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SUMMER BUYER'S GUIDE

The Best Video Games
from the 2003
"Electronic Entertainment Expo"

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II

Over
50
games
previewed!

TRUE CRIME
STREETS OF LA

Hot
peripherals!

Top Picks!

PlayStation 2
Greatest Hits!

Xbox
Platinum!

EA
SPORTS
MADDEN
NFL 2004

From The Editors of
GAMEPRO
MAGAZINE
www.gamepro.com



- 
1. Must remember to throw slider on 0-2 count.
 2. Must remember to keep slider out of strike zone.
 3. Must remember to get real estate license if 1 and 2 fail.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION. Welcome to the next reality of MLB™ 2004, our most authentic, cage-rattling baseball experience ever. This season, we swing for the fences and made gameplay trademarks like Total Control Pitching™, Batting and Fielding even more realistic. Making the cheap seats is more challenging, getting started is more hectic, and, in between the roar of the crowd, you can almost hear the star music. MLB™ 2004. It's game time.



PlayStation 2



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GAMEPRO

BestBuy.com

SUMMER BUYER'S GUIDE

The Best Video Games from the 2003 "Electronic Entertainment Expo"

Welcome to Best Buy & GamePro's Summer Buyer's Guide! Video games have become big business, and store aisles are packed with more choices than ever before. No longer "just for kids," video games appeal to all ages and interests, and this buyer's guide will steer you toward gaming's newest stars.

Each year, the entire video game industry convenes in Los Angeles for a couple days for the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E³). Here, companies showcase all the latest and greatest games that will be released throughout the rest of the year. Unfortunately, this is an industry-only event, but we've got you covered. The editors of *GamePro* magazine, the world's largest independent multiplatform gaming magazine, have scoured the show floors to give you an insider's look at the top titles for each game system plus the hottest, most useful peripherals to enhance your gaming experience.

We hope you'll use this guide to help you make all your video-game-buying decisions at Best Buy this summer (and influence those who might be buying for you by checking off boxes on the handy Wish List). For the most up-to-date video-game news, reviews, previews, and codes, be sure to pick up *GamePro* wherever magazines are sold and visit BestBuy.com and GamePro.com regularly. **Game on!**

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Produced by GamePro—world's largest independent multiplatform gaming magazine! For up-to-date video-game news, reviews, and game codes, visit:



GAMEPRO

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The ESRB Ratings Guide

The interactive electronic entertainment industry utilizes a voluntary rating system developed by an independent organization—the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB)—so consumers know what to expect before buying a video or PC game. The following is a quick key to the most common ratings; for a complete description, check out the ESRB's website at www.esrb.org or call 800/771-3772 for more information.



Everyone (E) Titles rated Everyone (E) have content suitable for persons ages six and older. These titles will appeal to people of many ages and tastes. They may contain minimal violence, comic mischief, or crude language.



Teen (T) Games rated Teen (T) are suitable for ages 13 and up. These games could have violent content, strong language, and/or suggestive themes.



Mature (M) Games rated Mature (M) are appropriate for older gamers, generally 17 and up. Mature-rated games may contain more intense depictions of violence, stronger language, and, on rare occasions, sexual themes.



Rating Pending (RP) The Rating Pending (RP) icon may appear in early reviews of soon-to-be-released products. Look for the actual ESRB rating icon on the game's package, check the ESRB's website, or call its toll-free phone number for up-to-date rating information.

Only in Donkey Kong Country.



Runaway mine carts, blasting barrels and one swimming gorilla.



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Game Boy Advance ® sold separately. www.donkeykongcountry.com

True Crime: Streets of L.A.

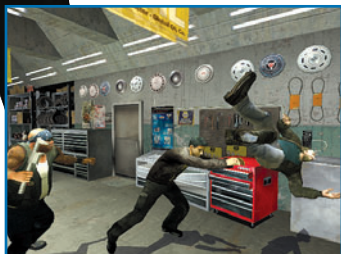
■ Published by Activision ■ Available September ■ Also on Xbox, GameCube ■ ESRB: MATURE

TTrue Crime: Streets of L.A. shoots from the cinematic hip, placing gamers in the filmic persona of Nick Kang, a renegade ex-cop who's been recruited as a member of the Elite Operations Division. Loose cannon Kang (think a young Chow Fun Fat playing Martin Riggs) battles Asian and Russian crime organizations using martial-arts techniques, expert marksmanship, and a lead foot to restore law and order in the City of Angels.

Any time the phrases "mission-based driving" and "wasting criminals in a huge 3D city" are breathed in the same sentence, it's hard not to think of a certain series by Rockstar. But it's not fair to write off True Crime as "Grand Theft genre"—there's a branching story structure (the outcome of a mission can vary the resulting events wildly) as well as a strong RPG-style character-improvement element to let players choose how they progress.

Gamers can also learn 10 different martial-arts styles, all of which were motion-captured using professionals. The game will also feature plenty of twin-pistol combat with a flexible targeting system and some cool Max Payne-style slow-motion dodging attacks.

The action takes place in a huge, realistically modeled chunk of Los Angeles, roughly 300 square miles, from downtown to the beach and from LAX to Sunset Boulevard. Big-name Hollywood talent like Gary Oldman, Christopher Walken, and Michael Madsen are among the voice cast. And with three types of gameplay wrapped in a Hong Kong-style package, it certainly sounds like True Crime will feature plenty to, er, woo eager gamers.



Final Fantasy X-2

■ Published by Square Enix U.S.A.
■ Available November ■ ESRB: Teen

The time is two years after Titus and Yuna went on their fateful journey in Final Fantasy X; and with Sin all taken care of in the last game, Yuna's dropped the summoning racket and is currently searching for her old blitzball-playing flame from the last FF sequel. As a result, the plot's less RPG-like and more like Yuna and Rikku going on a *Thelma and Louise*-style road trip across the world. FFX-2 introduces a number of new features to the renowned RPG series, including switchable job classes like Gunner, Mascot, Gambler, and even Pop Star, all accessed using the game's new Dress-Up system. There's also simplified world travel and a return to the active-time battle system from previous Final Fantasy games.



Out of the tombs. Into hell.



