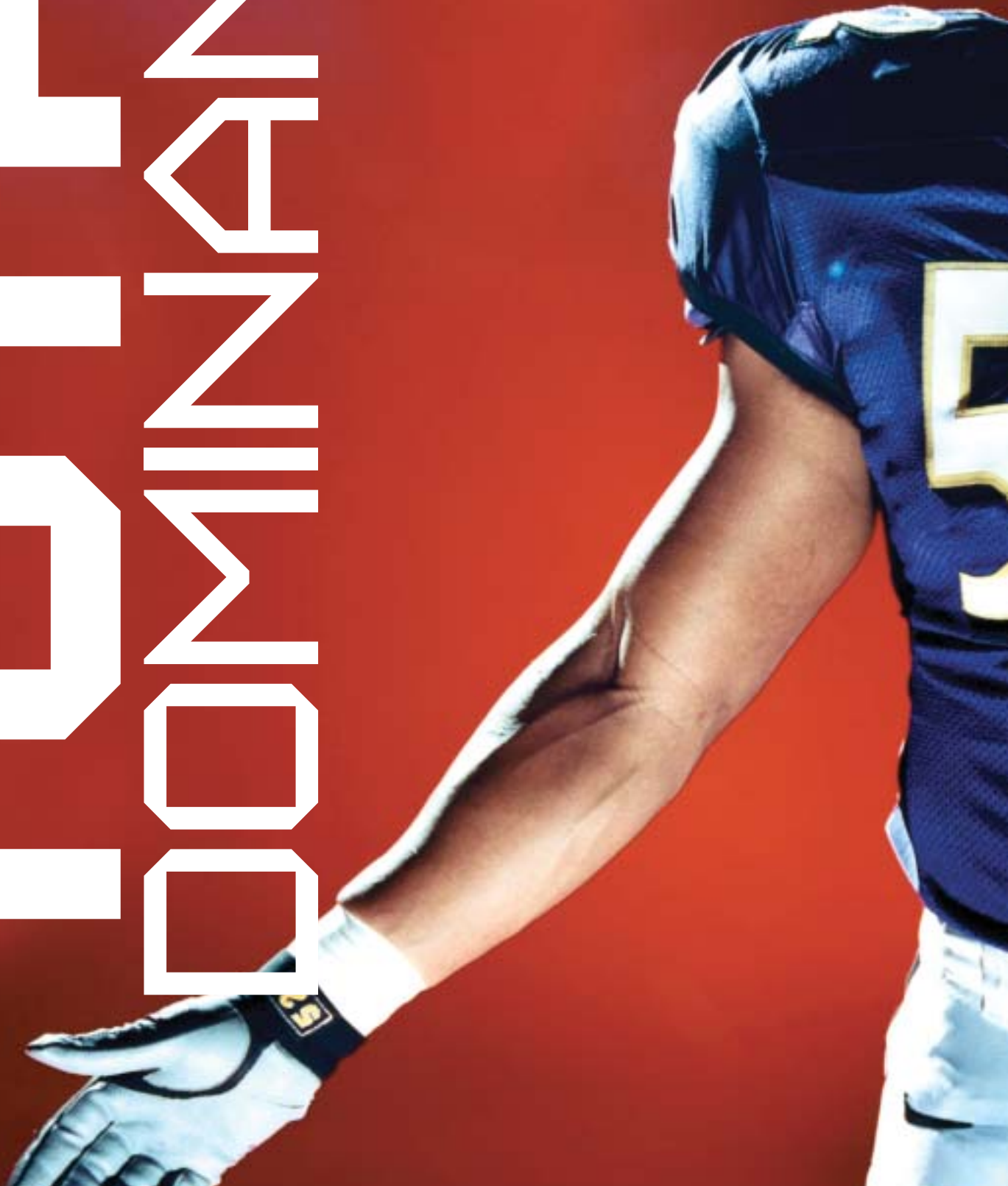


# THE MADDEN FRANCHISE

NOW IN ITS 15TH SEASON,  
THE VETERAN MADDEN SHOWS  
NO SIGNS IT'S LOSING A STEP





By Chris Baker  
With David Simutis and Todd Zuniga

**Located in Canton, OH**, the National Football League Hall of Fame honors all of the legends of the game. Montana. Thorpe. Largent. Unitas. Brown. Payton. *Madden*.

No, not *John* Madden, the legendary Raiders coach and broadcaster—he still has yet to get his much-deserved personal due. Rather, sitting in the Hall is a nice, shiny copy of *Madden NFL 2004*. A videogame.

Actually, it's more than a videogame.

*Madden NFL 2005* marks the 15th year of the venerable franchise, and in that time, the series truly has grown—much like the man himself—larger than life. Nearly 37 million copies have been sold since 1989, and in recent years, very few titles (if any) challenge the latest edition of *Madden* as the best-selling game of the year.

And it's only getting bigger.

*Madden* has become such a force, in fact, it's not uncommon to see television specials about it. Or to hear it mentioned in a movie. Or to read how a breakthrough band attributes its success to having a song in the game.

For anyone who can't remember a time before videogames, *Madden* has solidified itself as a staple of American culture. Whether you call yourself a gamer or not.



# DEFENSE

**Defense wins championships**, the old saying goes. But most *Madden* players would disagree. "Last year, we saw a lot of games being played into the 50s and 60s," says Tiburon Supervising Producer Jeremy Strauser, "so we're trying to balance it." This year, anyone you ask—from Tiburon employees to John Madden or cover athlete Ray Lewis—will tell you they're most proud of the audibles the team is calling in order make some defensive adjustments. "We've put a lot of things under the hood," General Manager Steve Chiang tells us. Things like...

## THE HIT STICK

By pressing the right analog stick—the "hit stick"—in the proper direction at the right time, "you're able to deliver a bigger tackle than by pressing dive or Circle," says Strauser. "It's a way that defense can really change the tempo of a game—they can cause more turnovers. It's a risk/reward thing, too, so you can totally take yourself out of a play if you just go around trying to hit stick the whole time."



