

# SILVER HORSE AWARDS 2014

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# GAMING INSURRECTION

for gamers, by gamers

## Third Quarter 2014

YEAR 07, NO. 27

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# E3 2014

GI goes in-depth with the gaming event of the year



NBA JAM



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## THE USUAL SUSPECTS

## 08 TECH GEEKS

If a device is on sale for \$69 and it usually costs in the hundreds, you probably shouldn't buy it. Brandon Beatty learns an important lesson about why you don't buy something just because it's cheap. You do get what you pay for sometimes.

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Brandon Beatty brings Death Note back into focus with the review of the seventh volume of the manga. Light's managed to get away with an awful lot, but this time even we have to agree that he goes too far. Get ready to say goodbye to some favorites.

## 30 DDR SPOTLIGHT

Gaming Insurrection puts the spotlight on Healing Vision ~Angelic Mix~, Paranoia Eternal and So Fabulous, So Fierce, three songs that are favorites from the pre-SuperNova era.



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editor-in-chief

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## GI REVIEW POLICY

Scale is from 1 to 5 as follows:

- 1 — **Broken.** Absolutely do not play this game. A broken mess from start to finish. Game is unplayable and irredeemable in all areas.
- 2 — **Standard.** The game isn't for everyone. Some mechanics work; others need work. Overall design is questionable in some areas.
- 3 — **Average and meets expectations.** Mechanics work and it's a decent package overall. It's playable, and you'll come back to the game.
- 4 — **Above average.** Exceeds expectations. Overall, a great game worth keeping in a gamer's library. Presentation and mechanics all work as expected and add to or enhance the gaming experience.
- 5 — **Masterpiece.** Everyone should play this title at least once to experience what it has to offer.

Lyndsey Hicks  
CRY OF WAR

## There's no need to run out and buy the latest, greatest consoles



VS.



As we opened a new E3 this year, I was thinking about the lack of next-gen systems in the Hicks household. I have never been one to run with the must-have crowd, and buying the latest and greatest system has never been high in my priorities. There's several reasons for this: 1. I never had enough money; 2. I was perfectly content with what I had; and 3. I couldn't fathom running out to get a system that would inevitably have some hiccups in its first few months of shelf life.

As I watched E3 last year and pondered the possibility of joining the rat race this year, I came to the conclusion that, as usual, I would be sitting this one out. Why slay my

pockets for two systems when the Xbox 360 I have will do? Hell, I don't even have a PS3, and it seems like I never will. Every time I've gone to buy one, something has come up and taken my money; likely, this will never happen. Besides, I'm perfectly content with the 10-year-old PS2 that graces the stand holding my retro systems that I use to run GI, you know, that publication that you're reading right now.

You see, my focus is on retro titles. If a game was released for a system in a calendar year that's after 2006, I probably don't have time for it. That's not to say that I don't enjoy modern gaming; I do. It's just that, for my purposes, I look to the past for gaming

brilliance and I don't get involved in the silly console wars of today. The only console war that I can say with confidence that I care about was between Nintendo and Sega, and we all know the outcome to that conflagration.

So, don't get your hopes up that I have praise for this year's festivities out in the wild world of Los Angeles. Unlike most of the people in the gaming community, I'm not leading the lighted way with a PS4 or Xbox One in hand.

*Lyndsey Hicks is editor-in-chief of Gaming Insurrection. She can be reached by email at [lyndseyh@gaminginsurrection.com](mailto:lyndseyh@gaminginsurrection.com)*



## Count on the TMNT, Konami to have rocking soundtrack

Konami makes another appearance in the column about music, because, well, Konami is known for having one of the best sound departments in video games. Quite a few of the best soundtracks in the industry have come from KCET's hallowed doors and engineering booths. One the first games that made me take notice of Konami's sound know-how was TMNT IV: Turtles in Time. In addition to being one of the best beat-em-up games ever made, the soundtrack was outstanding and perfectly suited the game. Fun trivia time: Most of the tracks selected here made an appearance as part of my ill-fated play "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: A Turtle in Love," a ridiculous work from way back in 1992.

starting point for the green foursome to ply their trade against Shredder and Krang, the Big Apple track sounds the most like the iconic TMNT II: The Arcade Game. And everyone wins when that homage is made.

**2. Bury My Shell at Wounded Knee:** Aside from having the awesome distinction of referring to the incident at Wounded Knee Creek, S.D., on Dec. 29, 1890, the track has an interesting beat that doesn't really show up elsewhere in the game. Also, I love Old West tracks. And that battle at Wounded Knee? Go learn about it kids: The U.S. government basically massacred about 300 unarmed women, men and children from the Lakota tribe. Video games are capable of teaching.

**3. Going Up:** This track is used in the elevator section of the

Technodrome. And it's a fantastic track that encourages Turtle-like thinking. It's not hurried but it's hard-hitting and it makes that elevator trip up to Shredder all the more awesome. The melody is memorable and there are several uses of a synth that make the track work.

**4. Sewer Surfin':** This track is a favorite in that inspires the idea that it's showtime. The song plays when taking on the bonus level in the sewers. It's playful enough that it's perfect for the Turtles, and I easily imagined something like this actually happening in the 1987 version of the cartoon.

**5. Sparring Match:** The beat is crazy awesome and resembles an old-time rock 'n' roll romp through the '50s. The only problem is, unless you utilize the two-player versus mode,



you aren't going to hear this that often. It deserves to be heard far more since it's got a great pace to it, and fits neatly within the Turtles' sphere.

**6. Technodrome ~The Final Shell Shock~:** Most final boss tracks tend to be epic, probably because they have to be. What better way to show that your main antagonist that's been a thorn in the side of the protagonists the entire time is a badass than by having an equally badass track accompanying him or her? Turtles in Time plays this up well, with Super Shredder ascending then descending in a haze of light with an awesome intro and even more awesome backing track. It doesn't hurt

that as this intro plays, he paraphrases a classic line from the show: "Turtle soup — my favorite."

**7. Under Pressure:** If there's a track in the game designed to make you move faster, it's Under Pressure. The point of the section that you're in when it plays is to move quickly from group to group. The music facilitates that notion. It's fun, fast and full of synth goodness that does a pretty good job of pushing you to kill the Foot a little faster than you normally would.

*Lyndsey Hicks is editor-in-chief of Gaming Insurrection*



**Lyndsey Hicks**  
**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Let's get down to business and not dance around things: The main thing to take away from this year's E3 presentations is that there really wasn't anything show-stopping from any of the three companies. Last year saw the release of two systems — the PS4 from Sony and the Xbox One from Microsoft — but there really wasn't anything in any of the press conferences that made anyone stand up and shout about buying those consoles or a Wii U, for that matter.

Each company did have something to focus on in 2014 and all settled on the most obvious of choices: Games. There was a blockbuster or two announced (see: Uncharted 4), but mostly everyone knew what was going down, right down to the specs. Has E3 lost its luster finally? No, not just yet. There's still some life left in the old dog and that focus on games this year has proven that point. Turn inside and prepare to be convinced that E3 still is the Christmas in June of video games.

**Welcome to E3 2014**



## exclusives



halo 5 guardians



fable legends



crackdown

### Halo: Master Chief Collection

Microsoft's system seller and near de facto mascot is coming to the Xbox One just in time for its anniversary ahead of the newest game in the saga of Master Chief. The elite Spartan will be featured in a disc that includes all mainline Halo games — Halo: Combat Evolved, Halo 2, Halo 3 and Halo 4. All games will run on their native engines and there will be multiplayer level maps from each game thrown in. This is for the Halo fan that wants to be able to play all Halo games on one system without having to pull out their Xbox 360 or original Xbox.

### Forza Horizon 2

Microsoft's resident racing game is also coming out with a sequel: Forza Horizon 2. More cars and tracks have been promised as well as the ability to race in 1080p clarity. Making its debut will be a dynamic weather system, allowing for races day or night. Clubs return and a "bucket list" feature has been added, allowing racers to complete challenges.

### Sunset Overdrive

Harkening to the days of zombies ruling the world — that thankfully seems to be over — Sunset Overdrive asks that you murder mutated humans who have drunk too much of an energy drink. It's going to play a lot like the Resistance series since it's being developed by two alums of Insomniac games, but it's also going to have modern-world features such as Internet memes, social commentary and cloud computing, which will force the game world to update based on what's going on in the real world.

## editor's reactions



lyndsey hicks

There wasn't much that could be said about Microsoft's press conference that I haven't said year after year: There was nothing special here that would make me run out and buy a system. Sure, there were some pretty things on display and a few exclusives that may or may not whet your whistle, but this year was nothing show-stopping, by any means. There were the few exclusives like Fable Legends and Forza and the requisite Halo update, but nothing said buy an Xbox One right now. And if you aren't a Halo fan, the Master Chief Collection is not going to change your mind. The bright spots in this year's show, though? It was streamlined with a cognizant focus — something Microsoft has had problems with in the past — and it wasn't the unmitigated disaster that last year's conference was with the introduction of the Xbox One. I just wish there was more to knock my socks off.

Grade: B-



brandon beatty

I found Microsoft's E3 conference to be a major improvement over that god-awful spectacle of last year. I found that the Xbox team learned a few things from Sony and applied them, showing that Xbox One is not just some one-trick pony that rips unsuspecting gamers from their cash. The good spots I saw were Assassin's Creed: Unity, The Division, Sunset Overdrive and Project Spark. I also saw Evolve and the brand-new Forza game as titles with major potential. However, while I appreciate Microsoft giving shoutouts to creativity and remembering their roots, I saw them pushing a Halo collection more than the creativity of their third-party developers and in-house team. Microsoft, it's an A-plus for effort but you still need to push creativity more. Overall, they are on the right path to gaining redemption for a MAJOR past failure.

Grade: C+



## exclusives



the order 1886

### Little Big Planet 3

Sackboy is back for his third take on platforming and he's got a new crew with him. The new crew consists of three helper characters that will give support in completing levels by helping with their own unique abilities. Per the usual, the levels are user-generated and able to be downloaded. The irreverent environments are also returning, which can only mean good things for those that love the look and feel of the series.

### Destiny

Bungie wanted it to be known that it was tired of doing just the Halo series some years ago. So, the company quickly parted ways with the franchise, left it in 343 Industries/Microsoft's capable hands and branched out to become a free agent in the development business. The fruit of that change morphed into Destiny. It's adventurous and ambitious, not unlike Bungie's first offspring. You're still tasked with saving humanity from an evil alien race, but you're on Mars this time around. Still sound like something you want to do? It's coming Sept. 9.

### Uncharted 4

Nathan Drake has a little left in the tank, supposedly. The adventurer was a conference-stealing announcement, leaving a myriad questions unanswered but jaws dropped as movie-caliber graphics were shown. Just why Drake is lying on the ground by himself, befuddled and disoriented, hasn't been explained but given the uptick in graphical quality, that answer will be revealed in stunning detail later in 2015.



project morpheus

## editor's reactions



lyndsey hicks

Sony had an interesting mix of exclusives and multiplatform titles, but really waited until the end to drop their ace in the hole. The exclusives are all what you're used to seeing by now from Sony — Little Big Planet and Battlefield — but they were entertaining nonetheless. There was quite a bit of The Order: 1886 shown, which is shaping up to be promising. The Vita side of the business was shifted toward the middle of the show, and there were some interesting announcements there regarding Cross Play. But I know what everyone was waiting on: something about The Last Guardian, which is quickly turning into vaporware; Metal Gear Solid 5: Phantom Pain information; and Uncharted 4. Two of three happened, and they quickly evened out what was shaping up to be a ho-hum show from Sony. Metal Gear looks fantastic with a new trailer to entice, and Uncharted 4 brought the house down. Sony managed to save itself at the last second with Uncharted, which looked beyond fantastic.

Grade: B+



brandon beatty

Sony brought some worthy gems of importance to its fans, and succeeded in conveying that they are setting and raising the bar for others to follow. I was impressed by the new PlayStation TV, which has a \$99 price tag and a \$139.00 bundle that not only delivers music and video content from major third-party developers, but also allows players to play classic PS1 and PS2 games. Also having Mortal Kombat X and The Last of Us remastered for PS4 were major blockbuster announcements. Add in previews of Batman: Arkham Knight, Metal Gear Solid V: Phantom Pain and Uncharted 4 and I wanted to throw my wallet at the screen. However, Sony diverted from their product offerings to give a five- to 10-minute promotion about their non-game content that almost made me want to fast forward to the rest of the games. Sony, that was a good conference, but please, please DO NOT focus on issues that do not affect PlayStation; your customers will know if the content is worth it.

Grade: A-



battlefield hardline



## exclusives



### Super Smash Bros. Wii U/3DS

The seminal fighter from Nintendo features its characters (and other well-known franchises, too!) pitted against each other in an epic fight for supremacy. The newest entry looks to add more characters and more things to do, improving upon its predecessor, Super Smash Bros. Brawl. The 3DS version also marks the first time in the series' history that it will come to handheld consoles. And joining the fray this time around is Pac-Man from Namco Bandai, Mega Man from Capcom, Palutena from Kid Icarus, the Wii Fit Trainer, Little Mac from Punch-Out!! and the human Animal Crossing Villager. If that doesn't make you pick it up, know that the pratfall mechanic has been removed. Sold!