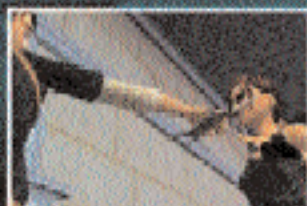
New 3D Engine and character control give full advantage of the latest technology.



Stealth and hand-to-hand attacks help remove anyone in your path.



The gritty urban underbelly of Europe offers whole new environments.



PlayStation 2's DualShock 2 brings her own distinct gameplay mechanics.

A bloody crime scene. A ritual killing. A shocking suspect. And so the daring pursuit of good becomes the desperate flight from evil. And if the dark forces arrayed against her believe she's incapable of the ultimate, they're about to learn a painful lesson: Payback's a bitch.

LARA CROFT
**TOMB
RAIDER**
the angel of darkness



PC
CD

core
design

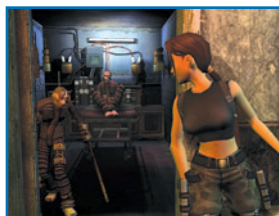
EIDOS
interactive

Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness

Published by Eidos Available now ESRB: Teen

Available NOW!

She's raided tombs, fought dinosaurs, uncovered hidden conspiracies, and saved the world, but when Lara's framed for murder, can she save herself? Core and Eidos will be asking that question in *Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness*. Billed as "Lara Croft as you've never seen her before," this new Tomb Raider promises to be something newer and darker, wrapped up with the good ol' platform-hopping, impossible-gorge-leaping gameplay that Lara's fans have come to crave. And if her two



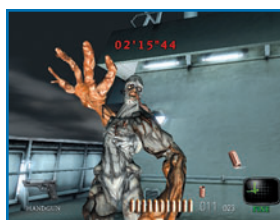
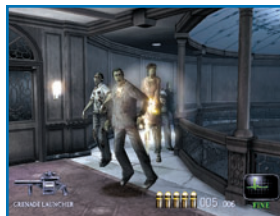
trademark pistols aren't enough, then a new suite of stealth-based moves and a second playable character named Kurtis should help out a bit.

Resident Evil: Dead Aim

Published by Capcom Available now ESRB: MATURE

Available NOW!

Resident Evil: Dead Aim takes place aboard a cruise ship that's been overrun by a plethora of monstrous Umbrella creations—zombies, mutant frogs, tyrants, and more. *Dead Aim* utilizes the Gun-Con 2 controller (you move via third-person view, then switch to first-person mode on the fly), but if you lack this peripheral, the regular PlayStation 2 controller works surprisingly well. The visuals are clean and finely detailed, and the 3D Silent Hill-ish play engine is a nice departure from the prerendered environments



of previous Evils. Another unique play mechanic is the use of stealth as you're frequently forced to dispatch enemies while making as little noise as possible.



Gran Turismo 4

Published by Sony Available Winter 2003 ESRB: Everyone

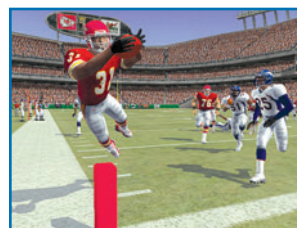
Sony is pulling out all the stop signs for *Gran Turismo 4*, promising an even more exciting ride where realism overshadows everything else. Improvements to the game include advanced A.I. opponents, more refined physics, and much more detail for each car. You can now choose from over 500 vehicles that range from historical classics to tomorrow's concepts, then race on up to 100 courses like the streets of New York or the dirt paths of the Grand Canyon. Even better, you can now test your prized hotrods against up to six players online.



Madden NFL 2004

Published by EA Sports Available August Also on Xbox, GameCube, GBA ESRB: Everyone

Now entering its 14th season, the Madden series is one of the all-time best, and *Madden NFL 2004* beefs



up its already formidable array of features. *Monday Night Football's* John Madden and Al Michaels command the commentary as you take on the 32 teams of the current NFL or great squads from the past (in the PS2 version only, you'll also be able to play online). This year, Madden's great Franchise mode enables you to play owner as well as coach and GM. You can build your own stadium and manage it right down to ticket sales and the price of beer. This is video-game football at its finest.

DEEP IN CUBA, THE GHOSTS BATTLE A NEW ENEMY.



★ Tom Clancy's
**GHOST
RECON**
ISLAND THUNDER

SQUAD-BASED BATTLEFIELD COMBAT

In the wake of Castro's death, the Ghosts battle a drug-funded warlord threatening Cuba's first free elections in decades. With a new single-player campaign, 12 new multiplayer maps, and downloadable missions, the TOTAL BATTLEFIELD EXPERIENCE just got a whole lot steamier.



Blood and Gore
Violence

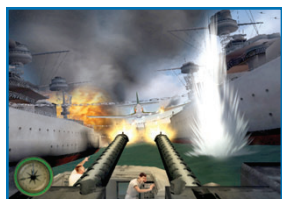
COMING
IN AUGUST



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Medal of Honor Rising Sun

Published by EA Games ■ Available November ■ Also on Xbox, GameCube ■ ESRB: Teen

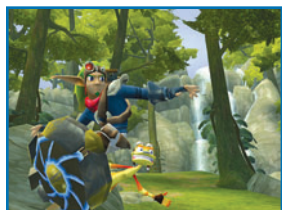


The war's not over yet for the Medal of Honor franchise as its action shifts to the jungles and islands of the Pacific theater in Medal of Honor Rising Sun. You play as one of the many thousands caught in the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, escaping from a sinking battleship to ship out to the Pacific for action in Guadalcanal, Burma, Singapore, and the Philippines, where you fight alongside (but don't control) squad members. Levels now have multiple paths and secret areas, and excellent multiplayer options mean two players will be able to play through all 10 single-player levels in cooperative split-screen play.

Jak II

Published by Sony ■ Available September ■ ESRB: Teen

Jak and Daxter's story starts immediately after the ending of their first game, which is now part of the Greatest Hits lineup. The duo travels to the future, where Jak is captured and incarcerated. Jak's two-



year stay in isolation involves countless tests with Dark Eco, an element that turns his body into an abnormality. Daxter eventually frees Jak, and their adventure begins. Much of the gameplay (3D platform hopping) in Jak II remains unchanged, but it includes additional moves for a now-mature Jak. He uses an upgradeable gun and hoverboard, but still possesses a vast array of jumps, punches, and kicks—along with a brand-new set of moves when he's fully powered up with Dark Eco.

