

# Sorcerers and balls

by Billy O' Keefe  
Knight Riddler

XBox

From: Sega Sports  
Electronic Arts' "NBA Live" has gone arcade, leaving "NBA 2K3" to run pretty much uncontested in the basketball SIM department. The choice is a breeze either way: "2K3" replicates the NBA game to an astonishing degree and is perhaps the only game to place defense on the same scale of importance as offense. Blindly driving to the hoop will get you burned time and again. You'll need to be selfless

to a fast, pretty and slick game of fast break ball. All the features \_ franchise, player creation and so on \_ are intact. What's missing is a bona fide simulation of the NBA game: Playing defense is fun, but "Live's" offensive game is larger than life, a five-on-five version of "NBA Street" for lack of a better description. EA is going hoarse promoting its new freestyle control, which allows you to use the right analog stick as your arms while the left stick controls your legs. It takes some getting used to, but it's a killer feature once it becomes second nature, and makes for some exhilarating plays and cool discoveries. "Live" isn't the prettiest basketball game on the market, but the game has made major strides in terms of looks, animation and even sound (XBox and PlayStation2 owners get a bonus CD containing the game's excellent soundtrack). "NBA 2K2" easily takes the crown if you pine for a serious NBA simulation, but "Live" can easily coexist with Sega's game in any fan's library. It's a loud, proud good time that finally earns its moniker.

**LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS**  
For: PlayStation 2  
From: EA Games  
A small handful of very different "Lord of the Rings" games have appeared from all sides in no time at all,



Jason Kidd angrily dribbles the ball in the NBA Live 2003 video game.

confusing gamers about which is THE game to own. If you want a role-playing game based on the book, you're barking up the wrong tree with "The Two Towers." But if you want senseless, furious action with the film as the backdrop, this is it. "Towers" is an unapologetic twitch game that delivers wave after wave of enemies for your busy thumbs to destroy. Sounds repetitive, and it is. It's also way too short. But "Towers" is fun, thanks to a slick battle system, many unlockable special moves and the ability to play as three pivotal characters from the film. Actual snippets from the upcoming film (as well as half of "Fellowship of the Ring") introduce each sequence, and the amount of aesthetic detail and activity in each level should make players happy. "Towers" is no substitute for the movie much less the book but it sure is fun to step inside the heroes' shoes and save the day yourself, even if the adventure ends too soon.

with the ball and milk the game's tremendous controls for all they're worth. The game's look and sound are equally impressive: The new "sweat engine" as a fatigue gauge is a bit overrated, but it's hard to deny how awesome the players look and move. The game's presentation is gold as well, thanks to the new ESPN-centric look, the always-dependable commentary, and some sobering court banter to give it a unique squeeze of character. "2K3's" franchise mode is the best of any basketball game - a far cry from "2K2" and the street ball mode and cache of extras are as welcome as ever. Fans of the fast break and non-stop offense may feel a bit lost in "2K3," but students of the game will be shocked at how smart and deep it is. For basketball fans, this one's pretty much a no-brainer.

**NBA LIVE 2003**  
For: XBox, GameCube, PlayStation 2  
From: EA Sports  
"NBA Live" EA's basketball game has endured some major physical therapy in the past year, transforming itself from a prodding, merely decent basketball title

in a basketball game in 2003 goes to "NBA Shootout 2003's" career mode, which puts you in gym shoes instead of a two-piece suit. You design a player, join a summer league, get drafted or signed (hopefully) and play well enough to make the starting five of a contender. Cool indeed, as is "Shootout's" dunk and player editor features, which let your mind run wild. Unfortunately, the gameplay still leaves more to be desired. The series has improved immensely since its last installment, but it doesn't quite grasp the free-flowing finesse of "NBA Live" or the intelligence of "NBA 2K3." There's a general tinge of sluggishness in both the controls and pace of the action, and the A.I. is still missing a few coats of polish on both sides of the ball. "Shootout" generally looks and sounds good, and the feature set doesn't have any gaping omissions. The gameplay may lose steam over the long haul, but curious gamers would be smart to give "Shootout" at least a rental, if only to check out the brilliant career mode, which will only get better in coming editions.

## Through the looking glass

by Mike Pingree, KRT Campus

IS IT CROWDED IN HERE, OR IS IT ME?

A German policewoman obtained the mobile phone number of a fugitive from justice, called him up, flirted with him and arranged a blind date.

The man, who was wanted in the town of Recklinghausen, came to a bar in downtown Berlin "all dressed up" and unaware not only that his date was a cop, but that all the men at surrounding tables were undercover police officers, too. The date ended in his arrest.

