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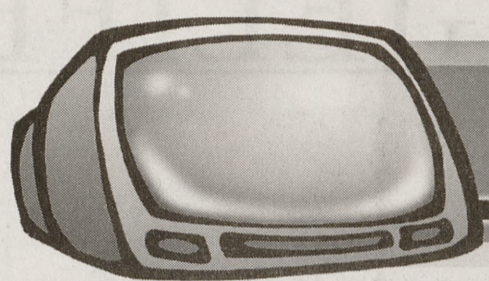
to begin service in the Spring Semester.  
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**STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICE**  
 Texas A&M University

A department in the Division of Student Affairs



# Batt Bytes

**A = instant classic    B = a cut above    C = average**  
**D = don't buy it        F = burn in effigy**

**Um Jammer Lammy**  
 Genre: puzzle  
 Developer: Sony  
 Playstation

*PaRappa the Rapper* was too much of a success to not merit a sequel. Rather than sticking with the title character of the first game of the series, players are given a new character, *Um Jammer Lammy*, to play through a musical adventure.

For those unfamiliar with the concept of the *PaRappa* games, it is easiest to visualize them as Simon Says for Playstation. Players take on the role of the title character and follow the instructions of assorted other characters by pressing buttons which correspond to the character's actions on the screen.

For example, a player might be told to spin three times and then jump, so they would press the triangle button three times and the circle button once. Players score points based on their accuracy and their ability to punch the button combinations in time with the music.

The game may not hold any appeal for older gamers who would much rather hit a grand slam or blow up a building, but it is an ide-

al gift idea for younger players who do not have the coordination to execute a spinning backflip kick and chokehold. It should also be a hit with parents who are tired of seeing games where the ultimate objective is to shoot nuns or bludgeon kittens.

The game's charm, from its bright cardboard-cutout graphics to its innocent appeal, never diminishes. Where the first game in the series suffered slightly from poor color choices and washouts in the background, *Lammy* never misses a step graphically.

*Lammy* does have its negative side, though. While some of the button combinations are quite tricky, the game becomes button-pushing busywork instead of the mental exercise of *Tetris* or *Puzzle Fighter*.

For a musical adventure, the music is not the best quality one could expect. Considering the game's intended younger audience, however, this is not a liability. Even a jaded gamer can spend a few quality minutes trying to master button combinations before moving on to more mature pursuits. Unfortunately, many will not bother to try. (Grade: B-)

— Stephen Wells

**Crash Team Racing**  
 Genre: Racing  
 Developer: Naughty Dog  
 Playstation

Playstation owners who yearn to experience the joy of N64's *Mario Kart* can finally satiate themselves with the almost-a-clone go-cart action of *Crash Team Racing*.

The premise of the game is simple: players ride a go-cart around cartoonish tracks and try to be the first to cross the finish line. Several of the most memorable characters from the *Crash Bandicoot* action/adventure series are accounted for, each with a different set of racing talents.

The game does contain some interesting twists on the old racing theme. Players who run over fruit on the tracks are rewarded by having their cart perform better. Also, the tracks are littered with crates containing randomly generated power-ups. Players never know when they will receive a much-needed turbo boost to catch up to the pack or be stuck with a near-worthless oil slick to drop on the track.

Graphically, the game stays in tune with the standards set by

other games in the *Crash* coot lineup. Lightning-fast rates and bright colors make the game fun from falling into a rut, and each of the tracks own aesthetic appeal.

Unfortunately, the track many of the elements that good racing game into an excellent one. Games like *Wipeout*, *Gran Turismo* challenge, no matter how experienced are, but *Crash Team Racing* to deliver even the most racetrack challenges.

The game also has a tendency to run too slow, no matter how experienced the player. The difficulty rating players are given under. Players are surprised by a hairpin turn they see it coming a mile away. If the go carts traveled faster, higher difficulty settings the game would have much more repeat-play potential.

Slow game play and unspirited track design hamper racing title with a great reputation. While the game is especially in multiplayer mode, the lack of a serious challenge will turn off many gamers. (Grade: C+)

— Stephen Wells



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## Networks unveil challengers to 'Millionaire'

NEW YORK (AP) — ABC is not ready to reveal when it is bringing back "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire," but rival networks are already planning around the show.

Caught somewhat off-guard by the quiz show's smashing ratings during an 18-night run that ended last week, ABC executives were mulling whether to bring it back as a regular series and how often to show it.

"We really believe we're in a win-win situation no matter what we do here," Lloyd Braun, ABC Entertainment co-chair, said yesterday.

CBS' top executive tried to steal ABC's thunder, saying in a conference call with reporters that he had heard "Millionaire" will begin airing regularly on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays starting in January. Leslie Moonves, CBS Television president, said he was repeating trade publication reports. ABC would not comment.

CBS said it was taking the unusual step of re-running its Celine Dion farewell special on Dec. 4, largely because so many people missed it the first time last Wednesday when it aired against the final night of "Millionaire."

NBC also said it was pushing back its 10-hour miniseries planned for February, "The 10th Kingdom," for a few weeks partly in hopes that the "Millionaire" craze will fade.

**"It has become a cultural phenomenon. Everybody's talking about it."**

— Stu Bloomberg  
 ABC Entertainment co-chair

"The thought is, it will become more humdrum as it is going on," NBC Entertainment President Garth Ancier said.

ABC's retort: Do not bet on it.

"I don't believe it will become humdrum," ABC Entertainment co-chairman Stu Bloomberg said. "It has become a cultural phenomenon. Everybody's talking about it."

A trickle of copycat game shows, already on Fox's "The Price Is Right," will soon become a flood. NBC said it will rush its revival of "The Price Is Right" on the air within the next few months, and has another game in the works. CBS said beginning "Winning Lines," a quiz show the same producers of "Millionaire," shortly after the new year begins.

Moonves described it as a game where contestants are whittled down to one who must go up against a "wonder wall" of questions.

"I probably wouldn't be putting 'Winning Lines' in the schedule if it wasn't for 'Millionaire,'" he said, "and anyone who isn't talking about it is a liar."

Television executives warned that the success of a cheaply-produced game will be felt throughout the business: "It will become less willing to spend on scripts and pilots of new comedies and dramas."

"There is a real domino effect on the board," Moonves said.

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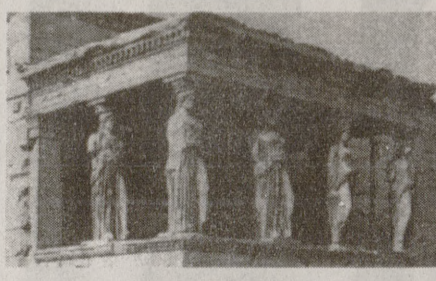
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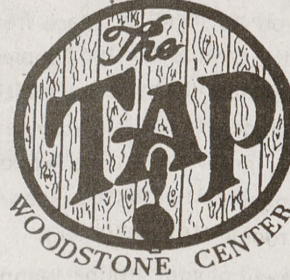
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