Ratchet & Clank: Going Commando

Published by Sony ■ Available November ■ ESRB: Everyone

Ratchet & Clank: Going Commando is the sequel to one of last year's best platform games. The first thing to look for is a matured Ratchet, who is more self-assured of his heroic stature and eventually becomes a commando, hence the title. You wouldn't expect a game that had almost 40 hours of gameplay to get even longer, but Going Commando will do just that levels that are 150–200 percent larger. Ratchet is more than up to the added challenge with



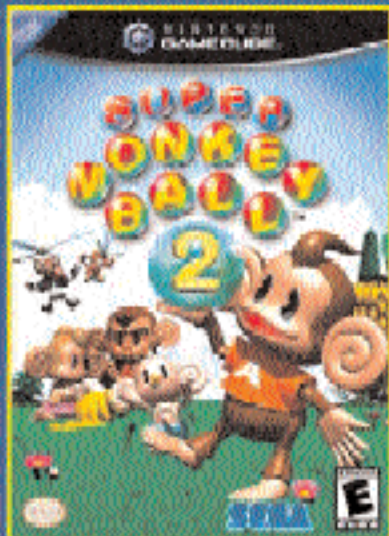
the ability to earn experience points to boost his health and attack strength, as well as armor and weapons that are upgradeable.

SOCOM II: U.S. Navy SEALs

Published by Sony ■ Available November ■ ESRB: MATURE

As the first online shooter for the PlayStation 2, SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs has proven that it can hold its ground in popularity. The game not only offers hours of enjoyment online, but its single-player game is, at the very least, captivating. Sony promises more of the same in the sequel but with gameplay enhancements that will get even the most stoic soldiers stoked for battle. Notable features in the sequel include more weapons for your armory, online improvements, and 12 brand-new single-player missions that take place in Albania, Algeria, Brazil, and Russia. A headset won't be included with this version, but Sony will sell headsets separately this fall.





Abstract Background:



Be sure to check out **GamePro.com** for more great video-game coupons redeemable at Best Buy!

Goblin Commander: Unleash the Horde



The brains behind StarCraft and Diablo bring you a new RTS designed specifically with consoles in mind. Unite the five Goblin clans under your banner and bring peace back to the land of Ogriss!

■ Jaleco ■ Available November ■ Also on Xbox, GameCube ■ ESRB: Teen

Rise to Honor

Jet Li has been completely motion captured for this all-out action game. You can take on enemies using a unique 360-degree martial-arts system, which includes combos, countering, and super strikes.



■ Sony ■ Available September ■ ESRB: Rating Pending

ESSENTIAL ACCESSORIES

Datel Action Replay

If you can't beat 'em...cheat! The Action Replay gives gamers more power than they thought possible; it quickly and easily allows players to temporarily change the parameters of their favorite game—any and all of them! Skip levels or get infinite life, unlimited wealth, extra characters...plus you can even watch imported DVDs on your PS2. New codes for the latest games are always available from Datel's website as well as in *GamePro* magazine. (This product is also available for the Xbox and GameCube.)



www.codejunkies.com

Pelican Stealth

If you need to keep your PS2 gaming quiet, the Stealth's innovative built-in headphone jack could be the perfect solution. The Stealth's cable taps into your AV output to feed the sound signal to a jack in the controller, but it doesn't cut off the standard audio output—so you can still use the TV speaker without disconnecting. The package includes low-rider earphones, but you can just as easily connect your own hi-fi headset.



PlayStation 2 Online Pack

The future of gaming is online—and Sony's newest version of the PlayStation 2 can take you there. The package comes with the Network Adaptor at no additional cost, so you can hook up your telephone line or broadband Internet cable for online gaming. The PS2 itself features an improved DVD drive, a built-in IR sensor for using universal remotes, support for progressive-scan televisions, and even a quieter fan. If you've somehow resisted the urge to get a PS2 for this long, now's the time to give in.



Eye Toy

Smile—you're on PlayStation 2! Sony's Eye Toy is a USB camera specifically designed for use with the PS2; it lets you interact with the console without using a traditional controller. The camera, which was in development for two years, tracks your motions—watch yourself on the screen, then wave your hand over the start button that's floating next to your head to begin a game. The Eye Toy comes with 12 mini-games, many of which are funny reflex contests with names like Kung Foo and Wishi Washi, but there's a lot of potential for other uses, such as video conferencing and cool *Minority Report*-like menu navigation.





Available in stores 8/14/03. Maybe you can still be friends.



MADDEN2004.COM



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call 1-800-777-3742
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Brute Force

Published by Microsoft Available now ESRB: Teen

Brute Force is a science-fiction action/combat game where teamwork pays off. You control four galactic commandos (human, non-human, and in-between), each with his, her, or its own special abilities and expertise, as you stamp your brand of justice on the galaxy of the future. Your "beat" covers 50 star systems called the "Known World," which is comprised of human colonies and several alien races.

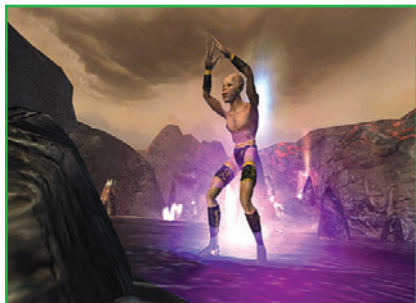
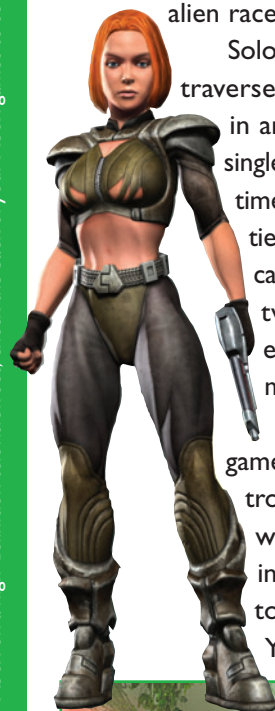
Solo soldiers will traverse six worlds in an extensive

single-player campaign, but a friend can join the patrol at any time by just plugging in his controller. For cooperative sorties, up to four players can play together through the main campaign, and up to eight players can play each other with two Xboxes connected via System Link. If that's not enough, Microsoft will provide downloadable campaigns, missions, and maps over its Xbox Live online service.

