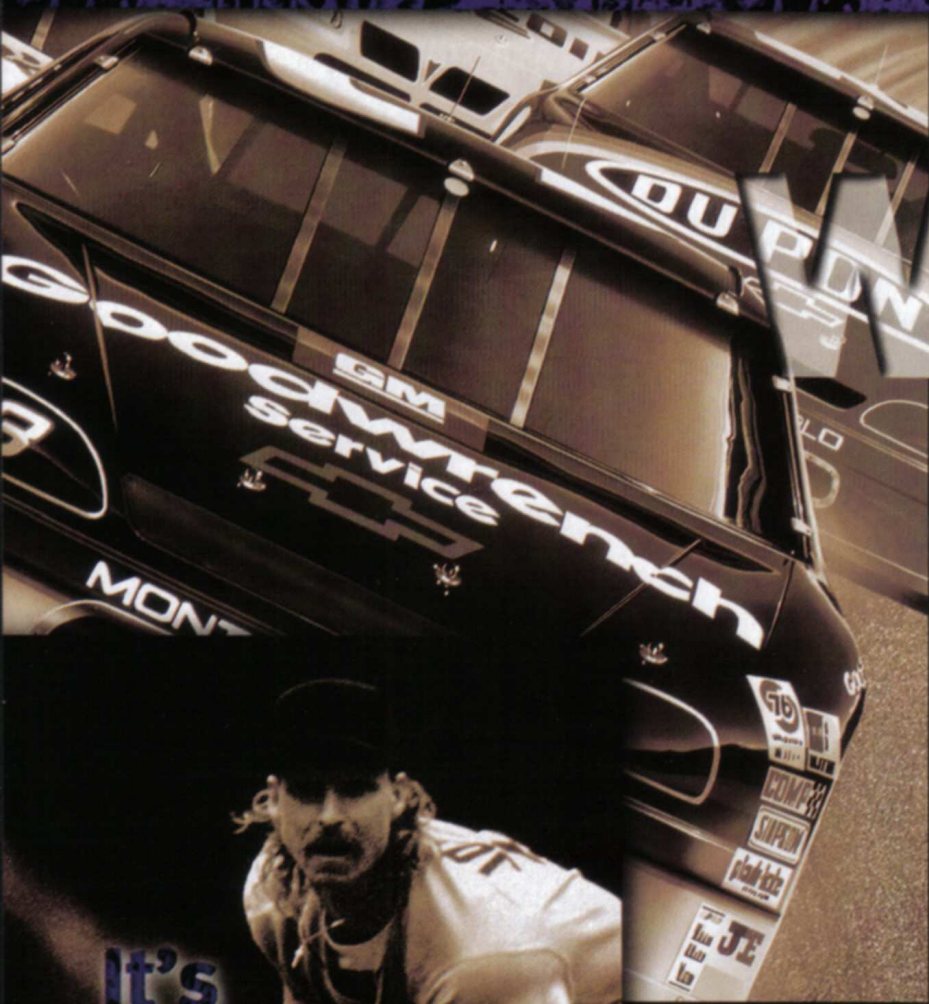
hat makes a great sport franchise like the World Champion Chicago Bulls? Years of hard work in both the front and back offices, building an organization with the best players and the best coaches. The same goes for software publishers who benefit from the experience gained in producing title after title, year after year with the best design teams in the world. Sierra has come to a place in its long history where the wisdom gained over time and the stability of success create the need for a metamorphic transformation—the need to do even more. Sierra is taking a bold step forward and gathering all its best-selling sport simulations together under a brand-new label—Sierra Sports. The Sierra Sports brand embodies a rededication to a philosophy of excellence that in turn can be instantly trusted by sports game fans. One brand, one vision, one uncompromising standard of quality.

From now on, all the popular games produced under the Front Page Sports and Papyrus brands, including award-winning games and simulations from development studios—Dynamix, Papyrus Design, and Front Page Development—will be unified under the Sierra Sports umbrella. Along with the new Sierra Sports label comes a renewed commitment of time, money, and passion to produce the highest-quality, most authentic, and most fun-to-play sport simulations possible. Read on to find out about this year's lineup of sport sims and get the inside scoop of what the future holds for Sierra Sports.

A Brief History

Sierra is one of the oldest gaming design houses in the industry. Ken Williams and his wife, Roberta, started Sierra back in 1980. The success of the company over the years allowed it to acquire other well-respected game designers such as Dynamix in 1990 and Papyrus Design in 1996. Partnering with these new studios meant Sierra could diversify into the sports-simulation genre; Dynamix specialized in league sports, and Papyrus set the standard for auto-racing simulations. Sierra realized that PC sports fans wanted more than twitch or arcade-sports games. They wanted immersive, true-to-life simulations. Among the first of these kinds of sims was *Front Page Sports: Football Pro*, where you could not only play in an arcade mode but also delve into the managerial intricacies of playmaking, play calling, coaching, drafting, and more.

Although the game engines and the code foundations were developed, PCs in the early 1990s couldn't always smoothly handle the hardware-intensive simulations. But in 1996, things started changing in the PC world. There was an explosion of chip evolutions, and RAM dropped in price. Gamers upgraded their systems like crazy. Under these new conditions—improved chips and an expanded base of upgraded gaming PCs—Papyrus and Dynamix tweaked their sim engines in order to take full advantage of the more powerful computers. That brings us to this point in time when Sierra has decided that sports simulations should be more than just sims—they should be a comprehensive combination of the competitive fun of arcade games and the more cerebral management aspects and voracious realism of simulations. They should remain true to the details of the sport while utilizing today's technology to immerse users in the thrill of competiton. It's not just about man versus computer; it's about man vs. man, man vs. nature, man vs. machine—and, most importantly, man vs. himself.

"A unified Sierra Sports brand will help people understand our commitment to a broad range of sports," says Sierra Sports Director of Marketing Sean Gleason, "...and not just team and motor sports. Our product line is much deeper, including the highly successful *Trophy Bass* products and our entry into unique sports categories [such as *Ski Racing*]. At the same time, we're re-engineering our approach to team and stadium sports and making the commitments necessary as a unified brand to be number one in every sport we compete in."
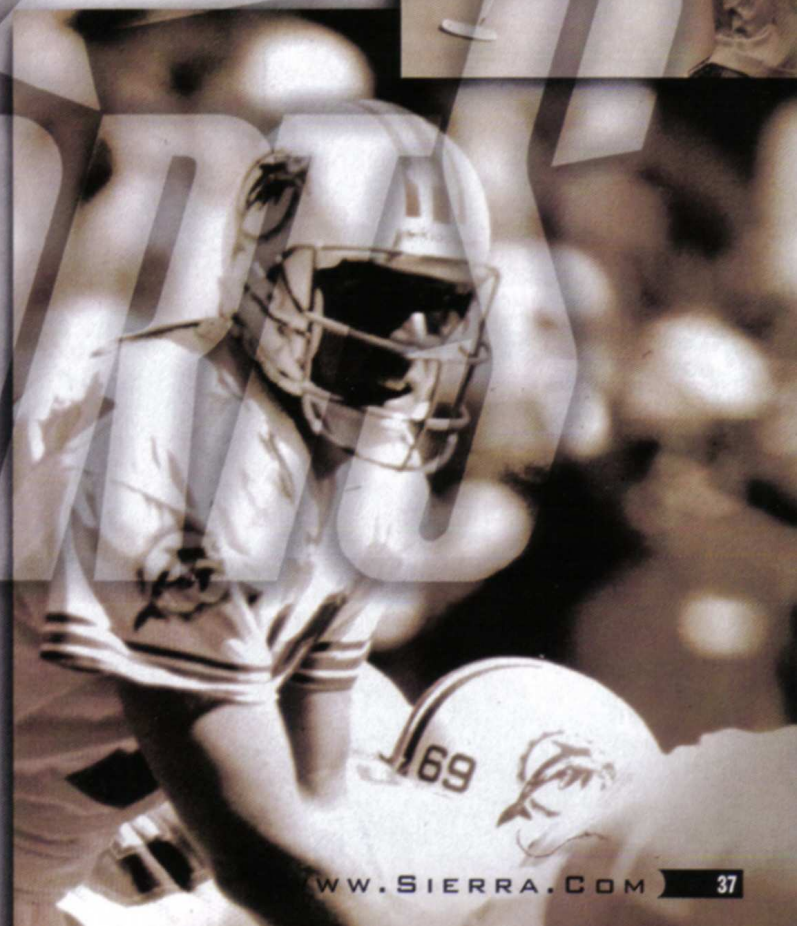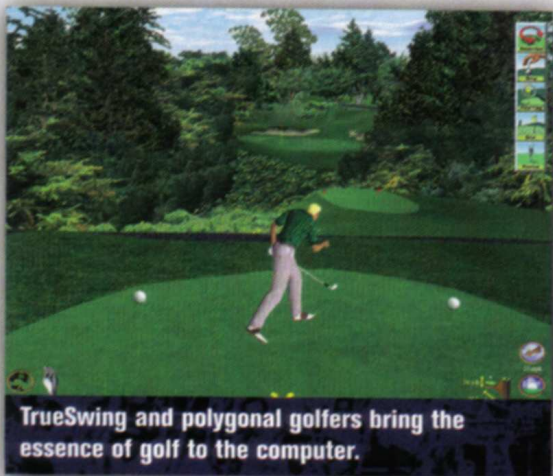
TrueSwing and polygonal golfers bring the essence of golf to the computer.

The golfers in *Sierra Sports Golf* are accurately 3D-modeled for maximum realism.

Sierra Sports: Golf

Spring means many different things to different people. But to millions of people out there, it means the beginning of a new golf season. Thanks to *Sierra Sports Golf*, there's no reason to wait for the sun—how about some links on the PC? *Sierra Sports Golf* exposes you to a whole new dimension in computer golfing. This sophisticated game features TrueSwing, the only mouse-driven swing technique that accurately simulates a real golf swing.

"TrueSwing is the combination of a mouse-based swing and a three dimensional golfer," says Designer Vance Cook. "So, you pull the mouse back, and the golfer moves with you. Push the mouse forward, and the golfer moves with you—and the pace at which you move forward and the direction you move are all significant." This means if you push the mouse

90% of the putts that are short don't go in.
- Yogi Berra

to the left or right, then you'll hook or slice. If you pull the mouse back too far, your golfer will topple over backward. To master TrueSwing, you really need to practice your "swing." This method of swinging in computer golf is revolutionary since most golf sims use a swing wheel and you click the mouse at points along the wheel to determine your hit.

Cook says TrueSwing provides digital golfers with greater satisfaction when they make great shots. Besides the more realistic-acting club swing, the 3D golfer moves in real-time, creating a whole new feel to computer golf. "We worked on and perfected that [feel] for almost two full years—until we were really happy with it," Cook says.

Sierra Sports Golf does

QUICK START

START NEW GAME

REPLAY SHOT

RESUME GAME

PRACTICE

OPTIONS

PREVIEW

EXIT

contain a higher number of 3D objects than other computer golf sims, because, Cook says, "Just viewing 2D houses, bridges, and the like becomes boring to see after a while. So much about the game of golf is visual, and we took great pains to accurately represent that in the game." The other important aspect to the sim is that the ball physics are more subtle than what had ever been done before. A case in point is that Cook and his design team modeled the ball going into the cup and bouncing around, so the ball is not in the cup until it hits the bottom. That's the foundation of true-to-life realism on which the Sierra Sports brand was built.

Fishing

If you long to compete not just against yourself, but also against Mother Nature herself, then *Trophy Rivers* and *Trophy Bass 2* are the simulations for you. *Trophy Bass*, the original sim in the series, was one of the surprise sleeper hits of 1995. The gorgeous scenery and true-to-life gameplay continue to keep *Trophy Bass 2* and the latest in the series, *Trophy*

Rivers, among the best-selling sport simulations released to date. The reason for the popularity of these fishing simulations is simple. Game Designer Michael Waite says *Trophy Rivers* is "aware" of the nature of the sport.

"We already had *Trophy Bass 2* under our belts, so we were pretty clear about what worked and what didn't in terms of merging the reality of fishing with the intensity you want from gameplay," explains Waite. "And

now that we're entering the fly-fishing world, all we had left to include were the particulars—what is it about fly-fishing that turns on all the anglers?"

Waite says they found fly-fishing is an equipment-intensive sport. Anglers have to deal with a large number of fly patterns, fly colors, and variations, as well as rod selection and line weight. And the fish AI (artificial intelligence) is as real as what you could find in any real river. In order to catch the fish, you

have to gauge and account for the dynamics of moving water as well as determining just which fly the fish are hitting. "This adds a really serious and challenging component to gameplay," says Waite.

Trophy Rivers does have a fully in-depth game of spin-cast fishing as well, updated from *Trophy Bass 2*. In all, Waite says *Trophy Rivers* has the depth to challenge anglers, and gamers will find the gameplay a "blast."
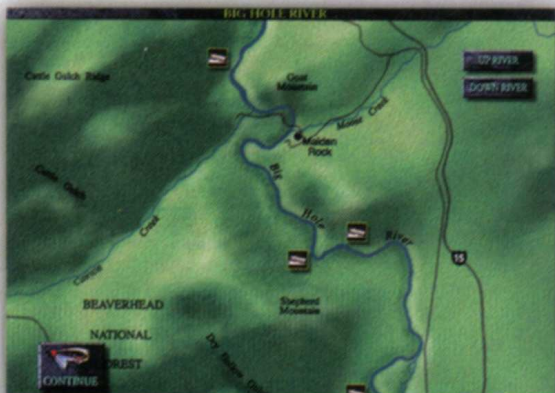
More than 200 miles of prime water to fish as you see fit.
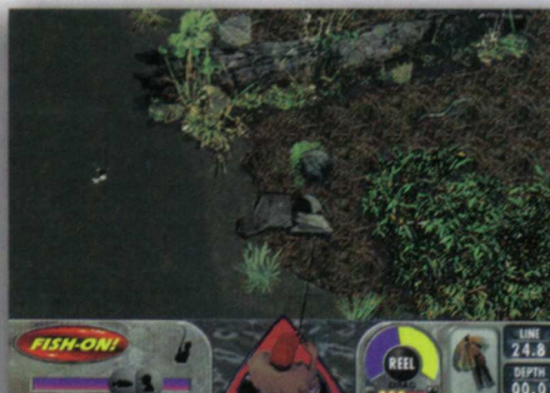
Angle online or off with a bottomless tacklebox against Sierra's cunning AI.

Ski Racing

One of the newest entries in the Sierra Sports lineup is *Ski Racing*. Again, keeping with the Sierra Sports philosophy of having not only a fun arcade mode, *Ski Racing* also has more of the depth and realism that only the PC can bring to life.

Ski Racing Project Director Mark Crowe

one of the first titles using the new Dynamix 3D engine, and accurately captures the thrill of downhill ski racing. Whether you're a skier or not, *Ski Racing* challenges you to conquer the mountain—and yourself.

Grand Prix Legends

Expect the standards of racing realism to go way up this summer when a new motor-sport racing simulation ships from Sierra Sports. The sim is called *Grand Prix Legends*, and it will be the first title to show off Papyrus' new 3D physics engine, an engine some four years in the making.

GPL Producer Mike Lescault says Papyrus' 3D physics engine actually simulates real-world physics more accurately than any previous racing sim. This means the cars in *GPL* act "exactly" like real racing cars did during the 1967 season. "When you shift," explains Lescault, "the entire chassis will move. Back then you could have one tire on the car lock up when you hit your brakes a little bit. When that happens to you in *GPL*, one tire will actually lock up and smoke." And Lescault explains that you can catch air. He says that, because of the exacting nature of their new engine, if you should hit the wall during a race, your car can bounce up a bit and catch some air that in turn might cause your car to cartwheel end over end.

The new 3D physics engine in *GPL* also means you can go over a little jump and have one tire leave the track, and then all of the real-world physics will be applied,

says, "*Ski Racing* is a downhill racing simulation that uses highly developed physics models to re-create the sensation of flying down a ski run at 70 to 80 mph." He also says the six international courses are 3D-modeled in such close detail, even World Champion Picabo Street recognizes specific details of each run.

"You are the skier," says Crowe. "You are controlling the skier as you go down the mountain. You make the moves to cut left or right, tuck to go faster, stand up to slow down. Sometimes you can't slow down fast enough."

Besides the thrill of racing, the simulation provides a depth of gameplay that allows you to

choose your clothing and skis, and manage the details of your skiing career.

Three or four ski games have been made over the last couple of years by various gaming companies, but the Sierra Sports team knew that the technology now existed to make a skiing simulation right. *Ski Racing* is
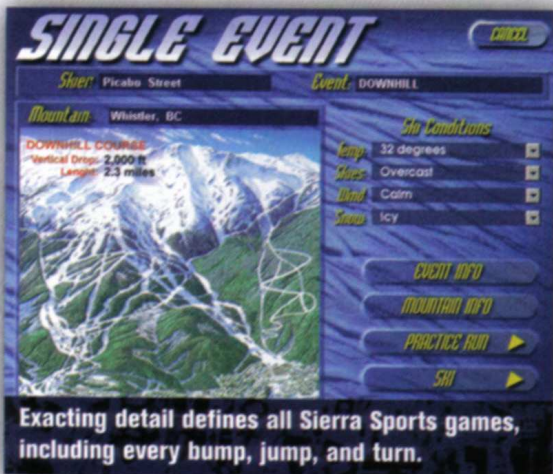
Exacting detail defines all Sierra Sports games, including every bump, jump, and turn.

Ouch! That's gonna leave a mark!

The advanced physics of *GPL* will give you the sensation of historical open-wheeled racing.
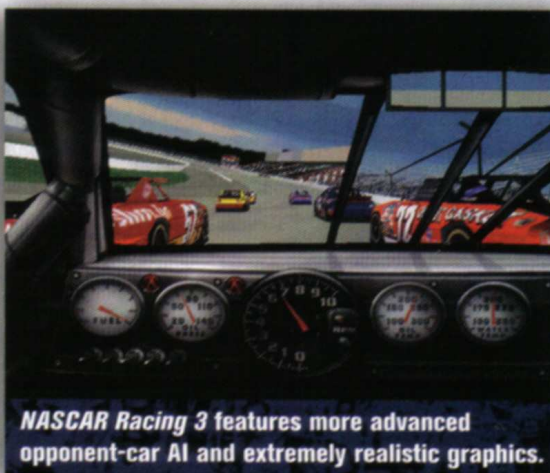
NASCAR Racing 3 features more advanced opponent-car AI and extremely realistic graphics.

affecting your speed, handling, and mechanical integrity. All four tires have been individually modeled as well as part of the chassis and the engine. But the car is not the only aspect of *GPL* that smacks true.

"We're doing everything we can to get these tracks as accurate as possible," Lescault says. "That's something we're always true to, modeling down to the finest detail each bump and curve and corner until it's 99 percent accurate. People can see a historical race and then look at our game and say, 'Wow. Look at that. I know that corner because I raced it in *GPL*.' And that's the level of realism we aim for—every time we design a racing sim."

NASCAR Racing 3

In the fall of 1998, another motor-sport sim, which will continue to push Papyrus' new 3D physics engine as far as it can go, hits the market. *NASCAR Racing 3* will have all the racing realism of *GPL* plus enhanced opponent-car AI and astonishing 16-bit graphics.

Other things requested by

hard-core fans will be addressed in *NASCAR Racing 3*. Lescault says that because of the tools they used, the pit lanes had a bit of a curve in them, but not in *NASCAR Racing 3*. The pit lanes will now be straightened out. "That's what our fans told us, and our commitment is unconditionally to our fans," he says.

Football Pro '99

In *Football Pro '98*, the navigation front-end was overhauled and the stock plays were tweaked, helping to perpetuate *Football Pro*'s reputation as the best of the gridiron sims. But look out, because the arcade engine of *Football Pro '99* is being re-engineered from the code up by Front Page
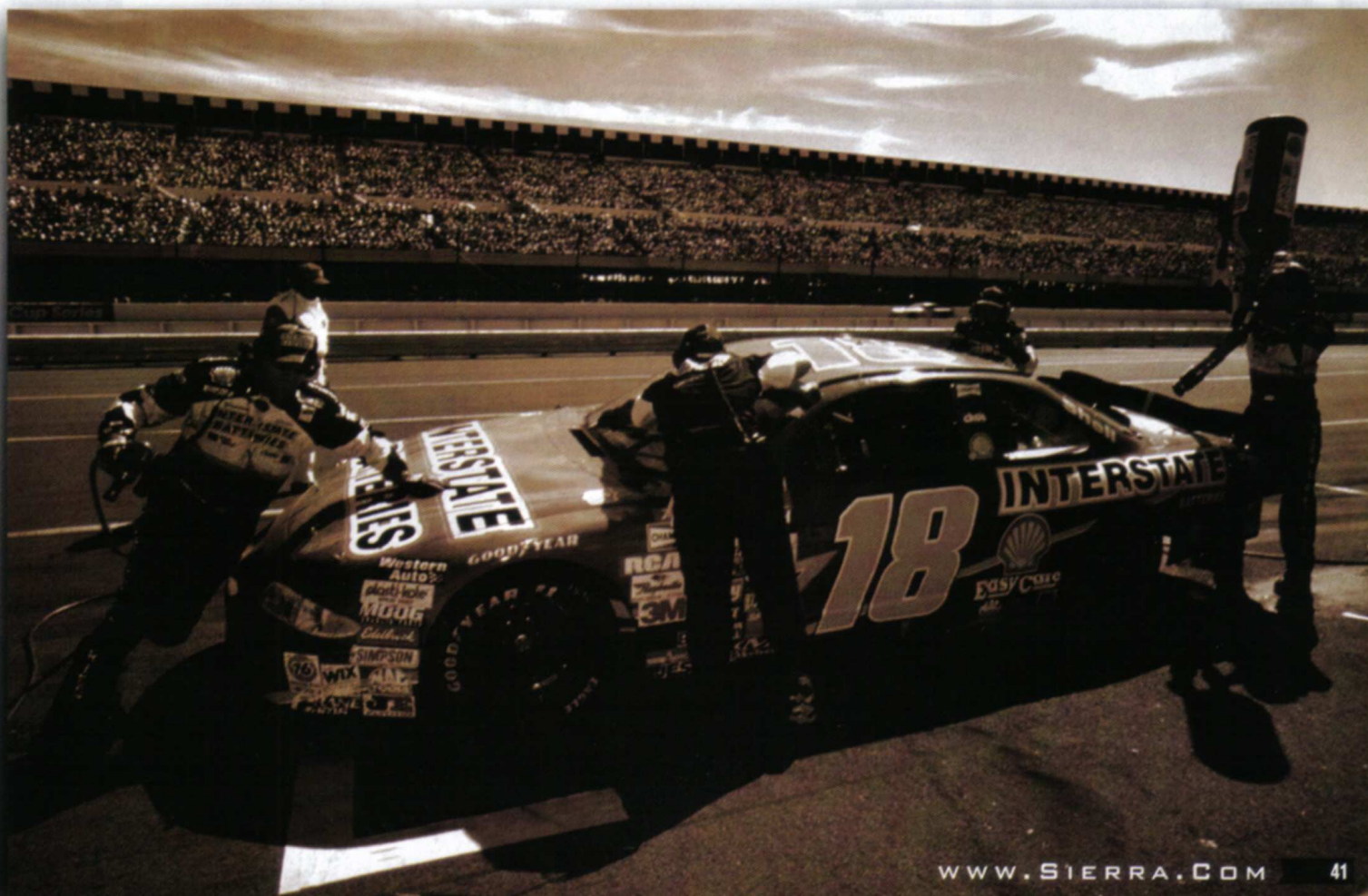
Development, and the result will be the most extensive PC football game to date.