### Amiibo

Announced during the Smash Bros. portion of the presentation was Amiibos, small figurines akin to Skylanders that work as digital representations of your favorite characters. They can be trained and leveled up, but you can't play as them directly. The concept is cool and they can be and will be used in other things besides Smash Bros., which is smart on Nintendo's part.

### The Legend of Zelda

There's a new Zelda title on the horizon and it looks fantastic. In preliminary looks, the game seems to be a free-ranging open world version of the classic adventure series, and Link looks absolutely gorgeous riding on a horse. The graphics are more modern than they are like Wind Waker, and the gameplay shows Link freely able to run away or initiate battles with foes.

## editor's reactions



lyndsey hicks

The Mario maker came out strong with key titles in its catalog of first-party games. The only problem? Most aren't coming until 2015 at the earliest. Smash Bros. Wii U was a great entry point to the event, but pushing it back will not help the struggling game maker at all. Smash Bros. is a must-buy title that will make people run out and buy that console, which is exactly what Nintendo needs the most right now. Same thing with a new Zelda, which was announced with little details. Zelda is a system seller, routinely pulling in millions of faithful buyers. Nintendo came with the games, but there were no third-party games to be seen, and any sort of longterm online strategy was conspicuously absent from the noticeably short presentation. While Nintendo hit out of the park with its game announcements, it didn't really show anything that non-Nintendo faithful weren't already going to buy.

Grade: B-



brandon beatty

Nintendo's digital event was a mix of comedy, surprises and creativity on display. When I saw the first of the Wii U at E3 2012, I was NOT impressed with its failed opening of very few games and its price tag. I felt that, as a gamer, Nintendo could have done better. Fast forward to this year, Nintendo's E3 roster of games finally did the company justice. Super Smash Bros. Brawl, Kirby and the Rainbow Curse, Xenoblade Chronicles and Splatoon blew me away, and with the Amiibo figures and Captain Toad coming in the fall, I see a possible game-changing return for Nintendo. My advice, Nintendo: Keep it going.

Grade: A

## tech bits

### iOS 8 coming this fall

Apple didn't unveil a new device at its June Worldwide Developers Conference; instead, the company showed off the evolution of its operating system. iOS 8 will be coming in October, the company announced, and with it will be a whole new slew of features: battery usage by app, a timer for the camera, interactive notifications and better messaging options. The new iOS will be available to iPhone 4S and above.

Source: *Yahoo Tech*

### Inventor: Don't be a Glasshole

A Berlin artist wrote a program that turns off Google Glass users' devices when they're in range of the program. Julian Oliver says he wrote the program as a means to protect against privacy intrusions from the device, and that it's thanks to Google Streetview privacy concerns that he was inspired to create his masterpiece.

Source: *Yahoo Tech*

### Nintendo closes European branch, consolidates operations

The maker of Mario and Zelda announced in June that it would close its current European headquarters, laying off 130 people. This news comes as the publisher and console maker is preparing to hold its annual worldwide announcement briefing outside of the annual Electronics Entertainment Expo. Nintendo has had a string of bad fiscal news as sales of its Wii U console lag rivals Microsoft (Xbox One) and Sony (PlayStation 4).

Source: *Arstechnica*

### T-Mobile, Sprint nearing merger

The two phone companies are getting closer to a \$50 billion merger, sources in both companies said in June. Sprint would acquire T-Mobile for about \$40 a share in deal between the U.S.' third- and fourth-largest companies. The deal would put the merged company in third place with 53 million subscribers, behind AT&T at 72 million and Verizon at 95 million.

Source: *Arstechnica*

### Time Warner, Comcast customers still angriest

According to an American Customer Satisfaction Index survey, the two cable companies have the angriest customers. Customer satisfaction found that the companies are ranked near or at the bottom when it comes to giving the buying public what they want. This can't be good news for the two as they're trying to merge in a deal that was announced in February of this year.

Source: *Arstechnica*

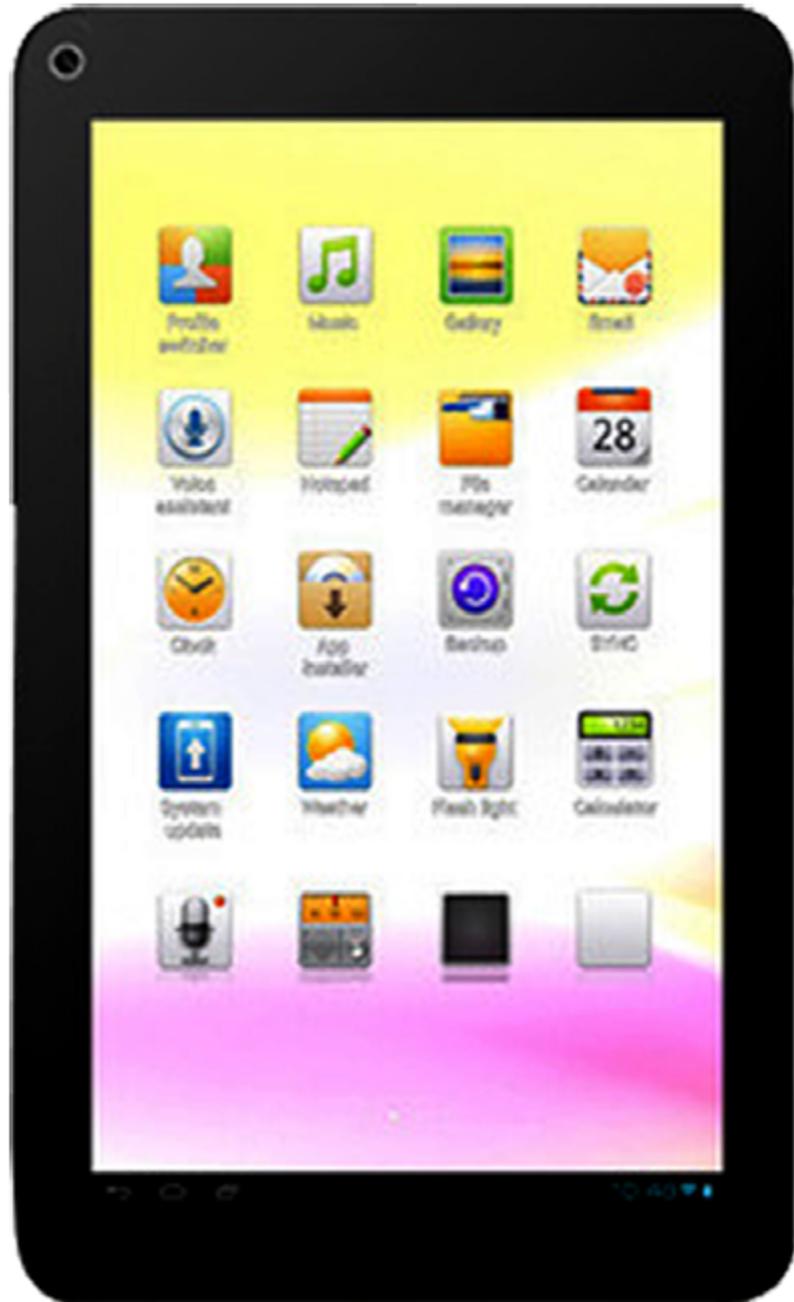
## ANDROID TABLET

If it's generic and it's not super expensive, don't expect much for your money. This can be applied to many things, most recently the Android tablet offered by online retailer No More Rack. GI Editor-at-Large Brandon Beatty bravely offered to test out the retailer and bought the tablet for \$69. He got what he paid for.

For \$69, the tablet isn't a bad buy. It's not the best thing on the market, but it works. The tablet features the Android operating system, so the first thing that should be done is downloading Advanced Task Killer, a free app that kills background tasks. The tablet is slow ... very slow. If you're expecting the lightning-quick speed of say, your Samsung Galaxy 4, you're in for a rude awakening. Also, expect frequent OS crashes, and it's tied to a Google Play account. If you're not into Google, you'll just have to work with it because everything associated with the tablet is going to utilize that account. It's lightweight, which is about the only really good thing we can say about it.

Cost: \$69

Where to buy: [Nomorerack.com](http://Nomorerack.com)



## ROCKETFISH HUB

This four-port hub from Best Buy is a really good buy. It's got the standard four USB ports found on most hubs on the market and it's easy to plug and play. The hub has stood up to our frequent use and doesn't require much in the way of power to get it going. A strong hub such as this is a must-buy for laptop users who want to add a little bit more accessibility for devices.

Cost: \$15

Where to buy: Best Buy



# GAME OF THE QUARTER

## TITANFALL

A few hiccups doesn't slow down the comeback first-person shooter from Respawn Entertainment, PAGE 10



GAME OF THE QUARTER

# INSIDE



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### Thief

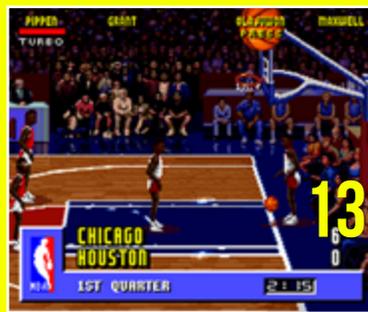
A reboot makes all things possible sometimes, and sometimes it takes a thief to make a reboot possible.



12

### SSX Tricky

Mix equal parts snowboarding, extreme sports, attitude and a great soundtrack for one of the best snowboarding games ever.



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### NBA Jam

NBA Jam is legendary for its ability to mimic streetball rules and eat quarters. BOOMSHAKALAKA!



14

### Unreal Tournament

There was a progenitor to the first-person shooter we see now on consoles and its name is Unreal Tournament.



15

### Excitebike

Race until the wheels fall off or you do, whichever comes first. That's the name of the game in Excitebike.



## TITANFALL

# Keep calm, prepare for Titanfall

By **WILLIAM HARRISON**  
GAMING INSURRECTION

Hello, pilots and welcome to the Frontier. The long-anticipated Titanfall is up for review and let me tell you, I had a lot of fun with this one and so will you. It posts a few unique innovations as well as an online only style all of its own. And, of course, giant robots ... everything is better with giant robots. The campaign mode is weird at first but it's nothing that can't be handled.

Titanfall takes place in the distant future and in another colonized area of space. Two warring factions, the IMC and the Frontier Militia, are fighting for control of their little pieces of space and the place they call home. Unfortunately, the IMC seem to be looking to control the area under the flag of Hammond Industries, a galactic widespread company that has its hands in ... well, pretty much everything. Then in comes the Frontier Militia, who believe the people are better off without the watchful eye of the IMC and Hammond Industries telling you what to do.

Titanfall is a very impressive

**SCORE:  
4.5 OUT  
OF 5**

and beautifully rendered game. It's currently out for the Xbox One, Xbox 360 and PC. I have it for Xbox One and it's about the only first-person shooter that I currently play. The gameplay is pretty much like Call of Duty, but that's to be expected when Infinity Ward closed its doors and reopened to a split in the company not called Respawn Entertainment and Sledgehammer Games.

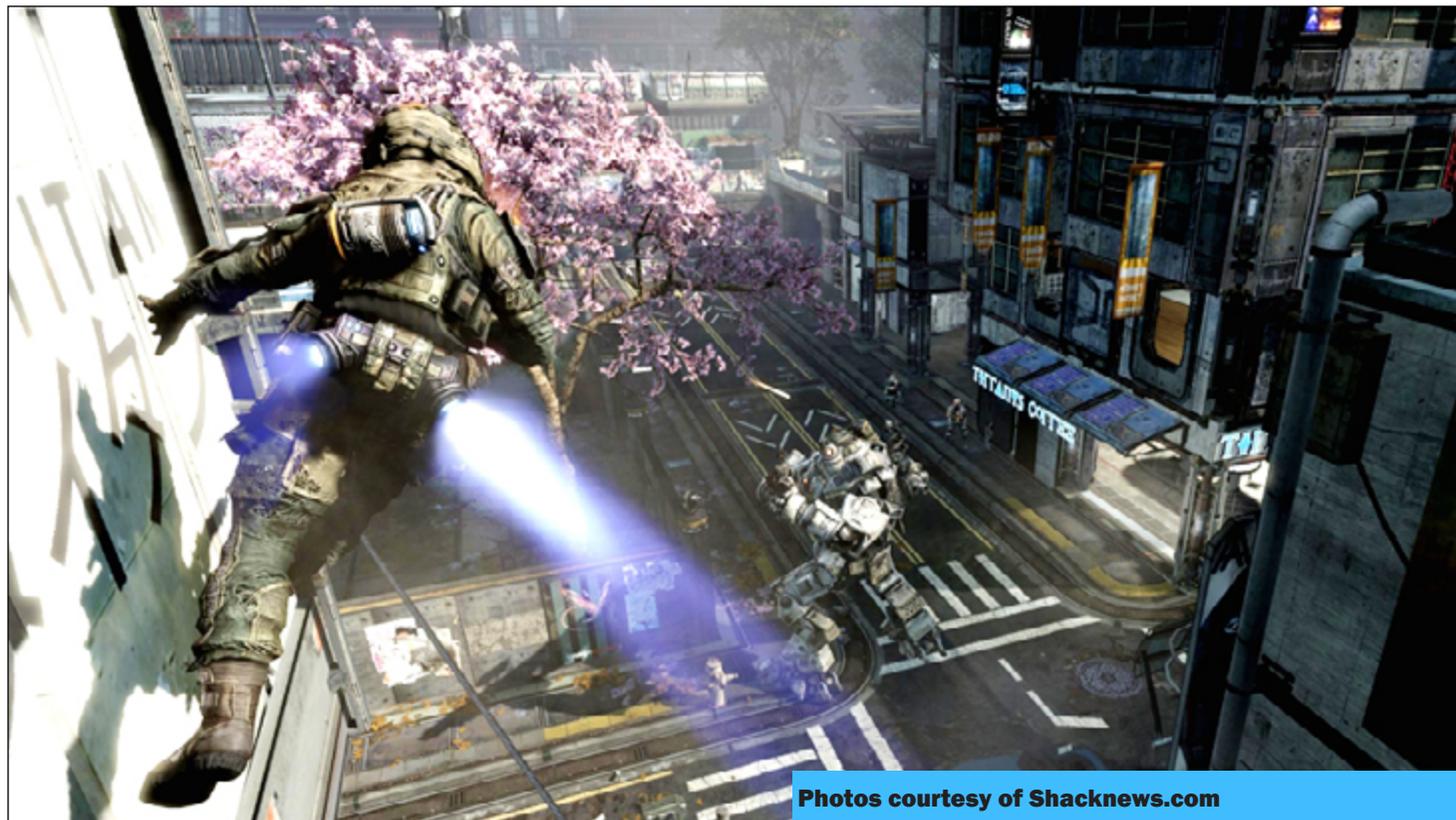
Respawn Entertainment is pretty much made up of the developers that made the COD series stories and games what they were. The addition of the Titans (25- to 30-foot-tall robots) and the ability to either pilot or have the AI control it makes for a new number of things that can be done.