At the heart of Brute Force is its squad-based gameplay. You can change which squad member you're controlling on the fly, giving you access to that character's weapons and special abilities. This plays a valuable role in the game's tactics, as you'll use the different abilities to solve puzzles and overcome obstacles in your way.

Your squadmates will follow you and guard your back,

but each of them also reacts to situations according to a unique personality. Tex, for instance, is a one-man wrecking crew who likes to lay down the blitz with guns blazing. When you want to keep peace in the universe, sometimes it takes Brute Force.



Enter the Matrix

Published by Atari Available now
Also on PS2, GameCube, PC ESRB: Teen

Available NOW!

You never can get enough of *The Matrix*! The story line for Enter the Matrix was actually written by Andy and Larry Wachowski, who directed the movies, and in fact intertwines with those of the films *The Matrix: Reloaded* and *The Matrix Revolutions*, as well as the *Animatrix* DVD (a collection of nine short-story *Matrix* animes).

The video games serve up an interesting mix of third-person combat action and vehicle-based skirmishes involving cars and hovercraft. You can play as one of two characters: Niobe the pilot, or the martial arts expert, Ghost, who are both from *The Matrix: Reloaded*. Familiar characters from the first movie—Trinity, Morpheus, Neo, and Agent Smith—make cameo appearances, too. Your task is to protect the human safe haven, Zion, from the onslaught of the machines. Also, check out the two-CD *The Matrix: Reloaded* movie soundtrack, which includes making-of footage on this game.



STREETS ARE FOR WUSSIES

Who needs pavement when you're behind the wheel of a souped-up MINI Cooper? Tear through subway stations, rip apart golf courses, and plow through storm drains as you pull off the ultimate gold heist.

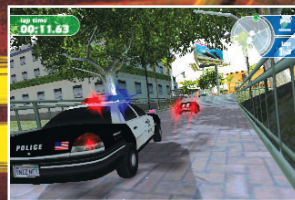
THE ITALIAN JOB[®]



A high-octane arcade racer based on the 2003 blockbuster movie.



Race through L.A. driving 10 different vehicles.



Master 4 modes from death-defying stunt driving to multiplayer madness.



Bonus features including movie footage, concept art, and more!



PlayStation[®]2



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CLIMAX

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EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

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Deus Ex: Invisible War

■ Published by Eidos ■ Available Fall 2003 ■ Also on PC ■ ESRB: Rating Pending

It's a dark near-future world, and you're a bio-augmented antiterrorist agent battling militant factions, each with its own plan for world domination. Technology has advanced in the 15 years after the first Deus Ex, and you represent the cutting-edge in body modification. As the game progresses, you'll choose how you want to customize yourself by selecting bio-mods to match your gameplay style. The choices you make in the game will have serious impacts on the way the game plays out. State-of-the-art

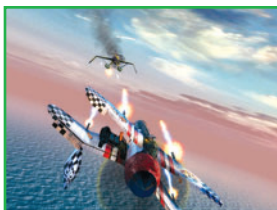
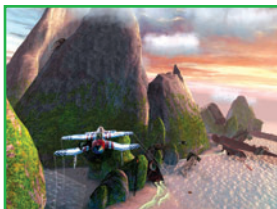


graphics technology will meld with innovative game design to deliver a game experience unlike almost anything else you'll play this year.

Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge

■ Published by Microsoft ■ Available October ■ ESRB: Rating Pending

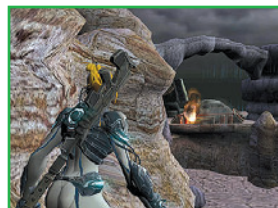
In *Crimson Skies*, you play as air pirate Nathan Zachary in an alternate-history version of our world in the 1930s. Zeppelins and other air-based technology dominate the skies, leading to packs of air pirates and massive *Hindenburg*-like flying aircraft carriers. This console version of the PC hit will feature Xbox Live support, which will enable 16 players to stage dogfights in any of the game's 11 different aircraft. *Crimson Skies'* emphasis on simple and fun flying physics, rather than a full-on flight simulation, means that the focus is on the action, not on keeping track of horizons and G-forces.



StarCraft: Ghost

■ Published by Blizzard ■ Available November ■ Also on PS2, GameCube ■ ESRB: Rating Pending

In *StarCraft: Ghost*, you play as Nova, an elite psionic soldier who is featured prominently in the three-way war for domination among the mostly human Terrans, the insect-like Zerg, and the powerful psychic Protoss. As you complete missions involving infiltration, sabotage, and straight-up combat, you'll use Nova's insane agility, superhuman speed, and cloaking powers to get the job done. Fans of Blizzard's PC strategy series will get a thrill out of seeing their favorite units in up-close action, including the Zerg Hydralisk and the Terran Firebat, and gamers new to the series will have plenty of stealthy combat action to look forward to.



XIII

■ Published by Ubi Soft ■ Available October ■ Also on PS2, GameCube, PC ■ ESRB: Teen

XIII is a unique first-person shooter that endeavors to make you forget the kiddy connotations associated with cel-shaded games. The story unfolds in a gritty, noir-style manner that stays true to the popular French graphic-novel series that the game is based on. You play a character that wakes up with amnesia due to a near-fatal bullet wound and discover a mysterious "XIII" tattooed on your chest. The President of the United States has been assassinated, and it looks like you're next on the hit list. Fortunately, you can use crossbows, sniper rifles, automatic weapons, and even shards of glass with the skill of a born professional.



XBOX INTRODUCES

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TELL YOUR GIRLFRIEND WE'RE SORRY

There are 3 things gamers shouldn't be without—cheese balls, some friends and a solid library of video games. With Platinum Hits, you can stock up on best-selling Xbox™ titles such as Project Gotham Racing™, Max Payne™, and many more, without breaking the bank. Once you've got a nice stash built up, you won't have much time to miss her anyway.