Producer Mike Branham says *Football Pro '99* is a game that unequivocally simulates league and administrative play, but the real emphasis is on extending our lead in re-creating total football action across all levels. This year, the arcade portion of the game is getting beefed up to a level that, to date, has only been achieved by console games.

Branham explains that the *Football Pro '99* arcade mode is so sophisticated, it is actually two games in one. He says the two games will be bridged to complement each other, but their levels of realism mean one can not be a component of the other. "The sim has NFL realism to the degree that, where when you go out there with this defense against this offense, it should produce this result. However,

fans: baseball—in this case, *Baseball Pro '99* from Sierra Sports.

Producer Robb Rinard says, "*Baseball Pro '99* will have its entire user interface overhauled and designed in DirectX instead of WinG. And, like *Football Pro '99*, the game is so big there are in fact two games in one. One game will be the league management simulation where you can become a baseball mogul, and on the other side is the arcade." Rinard also says confidently, "The graphics will be a big step up from the graphics seen on any other platform."

Also, all players will be 3D motion-captured. Some

Every inch of every NFL stadium adds to the realism—minus the pain!

the *Baseball Pro '99*'s development team is willing to share. The rest will have to wait until opening day.

What's Next?

The future does indeed look very bright for Sierra Sports. Not only will there be sport simulations steeped heavily in realism and gameplay, but also there will be a real commitment to provide the very best value to gamers. Sierra Sports promises unparalleled support of its simulations such as the upcoming launch of *Sierra Sports Golf* and Fishing

Nobody in the game of football should be called a genius. A genius is somebody like Norman Einstein.

—Joe Theisman

in a true arcade situation, it is one player against another, head to head with a joystick, and the stats model becomes less important—never obsolete, just a bit less important. What we're after here is the total football experience. No matter how users prefer to play *Football Pro '99*, we're gonna ensure they get accurate, real-world, competitive fun!"

Baseball Pro '99
But for now, the NFL is yesterday's news. It's springtime and that means one thing to sports

of those captured motions come from such players as NY Mets outfielder Brian McRae and the Chicago Cubs All-Star pitcher, Steve Trachsel. Realism, lifelike gameplay, and thrilling toe-to-toe competition are just a few of the surprises

The bottom of the ninth will have you on the edge of your seat.

Tournament schedules as well as building online communities so gamers can meet and compete in online tournaments, exchange ideas, and enjoy their sport of choice from many different aspects.

Sierra Sports is working to earn gamers' respect by producing titles that embody the sports themselves. The graphics will accurately re-create what you would actually see if you were in a real football stadium, on a real baseball field, or racing down a real ski run. The arcade gameplay will re-create the true nature of playing a sport—the running back of *Football Pro '99* will fly down the field under your control, reacting like a real player—cutting left, dodging right, sidestepping tackles, and head faking. And you will swear there is a real trout on the end of your line in *Trophy Rivers*. Playing Sierra Sports' games will be competition in its truest sense. Because that's what sports are all about—competition.

But in keeping with the commitment to create real sports gaming on the PC, the simulations will be designed to allow you to become fully immersed in the sport of your choice: completely run your own football league, keep track of all of your flies in *Trophy Rivers*, or carefully guide your career in *Ski Racing*. Arcade action meshed with accurate simulation creates true gameplay and the sensation of truly participating in America's most popular sports. That is exactly what Sierra Sports stands for.

Sierra is thus creating an electronic gaming revolution that will redefine the way you play sports—forever. 🄸

FUTURE RELEASES

Here are just a few things the Sierra Sports front office has planned for the near future:

Trophy Bass Deluxe: combines *Trophy Bass 2* and the *Northern Lakes* expansion pack with new lure selections including Berkeley PowerBait™.

Trophy Bass: is going 3D... more on that later.

Online Fishing Tournaments are happening right now on the gaming site, World Opponent Network (WON) at www.won.net. Be sure to check www.sierra.com and future issues of *InterAction* for tourney results.

Sierra Sports Golf 2.0: will feature a Course Architect so users can create custom courses.

• Users will be able to upload and download new 3D golfers with 500 motions, lots of reactions, and more polygons, and that are more lifelike.

• There will be expanded online tournaments through WON featuring large fields of golfers, completely recorded and tracked golfer statistics, immediately updated online leader boards, and real cash and prizes.

• *Sierra Sports Golf 2.0* will be the first real-time, non-turn-based PC golf game. Now in addition to non-players being able to watch games...you watch other players as you play, and you can be watched with configurable camera angles in real-time. Nothing else even comes close.
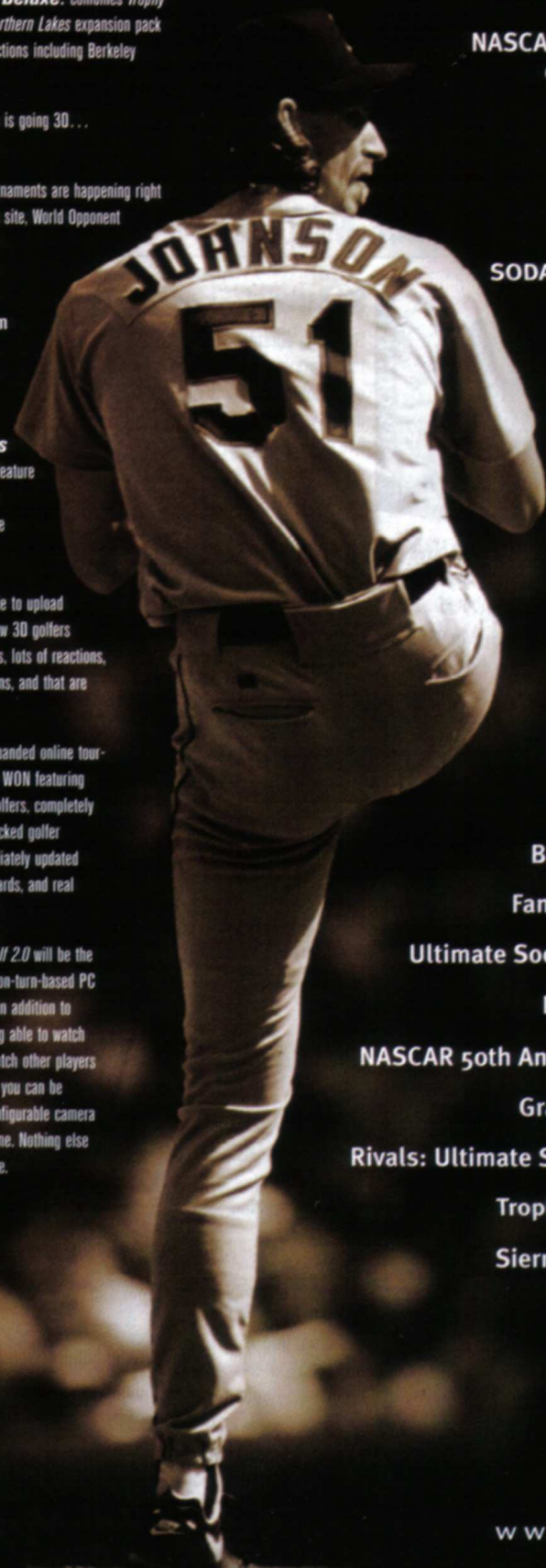
AVAILABLE NOW!

Sierra Sports Golf 1.0—Plus
Black Diamond Ranch & Pasatiempo Expansion Packs

NASCAR Racing 2—Plus
Grand National Series Expansion Pack

Football Pro '98

Baseball Pro '98

SODA Off-Road Racing

Trophy Rivers

CART Racing

Ski Racing

COMING SOON!

Baseball Pro '99

Football Pro '99

Basketball Pro '99

Fantasy Football '99

Ultimate Soccer Manager '98

NASCAR Racing 3

NASCAR 50th Anniversary Edition

Grand Prix Legends

Rivals: Ultimate Sports Car Racing

Trophy Bass 2 Deluxe

Sierra Sports Golf 2.0

Complete LandDesigner

FREE BONUS

This powerful, easy-to-use software includes four premium products: *3D Landscape, Photo Land-Designer, Garden Encyclopedia* and *3D Deck*. Together they give you everything you need to bring landscape projects to life. It gives you full color photos and detailed information on over 3,500 flowers, trees, shrubs and more.

#69988 Win 95 CD **$49.95**

FREE BONUS
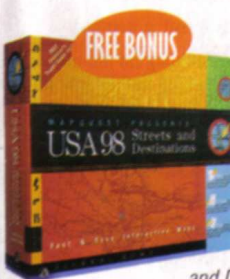
USA 98 Streets and Destinations

USA 98 Streets and Destinations includes detailed maps of all 50 states, with detailed listings for more than two million hotels, restaurants, businesses and attractions that make it easy to plan any trip. You can even customize and print maps in full color or black and white. Includes hundreds of dollars of valuable travel coupons and a free travel guide!

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Play the Power Chess King, an adaptive opponent who stretches your abilities but gives you a fair chance to win. Or play the Power Chess Queen, powered by the legendary WChess engine that battled IBM's Deep Blue to a draw.

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Print Artist Craft Factory

Now there's a publishing program just for kids! *Print Artist Craft Factory* includes 600 layouts and over 5,300 colorful graphics that make it easy for kids to create fun, unique greeting cards, craft projects, signs, poster and lots more!

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PC Gamer Editors' Choice Collection

5 FULL GAMES!

Get five complete games that earned the PC Gamer Editors' Choice award from *PC Gamer Magazine*. Includes *CART Racing, RAMA, Caesar II, Front Page Sports: Golf* and the hilarious *YOU DON'T KNOW JACK Volume 1*.

#69955 Win CD **$19.95**

Go Fishing on Your PC!

FREE BONUS

Trophy Rivers

The team that brought the excitement of bass fishing to your PC now brings five blue-ribbon rivers right to your desktop. It's a complete salmon, trout and steelhead fishing experience with all the challenges of real-life fishing.

#70060 Win 95 CD **$39.95**

Trophy Bass 2

The most popular fishing sim ever features 10 photo-realistic lakes, more rod and lure options and fishing tips from top bass fishing pros. Plus, now you can hook up with your fishin' buddies on the Internet.

#83695 Win CD **$29.95**
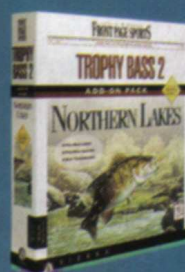
Northern Lakes Add-On Pack

Brings five new lakes to the excitement of *Trophy Bass 2*. Battle Northern Pike, Muskie, Walleye, Sauger and Rock Bass on waters from Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin and more!

(Requires full version of Trophy Bass 2.)

#56950 Win CD **$19.95**

The Official Guide to Babylon 5

Tour the Babylon 5 universe with an interactive reference guide that is loaded with hundreds of photos, sounds and video clips. You'll learn so much about the histories, biographies and workings of *Babylon 5* that you'll be ready to sign on for a tour of duty.

#70185 Win 95/Mac CD **$14.95**

Lords Royal Collection

FREE BONUS

Get the real-time medieval strategy challenge of the smash hit *Lords of the Realm II*, plus the new Internet-ready *Lords II Siege Pack* and the hard-to-find original version of *Lords of the Realm* in one Royal Collection.

#70315 Win 95 CD **$39.95**

Lords of the Realm II

Chaos reigns across the land as you lead an army of knights, archers and swordsmen into battle and try to smash your way to the throne of England. Features single-player or head-to-head real-time medieval strategy challenges.

#83710 Win 95/DOS CD **$29.95**

Lords of the Realm II Siege Pack

The new Siege Pack for *Lords of the Realm II* lets you jump right into battle with 20 new battle maps that will test the mettle of even the most seasoned warlords. Also includes head-to-head Internet combat!

#77100 Win 95 CD **$19.95**

Outpost 2: Divided Destiny

The sequel to the most talked-about space strategy game of all time combines an all-new story with real-time gameplay, open-ended multiplayer missions and incredible 65,000-color graphics. Play head to head via Internet, network or modem.

#83726 Win 95 CD **$29.95**
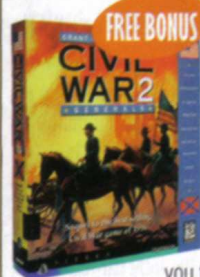
Civil War Generals 2

FREE BONUS

Command Union or Confederate forces in 40 Civil War battles, in action that takes you to both the Eastern and Western theaters. Features over 60 types of weapons and many new unit types, plus a new map editor and head-to-head battles.

#70225 Win CD **$49.95**
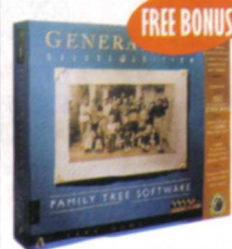
Generations Deluxe

FREE BONUS

Now there's a family tree program that's powerful yet easy to use. *Generations Deluxe* includes 4 CDs with all the tools you need to pass on your family heritage. Produce beautiful charts, import photos, search family records and more with ease! Includes records of more than 57 million people and links to over 26,000 genealogy websites.

#69953 Win CD **$49.95**

FREE BONUS

Aces Collection

Includes six Aces games in all! You get the original *Red Baron*, *Aces of the Pacific*, *Aces over Europe*, the first *A-10 Tank Killer* and the 1996 hit *Silent Thunder: A-10 Tank Killer II*, plus the *Aces of the Deep* submarine sim.

#76280 DOS/Win 95 CD **$39.95**

FREE BONUS

Leisure Suit Larry: Love for Sail

In his latest hysterical outing, Larry is booked on the world's gaudiest cruise ship, the PMS Bouncy. It doesn't take long for our hero to stumble onto a shipload of beautiful women in this hilarious "miss"-adventure.

#83320 Win CD **$49.95**
#13320 Mac CD **$49.95**

FREE BONUS

Leisure Suit Larry Collection

Let Larry Laffer loose on your PC with five Leisure Suit Larry releases, including the original *Land of the Lounge Lizards* and *Leisure Suit Larry 6: Shape Up or Slip Out*. It's the most hilarious game series ever created.

#73190 DOS/Win CD **$39.95**

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GET 3 HOYLE PRODUCTS AND SAVE!

Order the Hoyle Games Bundle and we'll send you *Hoyle Classic Card Games*, *Hoyle Classic Board Games* and *Hoyle Casino* – a $90 value – for just $69.95. That's a savings of $20!

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FREE BONUS

YOU DON'T KNOW JACK Television

Test your TV smarts as you tackle 800 all-new questions that cover 50 years of boob-tube trivia. It's a witty, brain-twisting mixture that tests your knowledge of celebrities, sitcoms, soaps, cartoons, commercials and more!

#20221 Win/Mac CD **$29.95**

YOU DON'T KNOW JACK Huge

It's the biggest JACK ever. Put the first three JACK volumes together and you get over 2,400 questions that test your knowledge of every aspect of pop culture. Includes *YOU DON'T KNOW JACK Volume 1, Volume 2* and *Volume 3*.

#20217 Win/Mac CD **$39.95**

YOU DON'T KNOW JACK Volume 3

Tackle 800 outrageous pop-culture questions in the latest irreverent quiz-show party game. Includes new graphics, new question types and more of the witty effects that make JACK the ultimate party game for pop-culture trivia fans.

#20212 Win/Mac CD **$29.95**

FREE BONUS

YOU DON'T KNOW JACK Pack!

Get three complete versions of *YOU DON'T KNOW JACK* together in one package that saves 50% off the regular price. The all-new *YOU DON'T KNOW JACK Pack* gives you *JACK Movies, JACK Sports* and the new *JACK Television* all for just $39.95. The variety will keep you laughing for hours.

#69958 Win/Mac CD **$39.95**

Hoyle Casino

Play Vegas-style Slots, Blackjack, Roulette, Poker and Craps against seven interactive opponents in more than 50 game variations. You can even play Blackjack and Poker online!

#70270 Win CD **$29.95**

Hoyle Classic Board Games

Take the "bored" out of board games with 10 family favorites. Play Dominoes, Chinese Checkers, Battling Ships, Backgammon and more against 12 interactive opponents.

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On-Line Games Collection

Get 12 Internet-only games with free, unlimited Internet play on won.net, Sierra's new World Opponent Network. Includes a multiplayer version of *Red Baron II, Front Page Sports: Golf*, *Hoyle® Blackjack, Lords of the Realm II* and more!

#69956 Win 95 CD **$19.95**

CART® Racing

Experience the 200mph thrills of Indy car racing as you race 15 incredibly realistic tracks. With *CART Racing*, you control all of the options that real-life Indy car teams use to squeeze out every last ounce of speed.

(Previously released as IndyCar Racing II.)

#70400 Win 95/DOS CD **$29.95**

FREE BONUS

King's Quest Collection

Get all seven *King's Quest* adventures in one package together with three additional Roberta Williams hits: *Mixed-Up Mother Goose Deluxe, The Dagger of Amon Ra* and *The Colonel's Bequest*. That's 10 games in all!

#73120 DOS/Win CD **$39.95**

Hoyle Classic Card Games

Nobody knows card games better than Hoyle! This collection of 12 favorites includes Poker, Gin Rummy, Hearts, Spades and more. Also includes two bonus board games.

#70255 Win CD **$29.95**

46

47

THE QUEST for PERFECTION

Columnist William Trotter takes a retrospective look at the Quest for Glory series, and explains why the final installment—QFG V: Dragon Fire—will invariably be the best.

Quest for Glory V: Dragon Fire

www.sierra.com/**qg5**

Developer
Sierra

Preferred Minimum Requirements
Pentium 90+, 16MB RAM, WIN95/PPC 80+, 16MB RAM, OS SYS 7.6

Format
WIN95/MAC CD

Price
$49.95
(Order #70325)

Available: Summer

1.800.757.7707

By William R. Trotter

IT WAS NOT your typical classified ad: "WANTED: HERO. No experience necessary. Visit beautiful Spielburg. Fight monsters. Defeat brigands. Reward and title of 'Hero of Spielburg' to the successful applicant."

This alluring job description formed the introduction to 1989's *Quest for Glory I: So You Want to Be a Hero?* Evidently, a lot of game players did, since they answered this ad in the tens of thousands. What they discovered was a gaming experience unlike any other. Sierra was already known for its colorful and varied series of graphic adventures (indeed, the company may be said to have defined the genre); to those tried-and-true design elements, *QFG I* added deep and highly addictive elements of the role-playing genre. The result was something special.

QFG I was a compelling mix of characters and quests, seamlessly wrapped up inside a real story. No mindless hack-and-slash dungeon crawls along a predetermined path. Players could adopt whatever role they felt most attracted to—Thief, Fighter,
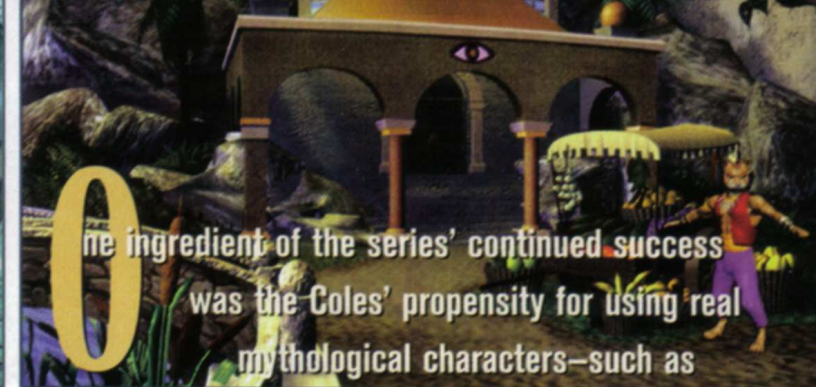
Magician—and their gaming experience would be significantly different accordingly. Each type of would-be hero had the same ultimate goal: to be crowned "Hero of Spielburg," but each had to follow a very different path: Magicians solved puzzles and overcame obstacles using spell casting, Fighter-heroes simply bashed through resistance employing their martial prowess, while Thieves needed to find deviously subtle methods of advancing their quest.