The Ravens' Todd Heap was much happier in the days before the hit stick.

## NEW DEFENSIVE PLAYMAKER CONTROLS

Last year, Playmaker control was next to useless on defense. Now, by using the right analog before a snap, you can change the assignment of any player to hook zone, blitz, flat zone, or QB spy. "He might think I'm blitzing, but it's actually prevent," points out Assistant Producer Ian Cummings. On a related note, a new coverage audible makes double coverage of Randy Moss or Terrell Owens all the easier to accomplish

## SUBTLE ASSISTANCE

Just playing defense itself has always been tough in *Madden*, and Tiburon knows it. "We've noticed a lot of people don't always pick the best angle [to tackle a ball carrier]," says Strauser, "so we've added an 'assist' so that even if they're facing the wrong angle, they'll be brought to the best angle. It's not taking away any control, and it's real subtle—but it's there. You wouldn't know it unless we tell you to look for it."



## STOPPING VICK

In *Madden 2004*, Mike Vick was unstoppable. All you had to do was send a few Falcons deep, wait for the backs to pursue them, and run the game's cover athlete to either side of the field. The usual result: a first down—and then some.

In the new game, he certainly remains a weapon, but Tiburon has done its best to ensure that the Falcons can't simply Vick you to defeat. "We put in some new contain logic for our ends," says Jeremy Strauser. "We talked to defensive line coaches about Mike Vick, and they all roll their eyes. What they're doing now is a kind of contain rush, and the whole point is to keep him in the pocket. You'll see that in *Madden 2005* a lot—we have a lot of contain-type plays."

# the MANN

## JOHN MADDEN TALKS TRAIN RIDES, RAY LEWIS, AND HAVING MEETINGS WITH HIMSELF



**No other man alive** personifies videogame football better than John Madden. But how did his line of pigskin games come to be? What does he think of the NFL these days? Who does he see winning it all this year? We asked him about pretty much everything except hardware stores and athlete's foot remedies (which, to be honest, we're kind of regretting now).

**OPM** How did you get into this whole thing, anyway?

**JOHN MADDEN** When I first retired from football and I was doing some teaching, I had a class at the University of California, and I thought that I would teach football. For fans and students—make some tools for coaches and stuff. And then [Electronic Arts founder] Trip Hawkins came to see me about a computer game. He went to Harvard and majored in games. So I thought, "Shoot, if a guy can go to Harvard and make up his own major—and it's games—he has to be something." And so we were thinkin' it could be a computer game, but it could be used for maybe high school coaches.

So my thing is, if I'm gonna do it, it has to be NFL football. I'm not interested in other types of football. The first thing was, there has to be 22 guys, because a lot of these games before had three guys on a team, six guys on a team—I said you have to have a lot of 'em. You have to have linemen, 'cause they're part of the game. I thought, "Hell, that'll take a couple years." So they didn't get back to me for a couple years after that. [Laughs]

I was taking a train at the time, and we would go on a train and draw up plays the way the game was played. And then it finally came out on Apple, and as hardware started to come around and changed, we changed. We were always ahead of everyone, 'cause we were the first ones there. I mean, we were doing it before there was a "there."

**OPM** Could you have imagined back then that it would get to the level that it's at today?

**JM** No! Hell no! Because there was no level. Anyone who said they could imagine this back then is lyin'. You didn't know what it was. Computers were just kinda coming in at that time. So I thought computers were going to grow and there would be a day when most people would have one, and then one of the things they'd be able to do is play a game of computer football. Now that's as far as I took it.

**OPM** Do you ever ask yourself what more Tiburon can do?

**JM** Yeah, but I always used to say as a coach that you never stay the same. If you think everything's OK and we're gonna stay the same, you're gonna slip. You know, you always have to get better. And I firmly believe that. I firmly believe that whatever it is, we have to get better. Graphics have to get better, realism has to get better, speed has to get better, positioning, plays.... Everything always has to get better. You can't stay the same.

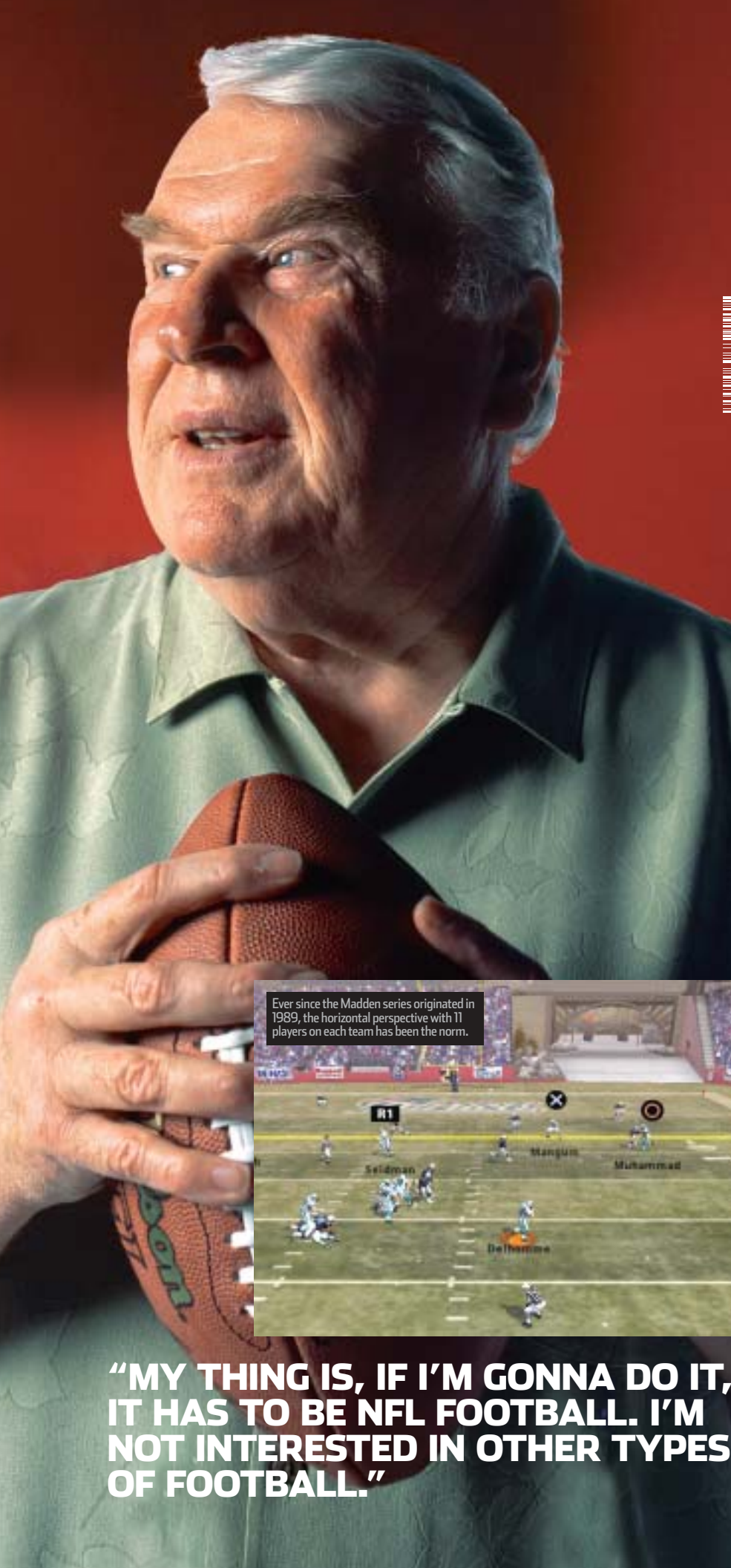
**OPM** Do you actually play the game yourself?