There is a campaign mode but it is multiplayer-based, meaning that the story is controlled by the outcome of the winning team in some missions. It only allows for 6v6 (12v12, if you include having the AI-controlled Titans on the map as well) so that the games can remain as lag free as possible. Don't want to ride inside your own Titan, well hop out and switch your Titan to either guard or follow to help hold a position or for a little backup. I must admit that I am rarely riding

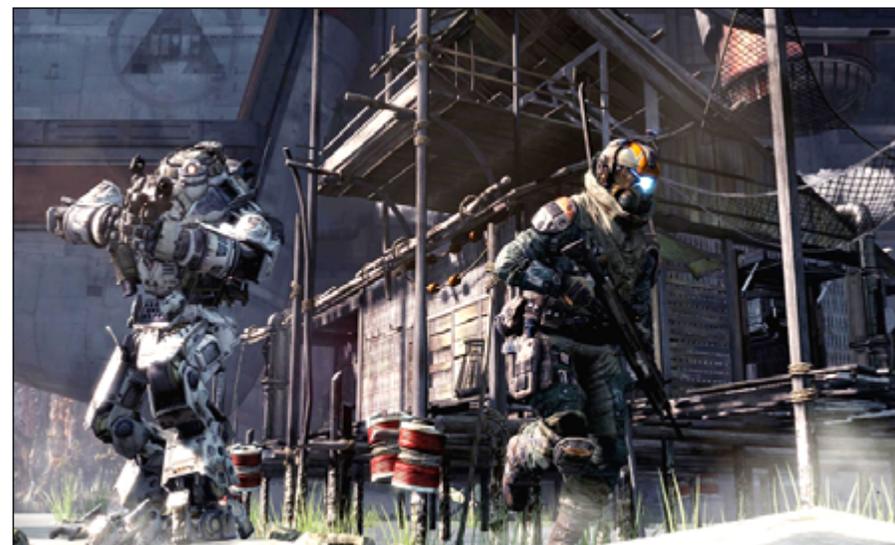
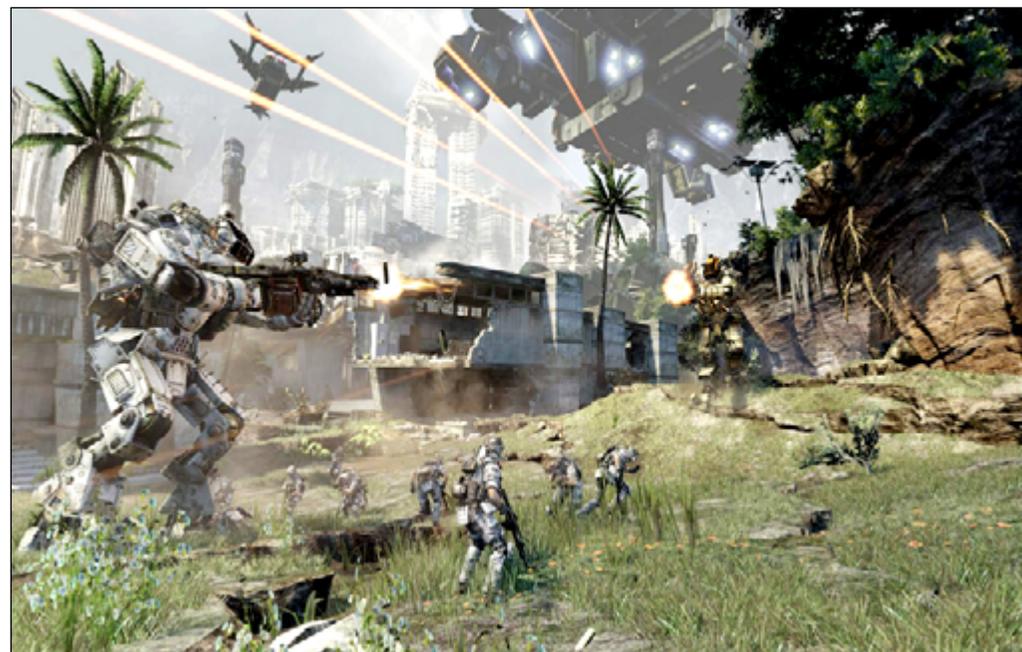
inside my Titan when I play. They have a nice selection of weapons for the pilots but only about six for the Titans themselves, which is fine by me.

The multiplayer is done really well, but right now there are only seven play modes, with the seventh as a mash-up variety pack that consists of all play modes on all maps randomly selecting both. I believe the Xbox 360 version is missing a mode or two.

Here is how I see it: Titanfall is one of those games you hear about and think it would be awesome if they can pull it off right. Respawn did their homework and came up with a game that is fun and immersive. Unfortunately, it kind of hindered itself by being online only, and although the download needed to play it on Xbox 360 isn't as massive as the GTA V download (1.3 GB versus 7.9 GB), it's still a bit annoying. However, you don't have to delete data to play. A matchmaking option that puts you with people in the same skill level would be a nice idea, too. If you haven't played it, then you should definitely "Prepare for Titanfall."



Photos courtesy of Shacknews.com





THIEF

# It takes a thief

By **WILLIAM HARRISON**  
GAMING INSURRECTION

You know, once in a while, a game comes along that is just full of fun stuff and guilty pleasures that make you feel all warm and fuzzy inside. Ladies and gentlemen, this is that game. Thief is a game that when I first heard about the original — way back when it was only available for PC — I thought it was one of those games I would have liked to play but didn't think it would be fun. Man, was I ever wrong.

Thief places you in the role of master thief Garrett as he works his way through a city run by a greedy and bloodthirsty Baron and his guard known as the WATCH. Use the shadows to your advantage and truly make what is theirs ... yours.

Eidos/Montreal and Square ENIX put forth a great effort in making this game a reality and bringing it to home systems. Thief is actually the fourth incarnation of the series, set during the time period around the same time as the Black Plague, I think; they don't really tell you when it's set or where it is relevant to any time period. I only say during the time of the Black Plague because of the disease that runs rampant called the gloom, which is a lot like it.

**SCORE:  
4 OUT  
OF 5**

The stealth gameplay is the main reason why I'm a huge fan of this game. I like the fact that it's a major part of the game and there is an achievement for making it through the game unseen. There is the rating system where I seem to always straddle the line between ghost and opportunist in my quest to see if I'm still as sneaky in stealth games as I claim to be.

As of press time, I haven't finished Thief but the story and the free roaming aspect are awesome. At times, I wander from the story to explore, roam aimlessly and rob people blind just like in real life.

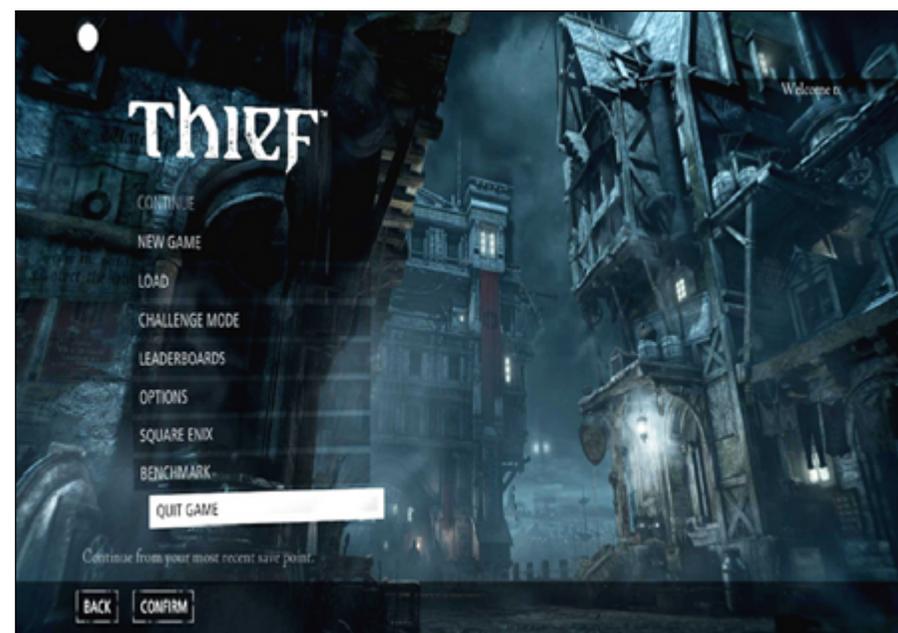
The city and the characters are beautifully designed and rendered but it seems to be missing something. The music — as far as atmosphere goes — is OK but it seems that you can't really hear it. And, a lot of times the interactions between characters is almost a joke because you can sometimes barely hear what a NPC or yourself are saying. Apparently, subtitles are a bit of a must to catch everything being said.

I'm not quite sure how the old Garrett matches up to the new Garrett since I haven't played the PC titles but hopefully it's not too far off. I really do enjoy this game, but it seems that it isn't really all that long, at least



not when you get into the story-specific missions. There is still a free roam element there but there are also points where you can't go back and that seems like it's punishing the player and slapping you saying, "You want to explore?! NOW!? The fate of the world is at stake!!"

Thief is a really good stealth, make-you-feel-guilty-in-a-good-way sort of game and should definitely be played by all. The fact that it's the fourth game but also a reboot of the series is fine, but the fans of the older games may have a problem with the differences. Sound issues aside, this is a hell of a steal.





## SSX TRICKY

# Grab your gear, hit the slopes

By **LYNDEY HICKS**  
GAMING INSURRECTION

SSX can get a little ... well ... Tricky. OK, yes, I went for the easy joke, but it's one that can be made with a solid title in SSX Tricky. Tricky tends to take the best things about the SSX franchise and make them better. And that's better for everyone because snowboarding games of the time weren't exactly freshly powdered experiences.

Tricky settles into its role as a snowboarding simulator with slick visuals and an added bonus of interesting characters. The easiest way to describe playing Tricky is that it's you versus the mountain, and well, sometimes you versus the other characters versus the mountain. While the World Circuit mode is touted as a main attraction — and it is certainly is for several reasons — the mode that does

the most for me is Free Ride. There's nothing quite like running down the tracks and pulling off tricks without other characters to annoy you. The characters aren't really that annoying, and the rivalry system is fun, but I preferred my solitude while learning the game and Practice and Free Ride provided that easily.

Those slick visuals are also on display throughout the different modes, and it immediately sets the game apart from its competition of the time. The game flat-out looks great on the GameCube, and the other console versions looked great, too. The GameCube version has an interesting control scheme that lends itself to rolling down the slopes, and it's intuitive and becomes second nature as you become more comfortable pulling off various tricks. For that increasing level of comfort,

**SCORE:  
4.5 OUT  
OF 5**



you are rewarded with bigger and better items that should help you improve as well as make you look a little better on the track. It's that drive to unlock these goodies and tracks that keeps you coming back to Tricky.

That's all alongside the soundtrack, which is excellent, too. There are a few vocal pieces with the instrumental tracks for the different levels, and all are appropriate for the atmosphere EA wants to

convey. In particular, the remix of Run DMC's massive hit "Tricky" is the highlight — as it should be. If it's the main theme of the game, it should stand out, which it manages to do so. It never gets old to hear the trio's 1986 hit sampled and remixed (*editor's note: '80s rap never gets old, in any situation*) while throwing down massive tricks on a treacherous mountain. And, believe it or not, the voice acting adds to the game as well. Usually, a fully famous all-star

cast of voice actors produces mixed results. However, Tricky is an exception to that rule. Folks like Lucy Liu, Oliver Platt, Patricia Velasquez and Billy Zane deliver solid results.