This formula may seem self-evident now, almost 10 years later, but at the time *QFG I* appeared, it was new and refreshingly different. The gaming market was already glutted with generically similar role-playing games that seemed trapped in a lock-step formula: explore the dungeons, build up your points by killing an endless stream of monsters and evil mages, then engage in a climactic duel with the Boss Monster (a clichéd formula known as the "Kill-the-Foozle" syndrome). Play through such a game one time, and you've seen pretty much all there is to see.

QFG I, however, introduced the then-revolutionary concept of "replayability." By starting each game anew as a different type of character, you got to experience a whole new set of challenges and different plot twists. It was like getting three games for the price of one, and consumers loved it.

The success of the first game, of course, generated clamor for a sequel, and sequels soon followed. In all of them, the husband-and-wife team, Lori and Corey Cole, imaginatively eschewed the bogus-medievalisms of so many Tolkien-inspired games. *QFG II: Trial by Fire* had an *Arabian Nights* flavor; *QFG III: The Wages of War* was set in the veldts and jungles of a mythical, but still recognizable, Africa; and *QFG IV: Shadows of*

Darkness transported the player to Mordavia, an east European country with a decided resemblance to Transylvania. One ingredient of the series' continued success was the Coles' propensity for using real mythological characters—such as Baba Yaga and Russalka—within a fanciful context governed by the evolving internal logic of the games.

More, Ken...Please!!
By 1993, Sierra had published four *QFG* games, and while fans naturally had their favorites and their somewhat-less-than-favorites, players who'd fallen under the spell of the first game remained intensely loyal as the cycle matured, while tens of thousands of new fans came on board with each new installment.

And then the series ran into a metaphorical brick wall: Sierra announced that *QFG IV: Shadows of Darkness* would be the final game. The reasons had less to do with the products themselves than with changing circumstances in the PC gaming marketplace. Technology exploded; the so-called "Hollywood Paradigm" extended its venture-capital tentacles throughout the industry; and the series was deemed a wrap. Fans of the *QFG* series were not happy campers when they learned that *Shadows of Darkness* was the "official" end of the series. They bombarded the company with email, snail-mail, phone calls, and long-range mystical incantations, pleading, demanding, begging for MORE. Some *QFG* addicts threatened hunger strikes and self-immolation (not too sure how serious the latter entreaties were,

but who wants to have that on their conscience?).

Sierra's co-founder, Ken Williams, decided that *Dragon Fire* simply had to be reinstated on the agenda, and pulled out all the stops to make it happen. He knew Lori Cole was the only person who could see the project through in a manner that would satisfy the fans (husband Corey was, by that time, tied into other commitments).

"Sierra made an irresistible offer," Lori says. "Everything that was on our 'wish-list' for the final game, we could have: the time, the budget, and the creative resources to do it right. All the symbolic and thematic threads, all the evolving character relationships, every element that tied the whole series together in one great narrative arc, all of these things had to come together to form a truly satisfying climax. And now

Sierra was offering the resources to do that. How could I resist?"

Dragon Fire

True to the Coles' tradition of emblazoning each game with a unique geographical environment, *Quest for Glory V: Dragon Fire*, the final episode, derives its overall mood and appearance from Greek mythology. There's a visually stunning sequence, for example, set in what could only be the ruins of legendary Atlantis.

The game takes place on the island of Marete, and the action centers on its fortress-capital, Silmaria. The customs and ambiance are inspired by the great Minoan civilization of Crete, and Marete itself—with its glowing beaches, azure skies, and quaint seaside villages—looks like the kind of Aegean island you might see in a Club Med advertise-

ment. Within this fantasy world, in fact, the place is regarded as a lush resort, widely favored by the leisured and wealthy.

But when the game opens, there's big trouble in this paradise: A mysterious assassin has just slain the Ruler with a poisoned dagger, Silmaria is besieged by a mercenary army from Hispania, the once-peaceful fishing villages are now havens for bloodthirsty sea-reavers, and the countryside is plagued by monsters. As if these problems were not enough, the land is also gripped by fear of an ancient prophecy that foretells of a terrible dragon whose appearance is imminent.

Sounds like our Hero has his work cut out for him. He can become the Ruler of this glorious realm, but first he must pass the Seven Rites of Kingship: Courage, Freedom, Valor, Destiny,

THE SOUND OF EXCELLENCE

Be honest. One of the first things you usually do when embarking on a long adventure game, is shut off the soundtrack. Once you've heard the first seven or eight minutes of it, you've heard everything you're going to hear for the next 30 hours of game-time. Repetitious banality has been the norm.

Thanks to the work of composer Chance Thomas, Sierra intends to break that pattern with *Dragon Fire*. Available separately on CD, the game's soundtrack (containing a bonus extended playable demo of the game) is avail-

able at www.sierra.com— well worth playing for its own sake.

"I think we've set a new standard with the CD of *Dragon Fire*'s music. Long after the player has finished the game and put it on his shelves, he can still recapture the mood by listening to the music."

Chance's score—moody, colorful, exquisitely orchestrated—does indeed set a new standard. It's as good as anything you're likely to hear in a theater, and it's certain to "raise the bar" for other game companies.

The First Bank of Silmaria is warded with the latest in anti-Thief technology.

You can prove your valor, as well as pick up a few drachma, in the combat arena.

The awe-inspriring Dryads of the woods are sources of great, though cryptic, wisdom.

Conquest, Peace, and Justice. He must also find the source of the dragon prophecy and quell that fearsome beast. If that isn't enough, he must also track down the assassin, whose list of potential victims includes not only our Hero, but all of his friends as

well. As he attempts to fulfill these quests, he will encounter a beautiful woman who could become his destined mate…but winning her will not be easy in an environment so filled with treachery, intrigue, and danger.

Fans of the series will meet old friends such as Rakeesh and Erasmus, learn new skills (pocket-picking and swimming are two of the most useful), discover some powerful new Paladin (a superior class) abilities, and learn to wield new weapons such as the Ice Diamond, the Slasher-Dagger, and the Dragon Slayer.

You'll navigate through the game world by means of a silky-smooth, third-person, cinematic viewpoint that provides unprecedented freedom to explore every nook, cranny, and angle of Silmaria's lush, high-resolution, 3D landscape.

If you're already a *QFG* fan, the above-listed peeks should already have you salivating… and those are only a few of the highlights.

Where Does the Series Go from Here?

But as *Dragon Fire*'s release date draws near, Lori's still besieged by fans who simply don't want the series to end. She's adamant about this matter, how-

ever, and for strong reasons: "Every great novel, no matter how much you want it to go on and on, has to have a climax that caps everything that's gone before, wraps up the loose ends, resolves the conflicts, and brings down the final curtain.

"This game completes an epic saga. Your hero, who was so unsure of himself and hesitant at the start, really has become a hero. If the adventures just kept rambling on through ever more diluted sequels, then what's the significance of the series as a whole? Without a rousing climax, all the events and challenges you experienced in earlier games really lose their meaning. In *Dragon Fire*, your destiny is fulfilled, your quest is triumphantly concluded.

You've made a difference in this fantasy world, you've done it all, you've become a hero of legendary stature, and now you have the opportunity to become a great ruler. The hero has earned his rest, and I think it's very satisfying to let him live out the rest of his life in your imagination."

Lori is understandably proud that this fifth and final *Quest for Glory* game will stand as a benchmark in gaming history. It pushes the technological envelope and achieves a synthesis of graphic beauty, sonic splendor, and sheer storytelling power that fulfills every dream inherent in the original concept. How many artists—in any storytelling medium—can witness their vision turn into reality on such ideal terms? *i*

STAKING SWAT 2 OUT
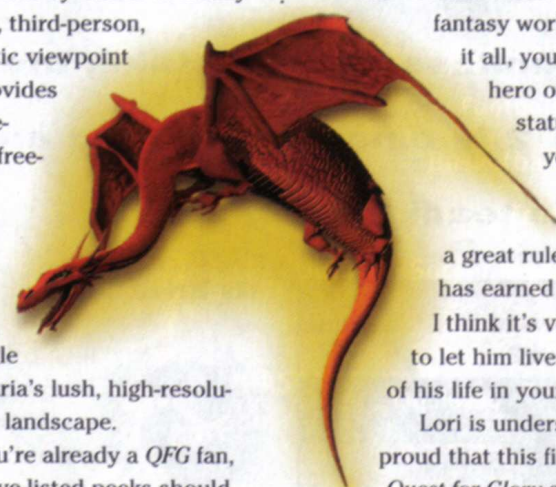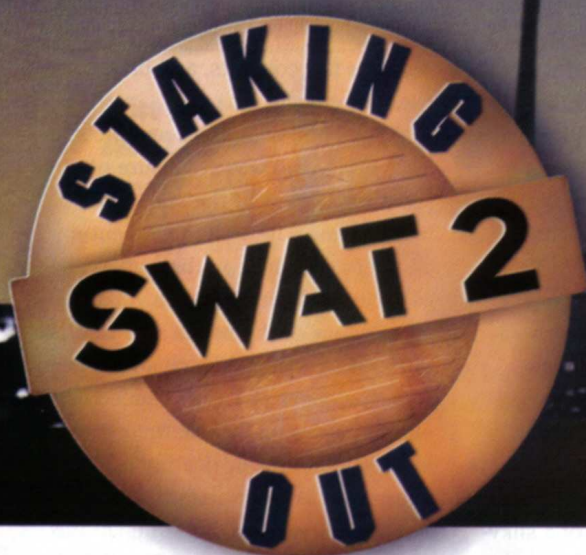
GET THE MOST BANG OUT OF YOUR SWAT

With countless lives at stake, the key to SWAT 2 is employing sound and effective team strategies.

By Brian Boyle

SWAT 2 offers exciting single-player missions as well as a richly detailed multiplayer gaming experience to everyone from combat-hardened veterans on down to the greenest of rookies. Play through the challenging multiplayer scenarios built into *SWAT 2*, and you are rewarded with countless hours of captivating, solid, head-to-head gameplay and unparalleled freedom of movement, as well as an abundance of strategic and tactical fun.

This overview of basic *SWAT 2* multi-player strategy begins with a brief examination of the tasks specific members of the SWAT Element should be expected to perform.

The SWAT Element

The SWAT insertion team, the Element, is a five-person squad composed of several experienced, highly trained LAPD officers. The five duty assignments within the Element itself are Element Leader, Scout, Rear Guard,

and two Assault officers. Should you choose to play the role of the good guys, it's your responsibility to see that the component members of your SWAT insertion team stay on task.

> "...before you start having too much fun, bear in mind that the game scenarios herein are based on actual LAPD SWAT call-ins. Spooky." –*GameSpot*

The Element Leader bears the responsibility for every aspect of the mission and must ensure its tactical stance through careful distribution of his team's resources. The Element Leader controls the marching order, assigns the Scout and Rear Guard, and dictates the squad formation. The Element Leader also dictates the maneuvers within encounter-specific tactics, such as entering and clearing a room. When you choose to play on the side of the SWAT team, you are the "de facto" Element Leader.

The Scout, as the point person, precedes the Assaulters into enemy territory. The Scout's fundamental use is as a reconnaissance unit—even employing the use of mirrors to check for danger around corners. He reports back to the insertion team upon visual contact with the enemy. Therefore, the Scout's primary responsibility is information procurement and not necessarily combat.

Use your Scout to evaluate a situation. Scouts can remove the unknowns and variables from any given scenario. Your Scout should always be in constant contact with the Element Leader. The information you secure with your Scout may save the lives of your team.

Use your Assaulters for fairly straightforward applications of force. Going through doorways, entering and clearing rooms, and live-fire contact with your terrorist opponents— all of these tasks are the duties and responsibilities of your Assaulters. As a general rule, don't bother assigning one of your Assaulters to cover your back, that's what your Rear Guard is for. Have both your Assaulters and your Element Leader take up flanking positions within the squad.

While the column may be suitable for a brisk march on a sunny day, it is rarely appropriate for a tactical situation. The fundamental difficulty with the column is that it prevents some members of the Element from providing cover fire for the rest of the insertion team.

A safer application of the column is to send the members of the team down the passageway one at a time, Scout first. When the bulk of the team has established a defensive position farther up the passageway, the Assaulters rejoin the rest of the team and the process is repeated.

In a defensive diamond, the five members of the Element are nearly back to back. In this manner all members of the team are able to support each other's fields of fire. Simultaneously,

WHAT'S NEW? Terrorists take over a plane at LAX— just another day in LA!

the team is able to hold off attacks from multiple directions. The defensive diamond is also an extremely adaptable formation, capable of changing itself into almost any other formation quickly.

The Softer Side of SWAT

SWAT 2 focuses on more than just life-and-death decisions. A major portion of the game is dealing with the public and its perception of your department—the PR factor. Dependent on the public's response to a mission, the PR factor is the sum of bonuses and deductions determined by the mission's outcome. If your PR rating drops too low, you will be taken out of office. Positive and negative public responses tie in closely to budgets for the upcoming missions. They determine whether you will be outfitting your squadron with $600 .45-caliber Colts or $5,000 Heckler and Koch MP5 9mm submachine guns. When basic emergency medical field kits cost about $250 each, you have to do what you can to make the budget stretch.

No police game set in LA would be complete without a riot scenario. *SWAT 2*'s riots will test your team and your leadership abilities.

Choose from 100 LAPD officers, each with unique characteristics, to create your ultimate SWAT team.

Echelon left & echelon right are more effective tactical variations on the column. To form an echelon left or an echelon right, simply stagger your team members to the left or the right on a diagonal.

The application of this tactic is necessary when you are taking enemy fire from either your left flank or your right flank. Echelon left concentrates your team's firepower left and forward, while echelon right brings the Element's fields of fire forward and right.

Line abreast is as simple a formation as the column, but it is considerably more effective in the larger, more open areas. By simply lining up the members of your team side by side, you provide maximum firepower in a forward action, with multiple, overlapping fields of fire. This also prevents each member of the enemy player's forces from comfortably targeting more than one of your Element members at a time.

Terrorist Tactics

No overview of *SWAT 2* strategy would be complete without at least a brief glimpse of the philosophically, politically, and otherwise diametrically opposing forces—the terrorists. Specifically, let's examine more closely one possible terrorist tactic: a game-plan dubbed "the wounded soldier tactic."

A clever opponent playing the role of the terrorist leader might employ "the wounded soldier tactic" against a particularly overeager adversary. However, since information is preparedness, your understanding of this enemy tactic reduces its effectiveness considerably.

"The Wounded Soldier Tactic"

This stratagem requires only one or two armed terrorists to effectively tie up the resources of an entire SWAT team. Meanwhile, the balance of the terrorist player's forces continues to roam free, doing just as they please.

Essentially, the terrorist player plans an ambush whose purpose is not to kill their opponents, but simply to wound them. The terrorist player relies on the highly principled personal integrity that is fundamental to the members of a SWAT insertion team for this plan to succeed.

If you, the SWAT team leader, are forced to become preoccupied with the safety of the individuals within your

team, you cannot focus your full attention on either the hidden terrorists picking off your officers, or the as yet unrevealed terrorists executing their despicable scheme.

In other words, the terrorist player depends on you—the player representing the SWAT officers—to do everything

within your power to protect your wounded teammates from further harm. If you commit more than one of your SWAT team members to aid or otherwise assist their fallen comrades, the net result is fewer able-bodied officers available to combat the actual terrorist threat.

A Final Word...

Whether your opponent is human or computer, caution, common sense, and careful consideration of all the possibilities are always strongly recommended. Be ever-vigilant—be at all times watchful and wary. While the single-player AI (artificial intelligence) in this game is amazing, there are few computer opponents as devious and cunning or downright conniving as another human being. And therein lies the fun of *SWAT 2*. 🖝

SWAT 2's comprehensive interface provides easy access to each officer's weapons and tools of the trade.

CORPORATE WARS OF THE FUTURE

InterAction asked the creator of CyberStorm 2: CorpWars to tell our readers exactly what makes this game unique. He's been talking ever since...

By Beth Demetrescu

WELCOME TO THE world of *CyberStorm 2: CorpWars*, where only the best survive. You're HERC Commander placed in charge of all forces for a corporation in the Typhoeus system. Your mission is simple: gain control of the universe's most valuable resources. Piece of cake, right? Wrong! Competing with you are seven other corporations—all vying for control of the system and its critical jump point. But be careful, because they don't fight fair.

CyberStorm 2 is a game of tactical combat, complete with rich detail and a huge array of technology to choose from. Not only must you learn to fight, but you will have to command an army of heavily armed HERCs. By managing and using your resources, you can achieve the ultimate goal—the Typhoeus jump point.

"In this future, space travel is based on jump points. You can travel faster than light but only by using jump points, or folds in space. They allow you to pass through the fabric of space to arrive instantly at another point. Jump points cannot be created—they exist only where they exist," *CyberStorm*

CyberStorm 2: CorpWars

www.sierra.com/**cstorm2**

Developer
Dynamix

Preferred Minimum Requirements
Pentium 90+, 16MB RAM, WIN95

Format
WIN95 CD

Price
$39.95
(Order #69987)

Available: Spring

1.800.757.7707

> "THE **REAL-TIME** MODE IS EVERYTHING REAL-TIME PLAYERS HAVE COME TO EXPECT: **FAST-PACED, ACTION-PACKED,** AND **CHALLENGING AS HELL.**"

2 Director Graeme Bayless says. "The Typhoeus system is important as it has a newly discovered jump point—one that leads to the other side of the galaxy and, more importantly, to a new system that contains many new jump points."

Bayless adds, "These jump points make Typhoeus of critical importance as a potential trade center for the future. Though it would be possible for this system to be shared, in the *CyberStorm 2* future, competition is fierce, and sharing is only a creative way of saying, 'I'll work with you now and stab you in the back later.' So the fight for Typhoeus is on."

Real-Time vs. Turn-Based

Unlike most games in its genre, *CyberStorm 2* is both a turn-based and a real-time game. Originally, the team had converted the entire system to real-time in answer to the pleas of many of the series' fans. However, they also heard from a lot of fans requesting they stay with a turn-based system. After *Computer Gaming World* paid the team a nice compliment last year by saying, "*CyberStorm* was the one game that we didn't feel needed to be real-time," a decision was made—"We

felt we'd simply give them both," Bayless says.

The real-time mode is everything real-time players have come to expect: fast-paced, action-packed, and challenging as hell. But it has an additional twist: unlike most of the competition, in *CyberStorm 2*, maneuvering actually makes a difference. For example, ducking behind a tree can be effective in hiding from the enemy. Likewise, turning a new shield to face your enemy when the others become depleted can be critical for defense.

In turn-based mode, however, the game breaks the real-time functionality into eight-second increments. In other words, anything your vehicle could do in eight seconds were you playing in real-time mode, you can do in your turn. This will control weapon rate-of-fire, movement speed, shield reallocation and refocusing, etc. "We've added a power bar that shows you how much energy you have and, as you fire and move, it diminishes," Bayless explains. "A well-built vehicle will have sufficient power for firing and movement, but if you underpower your vehicles, they will be unable to move their full eight seconds' worth and still fire their full eight seconds' worth."

Strategy and Action

In many ways *CyberStorm 2* is two games in one. As well as the combination of real-time and turn-based gaming, there are also two distinct "halves" to the game. The first

CYBERSTORM 2 GLOSSARY

HERC
A HERC is a HERculean Combat unit (as per Earthsiege) and is one of three vehicle types. Basically, a HERC is a giant armored suit (20+ feet tall) with a cockpit from which the pilot attempts to save the world.

Bioderm
A bioderm is a genetically engineered pilot that is grown in a biovat. They are humanlike, but are not pure-strain humans. They think, as we do, but are grown specifically to command the combat vehicles in the game.

Proto 110

Cybrid
Cybrids are computer-controlled vehicles. Remnants of the Cybrid Forces remain in the Typhoeus system—players must always be prepared for an alien encounter.

Cybriderm
Cybriderms are combinations of cybrid computer technology and bioderm technology... think Terminators from the movie *Terminator* and you're close.

Proto07

Grav Vehicle
Grav vehicles are tanks that fly on gravitic suspensors. They can't fly high; they can only fly close to the ground like hovercraft.

DESTRUCTION IN A WINTER WONDERLAND: Take the battle to your enemies' base on a wide variety of terrain.

HOSTILE CORPORATE TAKEOVER: En route to combat, forces are sent from their base to other planets to attack enemy corporations.

CyberStorm 2: CorpWars

half is the more obvious aspect—the battlefield. Here you maneuver vehicles and HERCs and fire weapons in order to win the battles. However, there is an entirely separate game element that is less obvious but every bit as important—the strategic game.

"You are one of eight corporations fighting for control of this key star system, and in the strategic game you will be choosing your missions and what corporation you are pushing against," Bayless explains. "You will choose your research distribution to control what types of technology you get, and you will control your facility management—building your base to better prepare for enemy assaults as well as improving your facilities to build better vehicles or grow better bioderms. Simply put, the strategic/planning portion of the game is just as important to winning as is fortitude on the battlefield."

Of course, what fun would any game be without a healthy stable of weapons and vehicles? As well as trees and rocks to hide behind—lava flows to use as barriers or places from which to launch ambushes, CyberStorm 2 provides everything from Particle and Ballistic Weapons to tanks and Grav Vehicles.

"The weapons break into seven types," he says. "Energy Weapons (anything that is energy-based but does not have a recoil—mostly, this is lasers), Particle Weapons (any charged particle-based weapons), Missiles (any weapons involving propelled trajectory weapons), Ballistic Weapons (autocannons and the like), ELF Weapons (man-made lightning weapons, using electro-flux technology, a unique element to the ES universe), Plasma Weapons (hi-tech flamethrowers), and Advanced Technology Weapons (a variety of unusual weapons)."