**JM** Yeah, but not very well. The younger person can always play it better. What you do is you always watch someone else play. And that was one of the things: Watching someone else, there was a time when

### MADDEN: THE CAREER

So what does Madden know about football? Just a little bit. A linebacker coach when he began his NFL coaching career with Oakland in 1967, Madden became the youngest head coach in the American Football League in 1969 at age 33. After retiring in 1979, he started his football-broadcasting career at CBS in 1980, moving to Fox after that network bought the NFL broadcasting rights in 1994. In 2002, he joined the Monday Night Football broadcast.





they were going for it on fourth down all the time. Everything we kind of put into it before was offense—there were just more things you could do offensively. And this year we have more things you can do defensively. And now we have Ray Lewis on the cover—the first time we’ve had a defensive player.

**OPM** Right. So what do you think of Ray Lewis as a player?

**JM** Well, he kind of epitomizes defense. I think that one of our things this year is more defense, better defense. And who do you think of when you think of defense in the NFL today? You think of Ray Lewis. There was a time when it was Lawrence Taylor. There was a time when it was Dick Butkus. But right now it’s Ray Lewis. He’s the perfect guy.

**OPM** Of course, all players have their own skill ratings in the game. Do you ever get any flak from players saying, “Hey, my rating’s not good enough!”?

**JM** Yeah. More speed—“juice,” as they call it. They all think—and I get it quite a bit—that they’re not fast enough. That in real life they’re faster.

**OPM** We’ve heard Emmitt Smith said you made him *too* fast....

**JM** He was the only guy. In the history of guys talkin’ to me, the only guy was Emmitt Smith. He told me, “You know, I’m not that good. I’m better in the game than I am on the field!” And he’s the *only* guy that I ever had say that.

Last year, Dante Hall got up—you know, the kick returner/receiver from Kansas City. He talked to me in training camp, and he said, “Man, you’ve got me so slow, *linemen* run faster than me, the trainer coming out on the field for an injured player runs faster than me, the doctor runs faster than me....” [Laughs]

Any time that I do get that, I take it seriously—I don’t laugh at ‘em. And what I do is I call up, and I say, “Make sure....”

**OPM** Do you have any predictions this year for the NFL?

**JM** Only that something wacky’ll happen. I mean, that’s the way football is today with free agency. There was a day when you could pick 10 teams and say two of these teams are going to make it to the Super Bowl—and you’d be right 95 percent of the time. And now with free agency you can’t even do that. I mean, forget the two teams—you can’t even pick a group of 10.

And if we were talking here a year ago, who was Carolina? They just got a new quarterback, Jake Delhomme. Who? They didn’t even know how to say his name. Is it “Del-oom”? “Del-oop”? “De-bacca”? S---, the next thing you know, he’s in the Super Bowl. And who would have picked Baltimore? Who would have picked Tampa? Who would have picked the Patriots? Who would have picked any of these teams?

**OPM** So does that make it any more exciting to you? The fact that you can’t predict what’s going to happen?

**JM** Yeah, and I had to have a meeting with myself on that because it’s easy to say I like the old days. I like the dominant team; I like the great team—the Dallas Cowboys and the 49ers and the Joe Gibbs Washington Redskins and the undefeated Miami Dolphins. But those days are over, and they’re not comin’ back. So if all you are is a guy banging his head against the wall who keeps saying that.... You have to join it—you have to enjoy it.

The thing I really like about it is you don’t know, and anyone can win. I think it helps the fans, too. It used to be you had the dominant team. If you were up, you were gonna be up for a long time, which was the good news. But if you were down, you were going to be down for a long time. And now, you don’t have to stay down for a long time, so everyone that is down that won four or five games can say, “S---, look at Carolina. They just won four or five games and they’re in the Super Bowl!” So you have that, which is big. Everyone really believes that their team can get there.

Check out John Madden’s complete OPM interview, coming this August to [IUP.com](http://IUP.com).

Ever since the Madden series originated in 1989, the horizontal perspective with 11 players on each team has been the norm.



