

Gamebreaker

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Jackson names the teams and the stadium was completely different.

The game also presents the usual features that computer game players have come to expect from the NCAA Gamebreaker series: As many as eight people can play; it has season and bowl play; walk-on players; more than 2,200 plays in the playbook; lots of camera-angle variation; and a variety of weather conditions that make play more dynamic. To top it off, every college stadium is shown in vivid 3-D.

But this year, the creators of the game, 989 Sports, tossed in a few extras for all the computerized football die-hards out there.

One such bonus is the pummel button, where gamers can actually knock the ball free of the opposing player's hands. The game also gives the player the ability to edit or create unique plays for the computerized playbook.

But what I imagine really kept the designers busy was all the "motion capture" they did. Mo-

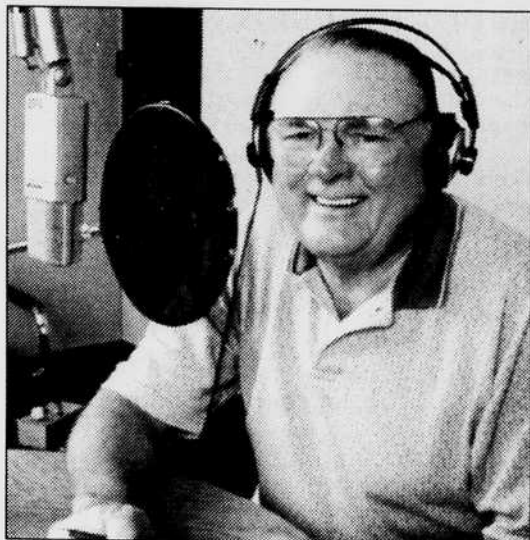


Courtesy photo
Former Washington State University and current San Diego Charger quarterback Ryan Leaf poses for NCAA Gamebreaker '99's creators to capture his throwing motions.

tion capture is a technique by which human movement is captured into a computer to make the players onscreen move more realistically. This computer wizardry translates into special moves for the collegiate cyber-players such as hurdling, shoulder charges, double spins, one-handed catches, high steps and dives over the pile, to name a few.

What more could you want in a video game? I'm not sure. Maybe the folks at 989 Sports will figure it out. In the meantime, if you're looking for a hard-hitting football game that really breaks from the pack, this is the game for you.

Besides, it will give all of the armchair quarterbacks a chance to beat up on the Beavers more than once a year.



Courtesy photo

Announcer Keith Jackson is the voice of NCAA Gamebreaker '99.

► Breaking it down

NCAA Gamebreaker '99

Graphics	5
Music/Sound	4
Game play/control	3
Difficulty	4 1/2

☺ The crowd yells "defense." The controller shakes when you take down the quarterback. Players can watch touchdown passes from multiple angles of play.

☹ The control takes a while to master, and there's almost too many special moves. The game also represents even the worst teams as if they are bowl bound.

Final score: **4**

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