Bayless goes on to explain, "Vehicles break into three general types: Tanks, HERCs, and Grav Vehicles, which further subdivide into a total of 26 chassis and include three Cybrid models. The

BIRTH OF A BIODERM: Fully customize your bioderms to suit your tactics.

"...IN THE CYBERSTORM 2 FUTURE, COMPETITION IS FIERCE, AND SHARING IS ONLY A CREATIVE WAY OF SAYING 'I'LL WORK WITH YOU NOW AND STAB YOU IN THE BACK LATER.'"

chassis also are divided up because some can use scout sensors and some cannot."

Scripted and Random Missions

One of the most innovative and fascinating aspects of CyberStorm 2 is its compelling missions. Bayless and his team wanted to offer players the chance to follow some carefully constructed scripted missions so they could experience some of the game's special elements, while also including some open-ended missions in which the player totally determines the course of events.

"Scripted missions include exciting details that increase the richness of the actual mission. There are storyline elements connecting several of these missions, making them miniature campaigns," Bayless explains. "The downside of scripted missions (which are how all of our competitors do all their missions) is that you can only play them once and you are done. Random missions, on the other hand, change that because each mission is created by our program-logic rather than by hand. This allows the missions to be created on the fly, with a randomly created map and a program-constructed enemy force comprised of vehicles that are literally constructed just for that mission. Therefore the opposition is truly unique every time you play."

"This," he declares, "gives CyberStorm 2 nearly infinite replayability!"

When asked to describe his favorite feature in CyberStorm 2, Bayless was loathe to pick just one. "I guess the biggest reason I'm passionate about this game is the toy factor. I love building different vehicles with different weapon configurations. This game lets you do that hundreds of different ways without ever seeing the same configuration twice. I also love the gameplay—and the action in this
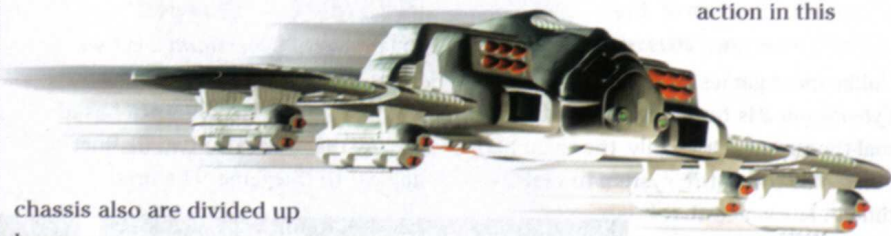
game is excellent. I find myself literally talking to the screen, making noises appropriately—screaming "ouch" when they hammer me, yelling at my slow HERC to get its butt in gear when I'm running for my life, cursing my bioderm when it misses a critical shot," he says.

"I also love the flow of CyberStorm 2. It's a strategic game in which you can spend plenty of time building and planning and a tactical action game in which the intensity is high." It just doesn't get any better than that!

Papyrus Uses the Past to Define the Future

By Mark H. Walker

OVER THE PAST 10 years, designer David Kaemmer and the development team at Papyrus have made quite a name for themselves harnessing the technology of tomorrow, today. The future never seems out of their sight, and proof can be found anywhere from the high-banked ovals of *NASCAR Racing* to the twisting tracks of *CART Racing*.
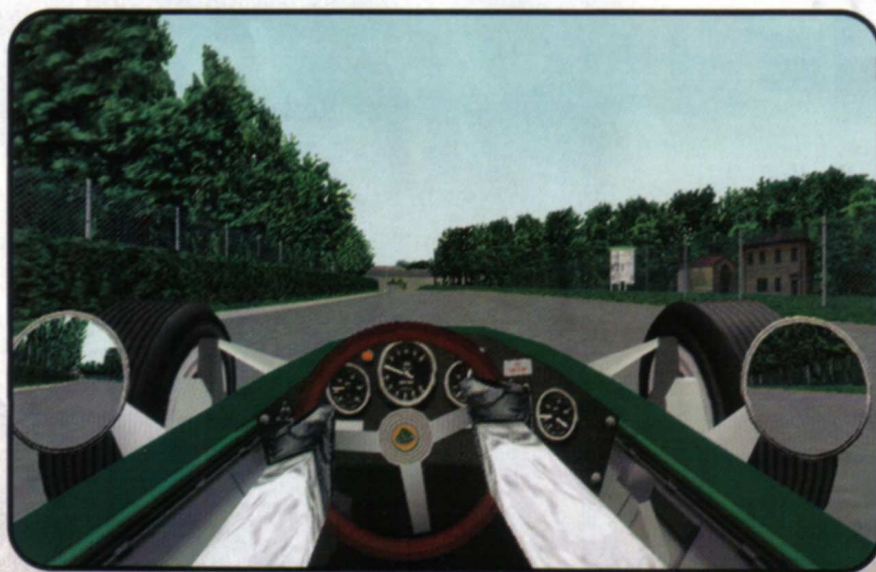
MONZA CIRCA 1967: Grand Prix's golden era.

But in their newest release, *Grand Prix Legends*, Kaemmer and his team have applied a completely redesigned physics engine to an era of racing past, when the unpredictability of the race-cars made heroes out of those drivers who succeeded, and memories out of those who didn't.

The year is 1967, and the series is Grand Prix racing. "Open-wheel, single-seater road racing is my favorite form of racing," claims Kaemmer. "We chose 1967 for several reasons: it was the final year before aerodynamic aids (wings and such) were introduced, the 3.0-liter cars had plenty of horsepower, and some of the most famous drivers of all time were racing then."

Perhaps the best-known racing simulation designer and programmer in the industry, Kaemmer is also a real-world racecar driver. He is a graduate of the Skip Barber competition driving school and frequently races a Barber-Dodge on several road courses in and around New York and Connecticut.

Nevertheless, his first love is creating racing simulations, and his eyes shine as he discusses his design group's latest project.

"The physics engine for *Grand Prix Legends* is really completely new. It's a product of years and years of thinking about it and learning, and we think the cars of this era will display the engine better than the more recent 'winged' Grand Prix cars would."

As Real As It Gets

As racing simulation fans have come to expect from Papyrus, each facet of *Grand Prix Legends* will be an authentic simulation.

All the famous drivers who raced in 1967 are pres-ent and accounted for: Jim Clark, Graham Hill, American Dan Gurney, and the 1967 World Champion Dennis Hulme. Better still, they'll drive the same cars. Once again, gold-trimmed kelly-green Lotus 49s will dice against midnight-blue Eagle-Weslakes.

"Like our previous games, we wanted a complete grid for the player to compete with," says Kaemmer. "Accordingly, each *Grand Prix Legends*' race will be capable of running a 20-car field."

There will also be a full plate of tracks to choose from. There were 11 Grand Prix tracks in 1967, and Papyrus plans to include 11 tracks in the game. The tracks in the sim are eye-poppers. Hay bales, tires, spectators, and build-

ings—all drawn in lifelike detail—flash by the cockpit. The depth of the art-work is, in a word—albeit a hyphen-ated one—jaw-dropping. The driver's arms actually turn the steering wheel, shift gears, and wave to the corner workers (or anyone else for that matter). And the cars look as real as the painstakingly detailed models that adorn the desks of Papyrus' graphic artists. *Grand Prix Legends* is simply beautiful and will use the latest 3Dfx and Rendition technologies in addition to supporting non-accelerated software.

Brains Behind the Beauty

But this game is more than just another pretty face. *InterAction* had the chance to give it a spin, and the experience was scintillating. Those of you who have been lucky enough to drive a Formula One racing car will recognize the feeling immediately; those who haven't are in for a fresh thrill.

With the new physics engine, your gut almost feels the tires skip-hopping across the pavement as your Lotus blasts through a corner in a full-blown, four-wheel drift. Get on the throttle too quickly, even in the higher gears, and the tires

will break loose—an event sure to grab your attention as you exit a corner at 130 mph. Jump on the brakes too hard and you'll lock up the tires, slide, hop a berm, and end up in a precisely ren-dered cow pasture—or worse.

And we aren't the only ones who like it. "Once you sit down and drive it, you'll realize that it is better (than previous Papyrus simulations)," says Kaemmer. "Every-one here who has played it thinks it's exciting because you know what is

"Grand Prix Legends pegs the highest possible performance in the racing genre."
—Johnny Wilson, Computer Gaming World

Race against open-wheel racing legends such as Jim Clark, Graham Hill, and Dennis Hulme.

Grand Prix Legends features tracks from the 1967 Formula One race season, including Monza, Zandvoort, Watkins Glen, and Kyalami.

Choose from legendary teams such as Lotus, Eagle, or Brabham.

NUTS AND BOLTS:

A Look Under the Hood of Grand Prix Legends

Grand Prix Legends is a gorgeous game, but its beauty is more than skin deep. The most sophisticated physics engine David Kaemmer has yet

fully 3D," continues Kaemmer. "That's one thing that's a big change. Our older engines were basically 2D models.

Although the weight of the car was modeled,

Grand Prix Legends graphically demonstrates the game's realism. The Lotus 49s, piloted by Kaemmer and Papyrus Creative Director Matt Sentell, drift through Monza's sweep-

you can let the cars shift automatically.

Obviously, the realism of the model directly translates into the gamers' ability to tweak their cars. "All the

I LOVE THE SMELL OF BURNT RUBBER IN THE MORNING...

Papyrus' new racing sim engine takes advantage of the speeds of today's computers. With smoking tires, high speed collisions, and super-realistic car physics, *Grand Prix Legends* puts you in the driver's seat.

designed powers the title, and it shows.

"The main thing that is different is the tire model; it's extremely accurate," says Kaemmer. "You can lock up individual wheels, you can spin the rear wheels, but it's much more than that.... When you brush the brakes, the car's nose will dive. When you accelerate, the rear 'squats'— all the things that really happen in a car.

"Additionally, the model is

it really couldn't jump. But now the car can leave the ground, cartwheel, or anything else. This makes for spectacular crashes, but more importantly the driving experience is much more like real cars'."

Even a quick glance at

ing bends, their noses dip as they brake, and their tails squat as the drivers accelerate.

Grand Prix Legends will even model the complete drive train. If you want to configure your controls to use a clutch, you can. On the other hand,

setup options for these cars are completely correct," says Kaemmer. "In our older simulations —because we were running on slower computers —it really wasn't possible to do the kind of computations we can do now."

Better still, all this realism will translate into what appears to be Papyrus' best racing simulation yet. The model is sophisticated, and the game is undeniably exciting and addictive.

> Jump on the brakes too hard and you'll lock up the tires, slide, hop a berm, and end up in a precisely rendered cow pasture, or worse.

What's Special About 1967?

Plenty. From 1960 to 1965, Formula One Grand Prix cars were powered by small 1.5-liter (about 100 cubic inch) engines. Although they were still fast, the 3.0-liter powerplants introduced in 1966 were much more powerful. This, coupled with the cars' lack of aerodynamic aids such as wings or underbody tunnels, makes the cars in *Grand Prix Legends* very tail-happy—and a blast to drive. This was the golden era of Grand Prix racing. The starting grid for a 1967 Grand Prix reads like the Formula One Hall of Fame: Jim Clark—arguably the greatest driver of all time;

It was the final year before wings and such were introduced to auto racing, and some of the most famous drivers of our time were racing then.

Graham Hill—father of the 1996 World Champion, Damon Hill, and a man who would win the Grand Prix of Monaco a record five times; Dennis Hulme—the man who would win the World Championship that year; Dan Gurney—a successful American driver and car designer; Bruce Mclaren—founder of Mclaren cars. All raced regularly that year.

It was a historic era. When Dan Gurney flashed across the finish line in his Eagle-Weslake at Spa Belgium, it marked the first time an American, driving an American car, won a Formula One race.

It was the last year before wings (and sponsor advertisements) began to sprout on the Grand Prix cars. It was a time when drivers, although hard-nosed competitors, remained friends. It was Grand Prix's golden era. It was 1967.
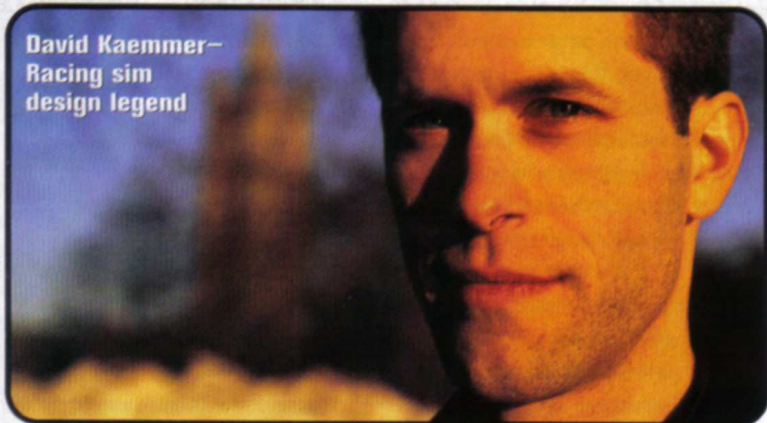
happening on-screen is what would happen in a real car. You're doing all the same things. You can come off a corner with opposite lock (i.e., turning into a slide), at full power, and just drift it over to the exit. It's something you just can't do with the other games. Once I get on (the game), they have to tear me off."

All Aboard

The good thing is, *Grand Prix Legends* is designed to let a lot of people like it at once. When asked about *Grand Prix Legends*' multiplayer capabilities, Kaemmer beams, "We've done a lot of work in setting up *Grand Prix Legends*' multiplayer functionality. We actually had multiplayer working before we had the AI (artificial intelligence) working. The early start has been great because we have been able to identify problems, and make multiplayer really exciting. I believe

there is nothing better than racing against a bunch of other live people. And with this new model, it is as close to the real thing as you can get. It's amazing. You find yourself doing exactly the same things you would in real life."

And Kaemmer, real-life racecar driver and simulation designer, would know exactly what those things are.

The good news for simheads is that with Papyrus' past record of excellence, it appears that everyone will get to find out for themselves how exciting driving a Grand Prix car can be, when *Grand Prix Legends* is released later this summer. 🏁

Graham Hill (left) chats with Jim Clark before the start of a race.

3D ACCELERATORS ARE an absolute necessity to play the hottest, best-looking games out there. While last year's choices for 3D accelerators were sparse, this year's brought a whole new host of contenders, each one claiming it can draw umpteen-thousand bilinear, texture-mapped, gouraud-shaded polygons per second. But which accelerator is right for you, and why do you want thousands of bilinear, texture-mapped, gouraud-shaded polygons anyway?

Hopefully, I can help you answer that question for yourself, and when you're finished with this article, you'll be wondering why you should settle for slow, blocky graphics, when you can have smoothly animated images running in 65,536 colors.

tor can run many 3D-optimized titles as well as a Pentium 200 without a 3D accelerator.

How Do 3D Accelerators Work?

To give you a little insight into how a 3D accelerator operates, of the wall match up properly, and can be viewed from any angle. This is *perspective correction*. Without it, your brick wall wouldn't line up properly onto your cube, and would become distorted depending on individual viewing angles.

If you want to display the wall as partially transparent (like gelatin), then you use something called *alpha blending*, which allows you to assign different levels of transparency to objects. To smooth the edges of the wall to make the whole look less blocky, 3D accelerators use something called *anti aliasing*.

filtering techniques (*bilinear* and *trilinear*), we can smooth the image of the wall (and our three-headed alien in front of it) as we move nearer or farther away from it.

These are just very basic examples of different functions 3D accelerators can perform, but not all 3D accelerators will necessarily support the same features. For example, one 3D accelerator might support gouraud shading, but not Z-buffering. Currently, however, most of the available 3D accelerators support these functions and many more— some, in fact,

GO 3D

Adding a 3D card to your computer offloads complex 3D processes from your PC—making your

And if I do my job right, you'll really be wondering how you've been gaming this long without a 3D accelerator.

What Are 3D Accelerators?

Before trying to decide which card you need to buy, you need to know a little about just what 3D accelerators are and how they work. In a nutshell, 3D accelerators were created to offload the CPU-intensive tasks involved with rendering and animating 3D images. By taking over these duties and freeing the CPU to handle other tasks, gaming horsepower is greatly increased. As an example, a Pentium 133 with a 3D accelera-

let's say you want to create a 3D brick wall. First, you need to create the polygons to execute this. Assuming the brick wall isn't too complicated, just pretend you have a blank cube, which is drawn using a series of x, y, and z coordinates. Now, in order to make the cube look like a brick wall, you have to map an image of a brick wall onto it. This is called *texture mapping*. You can create a brick wall, demonic monster (albeit a cubic one in this case), or even a candy house—the choice is yours depending on the texture you use.

Now, you have to make sure the texture map is layered onto our cube just right, so the edges

This is a method of color blending that makes edges appear smoother and more realistic.

Now say you want a three-headed alien to move in front of your wall. For this you need to use a technique called *Z-buffering*. This process allows 3D accelerators to draw surfaces and quickly redraw them when one object moves in front of another. "Quickly" doesn't just mean the redraw happens fast; it must happen instantly so that the redraw is seamless to the human eye.

And finally, using a technique called *gouraud shading*, we can color our brick wall with smooth, gradient colors, giving it a more natural, lifelike look. Using

even double as 2D accelerators. As you can imagine, if the CPU had to perform all of the functions described above in addition to everything else for which it is responsible, even topnotch Pentium-based machines could easliy be brought to their knees by today's sophisticated software programs.

Making Sense Out of Chipsets

One of the most important things to know about the video card in which you are interested is which particular 3D accelerator (or chipset) is being used on the card. So before we plunge into the specifics of what each card offers, I will take some

BY BRYAN SALOIS

time to discuss the 3D accelerators (chipsets) used on the various cards.

The 3Dfx Voodoo Chipset

Many of you have heard of the 3Dfx chipset, also called Voodoo. The Voodoo chipset was one of the first to hit the streets, and it continues to be one of the most popular and well-supported accelerators on the market. The Voodoo chipset is the 3D muscle behind Diamond's Monster 3D and the Canopus' Pure3D. If you have the bucks, you can't go wrong with a Voodoo-based card.

The 3Dfx Voodoo Rush Chipset

The Voodoo Rush chipset is

ed 3D as well. The Voodoo Rush is not quite as fast as the standard Voodoo chipset, falling around 10%-20% slower for most games.

nVIDIA Riva 128 Chipset

The nVIDIA Riva 128 chipset is a relative newcomer to the 3D arena, and it's already made quite a name for itself. Not only does it provide 3D acceleration rivaling the 3Dfx (in Direct 3D games), but it offers blazing Windows performance as well. This in mind, the Riva 128 makes a great single-card 2D/3D solution for your PC. It can augment its existing RAM with your system RAM, so if it needs more memory for texture maps, it can use your comput-

ATI's entry into 3D uses its own chipset called the 3D Rage. One of ATI's cards uses the Rage II chipset, and one uses the Rage Pro, which is the latest version. Regardless of which chipset you get, both pack quite a 3D wallop in Direct 3D games. To top it all off, this chipset offers 2D and 3D acceleration, so your Windows and your 3D will fly.

Rendition Verite 2100

The Verite 2100 chipset is Rendition's latest improvement on the earlier Verite 1000. This chipset offers good Windows performance and does well in Direct 3D games. One of the best-selling features of the Verite chipset is it's one of the less expensive

these 3D boards on an already pretty well-equipped Pentium 166 MMX machine (or better), you most likely won't notice much of a difference between one board and the next in your 3D games. Whether you get 25 frames per second (fps) or 40 fps won't make a difference. A fairly mid- to high-end Pentium-class system paired with any of the boards mentioned here will easily handle 25+ fps on most games and give you a greatly enhanced 3D gaming experience. If you are playing a game optimized for a

AND TAKE A LOAD OFF

games look better, animate faster, and run smoother than you ever imagined!

a slightly modified 3Dfx chipset that can be paired with a 2D accelerator, making a single-card solution for your 2D and 3D needs. This can be good if you are looking for a new video card that will improve your Windows performance and offer accelerat-

er's RAM rather than just the RAM on the video card. This lets the manufacturers put less RAM on the card and pass the savings on to the customer.

ATI 3D Rage II & 3D Rage Pro

chipsets while remaining a 3D powerhouse. Additionally, you can run "Rendition Ready" software with this board.

What's In the Cards

Overall, if you install any of

specific chipset, such as "Rendition Ready" titles like *NASCAR Racing 2* and *CART▪ Racing*, or games that support 3Dfx like *FPS:Ski Racing*, you can expect even better performance.

3D ANIMATION OVERVIEW

Skeleton	Wireframe	Rendered

1. A skeleton is created with each point plotted to designate where the skeleton can move and bend.

2. A wireframe (or collection of polygons) is mapped around the skeleton to create "skin."

3. And finally, images are mapped directly on the surface of the wireframe to create the final 3D object.

The Genius Is in the Details

3D accelerators are the difference between a good-looking game and a completely realistic gaming experience. Take a look at CART Racing:

With 3D   Without

CARS: Chunky, pixelated cars become smooth, shaded, and detailed.

STANDS: Crowds, signs, and the sky rush by with perfect clarity.

REARVIEW MIRRORS: See every detail of every car in your mirrors.

Voodoo

Since there is already wide support for the Voodoo chipset, you may decide this is the best card for you. Diamond's Monster 3D was one of the first Voodoo boards on the market, and continues to be a topnotch performer. It comes equipped with 4MB of RAM: 2MB for texture memory and 2MB for frame buffering. Additionally, the Monster 3D comes with a Monster software bundle, including *Whiplash 3D*, *Descent II*, *EF 2000*, *Tomb Raider*, *Terracide*, *HyperBlade*, *MechWarrior 2*, and a *Games Sampler* CD. All this can be had for around $160.