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*Estimated Retail Price. Actual retail prices may vary.

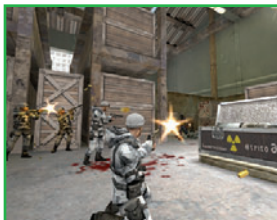
www.xbox.com/games/platinumhits



Counter-Strike

■ Published by Microsoft ■ Available December ■ ESRB: **MATURE**

The PC's most popular online action game is debuting on Xbox Live this holiday season, giving console gamers their first taste of these thrilling online team-based battles. Up to 16 players divide into teams of terrorists and counter-terrorists, then square off in classic firefights, hostage rescues, and defuse-the-bomb scenarios. The missions will be derived from the PC version of Counter-Strike: Condition Zero but will include new Xbox-exclusive levels. Gamers will also be able to check out Condition Zero's single-player game. Player rankings will let you find worthy opponents, and Microsoft also promises to incorporate cheat prevention.



Legacy of Kain: Defiance

■ Published by Eidos ■ Available November ■ Also on PS2 ■ ESRB: Rating Pending

Legacy of Kain: Defiance will unite the protagonists of Blood Omen and Soul Reaver in one new vampire adventure. Focusing on action and story this time—



as opposed to the repetitive puzzles of previous games in the series—developer Crystal Dynamics has introduced fast-paced, tense combat and dramatic new camera angles. Gorgeous environments filled with tough enemies will challenge you to your vampire best (worst?) as you control both Kain and Raziel, and drink the blood and souls of your foes. Telekinetic abilities and an all-new combo-based combat system should ensure that the new Kain title turns out more thrilling than the last.

WWE Raw 2

■ Published by THQ ■ Available Fall 2003 ■ ESRB: Teen

Soon, you too will be able to experience the thrilling life of the pro wrestler in THQ's WWE Raw 2 for the Xbox. Up to four players can get in on Triple Threat, Fatal Four-Way, Battle Royal, King of the Ring, and TLC matches. With more than 45 superstars to choose from, you'll have hours of entertainment at your fingertips. If you think Ric Flair is a wuss, go on and use the tried-and-true Create-A-Superstar mode to build your own beefcake. Plus, you'll be able to put that built-in hard drive to good use by ripping your own music tracks to create a personalized "Ultimate Superstar Entrance."



Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Tides of War

■ Published by Activision ■ Available now ■ Also on PS2 ■ ESRB: **MATURE**

Taking the role of American Captain B.J. Blazkowicz, you'll start your Allied adventure in Africa with your S.A.S. buddy, Agent One. But before long, you'll find yourself in fabled Castle Wolfenstein itself—and in deep trouble. Zombies,



Nazis, killer dogs, evil experiments, secret passages, hidden treasures, punishing weapons, situational logic puzzles, and more surprises await you as you take on the Third Reich from a first-person perspective. Several aspects of the PC game have been rebuilt for the Xbox, including new, more sinister-looking enemies and the addition of a fresh weapon, the shotgun. The ability to save anywhere and the use of frequent checkpoints are also welcome inclusions.

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—Electronic Gaming Monthly, Jan. 2003

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Crash Nitro Kart



Crash Bandicoot returns for another round of outrageous kart racing; this time, he's saving the Earth from destruction. You can take on 17 out-of-this-world raceways in four worlds for high-speed fun.

■ Universal ■ Available Winter 2003 ■ Also on PS2, GameCube, GBA ■ ESRB: Everyone

Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter



An ex-con-turned-bounty hunter scours the galaxy seeking those who framed him. This first-person combat game mixes intense gunslinging on the ground with outer-space dogfights.

■ Black Label Games ■ Available now ■ Also on PS2, GameCube ■ ESRB: MATURE

Fallout: Brotherhood of Steel



The console cousin to one of the best PC RPGs of all time, Brotherhood of Steel puts you in a bleak, post-apocalyptic future filled with mutants, monsters, and other hazards to your health.

■ Interplay ■ Available October ■ Also on PS2 ■ ESRB: Rating Pending

Hulk



Based on this summer's film, Hulk pits the jade giant against the Leader, a power-mad super genius hell-bent on taking over the world with a massive horde of gamma-radiated creatures.

■ Universal Interactive ■ Also on PS2, GameCube ■ Available now ■ ESRB: Teen

NFL Fever 2004



NFL Fever 2004 is toughening up its brand of wide-open pro football by intensifying the artificial intelligence on offense and defense. Effortless Xbox Live online gameplay will also star.

■ Microsoft ■ Available August ■ ESRB: Everyone

The Great Escape



This game version of the 1962 film will feature action along the lines of its source material as you'll play as several different characters who all share a common goal: escape a POW camp during World War II.

■ Gotham Games ■ Available July ■ Also on PS2 ■ ESRB: Rating Pending

ESSENTIAL ACCESSORIES

Mad Catz MicroCon

Some gamers (especially younger ones) find the Xbox controller's contours to be too bulbous and bulky. Enter the MicroCon, a scaled-down gamepad (20 percent smaller than normal size) for gamers with smaller hands. The button layout mimics that of Microsoft's own Controller S, and the 10-foot cable is still plenty generous. Better still, it works great and it's more comfortable than you might expect. (This product is also available for the PlayStation 2 and GameCube.)



Microsoft Xbox Live Starter Kit

If you're ready for some real competition, Xbox Live is where you'll find it. Microsoft's online gaming network

is simple to set up and hard to stop using—plus, some games feature new levels or updated rosters, all free to download. The Starter Kit gives you the Xbox Communicator headset, the setup software, a copy of Tetris World, and a year's subscription (you bring the broadband Internet connection). Pick your unique online Gamertag, build your reputation, and meet your match!