**“MY THING IS, IF I’M GONNA DO IT, IT HAS TO BE NFL FOOTBALL. I’M NOT INTERESTED IN OTHER TYPES OF FOOTBALL.”**



Photo by Michael Sexton

# FRANCHISE MODE ENHANCEMENTS

**Madden 99 created franchise**—a gameplay mode since adopted by almost every other sports game. Every year, it only gets deeper, and *Madden 2005* is no different. Its most notable new features include...

## NEWSPAPER STORIES

Much similar to the way *NCAA Football's Sports Illustrated* covers keep you informed about the happenings in your college football seasons, *Madden 2005's* Storyline Central section debuts the use of newspapers to cover everything. And not just on a national scale—though you can check *USA Today* for the biggest stories in the league, the local newspaper (many of them actual licensed papers like *The Green Bay News-Chronicle*) also tells you what's up with your team in particular.



"It's a real nice, deep feature," comments Strauser. "There's literally 25,000 types of stories that are gonna pop up—anything from a guy got hurt on the field and he wants to play through the pain to, you know, this one player isn't getting the ball enough. Milestones will pop up, too, like Emmitt Smith breaking the rushing record—we'll track that. All sorts of really cool things like that."

## TALK SHOWS WITH TONY BRUNO

"We've always wanted to do a radio show," says Chiang, "and this year was the time to really come after it." The perfect host? None other than Fox Sports Radio voice Tony Bruno.

"It's all set up very interactively so that what he's talking about is what's going on in your franchise," explains Associate Producer Oge Young. "Of our thousands of potential newspaper stories, about the 500 most significant ones have been set up as radio-show talk. Tony Bruno will discuss significant player movement, teams that are off to a great start, and things like that. We try to set it up like a real radio show where we've got call-ins. If a team, say, cuts a player, people will call in and [voice whether they] like it or dislike it."

Also calling in are 25 of the 32 NFL head coaches, whom Bruno interviews just as he would on his actual show. Young says, "It's set up to be extensible enough so that in 2015, if Bill Belichick is coaching the Raiders—and it's the middle of the season and the Raiders are doing terribly—you'll still get an interview that tackles both of [these things]."

"A lot of Tony's personality comes through," continues Young. "We've got his general takes on things like overtime rules or what the salary cap means to the NFL—that sort of thing."

## PLAYER MORALE

No one wants an unhappy player—but you'll get 'em in *Madden 2005*. "The NFL is driven by stories seven days a week," says Strauser. "It's not just the game on Sunday that matters anymore. It's are your players happy and content? Are they getting enough playing time? Are you getting them the ball enough when they do play? Are they threatened by the rookie that you drafted?"



All of those factors can influence a player's performance on the field. "Each player has a morale ranking now—a morale progression system throughout the course of the season," he goes on. "If you don't keep him content, then stories will pop up internally first [via e-mail on your PDA], then get leaked out and become public stories [in newspapers and on Bruno's show]. You have to manage those expectations and stories, because it'll affect their in-game performance."

Ultimately, an upset player might demand a trade. It's best to keep him happy. Unless you really hate him, anyway.

## OFF-SEASON MANEUVERING

Your managerial duties aren't over between February and August. New off-season features include restricted free agents, franchise tags (i.e., a designated player on your team who cannot become a free agent), and the fact that players looking to re-sign with your team must consider between 20 to 30 factors (team prestige, your offer, the town's weather, other talent on the team, etc.).

# the big MOUTH

Tony Bruno is more than the host of Fox Sports Radio's nationally syndicated *The Morning Extravaganza*. He's been digitally immortalized as the host of the in-game sports-talk radio show in *Madden 2005*. —David Simutis



**OPM** Why did they ask you to be the radio voice of the game?

**TONY BRUNO** I was told they were looking for a radio voice and they wanted somebody national, and my name was mentioned. I've been a *Madden* fan for years. I've known the EA people—I go to all the parties and I love videogames. John Madden is a friend. I've known him since 1980. I worked with him in 1980 on his first radio job. I don't think John had anything to do with it. I'm sure the people at EA asked him about it, and I'm sure he had no problem with it. It's an honor. It's not just being in a videogame, it's like being in the best. They didn't invite me to do voices for *Grand Theft Auto*. [Laughs]

They're making it worse." They make it better every year. And if you give the fans more and something more to look forward to, and this is something they like, then it's even better. The part that's way beyond my comprehension is how this stuff actually works and how the technology makes this sound and look great. Those are the geniuses. What I'm doing is what I do every day. The geniuses are the ones who put it together and make it work. It's mind-boggling.

## "I WOULD HAVE DONE THIS FOR NOTHING. SHOULD I SAY THAT?"

**OPM** You could make a whole career out of voicing games and not have to get up so early.

**TB** I love my job. I do the radio thing and I don't pursue a lot of stuff. When I announced it on my show, the response was amazing, and nobody even knew specifically what I was doing. It's a big deal. I'm pretty well known, but there are a lot of people who will be hearing me for the first time in the game, so it's going to help me as far as recognition. It's not glamorous—it's a lot of hard, tedious work—but the way the EA people put it together is amazing. I can't wait to see and hear it. The most exciting part is the end result. You put the game on and you say, "That's pretty cool, man...and that's me, kids."

**OPM** How has being this involved in the process changed your appreciation for *Madden*?

**TB** It's better: I'm in the game! How could I not appreciate it more? I appreciate it from the beginning because it's a great game. I hope it's better with me in it. I can't imagine people saying, "Oh my, what are they doing to that game?"

**OPM** Did you write the in-game rants?

**TB** No, but I basically did because the rants that are written are me. There's nothing that I say in the game that are words put into my mouth. This is exactly the way I feel, the way I talk, and the way I think. I had the creative freedom to change anything I wanted; if I read a rant that I didn't agree with, I told them I wanted to change it. I'm absolutely astounded at how the writers at EA were able to capture my feelings, my words, and my thoughts and put it all on paper.