With three other sequels and a reboot in 2012, Tricky has had the challenge of standing out in a crowded library of titles featuring snowboarding. But it's not that hard to do when it's got good mechanics and great atmosphere, a rather tricky feat to accomplish.

# The old king of the court

By **LYNDSEY HICKS**  
GAMING INSURRECTION

NBA Jam was — and still is — an experience. No, that's not some preposterous fluff dreamed up by an National Basketball Association maven like yours truly. It was truly an experience because if you were around at the time that Jam hit the streets, you'd remember the sheer amount of hype that surrounded the arcade release. You'd also remember the hype that came home with it. Was it justified hype? Yes and no.

You see, Jam represented the start of the exaggerated sports game era, the type of game where the player animations were over the top and the action just as extreme. Throw in a plethora of secrets — like playing as President Bill Clinton — and the hype went into overdrive. The game isn't bad and it mostly lived up to its billing. The simple setup of two-on-two basketball and fast-break basketball helped certainly, and the animation isn't bad at all. The player interaction is where it mostly succeeds, actually. At the time, there was no other place to get the kind of play that Jam offers: Crazy dunks, the ability to be on fire from great shooting and street ball-type rules. It's that offering that made it a phenomenal success.

Jam doesn't stumble in its race to be an in-your-face baller experience. That street ball player interaction means you don't have to learn much about the game to succeed and play well. The control is simple yet has a layer of depth that means anyone can do well at any skill level. The atmosphere could be a little better with a better



**SCORE:  
4 OUT  
OF 5**

soundtrack, but what will make you take notice is the announcer. If there's anything you will remember about the game, it's Tim Kitzrow shouting to the top of his lungs that a man is "on fire" or "BOOMSHAKALAKA."

The graphics, like the soundtrack, are nothing to get excited about. There's a static crowd except for the courtside folk, and then there's the players. Jam popularized the over-exaggerated look for players, and it certainly had its uses. It's not out of place for Jam, and it brings a certain atmosphere to the action that Jam benefits from.

If there's ever a reason to play NBA Jam, find it in the cartoonish action, sound and look. That's where the fun is, and the main reasons why the game succeeded in living up to the hype (mostly) that broke backboards in the olden days of 1993.



# An unreal icon for consoles

By **LYNDSEY HICKS**  
GAMING INSURRECTION

As someone who has never really gotten into the Unreal series or PC shooters in general, learning to run and gun with one of the seminal shooters of our time was and has been a challenge. It's a challenge in patience and in equilibrium, mostly because I can't play older first-person shooters without migraines and vomiting. So, if a game could persuade me to sit down and enjoy the fruits of its murderous labor, then more power to it. Unreal Tournament didn't have to try to hard to work that magical feat.

Unreal Tournament is a patchwork of ideas found commonly in modern shooters. It's arena-based play that requires you to hunt down and eliminate the competition. That's not that hard of a concept, actually. You're given an arsenal with which to complete your reign of carnage and helpful items such as health and armor boosts. While the concept is easy, the number of control options offered can easily overwhelm even a seasoned shooter veteran. Mostly, you're just looking for a way to aim and shoot, but there's about 15 different ways to set up your gunning exploits in UT. There's a wealth of modes offered,

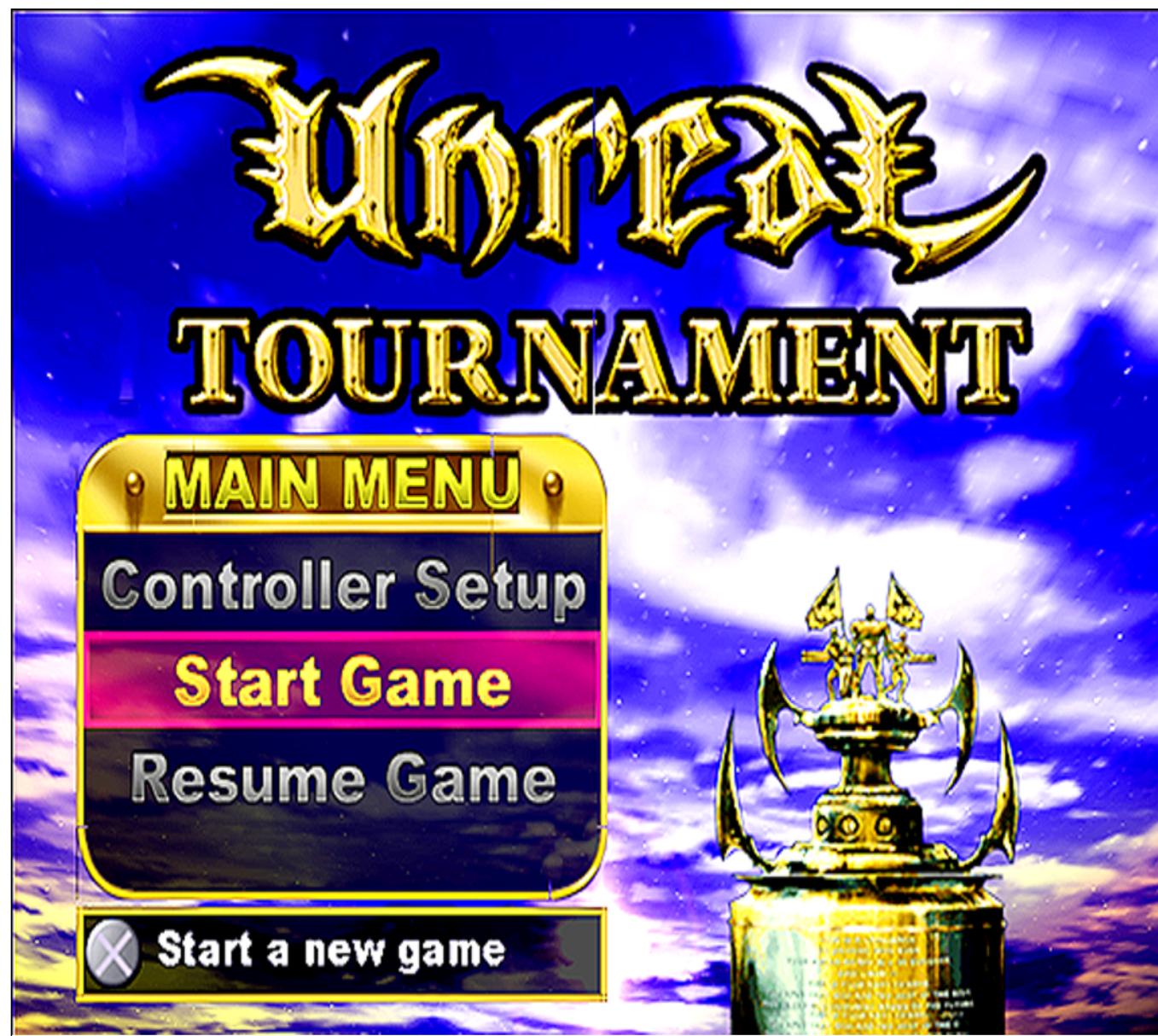
**SCORE:  
3 OUT  
OF 5**

too, and you can't go wrong with picking any of them. It's nice to be able to practice before jumping into the main story mode, or play a good Capture The Flag match.

Despite the variety of modes to run through, the character selection isn't all that varied. Stalwarts, like Malcolm from the original Unreal, are available but beyond that the character selection is a little blah. There are some to be unlocked but the question remains: Do you want to go through the trouble of unlocking a character that you aren't going to care about?

The soundtrack is decent, with a few standout tracks so there's something to spice up the disappointment of the character selection. The graphics are OK, but like that dearth of characters, there isn't much to get excited about. For the translation to PlayStation 2, the game plays and looks OK. It's nothing special but it isn't terrible, either. Just don't expect super impressive PC quality.

Unreal Tournament is an interesting experiment. It's a PC juggernaut that tries its hand at accessibility in the home market and doesn't fail miserably yet doesn't entirely innovate, either. If you were wondering what the hype was all about for the PC darling, the PS2 version is just the right version to introduce you to the world of Unreal.





## EXCITEBIKE

# Nothing to get excited over

By **LYNDSEY HICKS**  
GAMING INSURRECTION

Nearly everything game industry legend Shigeru Miyamoto touches turns to gold. The keyword there is nearly. While it might be considered blasphemous in some circles to question the godlike tendencies of Miyamoto-kamisama, there are sometimes valid reasons strewn about his resume. Excitebike is one of those excuses to point to when someone says that Miyamoto is capable of committing no wrong in game design.

Excitebike isn't a terrible game. In fact, it's one of the better games to come out of the NES lineup. But that isn't saying much in the long run. Excitebike takes a simple concept and makes a mountain out of a mole hill. So much so that if you have no idea how the game works, you're not

going to immediately figure it out just by rumbling through a couple of tracks. My personal learning curve stretched from age 8 to age 28, and it was only because I asked someone about the nuances that I became a better player.

That's the thing about Excitebike, though: I get that it's a really simple game. You, the dirt bike rider, are gifted and able to challenge a multitude of tracks. You aim for the highest score, stay off the rough patches, use your boost to speed up and attempt to keep your bike level with the course once you make big leaps. That's the extent of the game. There's a track editor thrown in for good measure and a second type of race that's basically time trials. Simple, right? Yes.

And frustrating. No one knows what I would have given to know that pressing A rapidly when you fall off your bike helps with recovery. I would have traded my tiny kingdom in little old Columbia,

S.C., to know that. It would have also helped to know that driving over the arrows on the ground reduces bike temperature. Knowing these two important pieces of information might have made a distinct difference in my continued career of dirt bike racing. But, alas, that dream went right out of the window with my inclination to continue renting the cart back in the day.

If you want nostalgia and you can appreciate being forced to learn the ins and outs of dirt bike racing, by all means pop a wheelie in Excitebike. But don't be surprised with the unimaginative locales, race layout and penchant for keeping you the player in the dark. Simple concept? Check. Simple controls? Check. Mario cameo? Triple check. But Shigeru Miyamoto's genius touch to make the game a better experience for the uninitiated? Nope. That's still sitting in the garage with my drive to play the game as a frustrated 8-year-old and now as a more discriminating 32-year-old.

**SCORE:  
2.5 OUT  
OF 5**

2014



SILVER  
HORSE  
AWARDS



GI honors  
five of the  
best of  
the best



# SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

**6:** Number of Chaos Emeralds Sonic must collect

**23:** Number of years since Sonic's introduction with Sonic the Hedgehog

**50:** Number of rings needed to reach the game's bonus stage



**65:**

Percentage of the market share that Sega owned after bundling the game with the Genesis



If there were ever any real competition to Mario in the days of the plumber's reign as platforming king, Sonic had a legitimate claim to the throne. Through sheer audacity to provide what Mario was missing, Sonic had a good run to the top that started with the tight gameplay of his debut title for the Sega Genesis. Where Mario was slow and methodical, Sonic was blindingly fast. There wasn't so much an emphasis on accuracy as there was with Mario, but really more of an emphasis on speed and the series' signature ring collecting. Sonic combined good music, great graphics and bright colorful graphics into a charming romp through memorable locations that nearly managed to topple a mushroom-based kingdom.

**12.46 million:** Number of copies of the game sold worldwide

# Pokémon

Gotta catch 'em all!

**151:** Number of original Pokémon to be caught, traded and trained in Red/Blue

**3:** Starter Pokémon available: Bulbasaur, Squirtle and Charmander

**4:** Number of elite Pokémon masters that must be fought in order to become a Pokémon champion

The titular creatures from that magical place called Game Freak have certainly made their mark in the world. What started the craze in America was the Red and Blue cartridges bottled by Nintendo, on the way to creating a juggernaut of a franchise. Despite taking two years to come across the world, Pokémon Red and Blue created a franchise in the U.S. that still stands today as one of the best-selling series of all time. The first 151 creatures captured the imagination of millions, leading to an anime, movies and a trading card game. Connected to the ubiquitous slogan of "Gotta Catch 'Em All," Pokémon has settled into the role of backup money maker, just after Mario and Zelda.

**31.37 million:** Number of Red/Blue/Green copies sold worldwide

**52:** Number of original Pokémon that are based on real animals



PIPPEN  
TURBO

INSERT  
COINS

CREDIT 0 1

NBA  
JAM

The dunks, the lack of fouls and most NBA standard rules, the commentary ... NBA Jam is synonymous with the '90s and with good reason: By the time the game was released, the NBA had become a cultural phenomenon and Jam was right there to show an exaggerated form of what was recognized as the best basketball league in the world. NBA Jam had a certain panache to it that lent itself to outrageous gameplay. Shoving and stealing were completely normal. Fast full-court action was also commonplace. The simple gameplay meant that anyone could pick up the game and play as part of their favorite franchise — with enough quarters. The one thing that stood out, though? Tim Kitzrow, who played the role of excitable commentator extraordinaire. Kitzrow brought a certain silliness to the game and made it memorable in the minds of basketball-loving gamers. NBA Jam still stands as the title that makes you want to go out and throw down a few shots to become on fire.