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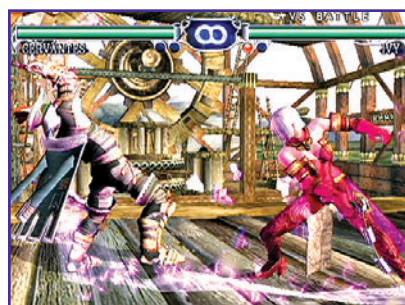
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Soul Calibur II

■ Published by Namco ■ Available August ■ Also on PS2, Xbox ■ ESRB: Teen

Soul Calibur II is the highly anticipated follow-up to one of the best fighting games of all time. **Soul Calibur** is known for its straightforward gameplay that's both easy to pick up and difficult to master, and the sequel doesn't stray far from this winning formula. The popular Weapon Master mode also returns with 200 new weapons to collect and the ability to unlock secret characters, features, and stages. The other modes available are Arcade, Vs., Time Attack, Survival, Team Battle, and Practice.

Soul Calibur II will be available across the three next-generation platforms, and each version will feature one exclusive character. The GameCube version includes Link from the *Legend of Zelda* series, who promises to be a versatile character. Besides his sword, he can fire off arrows to help land tricky air-based combos. He even has a supply of



bombs he can throw at knocked-down enemies. PlayStation 2 owners receive Heihachi from *Tekken*, who will be the first fighter in the series without a weapon. Last but not least, Xbox players get comic-book antihero *Spawn*, whose moves, such as the ability to freeze himself and launch attacks from mid-air, will be unlike anything ever seen in the series. A total of 20 characters fill out the roster, which includes returning characters like Taki, Mitsurugi, Nightmare, and Ivy. New challengers like Talim, Raphael, Cassandra, and Hong Yun Sung are also entering the fray.



Mario Kart: Double Dash!!

■ Published by Nintendo ■ Available Fall 2003 ■ ESRB: Everyone

Pure, unadulterated joy returns to the GameCube this fall as **Mario Kart**, the original big-head kart racer, hits the track. This time, you can pack two characters at once in a single kart—the character in front drives, while the one in back hands out banana-peel or tortoise-shell justice against fellow racers. You'll pick from a cast of characters, including Mario, Luigi, Princess Peach, Baby Mario, Baby Luigi, Yoshi, Wario, Waluigi, Donkey Kong, Diddy Kong, Bowser, Bowser Jr., and everyone's favorite, Birdo. What's more, you'll be able to switch the driver and gunner on the fly to better use each character's strengths.



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F-Zero

■ Published by Nintendo ■ Available August ■ ESRB: Rating Pending

F-Zero is the continuation of a game series that achieved legendary status on the Super NES and Nintendo 64. It's about time the real deal returned, too—without the original *F-Zero*, there would be no *Wipeout*, *Tube Slider*, or *Jet Moto*, not to mention an entire genre of futuristic racers. Thirty craft and over 20 tracks (including a completely rebuilt Mute City) are set to make their debut. The emphasis here is on speed at its purest: The tracks twist and spiral like Super Monkey Ball stages, and 1000 mph is nothing more than an average speed in most areas.



Star Wars Rogue Squadron III: Rebel Strike

■ Published by LucasArts ■ Available Fall 2003 ■ ESRB: Rating Pending



Star Wars Rogue Squadron III: Rebel Strike could eclipse *Rogue Leader* in both graphics and new gameplay options. A couple of the new scenarios will include speederbike chases and AT-ST battles set in the forests of Endor, and an assault on the *Death Star*. As in *The Clone Wars*, you'll be able to jettison your ship and play as various characters on foot in a third-person mode in addition to switching ships midlevel. *Rogue III* will also feature various multiplayer modes in addition to what should be a wicked single-player experience. The Force is strong with this one.

Beyblade V Force

■ Published by Atari ■ Available November ■ ESRB: Everyone

After its successes in the *Dragon Ball Z* arena, Atari is turning its attention to the latest craze in animated TV. For the uninitiated, *Beyblade* is a hugely popular cartoon series where the characters construct wild spinning tops and compete by battling with them in arenas. The hook is that the tops are also available as toys for fans to tweak and play with. Atari has licensed the full rights to the series and is cooking up a fighting-game-style adventure that stays true to the characters and tops from the show, challenging gamers to become World Beyblade Champion.



Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles

■ Published by Nintendo ■ Available November ■ ESRB: Rating Pending

Although *Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles* is Square's first GameCube RPG, it really isn't the epic you may expect from the series' other adventures. The emphasis instead is on multiplayer and Game Boy Advance connectivity, and as a result, it plays more like *Secret of Mana* than a traditional RPG. The gameplay is standard hack-n-slash with a few *Zelda*-style puzzles for good measure. Magic is more complicated: You



need magic jewels, picked up by defeating enemies, to cast anything. While a GBA isn't required, having one will greatly enhance the experience. Up to four players can join in at once, potentially making it a great party game for RPG geeks.



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Dragon Ball Z: The Legacy of Goku II

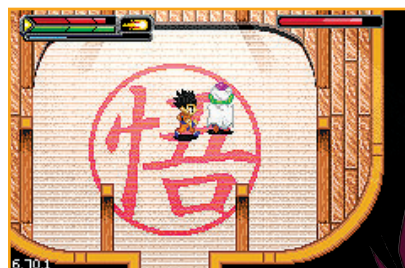
Published by Atari Available now ESRB: Everyone

When Akira Toriyama drew the first *Dragon Ball* comic in 1984, the idea of turning it into an international phenomenon made up of action figures, collectible card games, 500 cartoon episodes, and countless video games probably never occurred to him. Now, Atari's second wave of *Dragon Ball Z* titles, starting with *The Legacy of Goku II* for the Game Boy Advance, is rapidly advancing toward an eager fan base.

Dragon Ball Z: The Legacy of Goku II is the sequel to the original GBA action/RPG that came out in May 2002. The story line begins with the debut of Trunks, runs through the entire Android story arc, and ends with the Cell Games stories—all told, about 75 anime episodes worth

of plot. Not all of it is from Goku's perspective, either: The game features five playable characters (Goku, Gohan, Vegeta, Trunks, and Piccolo), and for the most part, you're free to switch between them at will. *Legacy of Goku II* isn't absolutely beholden to the

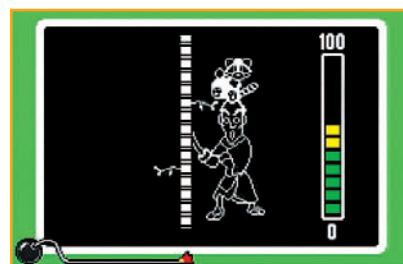
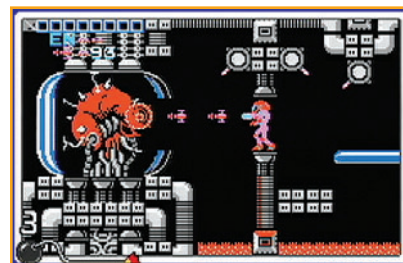
anime, however. Although most of the dialogue is straight out of the show, there are some side quests to solve here and there, including a spy caper inside Capsule Corp. and the rescue of a small town from a horde of triceratops. With over 200 maps to explore and 20 to 25 hours of gameplay, *The Legacy of Goku II* is three to four times as long as the original game.