Canopus' Pure3D, which was just recently released, comes with 6MB of Ram—4MB of RAM for texture memory and 2MB for frame buffering. This extra 2MB of texture memory gives the Pure3D a speed edge when it comes to handling lots of on-screen action, such as when there are lots of enemies running around in *Half-Life*. Additionally, the Pure3D offers a TV/S-Video out, which means you can connect it to your TV set and enjoy some big-screen gaming. Unfortunately, I only had a 13-inch TV here for testing, but I was surprised at how good the image quality was on *FPS: Ski Racing*. While TV screens are not as sharp as standard computer displays, I'd be more than happy to sacrifice a little sharpness to carve some turns on a 32-inch screen. The Pure3D is presently priced at $179, but does not come with any bundled games—rats!

If you absolutely want the most muscle and don't mind using an extra PCI slot, then the Voodoo-based boards like the Diamond Monster 3D and the Canopus Pure3D are definitely your best bet.

Voodoo Rush

If you can't spare an extra PCI slot and/or need a single-card solution, the choices can become more difficult. The Voodoo Rush boards, while about 20% slower than the standard Voodoo cards, still offer competitive performance. They also generally cost significantly less—important if you're just looking to replace an existing video card or buying a new one. If you already have a good Windows accelerator, then the most cost-effective option would probably be a straight Voodoo board. If you want to replace an aging 2D Windows accelerator and get 3D acceleration at the same time, then a single-card solution like Intergraph's Intense 3D may be your best choice.

The Intergraph Intense 3D Voodoo (don't be fooled—chipset: Voodoo Rush) features 6MB of EDO RAM—2MB of RAM dedicated to Windows 2D functions, 2MB of RAM dedicated to texture mapping, and 2MB of RAM dedicated to frame buffering. Like the Pure3D, it offers S-Video and composite video-out so you can take your gaming to the big screen. I also heard that Intergraph plans a set of 3D glasses for use with this card, but unfortunately I didn't have any for testing. The Intense 3D Voodoo comes bundled with full versions of *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter*, *Moto-Racer*, and *Longbow FX*. The suggested retail price is $229.95.

3D CARDS COMPARED

Company	Model	Chipset	Price*	Phone	URL
Diamond Multimedia Systems, Inc.	Diamond Stealth II S220	Rendition Verite 2100	$119.95	(800) 468-5846	www.diamondmm.com
	Diamond Monster 3D	(3Dfx / Voodoo)	$199.95		
	Diamond Viper V330	(nVIDIA Riva 128)	$199.95		
Intergraph Computer Systems	Intergraph Intense 3D Voodoo	(3Dfx / Voodoo Rush)	$229.00	(800) 763-0242	www.intergraph.com
Canopus Corporation	Pure3D	(3Dfx / Voodoo)	$179.00	(888) 868-2533	www.pure3d.com
STB Systems, Inc.	STB Velocity 128 3D	(nVIDIA Riva 128)	$179.00	(888) 234-8750	www.stb.com
ATI Technologies, Inc.	ATI Xpert@Play	(Rage Pro)	$329.00	(905) 882 2600	www.atitech.com
	ATI All-in-Wonder	(Rage II)	$329.00		

*estimated retail price

Advanced 3D games, such as Half-Life extensively use texture-mapping, gouraud-shading, and thousands of bilinear polygons.

nVIDIA Riva 128

If you're not overly concerned with 3Dfx compatibility, don't overlook the Riva 128—based cards. They generally offer much better Windows performance and outpace the Voodoo Rush cards in Direct 3D games. They also have the ability to utilize system RAM if the games need

up, the Velocity 128 has a TV-out connector. The STB Velocity 128 3D comes with *Interstate 76*, *FIFA '97*, and *Moto-Racer*. STB's suggested retail price is $199.95.

Like STB's Velocity 128, the Diamond Viper V330 sports 4MB of SGRAM. It also boasts TV-out and S-Video, out making your TV into a game cen-

> **...a Pentium 133 with a 3D accelerator can run many 3D-optimized titles as well as a Pentium 200 without a 3D accelerator.**

more RAM for textures, and TV-out connectors for big-screen gaming. The STB Velocity 128 and the Diamond Viper 330 are cost-effective and feature-rich, making them both worth a look.

The STB Velocity 128 3D features 4MB of fast SGRAM. Without getting into the nitty-gritty of the RAM, SGRAM is very fast—faster than EDO RAM and VRAM, which have long been popular RAM types for use on video cards. Additionally, like many of the cards in this round-

ter. It comes with a relatively light software bundle, including *MDK: Mission Laguna Beach* (a single-mission demo) and *iF-22*, though it also comes with a host of other applications and utilities. It has a suggested retail price of $199.99.

The Diamond and STB cards are both well-rounded, single-solution cards, and offer about the same performance in 2D and

3D—which is great on both counts. These cards are virtually on equal ground.

Rendition 2100

Diamond appears to be taking the "Blitzkrieg" approach to 3D-accelerator marketing. In addition to the Monster 3D (3Dfx) and the Viper 330 (Riva 128), they also offer the Stealth II S220, which uses the Rendition 2100 chipset. The Stealth II S220 comes equipped with 4MB of fast SGRAM for speedy Windows and 3D gaming. It does not include any TV-out connectors: but, it is upgradable, so you can later add a TV tuner or video capture card to run with it. While the Stealth II S220 doesn't boast the features or quite as much 3D muscle as the other cards in this review, it is the least expensive and the best card if you're on a tight budget. The Stealth II S220 suggested retail is a mere $119.95.

One word of advice I would offer is definitely get a card that has a TV-out connector on it. Even though there is some image degradation when output to a TV set, all of these cards still produce nice output, even on a 13-inch TV. Also, before buying a 3D card, take note of the games you want to play and find out what chipset they use—3Dfx (Voodoo), Rendition, Direct 3D, OpenGL, etc. Then be sure to select the card that offers the acceleration you want, and allows you to play the games you want to play, at a price you can afford. 🎮

LARRY ROLLS THE BONES!

Everyone knows Leisure Suit Larry and creator Al Lowe are ready for Vegas. Question is, is Vegas ready for them?

By Paul Quinn

WELCOME TO THE casino of the '90s. Well, more like the casino of the '70s, but let's not split hair implants here. Our polyester pal Larry Laffer has done it again. Through strange circumstances, Larry has been fronted the cash to build a huge casino in his own image and likeness—a casino that would give Martha Stewart endless facial tics of delight.

Leisure Suit Larry's Casino is an Internet-ready extravaganza in which you can chat, gamble, have a ton of fun, and maybe even find that certain someone who isn't allergic to polyester. It's almost like being in Vegas—if Vegas was decorated in neo-'70s neon and disco balls with plastic palm trees, and every type of gaming and interpersonal vice was catered to with wild abandon.

OK, fine—it's *exactly* like Vegas, but with many hilarious surprises, Larry-style.

While it's a lot of fun playing over the Internet, you don't have to go online to enjoy *Larry's Casino*. You can practice your technique offline, honing your abilities to a fine rapier-like edge, then jump online and interact with the real people using *Larry's Casino's* CyberFace 2000™ chat technology.

Hey Baby, Wanna Go Upstairs?

You start in your room. Nice decor, eh? Larry picked it out himself. Appears to be early retro '70s Warhol/Dali deco. Oh well, nothing a spot of arson wouldn't fix. Before you go down to enjoy the casino, you'd better choose a persona—you really don't want people to recognize you in this place, do you? The closet holds a selection of charac-

---

Leisure Suit Larry's Casino

www.sierra.com/**lslcasino**

Developer
Sierra

Preferred Minimum Requirements
Pentium 90+, 16MB RAM, WIN95

Format
WIN95 CD

Price
$44.95
(Order #70425)

RP
ESRB

Available: Spring

1.800.757.7707

ters from all your past favorite *Larry* games, so try one on! This is how other people in the casino will see you.

OK, let's head downstairs for some action. Those spiffy threads you selected back in your room are great while you sashay around the casino and schmooze, but all the gambling tables are located in hot tubs, so peel it, pal. Once in the tub, you can choose between five casino games: Black Jack. Craps. Roulette. Wheel of Fortune. How about a friendly game of Poker? Great! Click on the Poker table and off you go!

Nothing for Nothing

You start out with a few Larrybucks, so have at it and good luck! No more bucks, huh? Well, you can always restart the game and get more, right? *Wrong!* No free rides here. Several online party games are included in *Larry's Casino* to give you the chance to win another wad to spend. All the party games are interactive and a great way to have fun with your fellow gamers. The games range from joke writing to writing pickup lines, to a hilarious word game.

Spend Your Money Wisely

Unlike other popular casino games, the dough in *Larry's Casino* actually is worth something. You use Larrybucks to gamble, of course, but you can also use the cash to buy "cyber" goodies throughout the casino for yourself or your online friends. Drinks, snacks, and gifts are all available in various places around the casino.

Once you've won a few bucks, you can even invite that special (online) someone into one of several bar and restaurant chat rooms throughout the casino, or up to your room for a private chat session. In your room nobody else can overhear your conversation, so just about anything goes. If the two of you really hit it off, there's even a vir-

tual wedding chapel complete with an Elvis impersonator.

Go to Vegas any time of year without the hassle or the hangover. Larry is *the* hip-swingin', wise-crackin' party dude, and his casino is everything the others don't dare to be. Games, fun, drinks, and, of course, some harmless adult humor make *Leisure Suit Larry's Casino* the most fun you can possibly have in a casino—and you don't have to keep your clothes on! ⓘ

THIS IS THE PRESIDENTIAL SUITE? Better cash in on those room upgrade vouchers.

VEGAS CHIC: *Larry's Casino* would make Donald Trump's decorator proud.

DIRECT HIT

Jasper

BLAST FROM YOUR PAST

CLEAR   FIRE
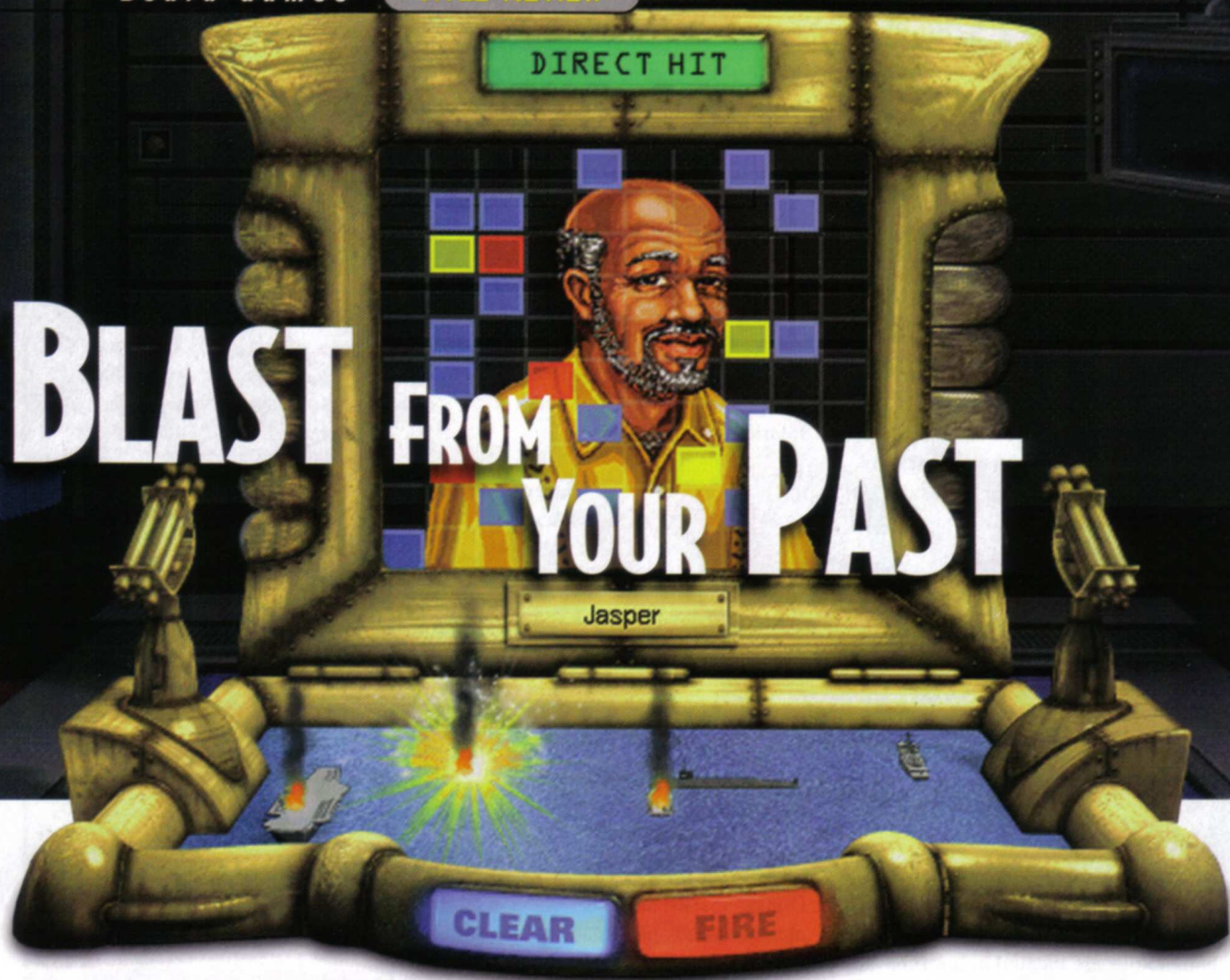
Hoyle® Classic Board Games is the computer game for people who need a break from computer games.

By Beth Demetrescu

HESE DAYS, STORE shelves are packed with a new chart-topping breed of games—first-person, shoot 'em up blood fests. While these games have their place, truth is, they're not for everyone. Some prefer the brain calisthenics of adventure or strategy games, while others prefer the striking realism of flight and racing simulations. But there definitely are those times when we need a break from that stuff—times when playing a classic board game like backgammon against a real person over the Internet sounds like more fun than challenging some sophisticated AI (artificial intelligence) to a bloody deathmatch. Enter *Hoyle Classic Board Games*.

HCBG offers you the option of playing Backgammon, Battling Ships, Checkers, Chess, Chinese Checkers, Dominoes, Pachisi, Snakes & Ladders,

Hoyle Classic Board Games

www.sierra.com/**hoyle-bg**

Developer
Sierra

Preferred Minimum Requirements
486/66, 8MB RAM, WIN95 or WIN3.1

Format
WIN95 CD

Price
$29.95
(Order #70240)

Available: Now   1.800.757.7707

"I FOUND MYSELF PLAYING THE GAMES HERE OVER AND OVER AGAIN... WITHOUT FRYING MY EYEBALLS OR JACKING MY BLOOD PRESSURE TO DANGEROUS LEVELS."

—DON CRABB, CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

BACKGAMMON • CHESS

BATTLING SHIPS

CHECKERS • YACHT

SNAKES & LADDERS

ZEN BONES • DOMINOES

PACHISI • CHINESE CHECKERS

HEARTS

PYRAMID SOLITAIRE

Yacht, Zen Bones, Hearts, and Solitaire, all of which are tried-and-true favorites. Some are known by different names, such as Zen Bones (Tai Pei™, Shanghai™), Yacht (Yahtzee™), Pachisi (Parcheesi™, Sorry!™, Trouble™), and Battling Ships (BattleShip®).

HCBG also lets you choose your type of adversary. If you want to have a quiet game, just you and the computer, you can select from 12 entertaining, animated opponents. OK, maybe these guys won't give you a quiet game (unless you turn down their attitude meter), but they will give you a good, fun game. They can be adjusted for easy, intermediate, and advanced play.

Of course, you may prefer a human (and more fallible) opponent. If that's the case, then Sierra has the perfect solution for you. Welcome to the World Opponent Network (WON)—Internet gaming at its finest. WON is an online arena designed for you to challenge people from around the globe to matches and tournaments using your favorite games. WON supports many Sierra games, including HCBG.

My experience with HCBG started about three months ago when a friend on the Hoyle team slipped me a beta copy. From the onset, I was hooked. I had just learned what a fun game Backgammon was, and was thrilled to find someone (or something) willing to play as much as I wanted. So, when I got my hands on the beta, I played Back-gammon nonstop. After a while, I would mix it up with some Zen Bones, Chess, and Yacht. I just stuck to the games I had played as an adult, as opposed to those I had played as a kid.

Now that the full game has been released, and I was asked to write about it, I decided I should also give the other games a chance. After all, there must be some reason they are included in what is billed as a collec-tion of favorites. There is. All of the games are immensely fun. Remember endless hours of Travel Battleship in the car with a sibling? Remember knocking

NOT SO CLASSIC COMPETITION

Hoyle Classic Board Games lets you select from 12 entertaining, animated opponents, including my favorites: Harley, Gax, and Maurice. Each character has his, her, or their own personality and biography. Harley, a 10-year-old gigantic grizzly bear, is very cordial and friendly. His biogra-phy states he enjoys rolling in grass and dislikes fast tourists and hikers. Harley whittles away time by rubbing his tummy, eating a snack, hiding, and even smoking a corncob pipe. Gax, a displaced alien who wants to return to his home planet, startled me the first time he exercised his forte—molecule rearranging. With an even, monotonous tone, Gax seems totally normal until he morphs his body, personality, and voice pattern into Marilyn "Happy Birthday, Mr. President" Monroe or, better yet, Elvis "Thank yuh verra much" Presley. Even more bizarre than a talking bear is Maurice, a strange French-Canadian fur trapper. Maurice was abducted in 1837 by aliens and later returned. He was so shaken by the event, he frequently consults a beaver hand puppet for advice.

someone's piece off the board in Parcheesi? HCBG brings it all back.

These days, Pachisi is my favorite, but last week it was Dominoes, so it changes often. Unfortunately, my best excuse when caught playing at work—"Uhhh, I'm just doin' some research" —will soon lose its validity. My advice is grab a seat, fire up *Hoyle Classic Board Games*, and prepare yourself for hours of fun. 🄘
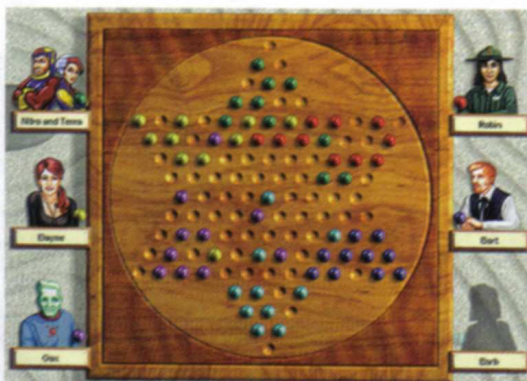
WORTHY OPPONENTS: Choose from 12 entertaining opponents and over 20 different backgrounds.

ROOM WITH A VIEW: Join Miranda in a 3D-rendered log cabin for a game of backgammon.

The Windle Family in America

Edith and Ida as children in West V...
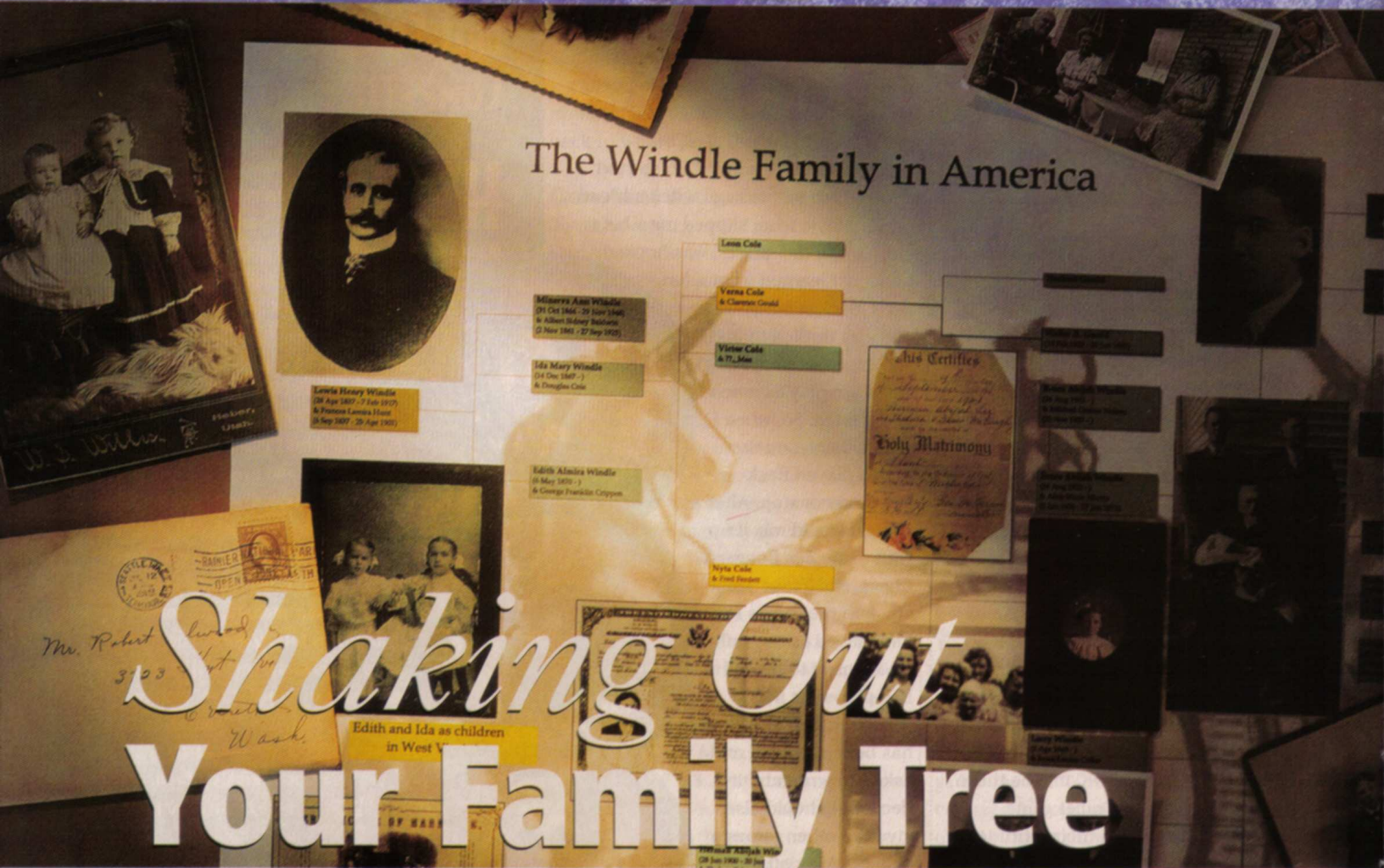
Shaking Out Your Family Tree

BY STEVEN BRYAN BIELER

When you were a kid, your parents probably dragged you all over the map, visiting grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, second cousins, you name it. This was definitely not your idea of a good time.

