

Gaming Insurrection

For Gamers, By Gamers

September 2002
Volume 2, Issue 1



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Welcome to the second issue of *Gaming Insurrection*. We have been on an extended production hiatus, but we are back and better than ever!

In this issue you will find that we have expanded our coverage from local to national coverage of the videogame industry. In addition to the feature stories on the upcoming fall game market, we are covering the tournament scene, which includes tournaments in North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida and Georgia.

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The Cry of War

Originally, this issue's column was going to talk about unity within the fighting game community. However, I decided to take a different approach and talk about something else that has been bothering me for awhile: how videogame skills are affected by trash talking.

Trash talking in a dignified form, I believe, is okay for two reasons. It serves to make a match more interesting, especially if the two people competing are rivals. Also, it makes the match seem more important. But when it comes down to it, sometimes trash talking can go too far.

I have seen each side of trash talking, where it was friendly and when it was just to embarrass someone. It's one thing to have a healthy confidence in yourself and your skills, but it's another to want to demoralize a person and their skills to make yourself feel better.

Becoming a better player in a game means, yes, you have improved your skills. It should also mean that you have matured enough to be able to play with class and sportsmanship.

Saying that someone sucks because they couldn't touch you within the allotted rounds or attempting to put down their efforts to best you when it's obvious that you won isn't necessary. When the discrepancy of skills is obvious between the two players, there is no need to put down either player by taking away from the winner or making the loser feel even worse.

Trash talking is supposed to be fun, not an exercise in frustration, belittlement and tactlessness. Please, players, have some decency, class and maturity whether you're playing amongst friends, or whether you're in a tournament somewhere.

Lyndsey M. Hicks

My Point of View

Over the years I have been a gamer, I have had run-ins with the good, bad and downright pathetic sides of the gaming industry. This column will allow me to share my experiences with you.

Usually when I walk into a game store such as Electronics Boutique or Funcoland, it's to chat it up with the associates and dig around for any games I want to add to my collection. However, lately I've had the following conversation repeatedly:

Customer: "Do you have any info on (insert game here)?"

Associate: "Yes, I've seen it in action, and it's going to rock on X-Box!"

Customer: "But I'm getting it on PS2."

Associate: "Oh ... Well, it should do decent on that, too."

Sound familiar? For some reason, those that can help you with gaming have been replaced with "fanboys" who try to shove their favorite system of choice down your throat.

When will they realize that we don't want to be bombarded with useless info about a system we don't have nor want to have?

Marcus C. Barnes

The Console Gaming Market: The Big Three's Prospects

By Marcus C. Barnes

With all of the buzz about online strategies, system specs and "exclusive" game titles, buying a system in this day and age can be really frustrating. This guide will give you the heads-up on what's out there for the "big three's" systems.

X-Box

Price: \$200

Online: Yes

Developer: Microsoft

Also known as "Bill Gates' little system that might," the X-Box stands poised to rule the console market; at least that's what Microsoft wants you to think.

Yes, it does sport the best specs in any system to date (733 Mhz Pentium 3 processor, nVidia graphics card), but it takes games to sell a system. At this point in time, games are not this system's strong suit. With a library of over 70 games, having less than a handful of good games will not help your cause.

The fact that it can play DVDs is pretty decent; the fact that you have to shell out \$30 to play those DVDs kind of kills that notion. A built-in hard drive is good for fast and easy game saves and eliminates the need

for a memory card, although you can still use one to transfer data between friends. You should just hope that your system doesn't crash at any time.

This fall could be the start of something major for the faltering box. With a bevy of possible megahits waiting in the wings and the launch of the X-Box Live online service later this year, the X-Box just might have enough firepower to take the top spot.

Gamecube

Price: \$150

Online: No

Developer: Nintendo

Ah, Nintendo, the tried-and-true game company. Well, it was kind of sketchy with the N64, but bigger things are on the horizon.

The Gamecube is simply that: A small cube that only plays games. Don't expect any DVD or audio CD features here. As a matter of fact, the discs that this system uses are roughly half the size, if not smaller, of a regular CD. It's Nintendo's way of keeping those game pirates out of their pockets.

Much like the N64 games are slowly leaking out to the public. Granted, there's more than

five games that are really good, but the small library is what's turning away quite a few gamers. This and the "kiddy" image that Nintendo has always been tagged with.

Times change, however, and so has Nintendo. To do away with the kiddy tag, they secured the exclusive rights to Capcom's *Resident Evil* series and have come up with a sweet thriller of their own: *Eternal Darkness*. Also, expect to see more than one or two games a month to appear on shelves, thanks in large part to better third-party support.

[Editor's note: Shigeru Miyamoto has apologized more than once, in press conferences for the Gamecube, for the problems with N64 development, and this is the reason they have more third-party support.]