SHOT

08

## NBA JAM BY THE NUMBERS

27:

Number of franchises in the league at the time of the arcade release

4:

Teams that have since changed their names (Charlotte — from Hornets to Bobcats to Hornets; Washington Bullets — to Wizards; Seattle SuperSonics — to Oklahoma City Thunder; and New Jersey Nets — to Brooklyn Nets)

13:

Number of players featured in the game that went on to become coaches in the NBA

5:

Number of players featured in the game that have won the NBA Most Valuable Player Award

8:

Number of players featured in the game that have won the NBA Rookie of the Year Award

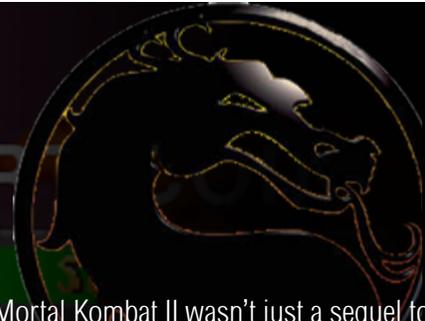
3.44  
million:

Number of copies sold worldwide

00 WINS

90

INSERT



KITANA



Mortal Kombat II wasn't just a sequel to a gory fighting game based on martial arts; it was an experience, a title that changed the landscape of the gaming industry. GI Editor-in-Chief Lyndsey Hicks calls the sequel to classic kombat progenitor Mortal Kombat one of the greatest fighting games ever created. In fact, the game is what gave birth to her years-long ritual of getting up Saturday mornings to venture forth to her local Aladdin's Castle to play, learn and teach. For years, she would be known as MK girl in Columbia, S.C., solely because of her talent at playing Mortal Kombat II. MK II was exactly what a sequel is meant to be: an expounding of the previous game's virtues and a continuation of excellence. With a combination of better graphics, music and storyline, MKII got everything correct when it came to making a better game that kept all that made the original successful. More fatalities and ways to finish matches, more characters, an improved combo system, better graphics and an outstanding soundtrack made for an experience that could only be described as epic.

# MORTAL KOMBAT II

## BY THE NUMBERS

**4:** Number of versions produced for Mortal Friday, Sept. 9, 1994 (Sega Genesis, Game Gear, Super Nintendo and Game Boy)

**3:** Number of boss characters

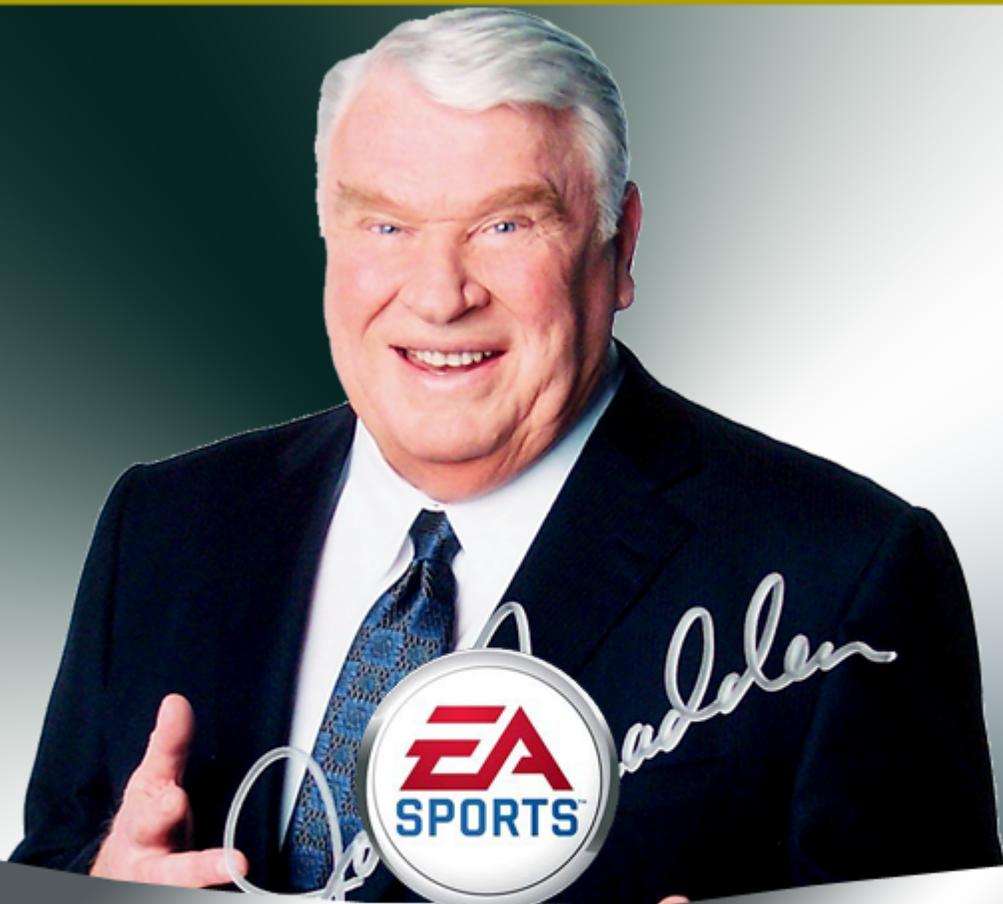


**2.5 million:** Number of copies distributed at retail for Mortal Friday

**12:** Number of playable characters, five more than the previous game

**5:** Number of returning characters from Mortal Kombat

GI SILVER HORSE AWARDS EDITION



# MADDEN FOOTBALL

Every year in August since 1993, the release of a new Madden NFL game has heralded the start of a new NFL season. Madden has become the industry standard when it comes to American football games, with new features introduced and head coaches, players and in-game broadcasts actually modeling themselves after their in-game counterparts. The game has wielded so much influence that the league considers it important to its operations and decision-making process.

Madden, so named for the Hall of Fame broadcaster, is important because it represents the ability of a franchise to transcend its surroundings as a video game to become an important tool in an international billion-dollar company's arsenal.

## MADDEN FOOTBALL

**2012:** Year that John Madden retired from the series

**5:**

Versions available in the Madden NFL exhibit featured in the Museum of the Moving Image

**10**

**million:**

Line of source code in the series as of 2012

**85**

**million:**

Number of games sold in the series

**25:**

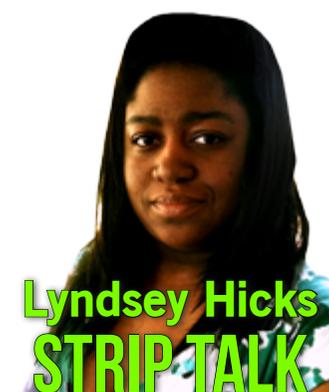
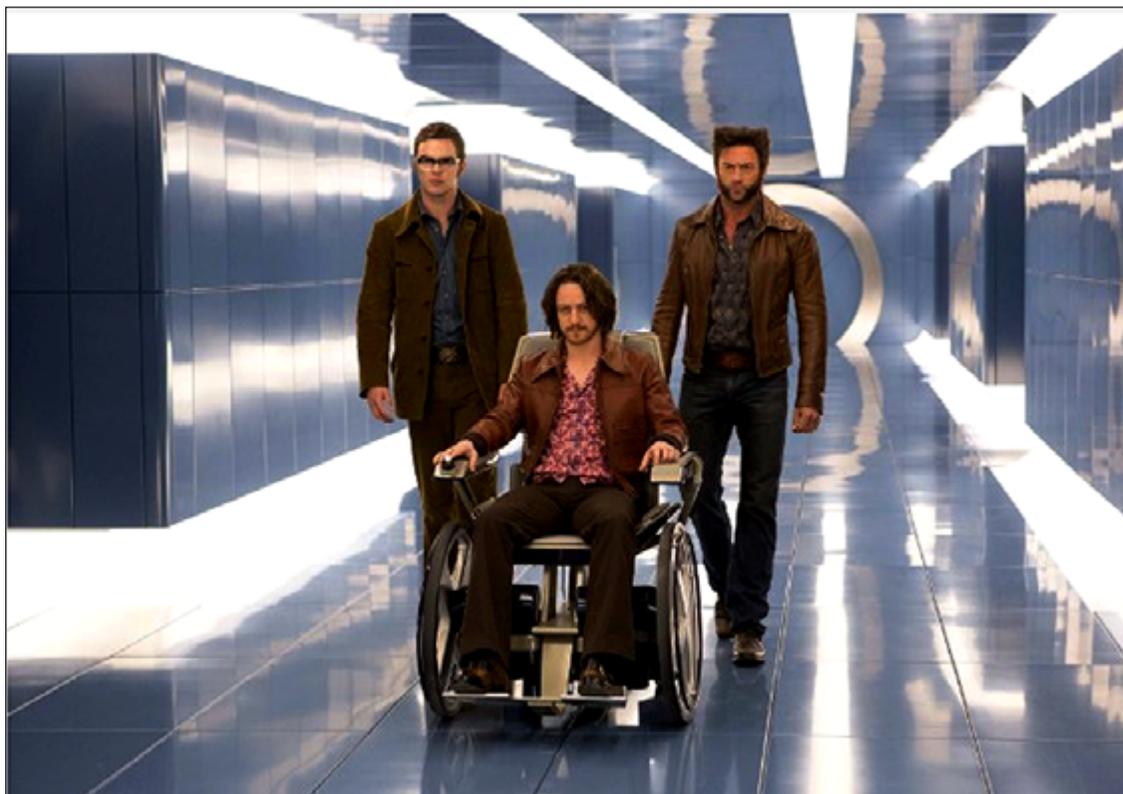
Number of games in the Madden series



# PROPERTY REVIEW

**X-Men: Days of Future Past**

20th Century Fox, 2014



Lyndsey Hicks  
**STRIP TALK**

## Sometimes it's OK to reserve judgment

**B**efore we even get started, let's not even question my TMNT legitimacy, OK? I am what you would call a superfan. Check my credentials: I have most of the 1987 cartoon seasons on DVD, have had the theme song of said show memorized since the beginning of 1988, had loads of merchandise and wrote a freaking play about Leonardo falling in love with April. Oh, and that 2011 GI issue devoted to TMNT? My idea. So, when I render a verdict on this new contraption that Michael Bay has dared introduce, you can best believe I do know what I am talking about. Except ... that's just it: I haven't rendered a verdict and I'm not going to. At least, not just yet.

Yes, I've seen the epic original trailer (and I use that term loosely here), and no, I don't have much to say about the overall film. The trailer is just that: a trailer. You can't just go around supposing anything from a trailer. From what I saw, it's supposed to be a retelling of the origin story of the four turtles and their first meeting with Ms. O'Neil. Beyond that, I'm not really expecting much other than the rumbling that I've heard over the hills that the Turtles are supposed to be aliens this time around. Not so fast there, Bay. That isn't canon and that one change? Yep, you guessed it: The fanbase isn't buying it. At all.

There comes a time, though, when everyone needs to step back and keep a clear head about things. This is one of those magical times. Kevin Eastman, co-creator of the boys in green, even agreed with that righteous statement from Bay. Keep in mind, however, that Eastman isn't even directly involved with the rights to the Turtles anymore and has only recently gotten back into the Turtle game. So take it for what it's worth. Meanwhile, other co-creator Peter Laird is telling anyone who'll listen that the concept is being watered down and probably will hurt the standing of the franchise. My reaction: As if the third movie, subsequent 80 million series after the 1987 cartoon and rampant

See STRIP TALK, PAGE 24

## X-cellent return to form

**S**et aside any preconceived notions you may have had at the announcement of a new X-Men film. We'll wait because we know just how hard that may be to do. Now that it's out of the way, let's get down to business.

X-Men Days of Future Past is phenomenal.

Everything that went wrong with *The Last Stand* (*editor's note: See 2Q2014's property review*) has been corrected. See, the acting wasn't the problem; it was the storyline and the execution. Days of Future Past manages to take the bleak problems of its predecessor and turn them into bright spots, ironically, because Days of Future Past is a bleak and dark turn of events for the merry band of mutants.

Days of Future Past, while different from the Animated Series and the comic book original, is a solid adventure for the X-Men. The story posits that a single assassination is the linchpin that leads to the extinction of mutants by the Sentinels, aggressive mutant-hunting robots of the future. By stopping the assassination of Dr. Bolivar Trask, the X-Men will prevent the genocidal Sentinels from ever coming into being and, more importantly, prevent the slaughter of millions of humans and mutants, alike. To do this, they send Wolverine back into time to the point of divergence and hope that he can convince estranged friends Charles Xavier and Erik Lensherr to work together for the

### HOW WE GRADE

We score the properties in three categories: Casting (or voice acting in cases of animated), plot and similarities to its source material. Each category receives points out of the maximum of 10 per category and 30 overall. The percentage is the final score.

common good once more.