But as you grew up, you began to see that this group of people is *your* group of people. These are the people you came from. Your Uncle Eddie looks a lot like your father. When you kiss your grandmother's face, you see in it your mom's face. Your cousin Linda says things her parents always said, and they're a lot like things your parents always said. You see that you're not just a little person lost in a big world—and family defines where and how you fit in. Family gives you a place in the world. Finding that place and figuring out who you are by learning about your ancestors, is why so many folks are into the study of genealogy.

Basically, genealogy is the telling of your family's story.

Telling that story—the tracing of your family tree—used to be a painstaking matter of filing cards and filling notebooks... towering stacks of them!

The best thing that ever happened to genealogy is the com-

> *"Genealogy software helps you trace and document your family's history. With Generations Deluxe, that's only the beginning."*

With EasyChart you can customize your family tree to keep it crystal-clear, entertaining, and informative.

puter, with its capacity to store and retrieve massive amounts of data. And the best thing to happen to genealogy on the computer is *Generations Deluxe*.

Flexibility: EasyTree

Generations Deluxe isn't just another pretty database: this software tool allows you handle data any way you see fit. And when it comes to charting your family tree, *Generations Deluxe* offers you the most flexible charting program of any family-tree software.

Begin with EasyTree and just start typing: your name, where and when you were born, what you do for a living. Add in your siblings and your parents, your kids, your cousins, everybody. It doesn't matter if you don't know an exact name or date or place; you can take a stab at it and add the correct information later. It doesn't matter if you've never delved into your family tree before. It doesn't even matter if you've hardly used a computer before. The idea here is to get started, and *Generations Deluxe*'s ease of use is virtually unmatched.

Advanced Flexibility: EasyChart

Once you have some names entered, move over to EasyChart for the real fun. EasyChart is like a full-service print shop whose one mission is making your family look good while keeping all the relationships comprehensible. No other genealogy software title gives you so much freedom or makes it so simple to achieve.

You can create high-quality charts with EasyChart's many

options. Choose what data to display, pick shapes and colors, add shadows, vary line widths, create borders. Best of all, if you can digitize a picture of good old Uncle Eddie, you can add it to your chart. Birth certificates, death notices, high school diplomas, embarrassing driver's

There's plenty of space in EasyTree for everybody's life story.

license photos—if you can scan it, EasyChart lets you add it.

Figuring out who you are by learning about the people you come from is why so many folks have gotten into the study of genealogy.

Drag-and-drop individual family members or whole family branches with a touch of the mouse; EasyChart remembers and redraws the lines as you tinker with the layout until you have those folks right where

you want them. No other program will do this. Afraid of losing somebody at a page break? Don't worry. When you print out a big wall-busting chart, you won't cut Grandpa Don off at the bottom of a page. EasyChart lets you

preview your work before printing.

Families & Friends

Generations Deluxe gets you started and gives you the tools to understand your family tree and convey that legacy to others. But *Generations Deluxe* doesn't stop there. This product ships on four CDs, because Sierra includes three CDs' worth of databases. Social Security records; historical records of all kinds...there are more than 57 million names in these databases, complete with vital stats.

You might find ancestors you never knew you had. And if you're not sure of the relationship, the *Generations Deluxe* relationship calculator will figure it out for you.

Of course, *Generations Deluxe* also offers one-button Internet

access. Break out onto the 'Net and join the growing community of people also tracing their family trees. *Generations Deluxe* lets you link directly to more than 24,000 genealogy sites.

When you set out to tell your family's story, you're bound to end up with a small mountain of information. *Generations*

Photos, birth certificates, diplomas—if you can scan it, EasyChart lets you add it.

Deluxe, with its easy-to-use, powerful tools, will keep your project under control and fun. Only *Generations Deluxe* lets you chart your family tree so it's crystal-clear and informative—in other words, just the way you want it. *ⓘ*

From Barren to Beautiful

BY CODY BROWN

Spring is here and that means it's time to go down

InterAction asked a regular person with a regular computer to use Sierra's Complete LandDesigner to create the landscape around her regular home. The results—extraordinary!

into the basement, brush the dust and cobwebs off the gardening equipment, and get the landscape in shape for the coming months of sunshine. Millions of people share a passion for growing beautiful flowers and designing landscapes around their homes. Problem is, gardening isn't always easy—where do you start? Once you've started down a dead-end path, it can be really difficult (and expensive) to get your design back on track.

But how can computer software make gardening easier?

The answer: *Sierra's Complete LandDesigner*—a serious landscape design tool for people who are serious about their homes. Based on the same successful concept as *Sierra CompleteHome*, which released last October, Sierra has packaged together four versatile and easy-to-use programs: *3D Landscape, Photo LandDesigner, Garden Encyclopedia,* and *3D Deck*.

Making Your Garden Grow

Seattle homeowner Margo Mullally was given a prerelease copy of *Complete LandDesigner* and asked to use the product and give her opinion of it. Margo has owned her late 1920s, three-bedroom home in Seattle for a couple of years and has spent a lot of time, money, and energy renovating the inside.

"Once the house was taken care of, I knew I had to start on the yard. But the thought of drawing up plans and spending time extensively researching gardening books and magazines to find what would grow and look best in my yard was overwhelming. While calling a professional landscaper to handle everything was tempting, it didn't fit in my budget. That's why I was curious to see what *Complete LandDesigner* had to offer."

Stroll through your new garden in photorealistic 3D.

Usually, getting started with a new software package can be a bit difficult. That's not the case with this suite of titles. "Initially, when I saw all the things you can do with all the products, I was a little intimidated. I suppose I thought it would be hard to figure out, but it wasn't. I began with *3D Landscape* and was on my way in minutes. First I checked out a few of the professional designs for some ideas and then I created my own virtual yard. I used the Lot Wizard to position the property lines

and the Slope Wizard to deal with my tricky back slope. But I wasn't finished yet. I didn't have to imagine what my yard would look like—I could actually see it in the 3D WalkAbout. And that was only the beginning. I saw what it would look like in a year and what it would develop into after five years. I even checked out what it would look like through the four seasons."

The side yard was Margo's biggest challenge. It was so small, she wasn't sure what to do here. A little help from *Photo LandDesigner*

"I can tell a rose from an iris from a daisy, but beyond that, I'm lost."

was the answer. She loaded a digi-

tal file of the north side of her house in the program. "Within seconds *Photo LandDesigner* showed me several wonderful options on what I could do with the yard. The design I fell in love with was an English Country style. Quaint ivy climbing up the chimney and traditional box hedges lining the brick path."

A Palette of Color

Once her plan was finished, Margo chose plants that would add beautifully saturated colors to her landscape. "I was really intimidated by all the options.

I love flowers, but really, I don't know anything about the different species. I can tell a rose from an iris from a daisy, but beyond that I'm lost." The *Garden Encyclopedia* was just the answer.

Filled with more than 3,000 full-color plants, it helped her decide which she liked, and the information about climate, sun, and shade requirements narrowed down her list. "It was great to just browse through the photos, but what I really liked was the information about how much care is required. I work crazy hours, so I had to choose things that were low-maintenance but still pretty."

So What Do You Really Think?

"I saved a lot of time, money, and energy using this program. I never imagined that a computer program could do all this. I loved the fact that I could walk around in my future garden and change plants without having to dig them up first. It's great to have such a high-tech tool for the

Use *Garden Encyclopedia* to select the plant attributes like flower color, climate zone, and bloom season that are best suited for your garden and yard.

garden and yard. It was perfect for me because it's so easy to use with its step-by-step instructions. I could see serious gardeners and landscapers using it for their projects too." 🖋

Coast to Coast
with Sierra Home

BY STEVEN BRYAN BIELER

Is there anything like a map to make us dream of

From the bright lights of Broadway to the San Francisco Bay, Sierra Home, Mapquest, and NetMarket Travel are bringing together the USA and your PC.

faraway places? Who hasn't dreamed of escaping the everyday grind by exploring some place you've never been? Columbus certainly couldn't resist; it was the lure of a map that dead-ended with "Here be dragons" that sent him across the Atlantic. A fictitious map first gave Robert Louis Stevenson the idea for his children's classic, *Treasure Island.*

With its exceptionally attractive graphics, *USA '98: Streets and Destinations* captures that feeling of wanderlust that maps inspire, while giving you powers that Columbus and Stevenson never dreamed of. *USA '98* is a complete street atlas that'll help you find a specific location, find

your way to it, find the businesses and attractions around it, and create a map of the whole deal that you can print out and use any which way you like.

USA '98 is also a handy travel suite. The package provides direct online hookups to find driving directions and weather forecasts, to make reservations for lodging, and to find businesses that accept the coupons in the National Values® savings book that comes with *USA '98*. Topping this off is the other book you'll find when you open the box: the new *Frommer's USA* guidebook.

The Complete Street Atlas

The holy grail in software is ease of use—and *USA '98* could hardly be easier to use. *USA '98* comes with 10 preset "zoom" levels, from the widest-possible setting (all 50 states) to the most-focused (on the street

Use *USA '98's* direct integration with MapQuest for door-to-door directions.

"Now you can do something that generations of cartographers would've sold their souls to do—easily and quickly customize a map."

—STEVEN BRYAN BIELER

where you live). Type in an address, and you're there—instantly! *USA '98* won't be denied—it has 160,000 American cities and towns in its digital brain! You can instantly create a detailed map on any of these levels. You can even create your own level by drawing a rectangle around a particular area.

Now you can do something

Personalize maps to include driving directions and points of interest.

that generations of cartographers would've sold their souls to do—easily and quickly customize a map. Use the 200 custom symbols to mark your house, your friend's houses, and any points of interest in between. Use the pull-down menus to search for all-night diners, banks, multiplexes—whatever you need that's close

by. Mark those locations, too. Now add borders, highlights, and even notes of text to increase your map's usefulness. Too much? Edit your changes. Too little? *USA '98* lets you do whatever you need to do to create a clear, readable map. Print it out in color or black and white, and make sure that no one gets lost on the way to your party, or that you don't get lost trying to find that hideaway bed and breakfast on the beach at the end of a 10-mile dirt road.

If you do any traveling, you can do your planning ahead of time and bring a map with you. If you bring your laptop along, you can make corrections or additions to your map as you go along. If you wake up in the middle of the night in your hotel with a king-size headache, you'll know where the nearest pharmacy is.

USA '98 has more listings of hotels, restaurants, health clubs, museums, and other businesses and services than any of its competitors—almost 1.5 million of them. Roadside attractions? *USA '98* has more than 500,000 geographic points of interest, from seaside to mountaintop and every national park in between.
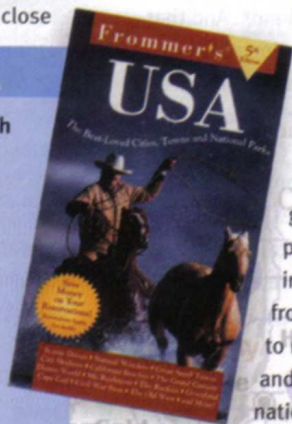
The Handy Travel Suite

Is the Internet of any real use? It certainly is if you like to travel. *USA '98* gives you direct online hookups to two of the best friends a traveler can have, *MapQuest* and *NetMarket Travel*.

With the instant access to *MapQuest* provided right in the interface of the program, you can request driving directions between two points, and you'll get a detailed map you can personalize further through *USA '98*. *MapQuest* also covers Canada and Mexico and can even tell you about the weather at your destination.

With *NetMarket Travel*, you can find discounts on hotel, car, and airline reservations. *NetMarket* is also the distributor of the popular Entertainment® Savings Coupon Books (total value $250), which guarantee that even fewer dollars will escape your wallet. *USA '98* pinpoints the locations of businesses that accept these coupons, so no matter where you go, value's never far away.

In the Age of Exploration, Columbus and his cohorts had to put up with dragons and other nonsense on their maps. Fortunately, we only have to worry about finding the right exit off the Interstate and a hotel near some good restaurants. With *USA '98: Streets and Destinations*, you can create maps that are just as evocative as the maps of old, but far more clear, much more personal, and definitely more useful than any other interactive mapping software program has ever even promised to be. ✦

View the U.S. at any level from the country to your neighborhood.

USA '98 instantly zooms into any area of the United States.
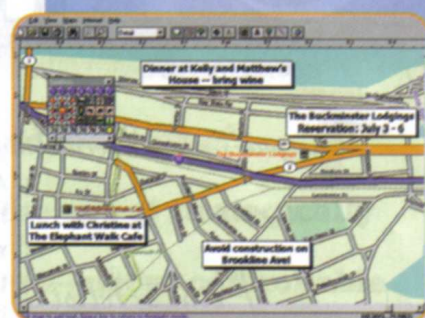
USA '98 is perfect for a trip—print out your map and take it with you.
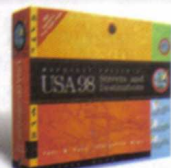
Design, Produce, & Print It

BY CODY BROWN

Two years ago I wrote my first review of *Print*

Print Artist Platinum continues in the Sierra Home tradition: when it comes to beautiful graphics and an intuitive interface, too much is never enough.

Artist, Sierra's best-selling home publishing software. It was a typical assignment: I was to take a copy of the program home, try it, and then write about my experiences.

The first test was going to be loading it onto my hard drive. It loaded without a problem. I briefly looked over the manual and within 10 minutes, I had made my first card, printed it out, and actually liked it. Not bad. Next I made a calendar and added some custom graphics. Again, I was really pleased with the results. But the real test came when my then eight-year old daughter Louise wanted to try it out. Kids offer the true test because they can make or break

a program in no time at all. *Print Artist* was a hit with her. Like me, within minutes Louise was having a great time. She customized her "Do Not Disturb" signs for her bedroom door, created sample birthday cards, and made party baskets for her friends. And that was just a fraction of what the program can do. Louise used *Print Artist* for over an hour, trying out the thousands of different options, and her pleasant experiences were enough for me. It was true, *Print Artist* lived up to its reputation—it was fast, fun, and (you guessed it) easy to use.

Since that time, I have seen *Print Artist* evolve into much more—namely *Print Artist 4.0*

Platinum.

Not content with having a best-selling, highly acclaimed program, the *Print Artist* team scoured the world looking for designers to improve the bank of graphics in the program—both in terms of quantity and quality. They increased the Agfa font library to 300 fonts and added additional professional layouts for home and small-business use. Thanks

to a couple of powerful add-ons—*Kai's Power Goo SE* and *iPhoto Express*—*Print Artist 4.0 Platinum* is simply the most comprehensive home publishing software tool available—period! If there is another one out there that's even close, I can't find it.

More Research? No Problem

In the name of research, I felt it was my responsibility to personally test *iPhoto Express* and *Kai's Power Goo*. Having a really good time while I tested the software was simply a fringe benefit of the assignment.

I began my experiment with a few of the 32,000 graphics included with *Print Artist 4.0* and *iPhoto Express*. I mixed and matched images, text, and colors. In fact, time quickly slipped away as I added photos to cards, stationery, and flyers. That was easy. But what could it do with my photos? A lot, as it turns out. I took a CD (just back from the drug store) with the last family birthday party preserved as digital images and loaded them into *Print Artist*. Now I can truly personalize cards and banners.

Endless Numbers of Creative Possibilities

But that was just the beginning. I also wanted to see what I could do with those photos besides placing them within my projects. I started manipulating them with *Kai's Power Goo*. This powerful manipulation tool offers a new creative dimension way beyond just silly-putty faces. I tried my hand at softening and redefining images and recoloring graphics to my custom

specifications. When I put these three products to work for me, in the truest sense I became the designer, art director, and production artist on all of my projects. And I don't have a background in design. Who needs one?

Your Imagination Is Packed With Great Ideas!

I've tried many of the predesigned layouts that come with *Print Artist*, and I've even made a couple things from scratch. But when compared with what some of *Print Arist*'s more devoted fans, the Print Artist Lovers (PALs), can produce, I'm definitely a beginner. Frankly, I was more than just a little amazed at the thousands of new and unusual projects I've seen created using *Print Artist 4.0 Platinum*. PALs from across the country have sent in baby mobiles, lampshades, mailbox covers, business cards, invitations, banners, and posters that they created with this powerful yet enticingly simple multi-project design tool. Most of

them looked as though a professional designer had spent hours creating them.

What makes *Print Artist 4.0 Platinum* such a powerful and successful home design tool is that it's such a comprehensive program. From its unusual photo manipulation features to one of the fattest graphics libraries anywhere, *Print Artist 4.0 Platinum* literally has it all.

Print Artist 4.0 Platinum is one of the fastest growing hobby products, because it unlocks the creative possibilities in anyone. Start with a little imagination, and who knows what will happen next?
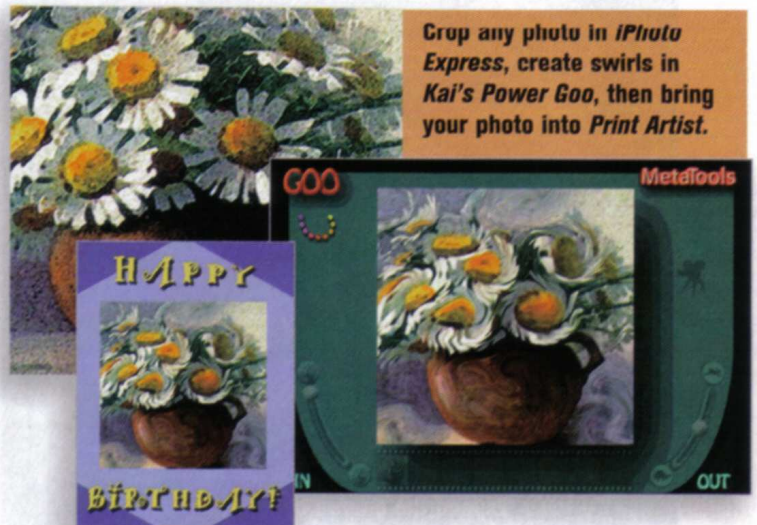
Crop any photo in *iPhoto Express*, create swirls in *Kai's Power Goo*, then bring your photo into *Print Artist*.
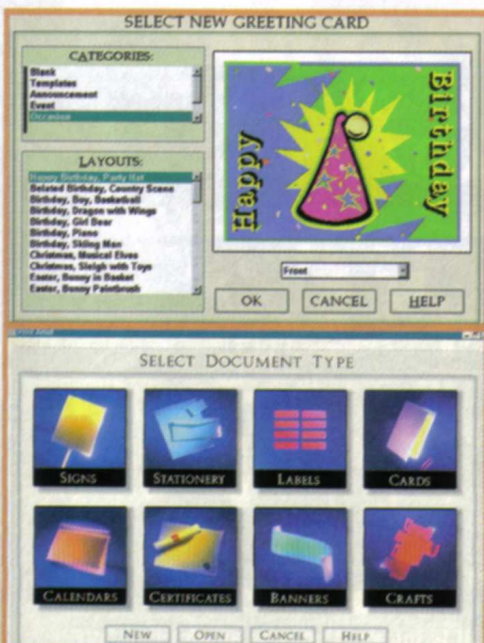
Select the project you want to make, then choose one of the 2,500 layouts included in the product—or create your own.

Print Artist 4.0 Platinum
www.sierra.com/**printart**

Preferred Minimum Requirements
486/66, 16MB RAM or 68040 & 16MB RAM

Format
WIN95/Mac CD

Price
$49.95 (Order #70150)

1.800.757.7707
Available: Now

CAESAR III

● When in Rome...

By R. Y. Eaton

The empire-building/ strategy genre has experienced rapid growth in the last few years. Much of the credit for that goes to *Lords of the Realm* series designer and Impressions co-founder David Lester. Inspired by *Sim City*, Lester was determined to create a city-building game that felt real and offered continuous challenges. "I thought building a city that had contact with the outside world or historical setting could be very exciting," Lester says. He decided Rome would be the perfect setting for his new game, and in 1992, *Caesar* was launched to critical success.

Three years later, Impressions upped the ante with *Caesar II* and proceeded to win *Computer Gaming World*'s Golden Triad Award and *PC Gamer*'s Editor's Choice Award. Over a half million gamers agreed Lester had indeed created the empire building/strategy genre standard. Lester and company are now pushing the genre to new limits with *Caesar III*—a game that expands exponentially on its prequels while staying true to the acclaimed intricacies of the *Caesar* series.

HIGH CULTURE: Expand the empire by bringing Roman learning, culture, and religion to the provinces.