Wario Ware, Inc.: Mega Microgame\$

Published by Nintendo Available now ESRB: Everyone

Catch a baseball. Kill Mother-brain. Suck up snot. Cut bamboo. Dodge arrows. Race in F-Zero. Balance a stack of books on a unicycle. Can you keep up? Nintendo's betting that if you can't, you'll be able to soon—and gosh darn it, you'll like it. With *Wario Ware, Inc.: Mega Microgame\$*, Nintendo has created a new kind of game experience, hurling microgame after microgame at the player with little breathing room. Each game lasts for no more than five seconds—and they keep on coming until you can no longer keep up. Don't approach it like your regular old Nintendo game. Instead, try to adapt.



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Sonic Battle



A showdown between the characters of Sonic Adventure, Sonic Battle lets you choose one of eight characters, pick an arena, set the rules, and then have at it with each other in 3D environments. Four players can duke it out!

■ Sega ■ Available Fall 2003 ■ ESRB: Rating Pending

Castlevania: Aria of Sorrow



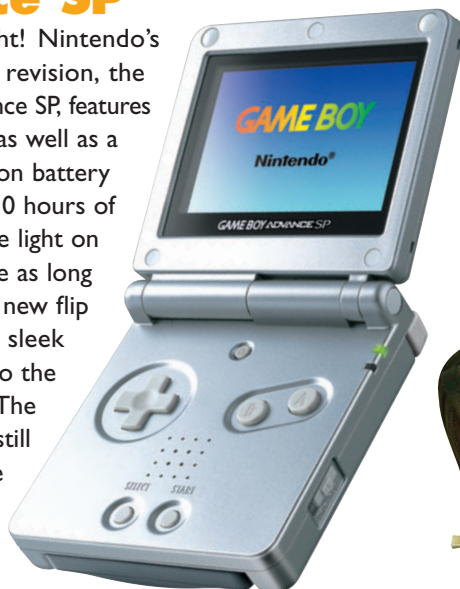
You'll gather hundreds of weapons and special powers from the souls you slay as vampire-killing student of the future Soma Cruz in Castlevania: Aria of Sorrow, the latest in Konami's masterful side-scrolling saga.

■ Konami ■ Available now ■ ESRB: Teen

ESSENTIAL ACCESSORIES

Nintendo Game Boy Advance SP

Let there be light! Nintendo's latest hardware revision, the Game Boy Advance SP, features internal lighting as well as a robust Lithium-ion battery that's good for 10 hours of playtime with the light on (and nearly twice as long with it off). The new flip design gives it a sleek laptop look as do the metallic colors. The original GBA is still available, but the SP represents the current state of the art.



Pelican Starter Kit SP

If you've just picked up a GBA SP, you'll probably want some accessories, and the Starter Kit SP has a bunch of handy items in one package. The Kit includes a rugged and well-designed Wacky Pak SP carrying case, a slim and cleverly engineered Flip N' Play screen



magnifier, a Two-Player Link Cable for head-to-head matches, Game Jackets for keeping loose cartridges safe and free from damage, and even a pair of stereo earphones. All that good stuff makes the Starter Kit SP an attractive and affordable all-in-one SP solution.

NOKIA N-GAGE

■ Available Winter 2003

The N-Gage, which Nokia prefers you call a "mobile game deck" instead of a game system, is a fairly powerful device—it's a wireless phone that also plays games that completely outclass the competition in the graphics department. Besides this, it also has a full range of PDA-style features—MP3 playback, built-in FM radio, e-mail, instant messaging, XHTML web browsing, and more. The system has 64 megabytes of memory built in to store all this stuff. Games for Nokia's system will be made available on special memory packs, called MultiMedia Cards



(MMCs). A total of 10 N-Gage MMCs are slated to go on sale with the system, including Tomb Raider from Eidos, MotoGP from THQ, a Sonic the Hedgehog title from Sega, and several Nokia-produced originals. The system can also play the Java games currently available on color handsets today, which can be stored in the N-Gage's internal memory.

To the gamer, though, the N-Gage's most innovative feature is its wireless multi-player compatibility. The system can deal with two types of multiplayer gaming: up to two players within a single room and online with the rest of the world. Either way you go, it spells the end of link cables for multiplayer games forever. Superb stuff.

namco



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Oldies can definitely still be goodies. Here's a guide to the top classics on the PS2 and Xbox—they're all fantastic games, but their best quality is their dramatically reduced price!

PlayStation 2 Greatest Hits

Gran Turismo 3 A-spec

The crown prince of racing games, Gran Turismo 3 delivers superb simulation-style racing with real-world cars ranging from Dodge Vipers to Mini Coopers. If you like driving fast, this game is one of the best ways to do it.

■ ESRB: Everyone



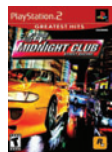
Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty

A stylish espionage masterpiece, Metal Gear Solid 2 focuses on the art of infiltration as you sneak through enemy territory to halt a terrorist threat. The graphics are dazzling and the action's tense as you slip through the night against overwhelming odds.

■ ESRB: MATURE

NBA Street

NBA Street puts pro ballers on the playground for exciting three-on-three street hoops where dunks and tricks matter as much as points. It's easy to learn and is packed with action rather than realism, which makes it a great sports game for players of all ages.



Midnight Club: Street Racing

Street racing rolls up to the starting line in this popular test of nerves and reflexes. You'll rocket through the realistically modeled streets of New York and London in late-night races with pink slips on the line.