The story takes some twists and turns, but by the end, you realize that this is a story of redemption and broken dreams healed. That's not just for the characters, but also for the movie franchise. Let's face it: *Last Stand* was horrible and a desecration of all that stands in the X-Men universe. Days of Future Past gets everything right and then some, starting with the re-emergence of Patrick Stewart and Ian McKellen. Next comes the healing of story butchering. Events that take place in *Last Stand* (no spoilers!) are erased throughout the film, but in particular the last five minutes of Days of Future Past quickly place a stake through the heart of *Last Stand*. Finally, comes the attention to detail, which is a major component of any comic book adaptation. Sure, Days of Future Past takes some liberties with the source

See PROPERTY REVIEW, PAGE 24

On tap this issue:

### STRIP TALK

Editor Lyndsey Hicks is taking a wait-and-see approach to the new TMNT movie

### REVIEW

X-Men comes roaring back with Days of Future Past

### MARVEL CHARACTER

Everything you ever wanted to know about Jean Grey

### OTAKU

Brandon Beatty loses one of his favorites in Death Note

### ANIME LOUNGE

A killer fashion piece is Kill la Kill

View this content at [www.gaminginsurrection.com/TheStrip](http://www.gaminginsurrection.com/TheStrip)



## Death Note Vol. 7 digs deeper with shocking results

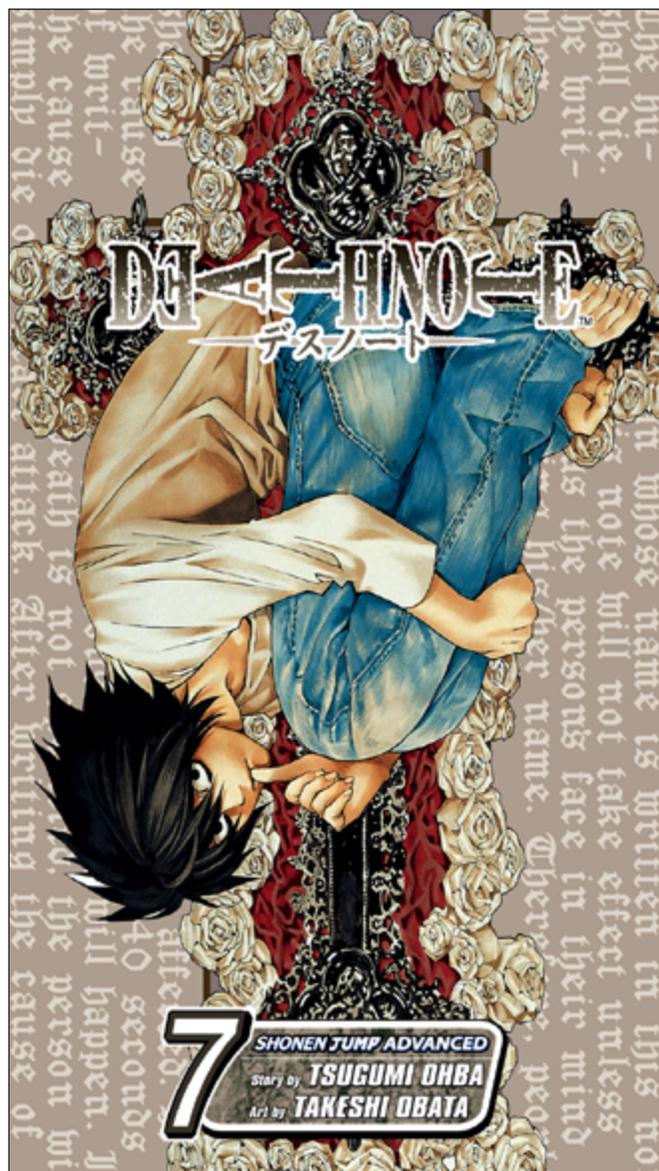
Welcome to Otaku Corner, the spot of The Strip where we bring you the finest manga and anime. I'm continuing my review of the series "Death Note," the mystery/supernatural manga of geniuses Light Yagami and L, the legendary detective. When Light finds the death note dropped in the human world by a shingami named Ryuk, he uses it to kill off criminals, hoping to create a crime-free world. When criminals worldwide begin to drop dead, L (Ryuzaki) is called in to find the murder known as "Kira" (Light).

Written by Tsugumi Ohba, drawn by Takeshi Obata and published by VIZ Media, Death Note Volume 7 continues where the previous volume ended with Light, Ryuzaki and the rest of the task force finally capturing Kyosuke Higuchi, the latest Kira. Upon recovering the death note, Light regains his memories as the original Kira allowing him to continue his main goal: killing L.

Using a hidden piece of the death note placed in his watch, Light — without anyone watching — kills Higuchi, thus focusing his attention to L. In the next set of pages, Light shows how far he is willing to use not only his "girlfriend" Misa Amane and her shinigami Rem, but also to have Ryuk write two fake rules about using the death note. Sensing that there are two fake rules, Ryuzaki attempts to have another country test the fake rules, but he and Watari are killed by Rem, who is also killed because of her actions that allowed Misa to live longer. Before his death, L erases all of the investigative data on the task force computers, but Light is able to recover the information, allowing him to kill Ryuzaki's associates Aiber and Wedy as well as the remaining members of the Yosuba group who were involved in the Kira killings. Light, during this time, plays the roles of Kira and L while joining the NPA's Intelligence section, securing his position as murderer and law officer.

Unknown to Light, however, L's proteges have begun to avenge their fallen mentor. One of them, Near, gathered enough evidence to convince the U.S. government to set up a Kira investigation unit known as SPK. The other, known as Mello, joins up with a major mafia organization to acquire the death note and to also become No. 1 over Near. While Light is enjoying his long-awaited victory, Mello has taken the NPA director hostage and when the director is killed, Mello orders his henchmen to kidnap Light's sister Saiyu. When Saiyu goes missing, Light deals with two new adversaries who are determined to destroy Kira at any cost.

Death Note continues to be a smash hit, thanks to its perfect mix of mystery, horror and supernatural elements. I guarantee that you will be in complete awe as you witness Light's complete transformation from a young man who hates evil to a murderer who will kill anyone in his way to create his perfect world.



L, while not entirely evil, did himself justice despite his willingness to test the death note among other questionable tactics to solve the case, leaving a legacy for his heirs to fight one of the greatest evils ever known. Viz Media also gets credit as well, as Alexis Kirsch performed excellently with handling translation and adaptation writing duties.

Death Note Volume 7 left me feeling sad and happy about its continuation. Although I'm pleased that the story will continue with new plot twists and nonstop action, I'm saddened that a great main character has fallen at such an early point in the series. Yet, I am confident that he will be avenged thanks to the efforts of his proteges. Keep reading Otaku Corner for more reviews of Death Note as its second act begins. RIP Ryuzaki and Watari. You WILL be avenged.

*Brandon Beatty is editor-at-large of Gaming Insurrection. He can be reached by email at [brandonb@gaminginsurrection.com](mailto:brandonb@gaminginsurrection.com)*



## The price of fashion examined in Kill la Kill

**Series:** Kill la Kill

**Episodes:** 1 to 6

**Premise:** A schoolgirl, Ryuko Matoi, goes on a search for her father's killer — a person wielding a scissor blade — while wearing a specially made suit — Senketsu. Matoi comes into conflict with Honnouji Academy and its leader, Satsuki Kiryuin, who rules with an iron fist. Matoi gains allies in her fight, starting with best friend Mako Mankanshoku and her family, and gains others in the form of Nudist Beach.

**Is it worth watching?:** Yes. The premise of a living uniform giving a girl super powers is intriguing enough, but the action and the way the animation works is an even bigger reason to watch it through to the end. The dialogue is snappy, and the characters are interesting and unique.

**Breakout character:** Mako Mankanshoku. Mako is quite weird and plays her role as the sidekick quite well. She's funny and interesting enough that you notice her almost immediately. She stands out from the crowd of characters introduced.

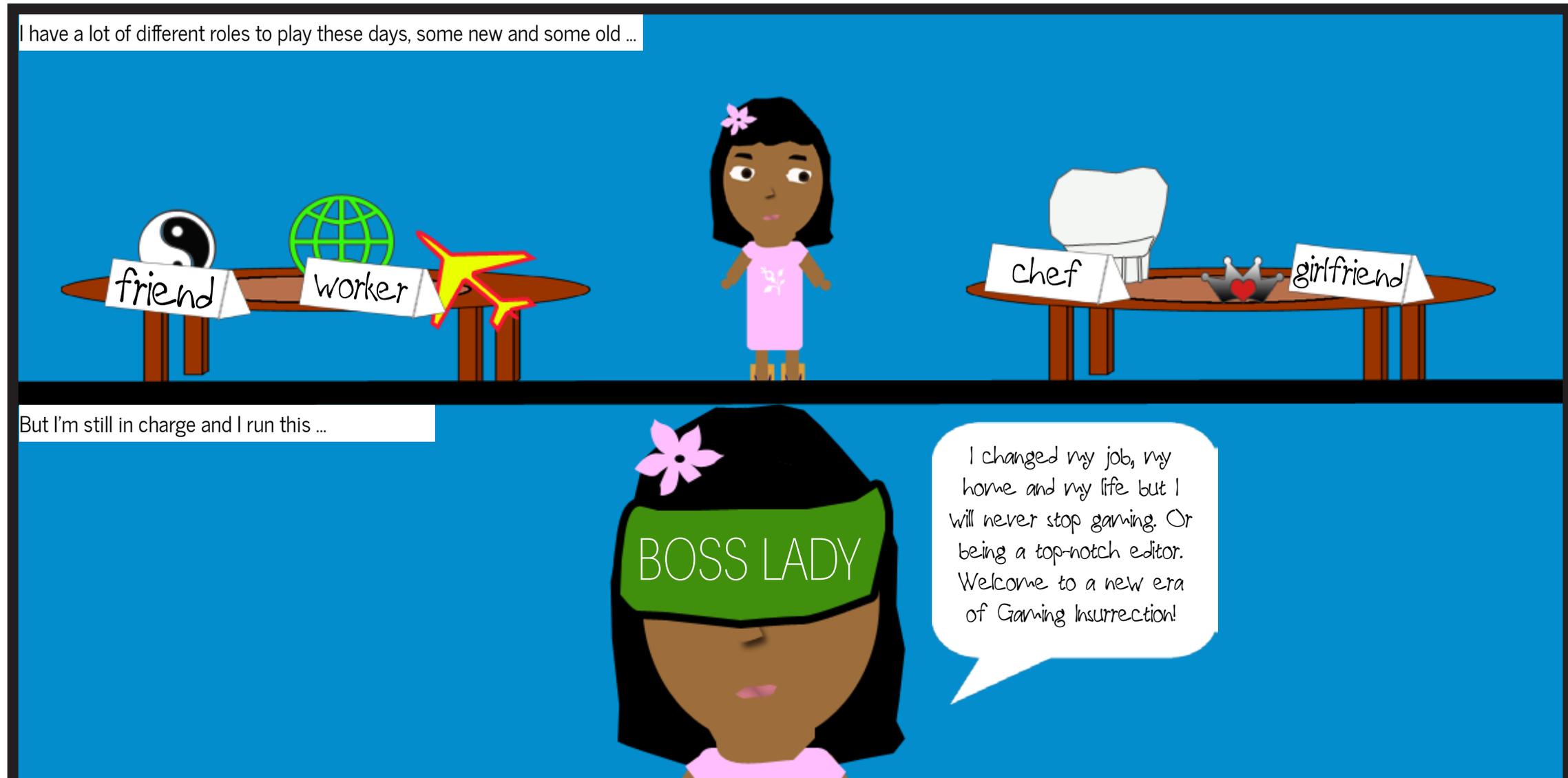
**Funniest episode:** Episode 4, Dawn of a Miserable Morning. Mako and Ryuko can't be late for school, as it's the one day of the year that requires everyone to be on time or risk being expelled. The route to school is purposely booby-trapped and set up for failure, with the prime objective of weeding out the ranks of the school. The duo make several attempts to get there on time and are nearly killed. What they don't realize is it's basically one trap after another, right down to walking in the door.

**Where it's going:** Ryuko is going to get some answers in her quest to find her father's killer. She'll learn just who she can trust, the reasons for his murder and why working together is such a good idea.



# Strip Life

BY LYNDSEY HICKS



## Days of Future Past an appropriate apology

STRIP TALK, from PAGE 22

PROPERTY REVIEW, from PAGE 22

material, but we'll allow it if it means the story will flow better. Here, it does and the changes make sense. There's no half-baked change for the sake of change.

Something else that *Days of Future Past* manages to accomplish is a sense of clarity. A time-traveling tale can be confusing with the lack of the right amount of distinguishing features to differentiate between eras. However, the film has a stunning amount of clarity, which makes everything obvious as to which time period is at the forefront. We had no trouble understanding the chain of events of the film — despite a lot of jumping between 1973 and 2023 — and additionally, the

powers of all mutants involved were correct and instantly clear. That's what happens when there is an obvious and immense level of detail paid to the source material, something *Last Stand* sorely lacked. And, unlike its predecessor, we had few gripes. We would have liked to have seen more Quicksilver and more of the newer mutants who joined the cause. Also, a little elaboration on the answer to the question of how the Sentinels evolved to the future state would have been nice, considering that original version's answer of Mastermold was left out of the film entirely. However, those are small quibbles and a small price to pay for such a large love letter/apologetic note to fans.

*Days of Future Past* serves a multi-pronged purpose: pacify the veteran

X-Men film fans; fix the problems of *Last Stand*; continue the story of the uncanny mutants through the First Class cast; continue the reboot of the film franchise; and serve as the swan song of the original trilogy's cast. *Days of Future Past* manages to complete its tasks and usher in a new era of prosperity and promise for one of the most recognizable comic book franchises ever. *Days of Future Past* is an x-cellent return to form.

**Like the comics:** 7

**Casting:** 10

**Plot:** 10

**Overall score:** 27 out of 30 or 9

merchandising didn't already do that? I mean, let's not forget that at the height of the series' popularity, you could find the Green Machine on everything from bookmarks to toilet paper practically. So, what's another movie to potentially push the franchise again to a newer generation of kids that don't know the black-and-white history of the Turtles?

