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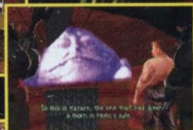
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depressed footsteps of software companies like Acclaim, JVC, Crystal Dynamics, and American Laser Games, Mindscape dismissed 12 members of its game-development teams in November. These teams, which worked on Steel Harbinger and Sidewinder for the PlayStation, were let go as a cost-cutting measure.

Nancy Van Natta, Mindscape's vice president of marketing, was quick to point out that the company would still be developing games. Still in the works is the new **Mindscape Sports Authority** line of hoops, golf, baseball, and gridiron games, as well as **Marvel 2099** for the PlayStation. Mindscape will also be distributing Crystal Dynamics' **3D Baseball** for the PlayStation and Saturn.

For a while the company was also a member of Nintendo's "Dream Team" of N64 developers, but their Monster Dunk basketball game was canceled over the summer.



Among Mindscape's recent efforts are **MegaRace 2** for the PC...



...the role-playing game **Warhammer: Shadow of the Horned Rat** for the PlayStation...



...and the space racer **Starwinder** for the PlayStation.

Nintendo Kills the Virtual Boy

Say goodbye to the **Virtual Boy**. Nintendo has finally pulled the plug on its beleaguered 32-bit tabletop system. According to a top source at Nintendo, "Nintendo of America is not focusing any more marketing efforts on the Virtual Boy, which means there are no more new Virtual Boy games coming out."

Launched in the summer of 1995 with a price tag of \$179, the Virtual Boy and its black-and-red game screens never caught on with



The two highest-rated Virtual Boy games of all time: **Wario Land**...



...and **Mario's Tennis**. Both games got 5.0 Fun Factor ratings.

gamers. It sold well under 50,000 units in North America (by comparison, the Game Boy has sold over 20 million units). With almost no third-party support, only 14 Virtual Boy games (barely one a month) ever made it to store shelves.

The end for the Virtual Boy comes with a whimper, not a bang. The two final games that should have been available in time for this past holiday season—**Bound High** and **Dragon Hopper**—were never released. This leaves Atlus's **Jack Brothers**, an October '96 release, as the last Virtual Boy game. **G**



News Bits

- Tom Clancy, the best-selling author of spy novels like *The Hunt for Red October* and *Patriot Games*, has joined with Virtus Corp., maker of 3D animation tools, to form a new games company called Red Storm Entertainment, Inc. Red Storm will develop and market unspecified new games for the Internet and PC. Clancy assumes the role of chairman of the board for the new company.

- Prospective artists might want to check out a new Cloud 9 Interactive game called *How to Draw the Marvel Way*. Legendary comic-book illustrator Stan Lee shows how to draw superheroes such as Spider-Man, the Hulk, and the X-Men. Over 90 drawing lessons, a "What's Wrong With This Picture?" challenge, and backgrounds on Marvel artists and their creations are included.



▲ The Cloud 9 Web site offers an inside look at the new Marvel CD (<http://www.cloud9int.com>).

Sweepstakes winners **Rudy Espinosa** (left) and **David Dispain** spent a day playing games in the GamePro offices.



- Last summer's Blockbuster Video Games of Summer Sweepstakes resulted in a November getaway weekend for two first-prize winners and their guests. After spending two days in San Francisco, the winners enjoyed a game-filled day at nearby GamePro headquarters (two other first-prize winners were unable to make the trip). The lucky winners were Rudy L. Espinosa, 21, from Arizona, and David Dispain, 22, from Georgia.

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