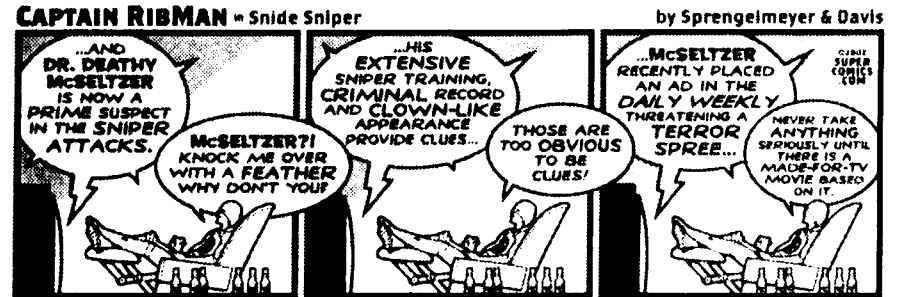
HONEY, NOTHING CAN STOP US NOW:

An Albanian drug dealer was deported from Germany but slipped back in, and made the mistake of registering to marry his girlfriend in Cologne.

He was arrested a half-hour before the ceremony was to begin.

BUT OFFICER, THE HORSE WAS SOBER

Police arrested a man for drunken driving when they discovered him riding his horse down the sidewalk in Carson City, Nev., after having consumed 12 beers.



## DITHERED TWITS

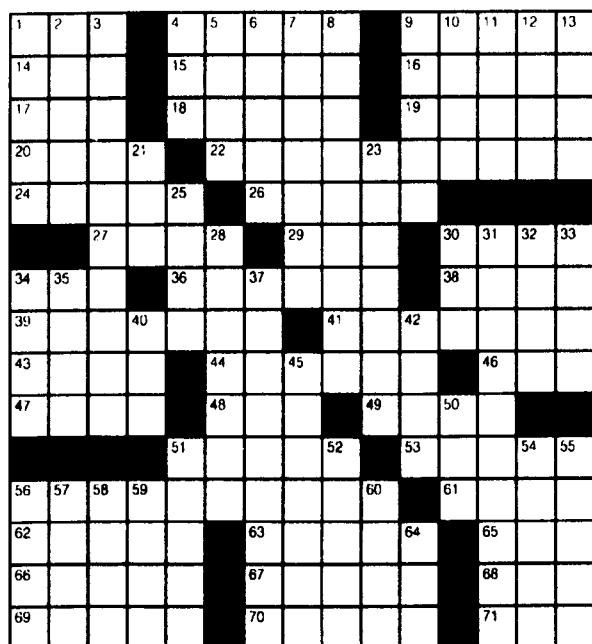
by Stan Waling



Chiquito began to wonder if Saint Primates was really the best choice for his health care needs.

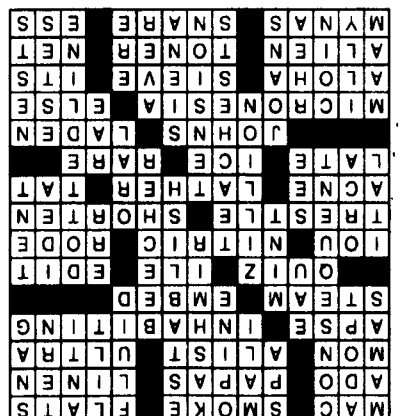
## Crossword

- ACROSS**  
1 Bub  
4 Fire giveaway  
9 Stage scenery  
14 Fuss  
15 Mates of 1D  
16 Flax product  
17 Sun follower  
18 Elite social category  
19 To the extreme  
20 Church recess  
22 Living in  
24 Word with engine or iron  
26 Fix solidly  
27 Short exam  
29 du Diable  
30 Correct text  
34 Gambler's marker  
36 Word with acid or oxide  
38 Went on horseback  
39 Bridge support  
41 Curtail  
43 Skin problem  
44 Soapy foam  
46 Make lace  
47 Tardy  
48 Chill  
49 Uncommon  
51 Wayne and Garfield  
53 Burdened  
56 Palikir's country  
61 Otherwise  
62 Islander's farewell  
63 Strainer  
65 \_ about time!  
66 Foreigner  
67 Skin cream  
68 Bottom line  
69 Starlinglike mimics  
70 Trap  
71 Double curve
- DOWN**  
1 Mates of 15A  
2 Vote to accept  
3 Following as a result  
4 Health resort  
5 African republic  
6 Express a view



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### Solutions



- 7 Disputed Asian territory  
8 Found  
9 Smooth and effortless  
10 Pleasant pitch variation  
11 In opposition  
12 Relative of a gull  
13 Obstacle  
21 de cologne  
23 Harriet Stowe  
25 Aromatic herb  
28 Extremely large number  
30 Blow it  
31 What to sign on  
32 Notion  
33 Hiker's housing  
34 Slanted type: abbr.  
35 Killer whale  
37 Oolong shipping containers  
40 Understand  
42 Spoken  
45 Emotional stress  
50 "Norma \_"  
51 Collins and Crawford  
52 City in Tuscany  
54 Adlai's 1956 running mate  
55 Snug retreats  
56 Address for the Queen  
57 Badly  
58 Nickel or dime  
59 Actress Perlman  
60 Assert  
64 Before, to be brief

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