Friends, Romans, Countrymen

Caesar III starts you out in the sandals of a young provincial governor in the employ of the Roman Empire. You have been charged with the task of spreading Roman culture to outlying barbaric regions, thus furthering the boundaries of the powerful Empire. By building cities, establishing industries, and developing trade relations, you seek to win the favor of the Emperor—thus ascending the hierarchy of Roman society.

Although *Caesar II* was widely recognized for its rich graphics, even this early in development, *Caesar III* puts it to shame. With amazing animation and true-to-life attention to detail, *Caesar III*

...while the game is set up from your perspective, you will soon notice life does not stand still at your whim.

draws you deeply into the heart of Roman life. For example, while the game is set up from your perspective, you will soon notice life does not stand still at your whim. The denizens of your settlements go about their daily business, walking the roads, working in fields, driving carts, or, if they are wealthy enough. merely meandering through parks and establishments. You can actually watch grapes grow on the vine and livestock fattens right before your eyes. Details are what set great games apart, and upon its release, *Caesar III* will instantly command attention.

Ambition Should Be Made of Sterner Stuff

Caesar III designers were intent on keeping the game as lifelike as possible.

THREE TIMES THE FUN: Caesar III is the exciting new empire-building strategy game from international design legend David Lester.

Certain situations call for different reactions and selections—after all, what is the point of giving the player a multitude of options if any of them work in all situations? For example, in the warmer climate of the southern regions of Rome, you will find your olive crops flourishing, but don't even think about trying to raise said olives in Hibernia, lest you find yourself bankrupt after a few fruitless seasons.

Impressions has made a major change to simplify game action. In the first two games, gameplay occurred in three different modes. You were required to switch between city, provincial, and battle modes. Each handled a separate aspect of the game. In *Caesar III*, all action happens in the city mode. When the heathens advance on your settlement, you will actually be able to see them wreaking havoc on your structures, destroying your crops, plundering your temples, and leveling the homes of your citizens.

Another significant change from *Caesar II* focuses on the Emperor—who's gotten even more demanding (as Emperors tend to do). No longer satisfied with periodic tribute, the Emperor has taken to leveling specific demands. If he asks for wine, you'd better start growing some grapes or establish trade with a city with hearty vineyards.

As with *Caesar II*, *Caesar III* bases your success on four ratings. While *Caesar III* has retained three of the original ratings, Peace, Culture, and Prosperity, it has replaced the Empire rating with a Favour rating. The Peace rating rises and falls based on the quantity of riots and the destruction of property by people hostile to Rome. Since Rome was known for its high culture, a city must make cultural activities (philosophical and political debate, education, religion, and entertainment) available to its population to earn a good Culture rating. Prosperity is often a measure of the quality of life, so in *Caesar III* unemployment, varied diet, tax income, and business all affect the Prosperity rating. Favour is the tricky one, because it rises and falls depending upon your success at pleasing the (often fickle) Emperor.

Some of Lester's success can probably be attributed to his love of history and attention to comprehensive research and detail. First and foremost, however, Lester is a gamer and knows what makes for compelling gameplay. He knows better than anyone that developing and managing a new Roman settlement is no easy task. But by successfully completing your objectives, you will become eligible for promotion, which leads to greater assignments. However, should you fail, you will feel the wrath of the Empire. *Caesar III* will deliver all the strategy, graphics, in-depth gameplay, fun, and challenge you can handle. So, be careful and be prudent—being a galley slave or, worse, being fed to the lions is a fate not fit for a hero.

HOUSES OF THE HOLY: Select carefully to which god or goddess you dedicate a temple.

When the heathens advance on your settlement, you will actually be able to see them wreaking havoc on your structures…

YOUR CHARIOT AWAITS: Stunning new animations bring the excitement and pageantry of Rome to life and put you deep in the heart of ancient civilization.

GABRIEL KNIGHT III

● Blood of the Sacred, Blood of the Damned

By Eric Twelker

When *Gabriel Knight II: The Beast Within* was introduced in early 1996, adventure gaming changed forever. Following closely in the footsteps of its acclaimed predecessor, *Sins of the Father*, *Gabriel Knight II* elevated the standard of adventure games with its compelling story line, deep character development, and technically advanced graphics and music.

For too long, adventure games had predictable, serialized plots. They were packed with irradiated talking tentacles stalking weary townspeople or Indiana Jones wannabes searching for ancient hidden jewels. And of course don't forget the elusive mad scientist. A new voice was needed, and award-winning author Jane

TICKETS PLEASE: The most promising Jane Jensen adventure yet, *GK3* takes you to mysterious destinations where your mind is tested and your beliefs questioned.
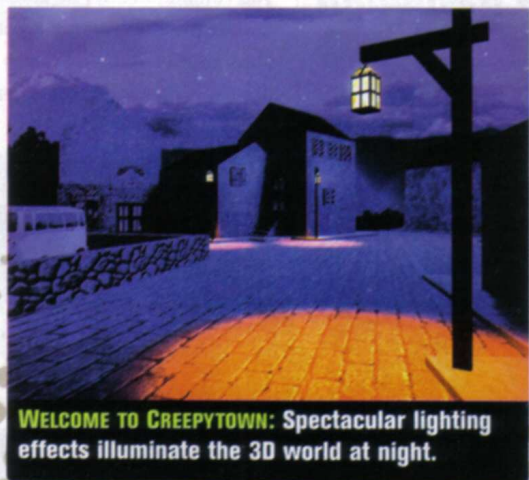
WELCOME TO CREEPYTOWN: Spectacular lighting effects illuminate the 3D world at night.

Jensen had it. She wrote adventures that offered a realistic narrative experience. Critics have often compared her adventure games to the classic Agatha Christie mystery film series or Alfred Hitchcock suspense thrillers, because they relentlessly draw you in and you never know what to expect next.

...just like real life, your perception of reality greatly depends on being in the right place at the right time.

In *Gabriel Knight III: Blood of the Sacred, Blood of the Damned*, due for release in late summer, Sierra introduces a highly detailed 3D game world. It offers you a level of exploration not yet seen in any adventure game, as well as control in the middle of suspenseful sequences.

GK3 continues the experiences of Gabriel Knight, a mystery writer whose real-life research has uncovered several questions to his family's far-reaching supernatural ties. In this story, Gabriel is summoned to the home of a currently dethroned royal scion. The Prince needs Gabriel's help to explain some recent bizarre, and possibly supernatural, events. Obsessed with the safety of

the Prince's newborn son, Gabriel agrees to help the Prince. He immediately sets off for the royal home in Paris. Upon arriving, he discovers the Prince's fears were not unfounded—a kidnapper has made off with the baby. It's only then that Gabriel learns the child is apparently the key to a century-old enigma surrounding the royal family.

Gabriel tracks the kidnapper to Rennes-le-Chateau, a village in the rural valley region of central Europe steeped in ancient and modern mysteries. As Gabriel explores the town and questions the inhabitants and visitors, he realizes the mystery surrounding the Prince's family is connected to a mystery of the ancient town—and both involve current political agendas and ancient secrets.

INTRODUCING GABRIEL KNIGHT: Unprecedented 3D detail that other adventure games have only used in their pre-rendered movies.

FROM ANY ANGLE: Zoom in. Zoom out. Move left, right, up, or down. With optional unrestricted camera capabilities, your viewpoint of the game is totally up to you.

The foundation of this virtual, living world rests on Sierra's new G-Engine technology, a progressive 3D engine custom-built specifically for GK3.

Uncovering the secrets and enigmas will immerse you in this enthralling thriller-mystery. *GK3* is set in an ultra-realistic 3D environment in which you have unlimited exploratory game control once reserved for action games such as *Tomb Raider* and *Quake*. Viewed from a first-person or third-person point of view, camera angles are fully adjustable to any position in the environment, whether in the normal exploratory gameplay or the in-game integrated story scenes.

This feature proves beneficial when observing some of the more subtle actions of the other characters.

Playing *GK3* will be much like controlling the cameras and main character in a movie. During the 13 time blocks, scenes are taking place—both independently and in close conjunction with the plot. The virtual world is enhanced with a cast of characters who live out their daily lives independently from the player. So, whether or not the player is present, characters

will interact and converse with other characters, perform actions, and influence the events in the story—all in real-time. And just like real life, your perception of reality greatly depends on being in the right place at the right time. In *GK3*, the level of understanding you take from the game depends on your puzzle-solving skills and ability to keep tabs on he events taking place in and around the village and surrounding valley.

The foundation of this virtual, living world rests on Sierra's new

G-Engine technology, a progressive 3D engine custom-built specifically for *GK3*. Designed to create the most immersive world possible with today's latest computer technology, the G-Engine allowed the design team to create intelligent, lifelike 3D characters who have unbelievably fluid animations. In addition, the highly detailed backgrounds are based on real-world locations and objects that don't suffer from pixelation or decreased graphic quality when viewed close-up. For example, if you want to get a closer look at a work of art across the room, then walk up and press your nose to the canvas; you'll find the detail is just as crisp.

While *GK3* takes advantage of the latest graphics and audio card technology, the engine is fully scalable for many computer systems. So, even computers with the minimum system requirements will let you experience stunning realism and detail.

Watch for additional story updates, technological details, and insider information about *Gabriel Knight III: Blood of the Sacred, Blood of the Damned* in upcoming issues of *InterAction*.

HOMEWORLD

Intergalactic Genre Bending

By Eric Twelker

It's not often that a computer game company stakes a claim in an entirely new genre of computer gaming, but Sierra is doing just that with the introduction of *Homeworld*. Action. Adventure. 3D real-time strategy. Simulation. Sound familiar? Well, if you've been playing computer games for even a short time now, you recognize these as industry "buzzwords." And while some games come along that mix these brands with varying degrees of success, few games in the past several years have successfully invoked new genres. Sierra proudly introduces a game that does that and more. When it releases late this summer, *Homeworld* will break down many preconceived notions, expand into an entirely new arena of games, and leave you thinking, "Why hasn't anyone thought of this before?"

Home Sweet Home

The first space strategy game set in a true 3D environment, *Homeworld* takes place in the far reaches of your visible, and very populated, universe. The planet you once inhabited was the center of a lush, resource-rich galaxy. Inevitably, peace was shattered when some uninvited visitors lambasted their way into your world. Invading your peaceful society with the sole intent of overtaking it, these insidious o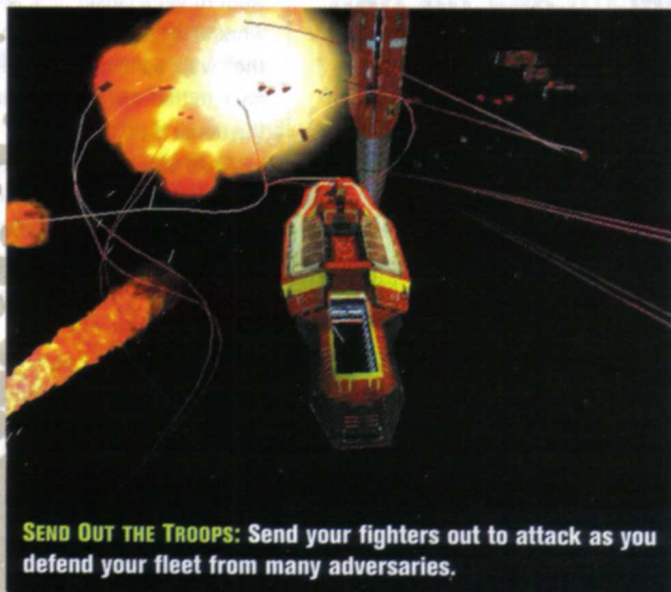utsiders wiped out millions, and relocated the survivors to a cold and lifeless planet on the edge of the galaxy. The journey to this galactic Siberia took hundreds of years, during which time your population was brainwashed and lost all memories of your prosperous and productive past. By the time the transports reached the distant planet, only ancient fables and folklore held clues to paradise lost. One such fable speaks of a beautiful white moon unlike anything in your new solar system. And the only bit of evidence that the moon ever actually existed, and may still exist, is a sacred chunk of crystal of other-worldly origin.

...archeologists discover a faint signal: a repeating code deciphered as an astronomical heading, a compass setting for your society's true home.

SPACESHIPS GALORE: View from any angle in this 3D universe. See the intricacies of each ship.

There's No Place Like...

As the game begins, archeologists studying the hallowed crystal discover a faint signal: a repeating code deciphered as an astronomical heading, a compass setting for your society's true home. As cultural upheaval ensues, society sets its technology and mindset toward a new goal: returning to its (you guessed right) Homeworld.

Your goal will be to build and manage your traveling society and protect it from peril during its journey home. Your convoy fleet (all 3D-rendered in such careful detail that landing lights blink, gun turrets pivot, engines glow in full-throttle, as well as other effects) has departed from the temporary world and is awaiting your orders. The crystal beacon is guiding your mothership, a massive spacecraft that serves as your mobile home and construction base. Your first step will be building up your fleet of fighters, corvettes, frigates, resource collectors, and other craft that will help you safely navigate the long trip home. It will take strategic thinking, quick reactions, and a strong will to live to survive the arduous trip.

As a single-player game or played against up to eight other players via WON (the World Opponent Network at www.won.net), modem, or network, *Homeworld* promises a wild and thrilling ride. Dorothy was right: "There's no place like home!"

SEND OUT THE TROOPS: Send your fighters out to attack as you defend your fleet from many adversaries.

STARSIEGE

● Somewhere in the Far Reaches of the Universe...

By Beth Demetrescu

WWW.STARSIEGE.COM: Download the free technical release now.

ROCKET'S RED GLARE: Nothing like a midnight stroll around the block...*incoming*!

The one thing most companies would never even consider is taking one of the most popular and widely recognized 3D combat action simulation series of all time and changing the name. But once the *EarthSiege 3* development team got its collective mind around what the third installment in the *EarthSiege* saga would actually be, they realized this game would reach far beyond the planetary plane of its two exhilarating prequels. This new game would push the saga toward the daunting unknown of the stars. This new game would only be—could only be—*Starsiege*.

EarthSiege and *EarthSiege 2* pitted mankind against the Cybrids in a battle to avoid extinction. *Starsiege* brings you 200 years beyond those victories into a terrifying multiplanet conflict with everything from Cybrids to the Earth Empire to Rebels on Mars. No longer are you combating traditional enemies—now everything lurking in the unknown provides horrific danger... and ass-kickin' fun.

One thing Sierra has always tried to do is listen to our fans. With *Starsiege*, we make no exception. Everyone loved *EarthSiege 2*, but one

...fans wanted multiplayer, needed multiplayer... Starsiege is a multiplayer technological masterpiece.

thing we kept hearing was that fans wanted multiplayer, needed multiplayer, would die sour, barren deaths without multiplayer. *Starsiege* is a multiplayer technological masterpiece. "Yeah right, promises, promises," you're probably saying right now. Go take a look for yourself. Right now you can download a special technical release of *Starsiege*. Check it out (**www.starsiege .com**) and use the Instant Feedback capabilities to tell us what you think. You

want independent weapons control? Tell us! You want nuclear capability? Tell us! You always wanted to help design a game, now is your chance.

One of the best multiplayer features is the death-match mode, where the number of gamers is limited only by your LAN connection. As well as pitting you against fierce otherworldly competitors, *Starsiege* teams you up for brutal one-on-one battles to the death.

To all the zillions of *Earth Siege* players out there, worry not—*EarthSiege* isn't going away! Featuring a brand-new game engine, 3D support, a host of mighty new weapons, and cranium-crushing 3D combat sequences inside, outside, or even underground, the *EarthSiege* saga has grown beyond the comfy confines of a single planet. Maybe the universe itself is big enough to contain *Starsiege*. Then again, maybe not.
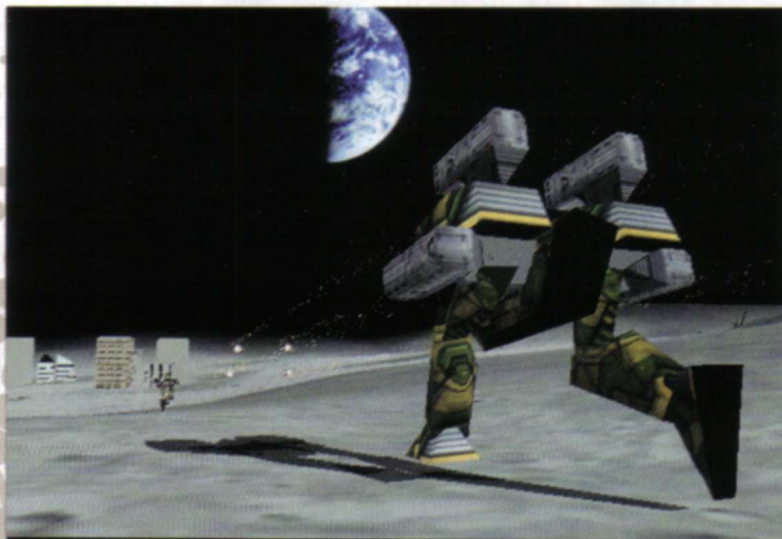
SMOOTH GAMEPLAY: Starsiege will be the first release from Sierra that features Dynamix' new *Starsiege* game engine.

MASK OF ETERNITY

King's Quest Springs into Action

www.sierra.com/mask

By Jeffrey Adam Young

When Roberta Williams made the decision that *Mask of Eternity* was going to be a real-time 3D game, waves of rumors washed through the industry. Some torridly mourned the death of the adventure game and cried foul, while others anxiously marveled at the possibilities of a real-time, 3D-modeled action adventure set in the *King's Quest* universe.

The *Mask* design team spent nearly two years developing and refining the technology that will drive the game. In a recent interview for a fan-based website, Roberta said, "Now that most of the technology development is finished, the actual implementation of the game is going on. The game is quickly coming together now as many pieces of it were concurrently underway (in development) while the technology was being developed."

Daventry have been turned to stone by a disastrous magical curse. All inhabitants but one: the son of a local villager, Connor Mac Lyrr. Players will assume the role of this young, unlikely hero to brave many evil encounters and find the missing pieces of a sacred mask that will cancel out the spell, and restore peace in Daventry.

Not King's Quake

With some of the gameplay characteristics that are traditionally found in first-person shooting games, *Mask* marks the first time true 3D action has been integrated into this classic adventure game series. You will have commands for three types of jumps, including a backflip, and you will control ranged weapons, like crossbows, as well as close combat weapons such as swords.

But don't get the idea that this game is focused entirely on action. *Mask* will interweave a strong narrative story with immediately gratifying 3D action elements to create a unique action-adventure gaming experience.

Mask *marks the first time true 3D action has been integrated into this classic adventure game series.*

MOOD LIGHTING: Dynamic lights, shadows, and 3D sound add to the realism and excitement of the *Mask of Eternity* experience.

Now that more concrete information about *Mask* is beginning to surface, it is clear the adventure game is far from dead. Roberta's new vision for this genre is, as always, groundbreaking, and her intention with this eighth inductee to the series is to introduce the traditional *King's Quest* audience to a new genre of gaming and, in turn, bring a new generation of gamers to a new era of *King's Quest*.

Now, it's just a matter of putting all these pieces together."

The Day the Kingdom Stood Still

Mask will include an imaginative, personal take on the archetypal *King's Quest* story line. In this installment, all of the inhabitants of the beloved kingdom of

While this is just a small sampling of this enormous new game, it should help whet your appetite for more information to come about *Mask*. For a load of updated information including screenshots, monsters sketches, and musical samples, check out the *Mask of Eternity* website at **www.sierra.com/ mask**. Until next time, savor this promise from Roberta: "We have a lot ahead of us, although I can tell you that from what I can see at this point, it's going to be one hell of a game!"

SWAMP THING: More than 80 unique creatures inhabit the seven dynamic worlds of *Mask*.

NASCAR RACING 3

● Papyrus' Best Pit Stop Yet

www.sierra.com/nascar

By Erica Kohnke

The only thing missing from *NASCAR Racing 2*, according to Karl Frederickson of *Stock Car Racing* magazine, is getting "banged on the head" like you are in a real stock car barreling toward a corner at over 100 mph. When *NASCAR Racing 3* is released later this year, the simulation will be so real, you'll swear you need a helmet.

According to the realism-obsessed development team at Papyrus, *NASCAR Racing 3* will have plenty to knock you around. Racing sim fans will rejoice in a new physics model so complete, cars actually lift off the ground when they encounter high-speed collisions, and the

racing crowd will enjoy a meticulously re-created 1998 NASCAR Winston Cup season.

NASCAR Racing 3 will also be the first 3DFX-native PC-based stock car racing simulation ever offered. This means a frame-rate that rivals that of, well, real life. By also including enhanced artificial intelligence (AI), Full Course Cautions (yellow flags), pace laps, black flags, accurate 1998 pit rules, double file restarts, and expanded online series options, Papyrus has again clinched the pole position in the

...the simulation will be so real, you'll swear you need a helmet.

racing simulation market.

Best-selling *NASCAR Racing 2*, released by Papyrus in November 1996, broke ground by offering a carefully created racing environment based on every bump and tire mark in the NASCAR Winston Cup Series.

The cars in *NASCAR 2* behave almost as sensitively as actual NASCAR stock cars. Since its release, professional drivers, as well as serious sim fans, have tried new setup and driving tactics with the tracks, slowly improving their performance through trial and error.

In the last six months, those *NASCAR 2* fans (as well as a few professional drivers) have also put these tactics to the test online in the *NASCAR Racing Online Series* (www.nros.com).

Keep an eye out for *NASCAR Racing 3*. You'll be able to strap yourself behind the wheel, check your mirrors, and lay on the gas with a whole new *NASCAR Racing* experience—but please...watch your head.

Sierra.com is a website built for you.

That's because we know you want more than just price and ordering information about your favorite games. You want player forums, demos, technical support, great collections, contests, and tons of free stuff like downloads and online gaming. You want a website you can go to every day and find something new and cool—and that's our goal.