**OPM** Do you have a personal favorite rant?

**TB** I don't remember. [Laughs] The thing that's so weird is we've done so much recording, and I'm doing my radio show every day, so I'm ranting every day anyway. I don't remember from recording 20 hours of script [some] time ago if the rant I was doing was for the game or if I did it on my show. Because it's me and I'm ranting about the NFL all the time and they're all exactly the same way I think. I'm doing my same thing in *Madden* that I do on my radio show every day.

## OVERHEARD

"As a fan, and not a player, you all probably don't realize how realistic *Madden* is. We can actually practice reads, defenses, and offensive plays just by playing the game."  
—Dolphins superstar running back Ricky Williams on his official website, [www.run-ricky-run.com](http://www.run-ricky-run.com)





# MADDEN PSAT

## (PLAYSTATION APTITUDE TEST)

Think you know everything there is about *Madden*? Test your knowledge here, smarty-pants (or just look at it as a history lesson). Fifteen questions to celebrate 15 years.

1. Aboard what type of vehicle did John Madden first discuss creating a football game with EA, way back in 1986?

- A. Plane
- B. Train
- C. Automobile
- D. Roller Coaster

2. When was *John Madden Football*, EA's first *Madden* game, released for Apple II?

- A. 1987
- B. 1988
- C. 1989
- D. 1990

3. Which of these is a screenshot from the first *John Madden Football*?



**BONUS:** Name the other three games.

4. Which of these does not exist?

- A. *John Madden Football II* (PC)
- B. *John Madden Football 92* (Genesis)
- C. *John Madden Duo CD Football* (Turbo Duo)
- D. *Madden NFL 96* (PS1)

5. Which of these does not apply to *John Madden Football: Championship Edition*?

- A. Available on both major 16-bit systems
- B. Available exclusively in rental stores
- C. Released in 1992
- D. Features 38 classic teams, but has no NFL or NFL Player's Association license

6. Fellow *Madden* commentator Al Michaels has taken part in other videogame franchises. Which of these apply? (Multiple answers...possibly.)

- A. *ABC Monday Night Football*
- B. *Bottom of the 9th*
- C. *Hardball*
- D. *Joe Montana Football*

7. True or False: *Madden* is the first American console sports title with a year in the title.

8. The first *Madden* with an NFL license came out in...

- A. 1989
- B. 1992
- C. 1993
- D. 1994



9. Which Sega Genesis game used the *Madden* engine to create a bloody version of football in which you could literally kill opposing players? (And incidentally, EA, you'd be wise to resurrect it.)

- A. *Jerry Glanville's Pigskin Footbrawl*
- B. *Mutant League Football*
- C. *John Madden Bloodball*
- D. *Barney's Hide & Seek Game*

**BONUS:** Who was the cover athlete for the answer to No. 9?

10. Which of these developers has never been associated with *Madden*?

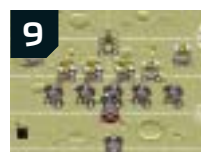
- A. Avalanche Software
- B. High Score Productions
- C. Tiburon
- D. Visual Concepts

11. Which was the first PlayStation *Madden* to use 3D polygonal player models?

- A. *Madden NFL 98*
- B. *Madden NFL 99*
- C. *Madden NFL 2000*
- D. *Madden NFL 2001*

12. Franchise mode debuted in which *Madden*?

- A. *Madden NFL 95*
- B. *Madden NFL 97*
- C. *Madden NFL 99*
- D. *Madden NFL 2001*



13. Who was the first NFL player on the cover of a *Madden*?

- A. Warren Moon
- B. Jerry Rice
- C. Junior Seau
- D. Eddie George

14. The EA Trax program started off in which *Madden*?

- A. *Madden NFL 2001*
- B. *Madden NFL 2002*
- C. *Madden NFL 2003*
- D. *Madden NFL 2004*

15. By the end of this year, how many PS1 *Maddens* will there be?

- A. Seven
- B. Eight
- C. Nine
- D. 10

Answers:  
1. B, 2. C, 3. D (BONUS: A is Atari Football, B is Intellivision NFL Football, C is arcade 10-Yard Fight), 4. D, 5. A, 6. A and C (in the aptly titled Al Michaels Announces Hardball III), 7. True (John Madden Football 92), 8. C, 9. B (BONUS: Bones Jackson), 10. A (you thought it was D, didn't you?), 11. B, 12. C, 13. D, 14. C, 15. C.



## MADDEN NFL 2005 COLLECTOR'S EDITION

In case you missed out on the old console days of *Madden*—or perhaps you just want to relive them—EA has the perfect solution. The limited-edition *Madden NFL 2005 Collector's Edition* includes the new game plus modernized versions of 16-bit and PS1 gameplay (two forms for the latter: sprite-based, as in *Madden 97*, and polygonal, as in *99* to present) and much more for *Madden* enthusiasts.

Like *NCAA Football's* College Classics, *Madden Moments* throws 15 of the past decade-and-a-half's most memorable situations at you, and you can play as any playoff team throughout that period of time. More than 1,000 trivia questions also await you, as do behind-the-scenes documentaries and other cool stuff. If you're willing to pay an extra 10 bucks for all these extras, the *CE* might be the way to go.



# ENHANCING THE LOOK

If defense is the primary focus for *Madden 2005*'s development, its aesthetic enhancements definitely fall close behind. "I really think this is going to be the best-looking *Madden* ever—didn't think I'd be saying that on the fifth version of the current hardware," admits Strauser.

Senior Art Director Mark Mongie leads the team in charge of the graphical overhaul. "It was very tough," he tells us. "We had one year to pull off a lot of changes. *Madden* is built on a legacy of sequential years of development, so there's a lot tied into a lot of other stuff. Making big changes to any project like this is a big challenge. We made quite a few changes with the system we had, and we brought some new improvements in as well." The most notable include...