■ ESRB: Teen

Ace Combat 4: Shattered Skies

This popular airplane-combat series gets the next-generation treatment with eye-catching visuals, a new story line, realistic aircraft, and 24 missions to test your dogfighting skills.



Tekken Tag Tournament

Loaded with 34 different brawlers, Tekken Tag Tournament is the home conversion of a popular entry in Namco's arcade fighting games. The "tag" comes into play by letting you alternate between a pair of fighters for furious fisticuffs.

■ ESRB: Teen

Test Drive

Racing doesn't have to be realistic to be fun, and Test Drive's action-packed competitions mix easy-to-drive cars with frantically busy streets, crazy collisions, and an alluring mix of exotic and muscle cars.



Grand Theft Auto III

The game that began a phenomenon is an absolute must-play for anyone who hasn't yet trawled the streets of Liberty City. Delve into a life of crime, stealing cars and taking shady jobs in a free-roaming 3D world.

■ ESRB: MATURE

Stuntman

Stuntman puts you behind the wheel as a stuntman for movies ranging from Bond-style capers to Indy-style adventures. If you can hit your marks perfectly, you'll send your car spinning into amazing stunts.

■ ESRB: Teen



Xbox Platinum Hits

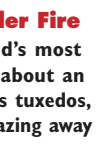
Project Gotham Racing

This game's name may not bring excellence in racing to mind but driving its snazzy cars sure will. Your pulse will pound as you dart around corners in tracks modeled after the streets of New York, Tokyo, London, and San Francisco.



James Bond 007: Agent Under Fire

Departing from movie territory, the world's most famous spy tackles an original adventure about an evil cloning plot. 007 deploys gadgets, dons tuxedos, and quips with the ladies when he's not blazing away at the forces of evil.



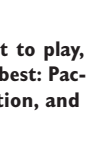
The Simpsons Road Rage

All the characters from the classic TV show hit the streets of Springfield in this fun driving adventure. Mr. Burns has jacked up the bus fares, so Homer and company battle their way through the now-crowded streets.



Namco Museum

The classic arcade games are always a blast to play, and this compilation assembles six of the best: Pac-Man, Galaga, Galaxian, Dig Dug, Pole Position, and Ms. Pac-Man.



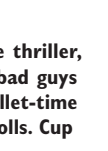
The Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind

For the swords-and-sorcery set, Morrowind is truly an open book. You create your own adventurer from scratch and then tackle an almost endless series of quests where the freedom to do what you want and be who you want is exhilarating.



Max Payne

Told in the style of a gritty noir detective thriller, Max Payne is all about mowing down the bad guys in gunfights accented with Matrix-style bullet-time effects like slow-motion dives, leaps, and rolls. Cup of joe not included.



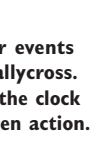
Dead to Rights

A noir thriller in the vein of Max Payne, Dead to Rights puts you in the gumshoes of Jack Slate as he pursues a tale of betrayal and corruption. The game-play mixes fisticuffs with gunfights and adventuring, including cool slo-mo moves.



RalliSport Challenge

Off-road rally racing comes to life in four events ranging from hill climbs to ice races to rallycross. Choose from 25 cars and race solo against the clock or take on up to three others in split-screen action.



Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath of Cortex

This classic platform character returns, but he's not flying solo this time. Crash's sister Coco is a fully playable character as the duo roams 30 huge levels to put an end to Dr. Neo Cortex's latest scheme.



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PLAYSTATION 2

Games

- ☐ True Crime: Streets of L.A.
- ☐ Final Fantasy X-2
- ☐ Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness
- ☐ Gran Turismo 4
- ☐ Resident Evil: Dead Aim
- ☐ Madden NFL 2004
- ☐ Medal of Honor Rising Sun
- ☐ Ratchet & Clank: Going Commando
- ☐ Jak II
- ☐ SOCOM II: U.S. Navy SEALs
- ☐ Goblin Commander: Unleash the Horde
- ☐ Rise to Honor

Accessories

- ☐ Datel Action Replay
- ☐ PlayStation 2 Online Pack
- ☐ Pelican Stealth
- ☐ Eye Toy



XBOX

Games

- ☐ Brute Force
- ☐ Enter the Matrix
- ☐ Deus Ex: Invisible War
- ☐ StarCraft: Ghost
- ☐ Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge
- ☐ XIII
- ☐ Counter-Strike
- ☐ Legacy of Kain: Defiance
- ☐ WWE Raw 2
- ☐ Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Tides of War
- ☐ Crash Nitro Kart
- ☐ Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter
- ☐ Fallout: Brotherhood of Steel
- ☐ Hulk
- ☐ NFL Fever 2004
- ☐ The Great Escape

Accessories

- ☐ Mad Catz MicroCon
- ☐ Microsoft Xbox Live Starter Kit

GAMECUBE

Games

- ☐ Soul Calibur II
- ☐ Mario Kart: Double Dash!!
- ☐ F-Zero
- ☐ Star Wars Rogue Squadron III: Rebel Strike
- ☐ Beyblade V Force
- ☐ Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles



GAME BOY ADVANCE

Games

- ☐ Dragon Ball Z: The Legacy of Goku II
- ☐ Wario Ware, Inc.: Mega Microgame\$
- ☐ Sonic Battle
- ☐ Castlevania: Aria of Sorrow

Accessories

- ☐ Nintendo Game Boy Advance SP
- ☐ Pelican Starter Kit SP

NOKIA N-GAGE

- ☐ Nokia N-Gage

SPLASHDOWN[®]

Rides Gone Wild[™]



Three wild inspired slides



Roll top slides to spin
the raft and challenge



Three team slides



100% water, mud and jumps



Mild Lyrics
Mild Language

PlayStation 2



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HULK™

UNLEASH THE FURY



SEE THE MOVIE
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45 devastating attacks to dispose of your enemies.



25 fully destructible and interactive environments - if you can see it, you can smash it.



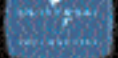
Battle notorious classic villains and massive new foes. Fight up to 10 enemies at once.



Outsmart your enemies as Dr. Bruce Banner, using stealth and disguise.



PlayStation 2



Violence

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