I'm no Bay defender or apologist but all of the knee-jerk reactions to the trailer need to descend right back down to the sewers whence the third movie came from.

*Lyndsey Hicks is editor-in-chief of Gaming Insurrection. She can be reached by email at [gicomics@gaminginsurrection.com](mailto:gicomics@gaminginsurrection.com)*

# MARVEL CHARACTER HIGHLIGHT

**Name:** Jean Grey-Summers

**Affiliation:** X-Men, X-Factor, The Twelve, X-Terminators, Phoenix Corps

**Special abilities:** Omega-level telepathy; telekinesis; Phoenix Force, which grants the ability to travel unaided through space; psionically manipulate matter and any form of energy; create powerful “cosmic” fire; resurrect from death and manipulate life energy in others; and manipulate timelines.

**Background:** Jean Grey had an ordinary home life with her parents and older sister in upstate New York. That changed when Jean’s friend Annie Richardson died after being hit by a car. Jean telepathically linked with her dying friend, manifesting her powers for the first time. To save Jean, her parents sought the help of Charles Xavier, who connected with Jean and brought her out of her coma. Jean then went to live with Charles at the newly formed Xavier Institute, learning to use her powers. While there, she fell in love with fellow teammate Scott Summers and continued to go on missions. During one mission in space, Jean was exposed to a mortally lethal dose of radiation poisoning. As she was dying, Jean cried out telepathically and the Phoenix Force answered her. The Phoenix Force created a duplicate body – which it resided in with Jean’s essence – and placed Jean in a healing cocoon that sunk in Jamaica Bay. The Phoenix Force posed as her for years, while a clone of Jean (Madelyne Pryor) married Scott and had a child with him. Jean was resurrected from the cocoon and rejoined her teammates. Later, Jean and Scott’s marriage fell apart and Jean was killed again. She then resurrected herself using the Phoenix Force and ascended to a higher plane of existence, the White Hot Room.

**Relationships:** John Grey (father), Elaine Grey (mother), Sara Grey-Bailey (sister), Scott Summers (former husband),

Nathan Christopher Charles Summers (Cable; genetic son), Stryfe (clone of Cable; genetic son), Rachel Summers (genetic daughter), Hope Summers (step-granddaughter), Nathaniel Grey (X-Man, genetic son), Madelyne Pryor (Goblin Queen, genetic clone), Corsair (Christopher Summers, father-in-law), Vulcan (Gabriel Summers, brother-in-law), Havok (Alex Summers, brother-in-law and lover)

**First Versus game appearance:** Marvel vs. Capcom 3: Fate of Two Worlds

**Appearances in other media:** Spider-Man and His Amazing Friends (television), The Marvel Super Heroes (television), X-Men animated television series (television), X-Men: Evolution (television), Wolverine and the X-Men (television), The Super Hero Squad Show (television), X-Men (anime), Iron Man: Armored Adventures (television), Astonishing X-Men (motion comics), X-Men (film), X2: X-Men United (film), X-Men: The Last Stand (film), The Wolverine (film), X-Men: Days of Future Past (film), X-Men: Apocalypse (film), X-Men II: The Fall of the Mutants (video game), X-Men (video game), X-Men: Gamemaster’s Legacy (video game), X-Men: Mutant Academy (video game), X-Men: Mutant Academy 2 (video game), X-Men: Next Dimension (video game), X-Men Legends (video game), X-Men Legends II: Rise of Apocalypse (video game), X-Men: The Official Game (video game), X-Men: Destiny (video game), Marvel Super Hero Squad Online (video game), Marvel: Avengers Alliance (video game), Marvel Ultimate Alliance (video game), Marvel Ultimate Alliance 2 (video game), Marvel Avengers: Battle for Earth (video game), Marvel Heroes (video game), LEGO Marvel Super Heroes (video game), Marvel vs. Capcom 3: Fate of Two Worlds (video game), Ultimate Marvel vs. Capcom 3 (video game)



## TOP 5 ON THE STRIP — FEMALE VILLAINS EDITION



**1 Lady Deathstrike – Marvel**

Yeah, so Yuriko Oyama has an adamantium-bonded skeleton similar to Wolverine’s. The reason for this? Because she wanted to have it. It wasn’t that she had it forced on her; no, she asked Spiral to do the process because she wanted to be able to kill Wolverine, who she thought stole the theories and ideas on the adamantium process. Receiving cybernetic implants as well, Yuriko has hunted Wolverine for decades.

**Mutant power:** Superhuman strength, speed, stamina, durability and agility; unbreakable skeleton laced with adamantium and 10 claws made of adamantium; and a cybernetic healing factor.



**2 Star Sapphire – DC**

The original Star Sapphire had several remarkable powers that included the use of a violet Power Ring (like the Green Lantern Corps). The main thing to know about Star Sapphire is that she is a group, a corps just like the Green Lantern. The group is possessed by the Star Sapphire gem, which is attracted to worthy females who are in love with Hal Jordan. Remember folks, stalking and harrasment are crimes, no matter if you are a gem or not.

**Super power:** Violet Power Ring possession, force blasts, protective shield, flight



**3 Selene – Marvel**

Selene – better known as the Black Queen of the Hellfire Club – is at least 17,000 years old and continuously wreaks havoc on the Marvel Universe, mostly by terrorizing the X-Men. She’s featured as the boss of one of Gambit’s stages in Spider-Man & the X-Men in Arcade’s Revenge, so you know she’s obnoxious.

**Mutant power:** Life-draining psychic vampire, flame manipulation



**4 Talia ah Gul – DC**

The daughter of Ra’s ah Gul, Talia has carried on her father’s life of crime and destruction. She’s covertly worked to take over Gotham City, injured or killed numerous people and lead the notorious League of Assassins. Her saving grace is the fact that she married Bruce Wayne and produced an heir, Damien Wayne. Eventually, she disowns Damien after realizing that he would always oppose her after taking up his father’s cause. Motherly love this is not.

**Super power:** Enhanced longevity, genius-level intelligence, superior marksmanship and swordsmanship



**5 Mystique – Marvel**

There isn’t much that Mystique hasn’t done. In several realities, she has been the cause of assassinations of key figures that leads to the downfall of that reality (see: Days of Future Past) and has betrayed quite a few people in her path. Given that she’s able to shapeshift at will into whomever she wants, Mystique has used that power to further her own agenda and goals. Usually, those goals are in line with the Brotherhood of Evil.

**Mutant power:** Shapeshifting

BY LYNDSEY HICKS | GAMING INSURRECTION

Back in the days of 8-bit and 16-bit dominance, there were quite a few games that appeared on multiple systems. Routinely, games would have versions for the NES/SNES and Genesis version. Later, the PlayStation and its successor would join the fray as would the Dreamcast. Generally, there would be a superior version among the crowd, and that version would do well at retail while the other version ... just lingered as an alternative choice for those who didn't own multiple systems.

# COMPARING VERSIONS

## SNES VERSION



**Game:** Mortal Kombat I  
**Main versions:** SNES/Genesis

If there's anything to be learned about the Mortal Kombat franchise, it's that you need to be careful when you buy an early version. Quick history lesson: When MK was ported to the home consoles, the SNES version altered finishing moves and removed the blood that's found in ample amounts in the game. The Genesis version featured a blood code (the notorious ABACABB) and flag system (DULLARD) that returned options or took them away as players saw fit. It also didn't alter finishing moves. Guess which version sold well and which did not.

**Best version:** Genesis

## GENESIS VERSION



## GENESIS VERSION



**Game:** Mortal Kombat 3  
**Main versions:** SNES/Genesis/Saturn

Mortal Kombat 3 came along right as it became common place to release a fighting game at home shortly after the game was released in arcades. Arcades were dying by this point in the U.S., and home sales began to dictate release dates and viability. MK3 was a perfect example of a targeted release and campaign. The SNES version is OK, with a decent translation of its soundtrack, but the AI is suspect. The Genesis version's translation was OK as well, but the soundtrack is still mediocre. The Saturn version suffers from long loading times. None of these versions are really spectacular and it's probably best to just buy Mortal Kombat Trilogy for the full MK 3 experience.

**Best version:** Super Nintendo

## SNES VERSION



## SATURN VERSION



**Game:** Mortal Kombat II  
**Main versions:** SNES/Genesis/Saturn

Mortal Kombat II is a special case among fighting games. Nintendo learned its lesson from the debacle that was Mortal Kombat, and decided to release an arcade-faithful version that featured all of the gore and death that made Mortal Kombat glorious in the first place. The Genesis version this time around? Not so great. It wasn't terrible, but there was something missing in the translation from arcade to home, and the music is off. The Saturn version, a late entrant into the arena, is the closest graphically and audibly to the arcade version. It, however, suffers the most from loading times, which drag down the experience.

**Best version:** Super Nintendo

## GENESIS VERSION



## SNES VERSION



See  
COMPARING  
VERSIONS,  
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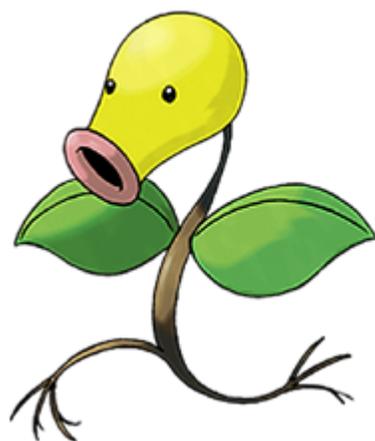
# Pokémon

## RED & BLUE KNOWLEDGE CENTER

### Pokemon on tap this quarter:

No. 69 — Bellsprout  
No. 70 — Weepinbell  
No. 71 — Victreebel  
No. 72 — Tentacool  
No. 73 — Tentacruel  
No. 74 — Geodude  
No. 75 — Graveler  
No. 76 — Golem

Special thanks to  
Bulbapedia for  
Pokémon artwork



No. 69 — Bellsprout

Evolves at  
Level 21



No. 70 — Weepinbell

Evolves with  
Leaf Stone



No. 71 — Victreebel

LEVEL	ATTACK	TYPE
START	Vine Whip	Grass
START	Growth	Normal
13	Wrap	Normal
15	Poison Powder	Poison
18	Sleep Powder	Grass
21	Stun Spore	Grass
26	Acid	Poison
33	Razor Leaf	Grass
42	Slam	Normal

LEVEL	ATTACK	TYPE
START	Vine Whip	Grass
START	Growth	Normal
START	Wrap	Normal
START	Poison Powder	Poison
START	Sleep Powder	Grass
23	Stun Spore	Grass
29	Acid	Poison
38	Razor Leaf	Grass
49	Slam	Normal

LEVEL	ATTACK	TYPE
START	Wrap	Normal
START	Poison Powder	Poison
START	Sleep Powder	Grass

## WHAT TO KEEP AND DELETE

### Moves to keep

Vine Whip (until Razor Leaf is learned)  
Sleep Powder  
Acid  
Stun Spore  
Poison Powder  
Razor Leaf

### Moves to delete

Growth  
Wrap  
Slam

### EDITOR'S NOTES:

The Grass/Poison evolutionary chain of Bellsprout is an interesting one. There isn't much that it can do that other Pokémon in the

same vein can't accomplish, but it still knows a healthy variety of moves that makes the chain usable in combat.

The fact that it can learn the different status effect powders as

well as Acid and Razor Leaf make it a strong contender if you want something different on your team other than the usual suspects such as Bulbasaur or Oddish.

As always, stick with the middle

evolution until Weepinbell learns all of its moves.

Otherwise, if you evolve it to Victreebel, it won't unlock its full potential.

# Pokémon

## RED & BLUE KNOWLEDGE CENTER



No. 72 — Tentacool

LEVEL	ATTACK	TYPE
START	Acid	Poison
7	Supersonic	Normal
13	Wrap	Normal
18	Poison Sting	Poison
22	Water Gun	Water
27	Constrict	Normal
33	Barrier	Psychic
40	Screech	Normal
48	Hydro Pump	Water



No. 73 — Tentacruel

LEVEL	ATTACK	TYPE
START	Acid	Poison
START	Supersonic	Normal
START	Wrap	Normal
START	Poison Sting	Poison
START	Water Gun	Water
START	Constrict	Normal
35	Barrier	Psychic
43	Screech	Normal
50	Hydro Pump	Water

### WHAT TO KEEP AND DELETE

#### Moves to keep

Acid  
Poison Sting  
Water Gun  
Hydro Pump

#### Moves to delete

Supersonic  
Wrap  
Constrict  
Barrier  
Screech

#### Moves to teach

TM 14 — Blizzard  
HM 03 — Surf

#### EDITOR'S NOTES:

For Tentacool and Tentacruel to be Water Pokémon, they sure aren't worth the trouble of catching and

raising.

Neither Pokémon is particularly strong in the ways of the Water category, and their movesets have nothing extremely attractive to justify

making a place for them on an Elite 4-challenging team. Of the unusually large moveset that they learn, there are only two Water-type moves. And they learn those fairly late in the pro-

cess. True, they learn Acid early on, but that doesn't make up for a lack of Water moves for a Water type. Stick with something else instead of this run-of-the-mill jack of no trades.