## ENVIRONMENTS

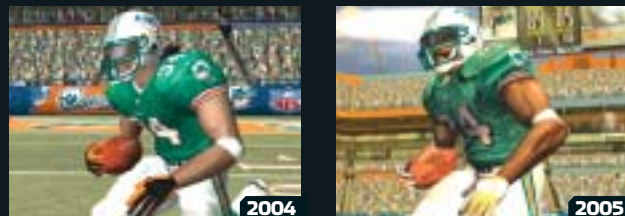
"We spent a lot of time on the environments," says Mongie. "There was a lot of research. I think we are accurate to the real-life environments. Plus, we added what I think is drama to the environments—more of a cinematic or Hollywood feel. That's probably my favorite area."



Some of this "drama" includes changing skies and weather. "We have this weather and time system in the game so that the weather, the sun, and skies and all that change throughout the course of the game," explains Strauser. "So you can start a game at 4:00, and soon the lights come on, and then by the end, it's dark with the moon in the sky. The guys are really pushing the hardware to the limits, and I'm really proud to see that in year five of the hardware, we're still doing that."

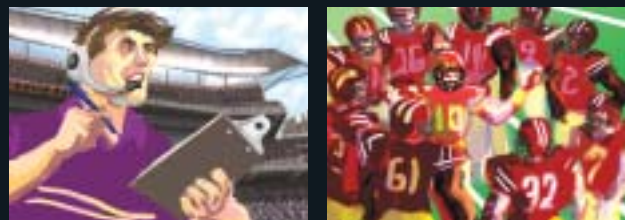
## PLAYER MODELS

Just look at the muscular arms on Ricky Williams here compared with those in *Madden 2004*, and you can see how much effort the team put into re-creating its player models. Beyond just looking at players' pictures, Tiburon's artists hit the books and studied the human body in order to be as accurate as possible. You can even see the veins!



## CUT-SCENES AND IN-GAME ANIMATIONS

*Madden 2005* includes more than 1,000 new motion-captured animations—everything from rabid fans cheering on their home team to subtle tackle animations you probably won't even notice. In the conceptual stages, the cut-scenes begin with really cool art, like these pieces by Associate Art Director Tony Santo, a former Disney animator.



# THE CURSE

SIGNING ON AS A MADDEN COVER ATHLETE DOESN'T COME WITHOUT ITS RISKS



**WHICH PLAYER HAS BEEN THE MOST TRAGIC VICTIM OF THE MADDEN CURSE?**

**53% MICHAEL VICK ('04)**

Preseason injuries are just wrong.

**36% PLEASE—THERE'S NO MADDEN CURSE**

(Though maybe *Sports Illustrated* should do a cover story on it.)

**7% EDDIE GEORGE ('01)**

The Titans should've been a lock that year.

**2% DAUNTE CULPEPPER ('02)**

The Vikings paid the price for that one.

**1% MARSHALL FAULK ('03)**

He bounced back, but the Rams suffered.

Source: USAToday.com



Few doubt that *Madden 2005* will do great things this year—but can the same be said for Ray Lewis? True, he is arguably—almost *inarguably*—the greatest defensive player in the game today. But then again, he's also *Madden*'s cover athlete. Ever since players replaced John Madden's smiling mug on box covers—that'd be in *Madden 2001*, the first PS2 edition—only bad things have followed in the season to come for anyone adorning the game's cover. It's a phenomenon referred to by many as the Madden Curse.

"Yeah...that happens to good players," Madden says. "I mean, I don't believe in those things—whether it's the Madden Curse or *Sports Illustrated*'s—but you can make a case. I mean, Mike Vick did get hurt...."

Indeed he did as *Madden 2004*'s cover boy last year. Just as in 2002, when Marshall Faulk's worst season since 1996 (mis)led the Rams to their first playoff-free year since 1998. And just as QB Daunte Culpepper missed four games in 2001 due to injury—his Vikings finished 5-11 that year. Titan Eddie George started the curse in *Madden 2001* (released late into the 2000 season), unable to avoid both the embarrassment of a first-round home playoff loss to the Ravens and a disastrous 2001 season to follow.

So what's Lewis have to say about all this nonsense? "I think it just happens," he comments. "You run into situations in life, whatever they may be. But you don't put it on the cover of a game and say that's why you got hurt! Nahhhhhh. I don't believe in curses either way. What God has for you, man can't curse—and I truly believe that."

Good luck, Ray....

# MADDEN AT THE MOVIES

The 2003 movie *Runaway Jury* stars John Cusack as Nicholas Easter, an everyday Joe just trying to get out of jury duty. His excuse doesn't impress the judge...but we think it's a fine one.

**Judge** Mr. Easter, that's the second time you've looked at your watch. Are we keeping you from something?

**Nicholas** No, your honor. I wouldn't presume to waste your time. I just—I think if you knew my situation, you might be inclined to excuse me.

**Judge** Your situation, Mr. Easter?

**Nicholas** Yes, your honor.... It's the, uh, Madden Challenge.

**Judge** The Madden what?

**Nicholas** You know *Madden* football? The videogame? Well, you'd be surprised at how many people play. At any rate, every year, they pick the best 15 players from across the country to compete in a kind of tournament, you know, between NFL players and celebrities—

**Judge** I'm not following you.

**Nicholas** It's like this, your honor: The prize is \$100,000. [It's actually \$50,000—Ed.] So I just don't know if I can afford the opportunity to pass up that kind of cash. It's a big deal—

**Judge** I think it's time you had a lesson in civic responsibility. Do you have any objection to that, Mr. Easter?



**Nicholas** Well, it's something I've been doing for a very long time—

**Judge [Angrily]** The *jury* system was originated, Mr. Easter, because a thousand years before that, an individual judge had the power to hang, for example, any young man he simply did not like!

**Nicholas [Humbled]** Yes, your honor.





# the cover BOY

**If you know anything about pro football**, you're familiar with the defensive talents of *Madden 2005's* cover athlete Ray Lewis. We chatted with him over the phone as he played the game with a Tiburon rep. And before you write us about it, our answer is "no"—we don't get the Mother's Day comment, either.