The online strategy Nintendo's employing is the "wait-and-see" approach. They will have a game ready for cyberspace, but they want to lay low and see what happens. This could really hurt Nintendo if online gaming really takes off, but it could also be their best move if it falls flat especially with

Sony and Microsoft going big in this department.

Playstation 2

Price: \$200

Online: Yes

Developer: Sony

Despite a slow start, the PS2 has become a powerhouse with a multitude of games for all ages and gamers. It's showing no signs of slowing down.

Thanks to a one-year head start, the PS2's library is simply huge. Sure, you'll find the occasional lemon here and there, but on what system won't you find one?

For the online strategy, Sony is coming hard with a nice amount of games that will be network ready. The main advantage Sony has is, unlike the X-Box, broadband and dial-up users are all welcome to the party.

Got comments on this story? Email us!

How do the Consoles stack up?

Here's how the consoles measure up to each other for the fall console market. Currently the only three major consoles on the market are the X-Box, Gamecube and Playstation 2. See for yourself how well they do in terms of price and online capabilities.

<u>System</u>	<u>Developer</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Online?</u>
<i>X-Box</i>	Microsoft	\$200	Yes; with X-Box Live in Sept. 2002
<i>Gamecube</i>	Nintendo	\$150	No, but online service for "Phantasy Star Online" will start in Nov. 2002
<i>Playstation 2</i>	Sony	\$200	Yes; with network adapter for dial-up or broadband connections

Site Seeing

By Lyndsey M. Hicks and Marcus C. Barnes

In this day and age of immense technology, video gamers are able to use many resources to learn about games. One of the most important is the Internet.

There are so many ways a gamer can learn from the Internet. They can contact other gamers via a web site, chat room or forum; or they can look up sites for codes, add-on enhancements or documents such as walkthroughs.

This feature will take a look at seven web sites that are designed to help gamers succeed or socialize.

Web site No. 1

Address: www.shoryuken.com

Shoryuken features columns by some of the top players in the world and a forums section, which is home to many Street Fighter players in the US and the world. The entire web site

has been designed with regions of the US in mind called APEX. The APEX system allows for points obtained in tournaments, according to overall tournament rankings, to accumulate and determine an overall ranking for a particular region and overall nationally. There are other forum sections where beginner SF players and advanced players can learn, and there is a section for talking about anything that comes to mind.

As with this site and several listed here, in order to post on the forums you must become a registered user, which is free.

Web site No. 2

Address: www.womengamers.com

Women gamers have it pretty hard not only because they are female, but also because most

web sites are promoted for men without women in mind. *Womengamers* attempts to change that and succeeds in doing so.

Although the site is primarily for women, male members are allowed to post in its forums, which are open to members who have registered. Like *Shoryuken*, it is free. The site features a section about jobs open in the video-game industry, articles from industry workers, and previews and reviews, which are written by female members.

Web site No. 3

Address: www.gameshark.com

The company of Interact is well known for its video-game accessories. One of these accessories is the Gameshark, a cheat device that allows users to input codes that modify attributes of

the game. The Gameshark has been on several systems such as the Nintendo 64, Dreamcast and PlayStation. It has also appeared on the portable Gameboy, which uses the same method of code input.

This web site is designed to give gamers the most when they are looking for codes. The site features a search function, previews and reviews, and a section where gamers can download game saves that have used Gameshark codes. Although the actual cheat device has to be purchased, the codes are free of charge.

Web site No. 4

Address: www.gamecombos.com

Game combos that can be found online are impressive. Even more impressive are combos that

are videotaped for the Internet specifically. Gamecombos has this and more.

This site features combos from most games such as *Marvel vs. Capcom 2*, *Capcom vs. SNK 2*, and *Mortal Kombat 2, 3* and *Trilogy*.

The videos have to be downloaded from the site so prepare to spend some time waiting.

However, these videos are worth it to watch. If you are looking for a site to learn impossible combos and glitches, come here and download their movies, which are free of charge.

Web site No. 5

Address: www.gamefaqs.com

A final boss giving you a hard time? The third level driving you up the wall, or you can't find an item? Then this site is probably for you.

Gamefaqs is a veritable treasure trove of gaming knowledge. Just about every game from old-school to X-Box are represented, with in-depth walk-throughs, game analysis, and mini-faqs that help you unlock and uncover everything.

The source for all these faqs are, who else, the gamers themselves. A lot of time and effort has been spent to get these online, so you know most of the data is legit.

However, we advise that you stay away from the site forums. Every so often you will come across a thread that is a worthwhile read. Other than those rare finds, it's nothing more than endless bickering and mindless flaming.

Web site No. 6

Address: www.ddrfreak.com

All Dance Dance Revolution players: step off your dance pads and pay attention.

DDR Freak is the definitive source for all things DDR, ranging from step charts for every song in the long-running series (in every difficulty as well) to news and updates. You can even find

the words to songs that are stuck in your head.