# Pokémon

## RED & BLUE KNOWLEDGE CENTER

EDITOR'S CHOICE



No. 74 — Geodude

LEVEL	ATTACK	TYPE
START	Tackle	Normal
11	Defense Curl	Normal
16	Rock Throw	Rock
21	Self Destruct	Normal
26	Harden	Normal
31	Earthquake	Ground
36	Explosion	Normal

Evolves at Level 25



No. 75 — Graveler

LEVEL	ATTACK	TYPE
START	Tackle	Normal
START	Defense Curl	Normal
START	Rock Throw	Rock
START	Self Destruct	Normal
29	Harden	Normal
36	Earthquake	Ground
43	Explosion	Normal

Evolves via trade



No. 76 — Golem

LEVEL	ATTACK	TYPE
START	Tackle	Normal
START	Defense Curl	Normal
START	Rock Throw	Rock
START	Self Destruct	Normal
29	Harden	Normal
36	Earthquake	Ground
43	Explosion	Normal

### WHAT TO KEEP AND DELETE

#### Moves to keep

Rock Throw (until Rock Slide can be taught)  
Earthquake  
Explosion

#### Moves to delete

Tackle  
Defense Curl  
Rock Throw (once Rock Slide can be taught)  
Self Destruct

#### Moves to teach

TM 28 — Dig  
TM 48 — Rock Slide

### EDITOR'S NOTES:

The Rock-type in the Geodude/Graveler/Golem chain starts out fairly useful, but by the end of its learning process, it becomes a solid powerhouse that can success-

fully anchor an Elite 4-challenging team. The chain is particularly necessary to take out the Ice-types you will run into at the beginning of the rush against Lorelei and later in several match-ups with your rival.

The best aspect about the chain is that it can learn quite a few moves not in its standard repertoire and what it does learn, it learns quickly. Golem, in particular, is our choice for the Elite 4 team.

It has a good assortment of

moves and can take out fairly powerful Pokémon quickly. It will take damage but it has a good amount of HP and can take punishment well. Keep the chain around long enough and it will earn its keep against the Elite 4.

# SONG SPOTLIGHT

By Lyndsey Hicks



Don't forget to download our DDR glossary of terms!



**Artist:** 2MB  
**Difficulty:** 5/7/9  
**BPM:** 46-196

Healing Vision ~Angelic Mix~ is one of my favorite songs in the entire series. It's by 2MB, one of my favorite artists, but it's known for being one of the most punishing songs in the history of DDR, as well. There's nothing easy about HVAM, and that's because it is a 2MB remix. All of his remixes are infinitely harder than the original song, and are made to be fast-paced, hard pounding affairs. HVAM has jumps interspersed at high speed with triplets and runs, making it difficult to catch your breath during most of the song. There is only one part that really gives a breather and that's the middle, around the 1:08 mark of the song. It's the section immediately preceding the stutter stop. The Standard steps are known for being some of the hardest in its difficulty category under the old and new scales because they rival the difficulty of the Heavy steps easily. Unless you're prepared stamina-wise, steer clear of HVAM until you're sure your lungs and legs won't give out halfway through the song.

**Suggested speed mod:** x1.5 for actual play speed; x2 for easier sight-reading and comprehension



**Artist:** STM 200  
**Difficulty:** 5/6/9  
**BPM:** 200

Paranoia Eternal is considered a "Boss" song for 5th Mix, and there's a good reason why: Every difficulty features steps that are off-timed and off-putting. There are two versions of the steps, the 5th Mix official steps and the Extreme-revised official steps. The 5th Mix steps feature a lot of jackhammers in the Standard difficulty and the Extreme steps feature quite a few jump-step combinations and triplets. The jump-step combinations first appear in the beginning and make another appearance at the end of the song in the Extreme steps. They are, perhaps, the easiest part of the song and are about the most normal and on-beat part of the whole thing. In the 5th Mix steps, the jackhammers show up at the end of the song, and they will surprise you if you're not looking for them. Be forewarned: This is not a song that you can rely on listening to the music to get the melody and a grasp on the steps.

**Suggested speed mod:** x1.5



**Artist:** Thunderpuss feat. Jocelyn Enriquez  
**Difficulty:** 3/5/7  
**BPM:** 128

Like most songs in the DDR catalog, So Fabulous, So Fierce is a consistent song with obvious properties. The Heavy steps are much like any other song on Heavy: They're on beat and match up with the melody well. The trickiest thing to watch for is the middle stutter stops. It, too, is on beat but it will trip you up and cause a Good or Miss if you aren't prepared for them. The song, overall, is a fun romp with sections for triplets and jump-step combinations throughout.

**Suggested speed mod:** x2

## Boss songs

A "Boss" song was usually denoted by the color red on the song wheel in 5th Mix to SuperNova and by the foot rating in 1st to 4th Mix. Boss songs are meant to be true tests for advanced DDR players, used to check endurance, stamina and sight-reading skills. If you could pass a Cata (9-footer), you were typically considered an advanced stepper and thus ready for Boss songs. As of Max, with the introduction of the first 10-footer in Max 300, Boss songs typically have to be unlocked and can be the Extra Stage or Encore Extra Stage selection.

### Boss songs by mix:

- 1st Mix:** Paranoia, Trip Machine
- 2nd Mix:** SP-TRIP MACHINE (Jungle Mix), Paranoia Max (Dirty Mix), Paranoia KCET (Clean Mix)
- Solo:** Trip Machine (Iuv mix), Paranoia Evolution
- 3rd Mix:** Paranoia Rebirth, Afronova, Dead End
- 4th Mix:** Trip Machine Climax, Trip Machine (Iuv mix), Paranoia Evolution
- 5th Mix:** Paranoia Eternal, Healing Vision ~Angelic Mix~
- 6th Mix:** Max 300, Candy Star
- 7th Mix:** Maxx Unlimited, Kakumei
- Extreme:** The Legend of MAX, DanceDanceRevolution, Trip Machine Survivor, Paranoia Survivor, Paranoia Survivor MAX, Max. (period)
- SuperNOVA:** Chaos, Healing-D-Vision, Fascination Maxx, Fascination ~eternal love mix~, Paranoia ~Respect-
- SuperNOVA 2:** NGO, Pluto, Pluto Relinquish, Trip Machine Phoenix, Paranoia ~Hades~

## UPCOMING SONGS

END OF THE CENTURY

DUB-I-DUB

MAX 300

# Stay away from boys who claim to love you, play Pit Fighter

Settle in kids, I have a nice story to tell. And by nice, I mean terrible. Because, you see, this is no ordinary story. It's a tale of mediocrity and shame, one that will probably scar you for life if it doesn't kill you first. Now that I have your attention, let's turn it to the object of our derision for the quarter: Pit Fighter.

The first lesson you're going to learn today kids is that when a man tells you that it's OK to play a bad game, you probably shouldn't marry him. I learned that lesson the hard way because the tool that I married thought it was perfectly OK to play such tripe as Pit Fighter. Sure, it was under the guise of "Well, you played Mortal Kombat II. If you can stomach that, then this is OK, too." No, kids, it is not OK. When a man tells you this, he truly does not care for you or your well being.

Pit Fighter is one of the worst games ever made. For starters, the graphics look like some kindergartner threw them against the wall with some construction paper and made people. Yes, I'm well aware that it's the precursor to my beloved MK's usage of digitization. But that doesn't excuse the piss-poor quality of the work. I imagine someone laughed when that went out the door and passed as an actual game. Laughed all the way to the bank, I tell you.

Now while that person was laughing at the graphics, he or she probably had a good



chuckle about the way the game controls. People, this is no laughing matter. Someone could get hurt from the protrusion of trash that masqueraded as control in the game. If you ever want a perfectly good example of when not to let yourself be seduced by the madness of a man who thinks Pit Fighter is OK, actually sit down and try to play the game. Seriously. Yeah, I'll wait. Get back to me when you actually can accomplish something without problems.

Somewhere out there, this incomplete and unpolished mess is being pushed on another unsuspecting woman of dubious judgment. Only you can prevent yourself from becoming another victim, suckered in by a man touting this as some playable entity that shouldn't be missed. Yes, it should be missed. Much like I should have been with this crap that Midway thought was passable. The real tragedy in all



of this is the fact that it was re-purposed and turned into a viable franchise that later fell prey to the same mistakes the earlier crud fell into. Midway — much like my tool of a former spouse — never learned its lesson and was doomed to repeat it ... because they thought that just because they got away with crap the first time around it was going to work again in the future.

Kids, what are the lessons learned here? Stay away from boys. And stay away from terrible games that will do the same thing stupid boys do: Ruin your perfectly respectable life. Playtime has ended.

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## COMPARING VERSIONS, from PAGE 26

**Game:** Mortal Kombat Trilogy  
**Main versions:** Nintendo 64/PlayStation One

Mortal Kombat Trilogy was a decent compilation story of the first three Mortal Kombat games. It could have been better in several areas but both versions offered a little something different. The N64 version had better load times and allowed you to play as main MK3 bosses Shao Kahn and Motaro, the female version of hidden character Chameleon and Classic Sub-Zero. The PlayStation version allowed for all of the previous bosses, classic versions of certain MK2 and MK characters (Kung Lao, Kano, Jax and Raiden), unmasked and Classic Sub-Zero and better music and gameplay closer to the arcade version of Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3. The main problem with the PSOne version is the loading times, which make the game nearly unplayable despite it being the better port.

**Best version:** PlayStation One

**Game:** Street Fighter II  
**Main versions:** SNES/Genesis

Street Fighter is known for a lot of things, like too many revisions, the combo system and introducing multiple well-known characters in the fighting game community. It's also known for being one of the first must-have fighting games released on home consoles. And this is where the discrepancies come into play. If you were lucky enough, you owned the Super Nintendo version. That's because it was the

most faithful to the arcade. The soundtrack is ported almost perfectly, and the controls work as they're supposed to. The Genesis version received its own port: Special Championship Edition, and it's special all right. It's especially terrible. The soundtrack is off because the Genesis had a less-than-stellar sound chip as compared to the SNES. The control scheme is a story by itself: To use punches and kicks, a six-button controller was required. Otherwise, you have to use a three-button controller and swap between the sets by pressing the Start button. Do yourself a favor and don't buy the Genesis version.

**Best version:** Super Nintendo

**Game:** Street Fighter Alpha 3  
**Main versions:** PlayStation One/Dreamcast/Sega Saturn

"Street Fighter perfection." According to the July 1999 review from Game Informer, this was Street Fighter at its peak. It probably was and there were plenty of forms of it to go around. The requisite version that nearly everyone played was the PSOne version, which was released in 1999. This version wasn't perfection as the other GI claimed, but it was pretty close. The all-important World Tour Mode was introduced and several modes were made available. The Dreamcast version, however, came along and blew the PSOne version out of the water on all fronts. The DC version beefed up World Tour substantially and provided true two-on-two battles with the ability to select two different characters. All of the limitations of the PSOne version were addressed and then some. The Saturn

version, as it turns out, is even better than the DC version. This port has everything the DC version has and better loading times, making it nearly arcade perfect with added bonuses.

**Best version:** Sega Saturn

**Game:** Ninja Gaiden Trilogy/Ninja Gaiden I to III  
**Main versions:** Ninja Gaiden Trilogy — SNES; Ninja Gaiden I to III — NES

If there was ever a reason why a game series doesn't necessarily deserve an upgrade, Ninja Gaiden Trilogy is the answer. Trilogy may upgrade things in the graphics department but everything else is lacking. The worst offense in this so-called upgrade is the music. Trilogy's version of the soundtrack completely screws up all of the music found in the three games. It's so bad that it's nearly unrecognizable. The hard gameplay isn't made any better so there's really no reason to play the newer version over the old version, except if you don't have an NES or emulator and desperately want to play Ninja Gaiden for some reason.

**Best version:** NES

**Game:** Dance Dance Revolution Max, Max 2 and Extreme  
**Main versions:** PlayStation 2 U.S. And Japan

While we generally encourage all Japanese Dance Dance Revolution games be played, the U.S. versions of Max and Max 2 (6th Mix and 7th Mix for the uninitiated) aren't half bad. There are few Japanese DDR

appearances thrown in to get your feet wet with what to expect from the original versions of the game, and the licensed songs for the U.S. versions aren't bad. There is a good song list for both mixes overall. U.S. Extreme, however, is a different story. It's a terrible mix with a bad interface that makes no real sense in terms of looking like a DDR game. The song list isn't great, though there are few Japanese songs thrown in and a few licenses that are worth playing. The only reason why you'd want to play the American version of Extreme is to take advantage of the easier timing window.

**Best version:** Japanese DDR 6th Mix, 7th Mix, Extreme

**Game:** Disney's Aladdin  
**Main versions:** SNES/Genesis/Master System

The SNES version of Aladdin is the definitive, by-the-movie version. The Genesis version tends to follow the movie much like the SNES version, but for some reason Aladdin gets a scimitar to fight with. He really doesn't use a weapon in the movie so that inclusion is a little weird. Otherwise, both versions are decent. The SNES version follows the movie almost exactly, with a few extra levels thrown in for good measure. Most notably, Aladdin does not use the scimitar and the Genie's levels are added to pad out the game. The Master System version has Aladdin running around in three types of levels: a chase level, an exploration level and flying carpet levels.

**Best version:** Super Nintendo