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One of our most recent additions is an update of our online Web Store. Check it out or head to your favorite retailer. Ordering products over the Web is becoming common—we should know, we've sold tons of games via the Internet. You can browse through all our available titles with your virtual shopping cart, and there is never a checkout line at this store.

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WebTrek

For starters, folks outside the United States and Canada, who can't use our 800 number, can forget about those international long-distance charges. Best of all, your order goes straight to the warehouse via our super-secure server. We know you want to be playing your favorite games, not waiting for them.

Before you order, be sure to take a look at the Sierra Specials, a page devoted to our best deals, like software under $20. Current offerings include *The Mastercook: Jenny Craig Cookbook*, *YOU DON'T KNOW JACK Volume 2*, and *The Beast Within* from the *Gabriel Knight* series. At **www.sierra.com/products/under**, you can find a whole list of games for less than 20 bucks.

If you're really looking for a bargain, then you should know about **www.sierra.com/free**. It's packed with contests, demos, screensavers, and much more, including three complete downloadable games: *Red Baron*, *BIRTHRIGHT*, and *Betrayal at Krondor*. We're always adding new stuff, so check back often to see what we're giving away next.

We appreciate your feedback. On your next trip though **sierra.com**, stop by **www.sierra.com/interact/feedback**, fill out the online survey, and let us know what you like and don't like. The results will only help us make **sierra.com** even better.

Meet Your Match on WON
www.won.net

If you've conquered all your friends, and their friends, or you just need new challenges, the World Opponent Network (**WON**) was made for people like you. That's because the idea behind WON was to give gamers a world of opportunities to play against an unlimited number of human opponents.

WON has done just that. Since it went up last year, over 50,000 players have battled in over one million games online—and things are just getting started. You can jump on and challenge other players right now. A completely free site, WON will give gamers tips and cheats, forums, free downloads, the latest news, and more.

Now, what would be the perfect game to try out on WON? *Red Baron II*? *Lords of the Realm II*? How about those, plus 10 other hits with the *Online Games Collection*, including 12 online versions of our favorites. Get the full story at **www.sierra.com/online** —we guarantee you won't be disappointed.

From the Unthinkable to the Unprintable
www.bezerk.com

If you're more of a brains than brawn online player, check out the free download of *Acrophobia* at **www.bezerk.com**. It's an exciting and challenging game of acronyms that you and up to 13 other players create in head-to-head competition, and the results range from the unthinkable to the unprintable. The *Acrophobia* website has already won every award from Cool Site of the Day to Dynamite Site of the Night, and because we like to make things easy, *Acrophobia* can be played for free on WON.

Berkeley Systems, the developer of *Acrophobia*, has also recently released its third volume of the all-time best-selling trivia game *YOU DON'T KNOW JACK*, featuring over 800 questions from categories like DisOrDat to Loogies & the Cosmos. If you haven't played *JACK*, it's a fast and furious trivia game that will test your brain and your funny bone—all at the same time.

They're the Top Ten and They're FREE

Here are the demos, screensavers, and games that we're sending out as fast as you can download them. To see them all, check out **www.sierra.com/free**.
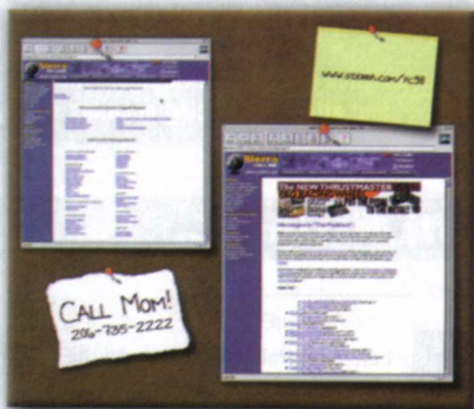
1. **Diving Adventure Screensaver**
2. **Red Baron (Full Version)**
3. **3D Ultra Pinball 2: Creep Night PC & Mac demo**
4. **Johnny Castaway Screensaver**
5. **3D Ultra Pinball PC & Mac demo**
6. **3D Ultra Pinball 3: The Lost Continent Mac demo**
7. **Betrayal at Krondor game**
8. **Fantasy Tracks for NASCAR Racing 2 Demo**
9. **3D Ultra Mini-Golf PC demo**
10. **NASCAR Racing 2 PC demo**

Quit Bugging Me!

Bugs—we hate 'em. Sometimes they even creep up after a game has shipped, and that's when update patches help. Patches are a great way to make your gaming a whole lot easier. You can download them at **www.sierra.com/support/technical**, and solve those little annoying problems that slow you down. Check it out and see if there are some for the games you own.

Better Than a Post-It

Stuck in a dungeon and can't find the way out? Sierra's message boards are one of the most popular ways to interact with other players in your favorite games. You can post questions, tips, suggestions, and more. There are more than 30 boards located at **www.sierra.com/messages**, and they include boards for technical and customer service as well. All boards are moderated, and suggestions are passed on to our product development teams so the next version of your favorite game will have that new feature you so desperately want!

Checkmate!

Power Chess '98 is one of our most popular games, perfect for the beginner to advanced player. It features the intuitive *Power Chess* King who learns as he plays and doesn't make the same mistake twice. After the game, the *Power Chess* Queen provides commentary on what you did right—and wrong. It's the perfect way to improve your game every time you play.

Info on *Power Chess '98* can be found at **www.sierra.com/powerchess**, and original *Power Chess* owners can upgrade for only $14.95.
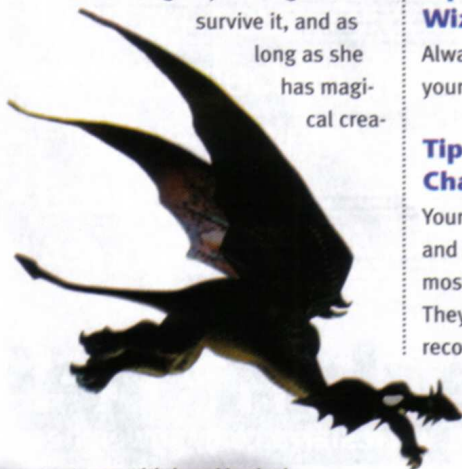
ask sierra

By Bryan Salois

That's right, *ASK SIERRA* is back with a vengeance. Bryan Salois, Sierra's resident answer man, responds to your most frequently asked questions about your favorite games with straight-up hints, tips, and configuration suggestions. If there's anything about any of Sierra's games that's giving you fits, write us c/o *InterAction Magazine*—Ask Sierra, P.O. Box 53008, Bellevue, WA 98015.

Lords of Magic — Hints & Tips

Tip 1: Fire Mages
If you play as the Fire Mage, the Inferno spell is great— as long as your mage can survive it, and as long as she has magical creatures with her. Magical creatures are all quite resistant to fire magic and can survive the blast of the Inferno spell easily. Used carefully, this spell can have a devastating effect on the enemy.

Tip 2: Keep Your Wizard's Mana Up
Always carry potions of mana for your Wizard!

Tip 3: Feed Your Champion Well
Your Champion's experience and fame are some of your most important resources. They allow you to quickly recover from lost battles. You can also gather new party members and train them to higher levels more rapidly.

Tip 4: Instant Armies— Almost
In the later stages of the game (when you have established a stronghold), it is not usually necessary to keep huge armies in your stronghold for protection. If you see the enemy approaching from far enough away, quickly summon creatures and hire mercenaries to create an army.

Tip 5: Heal Those Units
When playing Faiths with high hit-points, but low armor (like Chaos or Fire), don't forget about your ability to heal units in your capital. Keep your units healed, or they won't last long! Also, as a rule of thumb, don't worry so much about healing mercenaries, since they are more expendable.

MASTER OF YOUR OWN DOMAIN: Gather "Instant Armies," and attack advancing enemies swiftly.

SODA Off-Road Racing — Hints & Tips

Tip 1: Under-calibrate Your Steering Wheel (or Joystick)
Instead of turning your steering wheel all the way to the extreme right and left during calibration, turn it about two-thirds of the way. This will result in steering that is a little less sensitive and should give you better control of your vehicle. This can also help reduce the slip-and-slide feel you can get when driving in grass and loose gravel, especially with sensitive controllers.

Tip 2: Get Off the Gas
A lot of people like to play racing games with the pedal to the metal all the way. In SODA Off-Road Racing, this is the quickest way to find yourself face-down in the mud.

Traction is more important than speed, so don't stomp on the pedal and expect to be able to control your vehicle around those turns. Instead, pump the gas while navigating turns. This will increase traction as you decelerate, while still maintaining power to shoot you through the corner.

NO IN-FLIGHT MOVIE? Under-calibrating and staying light on the gas keeps you right side up.

The Realm

Tip 1: Save and Save Often

Hosting online games can be tricky sometimes. On the off chance that there is a server-crash, the characters are reset to the status they were at when you last logged in. Your house, however, is not reset.

For this reason it is important to log off and re-log in often, thereby saving your characters'
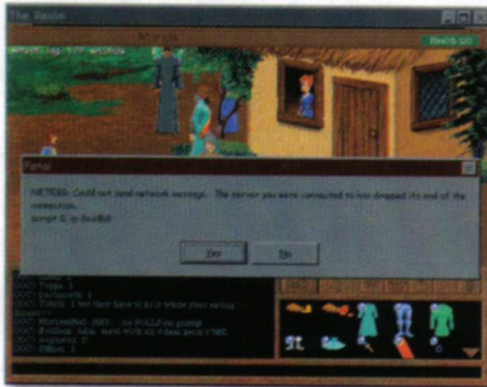
status. This is important!

Let's say you're in your house and you are holding a shield, and there are a million gold coins on the floor. You drop the shield, and pick up the million gold coins. If the server

crashes, your character will be reset to the last time it was saved. Then the next time you log on, your character will be standing in your house holding a shield, but the million gold coins that were lying on the floor will now be gone. You will, how-ever, still see a second (dupli-cate) shield lying on the floor.

Do yourself a favor, save and save often.

Red Baron II

Tip 1: Fine Control Is the Key

Rotary-powered planes like the Fokker DR1 and Sopwith Camel have a very high torque to them, which means they have a strong, constant pull to either the right or left. You need to make sure you constantly adjust your plane's heading, making small corrections and adjustments for the airplane's torque and the wind. Don't mistake this for a joystick calibration problem—this is how airplanes of that time flew in real life.

Tip 2: Actively Search for Enemy Aircraft

Look for enemy aircraft. If you

don't actively search for enemy aircraft, you may never find them, since they will be avoiding you most of the time. If you just fly with autopilot you'll never catch the enemy. Also, even if you see the enemy, your flight leader may not always choose to engage them.

Tip 3: Be Careful Using Autopilot

Don't use the autopilot unless you use it at the very beginning of the mission, or unless you are at a high enough altitude and air speed. If you engage the autopilot when you are too low or not flying fast enough, you will crash. This

happens because some air-planes need to achieve a mini-mum altitude and/or airspeed before autopilot can be used.

Also, read the manual, and make sure you understand the differ-ent types of autopilot available in the game.

MAYBE IT'S THE FETZER VALVE: Crashing and getting lost can be avoided by flight-path changes and proper use of autopilot.

Hellfire

Q: How Do I Access the New Levels in Hellfire?

A: A number of people have asked us this question because they

don't realize you need to be tough enough to enter the new levels, just like the existing dungeons in *Diablo*. Once you have reached level 15 or above, talk to the

farmer, and he will give you a bomb that you can use to open The Hive. Once you've entered and beaten The Hive, you should find an item that will allow you access into The Crypt.

Customer Support

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Services: We do have a 24-hour automated system, or you can call during stated hours to talk to a technical support representative.

Cost: No charge other than your long-distance rates. Some software companies charge you a fee for technical support. Not us.

Additional Help:
You can also post to our web page at **www.sierra.com** for the specific game title.

When to Contact Technical Support:
Call Tech Support when you can no longer advance in a program. This can include lockups in the program, error messages, blank screens, or no sound.

When NOT to Contact Technical Support:
Don't call Technical Support when you are unable to finish a game, or if you are playing an adventure game, if you cannot pass a level or complete a task. In this case, use hint scripts or strategy books, or call our 900 number (1-900-370-5583) for hints and tips from the Sierra Hint Line.

Sierra Hint Line   1.900.370.5583

Hours:
24 hours a day

US Phone Number:
(900) 370-5583

Canada Phone Number:
(900) 451-3356

Services:
We have a 24-hour-a-day automated system that walks you through the hints menu. Must have a touchtone phone and be 18 years or older.

Cost:
$.95/minute in the United States, $1.25/minute in Canada.

When to Call the Hint Line:
Call the Hint Line when you are unable to finish a game, cannot pass a level, or cannot complete a task.

When NOT to Call the Hint Line:
Do not call the Hint Line when you experience lockups in the program, error mes-

sages, blank screens, or when you get no sound while

playing the game. Contact Technical Support for assis-

tance in these situations.

Games Supported

Betrayal at Krondor	King's Quest III	Police Quest III
Betrayal in Antara	King's Quest IV	Police Quest IV
Birthright	King's Quest V	Police Quest: SWAT
Castle of Dr. Brain	King's Quest VI	Phantasmagoria
Code Name: Iceman	King's Quest VII	Phantasmagoria 2
The Colonel's Bequest	Leisure Suit Larry I	Quest for Glory I
Conquest of Camelot	Leisure Suit Larry II	Quest for Glory II
Conquest of the Longbow	Leisure Suit Larry III	Quest for Glory III
Caesar II	Leisure Suit Larry V	Quest for Glory IV
Dagger of Amon Ra	Leisure Suit Larry VI	Rama
EcoQuest I	Leisure Suit Larry VII	Rise of the Dragon
Freddie Pharkas Frontier Pharmacist	Lords of Magic	Space Quest I
Gabriel Knight	Lords of the Realm	Space Quest II
Gabriel Knight 2	Lords of the Realm II	Space Quest III
Goblins I	Lost in Time	Space Quest IV
Goblins II	Secret of the Lost Rain Forest	Space Quest V
Goblins III	Lighthouse	Space Quest VI
Gold Rush	Manhunter: New York	Shivers
Inca	Manhunter: San Francisco	Shivers II
Incredible Machine	Outpost	Urban Runner
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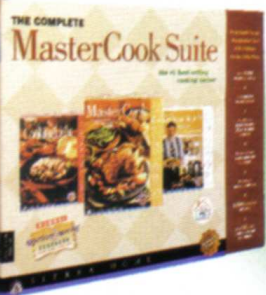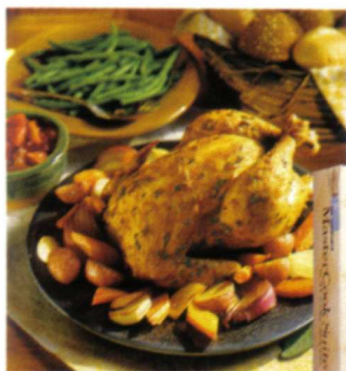
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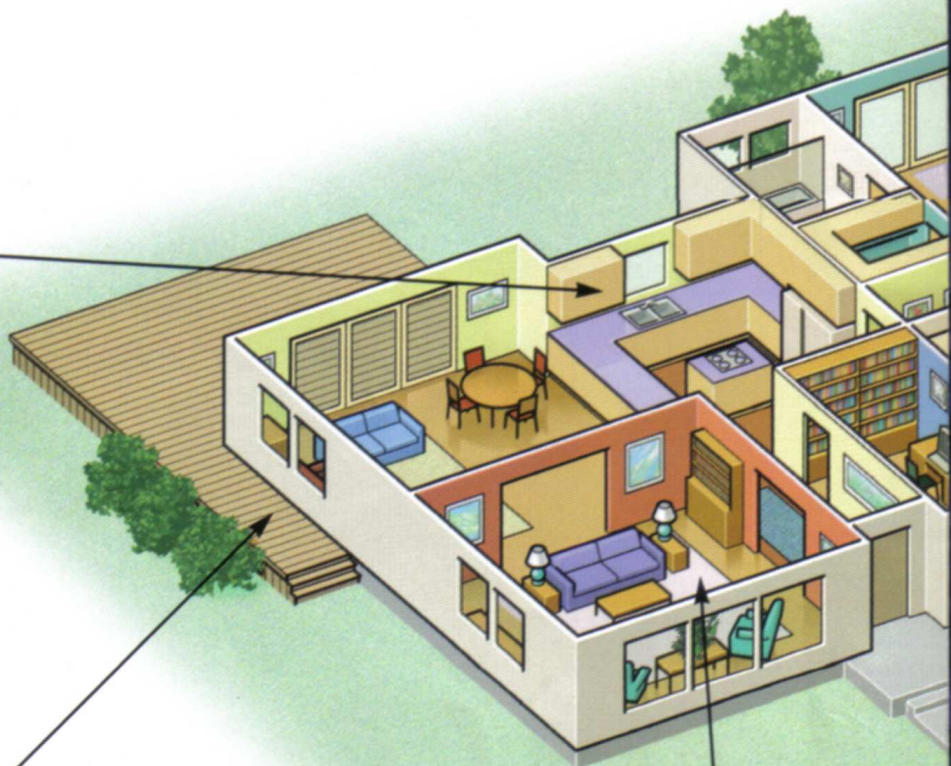
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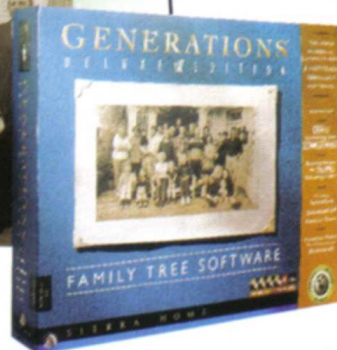
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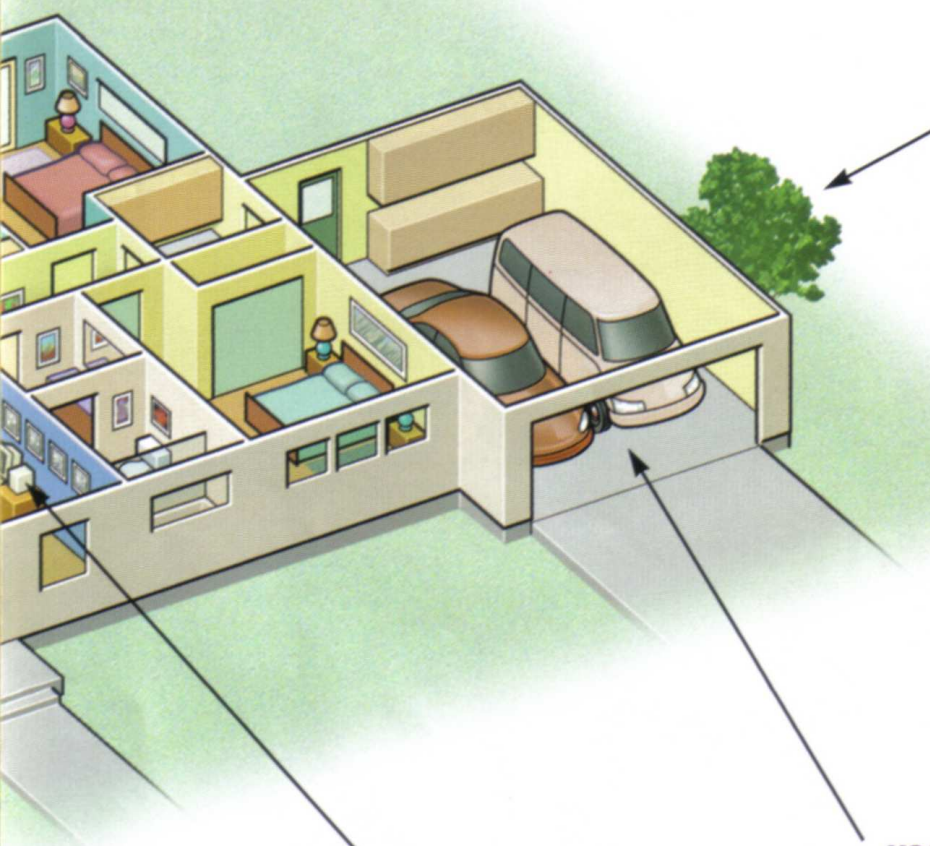
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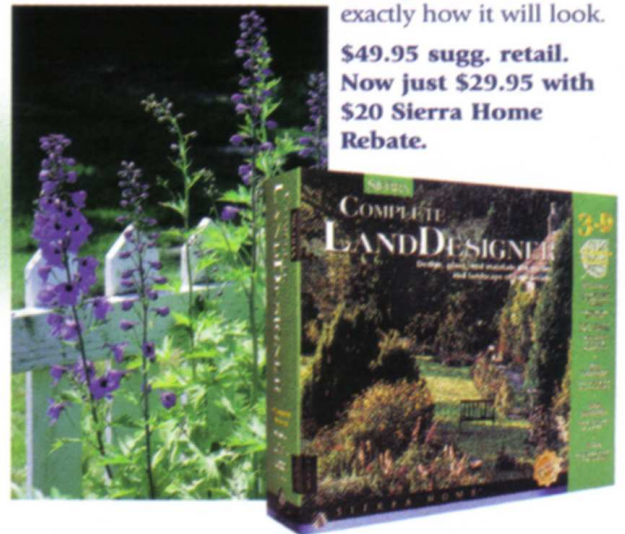
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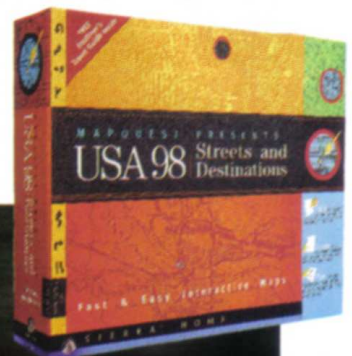
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