Make sure to also stop by their forums as well. There, you can find steppers in your neck of the woods, valuable tips to help you improve your game, and how to modify your existing pad for a longer life span and an arcade feel. One member even goes as far as showing you how to build your own arcade-style metal dance pad.

Editor's note:

When Marcus finishes building the editor's PS joystick, this will be his next project.

Web site No. 7

Address: www.shinakuma.com

One good feature about this is the fact that it helps those who want to run their own tournaments.

Whether or not you're using the site's "rolling ranking system," you can find everything you need from brackets to sign-up sheets to the basic rules and regulations.

Also, you can go inside the heads of some of the nation's top players with the player profile section. Here, you will find out what they

do before a tournament, their basic mindset and any tips that they have for the newbies.

Many of these web sites have an easy-to-read layout that we find convenient, especially if you're trying to find information in a hurry. These web sites and the others mentioned in the box to the right are my first stops on the Internet if I'm ever in need of information or games to buy. Check them out today!

Brief Reminder

Here are the web sites and their addresses:

DDR Freak - www.ddrfreak.com

Shoryuken - www.shoryuken.com

Gamefaqs - www.gamefaqs.com

Women Gamers - www.womengamers.com

Shinakuma - www.shinakuma.com

Interact's Gameshark - www.gameshark.com

Gamecombos - www.gamecombos.com

Other web sites we wanted to spotlight:

Software Seconds - www.softwareseconds.com (yay!)

The Super Mario Bros. Headquarters - www.smbhq.com

Tekken Zaibatsu - www.tekkenzaibatsu.com

Game Music Online - www.gamemusiconline.com

IGN gaming - www.ign.com

Got comments on this story? Email us!

The Tournament Report

The Aug. 3 tournament in Anderson, S.C., featured *Street Fighter Alpha 3*, *Super Street Fighter II Turbo* and *Marvel vs. Capcom 2*.

Participants from Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina competed in the three games, which kicked off at noon. A total of 28 people entered and cash prizes went to first, second and third place in each game.

The overall winner of *Street Fighter Alpha 3* was Jae Purvis of Anderson, S.C. Coming in second was Larry Dixon of Atlanta, Ga., and taking third was Ted King of Lavonia, Ga.

The top player for *Marvel vs. Capcom 2* was Xander Matchett of Jacksonville, Fla. The second place winner, Craig DeFour, also

hailed from Jacksonville and the third place winner was Kevin Hutchins, a native of Anderson, S.C.

Super Street Fighter II Turbo's first place prize went to Purvis. Second place went Dixon and third place went to Colin Caldwell of Georgia.

Tournament fees were \$5 for Turbo and \$5 for *MvC2*. *Alpha 3* was entry free, a one time only deal. Tournaments in *Turbo* and *MvC2* are held monthly in Anderson.

Individuals interested in attending should check the shoryuken.com tournament and events forums.

IF YOU ARE GOING ...

***Check shoryuken.com (www.shoryuken.com/ forums) and go to the tournaments and events section;**

***Contact the host of the tournament and check on possible tournament placement reservations, especially if you are traveling from out of town;**

***Gather direction (www.mapquest.com) and check out fees for the tournament (i.e. entry fee); and**

***Practice, socialize and enjoy the tournament!**

Who are we?

Lyndsey M. Hicks is a native Columbian who decided to make a living in one of the most abhorred professions on earth: copy editing. Lyndsey is a senior in the print journalism program at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. In her spare time, while putting this newsletter together, she works for Columbia's Free Times newspaper, enjoys playing videogames and writing, hanging out with her friends and fellow writer and fiance Marcus, and edits her little heart out.

Right now ...

Favorite Game: *Super Smash Brothers* (N64; Everyone fears Samus!)

Learning: How to master DDR (I'm working on trick difficulty songs at the moment.)

Planning: Graduation and (hopefully) a summer wedding

Systems at the Moment: PS One, N64, Dreamcast, SNES, Game Boy, Game Boy Advance, NES

Marcus C. Barnes is also a native Columbian who joined Lyndsey early in the process of putting out *Gaming Insurrection*. Marcus felt computers were his calling and computer science was the field to make money in, so he entered Midlands Tech. Graduation is right around the corner in May. In addition to going to school, Marcus works at the Spring Valley Wal-Mart doing what else: selling videogames in the electronics section. In his spare time, Marcus can be found playing many videogames including the ever-popular *Dance Dance Revolution*, building joysticks for his many videogame systems and spending time with fiancée Lyndsey.

Right now ...

Favorite Game: *Dance Dance Revolution* (PS One; He absolutely drove Lyndsey crazy while mastering the first *Paranoia*)

Learning: How to master "those other *Paranoia* songs on the first mix."

Working on: Joysticks for friends for the PS2, DC and a humongous DDR pad

Systems at the moment: PS2, N64, Genesis, Game Boy Advance, Dreamcast