SONY PLAYSTATION: Two essential new racing games push 32-bit hardware to the max

PC CD-ROM ■ Saturn ■ 3DO ■ M2 ■ PlayStation ■ Ultra 64 ■ Jaguar ■ Arcade ■ Online

34 hot, new 32-bit games reviewed & rated

NEXT GENERATION

Leading edge computer and video games

November 1995

Windows 95

Cool OS. But what about the games?

Sega Saturn 2
Sega's secret 64-bit super console

Virtua Fighter

The creator speaks

Sega's **Yu Suzuki** breaks his silence on ***Virtua Fighter 3***, ***Daytona 2***, and Sega's future coin-op plans. Page 6

Artificial Intelligence

"That stupid videogame!" Actually, it's probably smarter than you...

Power Players

We name the 75 most powerful people in the game industry

FREE! World's First Polygon Pin-up p.112
She'll break your heart, then kick your butt. Cool.

Cover art: Sarah Bryant. Yu Suzuki's ***Virtua Fighter***, ***Virtua Racing***, and ***Daytona USA*** have conquered the world. Without these coin-op classics, Sega would lose its main weapon against Sony. But how much more has Yu Suzuki got to give?

volume **one**

11

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BACK AT THE LAB...

Ken Kutaragi

Director R&D Division
Sony Computer Entertainment
Tokyo, Japan

Career Highlights:
Designed the PlayStation chipset.

What's the big deal?:
Ken Kutagari has been with Sony for more than 20 years, and he first dipped his toe into the world of videogames when he designed the abortive Sony CD-ROM add-on for the Super NES. The PS-X PlayStation project gave him his second chance to create the ultimate game machine, however, and many people around the world would say without doubt that he has succeeded.

"The objective was a high-performance, low-price videogame system which also had a design that was easy to write games for," reveals Kutaragi. "The technology came from an original idea to create a synthesizer for graphics; something that takes a basic graphic and then adds various effects to it quickly and easily."

Work on the project didn't entirely go without schedule-induced incident, however. "At the peak we stayed up all night for several nights in a row. We couldn't stop working because our work was so interesting. The only problem was that our office in Alasaka didn't have a bath in it. One of our employees didn't wash for more that two weeks!"

Life on the cutting edge, ladies and gentlemen.

Least likely career move:
A 32-bit, "portable," "Virtual Reality," um, "thing."

Most likely career move:
In answer to "What new features would you like to see in PlayStation 2?," Kutaragi replies, "Two things. One is higher performance in computer graphics, which benefit from faster and more compact integration of Silicon. Within 10 years we will see vivid computer graphics on a TV screen which are generated by 0.25 micron silicon. This enables us to have CG rendering power of 10 million polygons a second. That is equivalent to a movie-quality image. But the most important thing is that during the next few years there will be widespread use of high-bandwidth communications, which would be a feature of future versions of PlayStation technology."



Ken Kutaragi, whose PlayStation is currently regarded as the most complete and well-designed games machine ever assembled

RJ Mical & David Needle

Vice Presidents & Fellows
The 3DO Company
Redwood City, CA, US

Career Highlights:
Inventors of the Amiga, Lynx, and 3DO.

What's the big deal?:
It's true that of the machines that Mical and Needle have created, only the Amiga has been a true global mass market hit along the lines of the NES or Genesis. But it's only fair to put forward the argument that this is down to the marketing of the machines rather than the quality of the product. Take the Lynx, technically the best hand-held console seen so far, but trashed by Nintendo's Gameboy through pricing, marketing, and software support. And 3DO, when it was first seen four years ago, was a giant step forward — it only started stumbling when the men in suits got hold of it.

Least likely career move:
Become men in suits.

Most likely career move:
Recognition at retail for consistent brilliance in R&D would be nice.

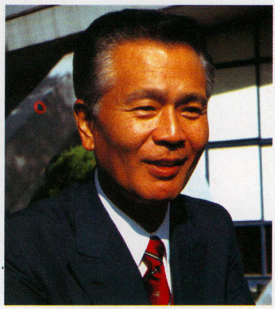
Gumpei Yokoi & Masayuki Uemara

Heads of R&D
Nintendo
Kyoto, Japan

Career Highlights:
Invented Game & Watch, GameBoy, and Virtual Boy (Yokoi). Created NES and Super NES (Uemara).

What's the big deal?:
Yokoi and Uemara were the R&D chiefs that took Nintendo into the age of interactive entertainment — and dragged the rest of the world with them. They made their name in the domestic market with gimmicky toys such as The Ultra Hand (simply a mechanical gripping device) and The Love Tester (a couple held hands while their free hands gripped the handle of the Tester which measured how much "love" was passing between them).

In the early '80s, however, inspired by machines such as Atari's 2600, the two turned to videogames. They headed up two separate teams. Yokoi's division (R&D 1) came up with the Gameboy and many of Nintendo's biggest software hits. Uemara's team (R&D 2, surprisingly enough) brought the NES and Super NES to life. The NES remains the biggest selling game machine in history. More recently Yokoi has been behind Virtual Boy (and some say blots have been introduced to copybooks for the first time). Neither two were involved with the development of the the (hopefully) upcoming Ultra 64.



It is rumored that Gumpei Yokoi's reputation helped him steamroll Virtual Boy through Nintendo's various objections

Least likely career move:
Produce a flawed, gimmicky, and ultimately unsuccessful hardware platform, um, like...

Most likely career move:
...Virtual Boy. The next big thing?

Sim Wong Hoo

Chairman & CEO
Creative Technology Ltd
Singapore City, Singapore

Career Highlights:
Creative Labs' SoundBlaster, launched in 1990, has now sold in excess of 15 million units worldwide.

What's the big deal?:
The flexible, upgradeable nature of the PC has enabled the growth of more than just a few billion dollar spin-off companies. One of the single most successful of these is Creative Technologies, the Singapore-based parent company of Creative Labs, the outfit responsible for the SoundBlaster range of PC sound cards.

Founded by Sim Wong Hoo in 1981 with just $6,000, in 1994 Creative had its first $1 billion year and now employs 2,100 people worldwide. Soundblaster accounts for seven out of 10 sound card sales — a market dominance and penetration that few other companies in any industry can come close to matching (Mr. Gates & Co. excepted). Mr. Sim was named Singapore's Businessman of the Year, and in 1993 was presented with the ASEAN Achievement Award for his accomplishments in information technology. But Creative's biggest success may still be to come. The graphics accelerator card based on a derivative of the highly acclaimed Glint chip, 3D Blaster is set to launch later this fall. If Creative can achieve the same level of success with 3D Blaster as with Sound Blaster, then this success story is far from finished yet.

Least likely career move:
Creative's marketing, distribution, brand awareness, and sales momentum fails to make the upcoming 3D Blaster a success.

Most likely career move:
Mr. Wong Hoo has to buy a larger house to accommodate yet more awards.