**OPM** Why did EA choose *you* to be the first defensive player on the cover of *Madden*?

**RAY LEWIS** Outside of being the most dominant player in the game? I don't know. [Laughs]

**OPM** That pretty much sums it up right there.

**RL** Me and EA hooked up a couple of years ago, and we have a great relationship. It's uplifting knowing the things we're putting together.

**OPM** So, have you gotten to play the game yet?

**RL** Oh, yeah—I'm playing it right now. I'm actually beating the man who created it. [Laughs]

**OPM** Nice! What's your favorite new feature about the game?

**RL** Oh, definitely the defense. This new hit stick that we have is *incredible*. It's real! You know, with the hit stick, you can make a bit hit, and it'll change the whole momentum of the game. And that's what football is all about, even in real life. You don't see football games going to 100 points and all this stuff, you know. And those are the things when I even came into it that I just asked—I said, "Hey, make it a little more limiting, at least," you know?

**OPM** So when do you think you've ever used the real-life hit stick?

**RL** Aw, man, I use the hit stick probably every time I step on the field! [Laughs]

**OPM** Is there one particular blow you're especially proud of?

**RL** Oh, yeah. I hit this guy [Keith Burns] from the Broncos on *Monday Night Football* on that Chris McAlister kick return. I don't think he likes me to this day because of that hit. But that's one of them hits, man, that changed the total momentum of the game.

**OPM** What else do you think makes *Madden* better than all the other football games out there?

**RL** Well, outside of the game itself being the No. 1 sport in football...shoot, man. Everybody loves it. It's just life. It's us.

**OPM** We've heard you make people do push-ups when they lose....

**RL** Yeah, I don't gamble or anything like that, so that's our thing—our thing is workouts.

**OPM** What's the most push-ups you've ever made somebody do?

**RL** Oh...probably a thousand.

**OPM** Really?!? Who was that? How bad did you beat him?

**RL** [Ravens wide receiver] Travis Taylor. I don't know—he just ran into a buzz saw over at my house one day.

**OPM** Sweet. Have you ever had a problem with the way *Madden* has portrayed you as a player in the game?

**RL** Mm...no. You know what, *Madden* has done a great job with me.

**OPM** Yeah, you're always a great Raven to choose. Where do you get that fire to play so well in real life?

**RL** Oh, that's easy. Outside of every Sunday being Mother's Day, just the football game itself—the game of football—is what I was built to do. It just happened. God gave me a direction to nurture it as well. And so I nurtured it, and it turned into my passion in terms of everything that I believe in.

**OPM** What's it gonna take for the Ravens to be in the Super Bowl?

**RL** To step on the field. It's our time again.

**OPM** Terrell Owens dodged playing for *your* team. Are you upset?

**RL** Oh, not at all. You have to understand, there are some people you can trust and some people you can't. If you're a man of your word, then you're a man of your word. And if you're not, you're not. And of course, that just showed that he's not. He says one thing, creates all this controversy, and does another. So just understand it that way. Whatever reason he had, hopefully it works out for him.




**OPM** The Eagles are on your schedule for Halloween. If T.O. comes up the middle, is it trick-or-treat time or what?

**RL** I'm gonna put on a Terrell Owens costume at the game. [Laughs] Yeah, I'm gonna come dressed as him. And I'm gonna find him....





# 25 1/2 REASONS WE LOVE MADDEN

1. You can change things up in owner's mode by promoting "Dollar Rib Sandwich Night!" at the TWA Dome in St. Louis.
2. Rich Gannon's sidearm delivery.
3. You roll out of the pocket with your QB and see your tight end covered by a linebacker. Finally, the defender charges, and you float the ball over his head to the wide-open TE. First down. 
4. Playmaker control. >
5. Playing someone you know and exposing every single flaw, character or otherwise.
6. Busting a 78-yard TD run after being held to 19 yards on 15 carries (Barry Sanders, anyone?).
7. Busting your hump with your interior defenders for three quarters and finally earning a sack with your DT on a game-saving third and long.
8. Winning a game by running up 160 yards and two TDs with Michael Vick, while passing for only 60 yards.
9. Your opponent dives for the pylon to tie the game, but you force a fumble at the goal line. Ball rolls out of the end zone. Touchback. Your ball at the 20.
10. Joining in on the Tai Streets bidding war to drive up the price on the third-string receiver, just to screw up another team's salary cap.
11. Zipping a frozen rope through that last golden ring in the QB Precision Passing minicamp.
12. The words "user pick."
13. Because one time—and one time > only—you felt justified in using a Madden Card to attempt a last-second, game-tying desperation field goal from 94 yards away. And without guilt, you celebrated like mad when you banged it in off the upright to send the game into OT. 
14. Biting your fingernails to sawdust because your favorite player is on the cover of the game and you're just waiting for the Madden Curse to end his season prematurely. Or he might just start to suck.
15. The defensive strafe button.
16. Thinking the soon-to-be-released version of Madden won't be capable of toppling the previous year, only to find out it makes the previous year feel more outdated than the Broncos' blinding orange jerseys from the Elway-did-it-himself era.
17. Your 15th overall draft pick, a strong safety out of Texas Southern, winning the Defensive Rookie of the Year award.
18. Even though you went an unexplainable 1-15 (without simming one game) in your franchise season, you're all smiles: You just won the first pick overall in next season's draft!
- 18 1/2. Trading up to get that first pick after going 3-13 and missing out on the top spot.
19. As cheesy, as canned, as predetermined as it is—when you pop someone's top and his helmet goes skyward, it rules!
20. The crowd peaking when your running back cuts into the open field.
21. Using C-Port's breakneck speed in the Ground Attack minigame on a cutback that leaves three defenders in the dust.
22. The fact that Old Man Wide Receiver Jerry Rice looks just like Old Man Wide Receiver Jerry Rice. >
23. Moving Miami's beloved Dolphins out of Florida and into the tropical paradise of Toronto.
24. Forcing a wobbly duck by cracking the QB's backside right as he releases the ball. 
25. Playing online versus your favorite gaming pal who moved to the other side of the world.

—Todd Zuniga



# TIBURON GETS COACHED

## MADDEN'S DEVELOPER CALLS ON OUTSIDE HELP

While Tiburon is not without its former football players (Larry Richart, the backup quarterback on the Florida Gators' 1996 national championship team, works on playbooks), most of its developers are just really big fans who live and breathe the sport. Head coaches contribute their knowledge from time to time, but their busy schedules limit their ability to do so. However, quite a few assistant coaches willingly assist Tiburon in any way they can. One of the most active this year was Tennessee Titans Defensive Coordinator Jim Schwartz.

"It was a relaxed time talking about football, which is something I do 365 days a year anyway," explains Schwartz. "I love what I do, love everything about the game, and never remember a day that I didn't like going into the office. I like the Madden

guys because I felt the same vibe from them. These are all guys who love what they do. They have a lot of pride in their work."

Schwartz tells us that he spent a full day with the team and followed up with a few phone calls. "They wanted to make sure the actual football plays were as legit as possible," he says. "They were very concerned about the authenticity of the game. I have to admit that I was surprised [that nothing I saw was very off base] because I am very critical of anything that has to do with NFL football: videogames, movies, books. I don't know if the typical Madden player will notice, but they have made the game so authentic that even our own football players comment about certain plays that they recognize from both our and our opponents' playbooks."

## OTHER STUFF

Every Madden has its focuses—in this case, defense, presentation, and Storyline Central. And every Madden also has its subtle new additions. Like these....

- Tons of new plays—everything from team-specific new playbook entries to trick plays like the flea flicker.
- Take a seat, Melissa Stark. It's fellow sideline-reporting hottie Jill Arrington's time to chip in with relatively worthless comments. >
- How many times have you screwed up a potentially huge running play, only to watch the replay and think, "Man, if only I had remembered to hurdle..."? For the first time in a PlayStation Madden, the Triangle button is not used for hurdling when you have the ball. Rather, you use it to protect the ball, usually in short-yardage situations when you don't want to fumble. Hurdling is automatic now.
- For the first time in Madden, receivers leap into the air to catch passes.
- Online enhancements include matchmaking, a game meant for short online sessions called Rushing Attack, tournaments (complete with news updates), and stronger anticheat measures.
- Players don't simply stop at the goal line once they score a touchdown anymore. Now, expect to see in-game celebration animations, from general spikes to personalized ones like the Giants' Jeremy Shockey punting the ball into the crowd.





EXCLUSIVE REVIEW

# MADDEN NFL 2005



IS SIMPLY BEING BETTER THAN THE LAST ONE GOOD ENOUGH?



### THE SIMMED SEASON SAYS....

According to our completely simmed season of *Madden 2005*, the Carolina Panthers rebound from last year's disappointing Super Bowl loss with a win in the big game against the Kansas City Chiefs. Final score: 34-20.

### BETTER DEFENSE?

EA has emphasized heavily how much better defense is this time around. Yes, it is better—but only in the sense that you can now use the hit stick and that you have the ability to call defensive hot routes (something maybe 5 percent of us will learn to do effectively). I can't say that either really affected my actual performance on defense much, though—*Madden* remains mostly about offense. But then again, isn't that what most people want?



Wanna know the best way to figure out the importance of a new feature in a sports game? Just go back and play an earlier version. If you don't miss that given feature in the older game, then it's just a nice touch—good to have, probably, but by no means essential. If you do miss it, though...well, then you know it's time to upgrade.

In *Madden NFL 2004*, Playmaker control substantially upped your ability to play with controlled spontaneity, making any *Madden* before it a noticeably different play experience. So does *Madden NFL 2005* feature anything so significant that it changes the way you play the game? Well...not really.

If anything qualifies, it's the hit stick. **Delivering a crushing blow is a great use for the right analog stick**, and you'll use it a lot. Actually, you might use it too much—it soon became my all-purpose tackle button. Truth be told, though, I've hit equally as hard with a dive tackle...which is actually riskier to use. Still, when you return a fumble on a kickoff play for a TD because of the hit stick, it feels pretty freakin' good.

That said, I did that twice in my first seven games. Should that happen? And on the other side, you can get belted hard, as well—in those same seven games, the too-hard process of calling a fair catch caused Derrick Mason to fumble five times, resulting in five TDs. One I can buy. Two? Maybe. But five?!

*Madden 2005's* upgraded look definitely improves its visual splendor, and it's about time the weather started changing throughout a game. But ultimately, it's all just a really nice touch—you only really even notice the enhancements in replays and cut-scenes, not while you actually play.

The new Storyline Central in franchise mode adds the welcome, if not entirely necessary, Tony Bruno radio show. I'm incredibly impressed by how much work went into all this, and—except for some callers who sound like amateur voice actors reading lines and the fact that every player is (understandably) referred to as "this guy"—it really does have the feel of a radio show. It's nice background for all your player adjustments and whatnot.

Speaking of which, **I could do without all the inner turmoil caused by unhappy players.** Unlike the similar mechanic used in *MVP Baseball 2004* (a much more individual-focused game by nature), you pretty much have to change your own style of play as a gamer to satisfy certain guys who may think they're not getting the ball enough. And that just isn't very fun.

But that's not to say *Madden* isn't as fun as ever. It's still great, great football, and all the new stuff makes it the best one yet. I'm just not so sure it's worth 50 bucks if you already have last year's edition. **Chris Baker**

## PlayStation RATING

**TDs** Very welcome new features (hit stick, Storyline Central, and better graphics), arguably the best football game ever made  
**FUMBLES** Nothing is so innovative that it revolutionizes gameplay

Pub: EA Sports Dev: EA Tiburon ESRB: Everyone MSRP: \$49.99

