



Aliens vs. Predator

Three Intense Characters in One Scary-ass Game



by Greg Fortune

All of the *Alien* and *Predator* movies had one thing in common: Extraterrestrial killing machines that you just couldn't help wanting to see more of. Now, who hasn't thought

about pitting the two races against each other to see just who's the best? Well, that's precisely what you get to do in ALIENS VS. PREDATOR. The concept of bringing the Alien and Predator races together for a little Celebrity deathmatch is not a new one. There's a very cool comic book series based on the subject, and if you look closely at the wall of the last set in *Predator 2*, you'll see an alien skull mounted in the Predators' trophy room. There was even talk of a movie featuring both races, but apparently nobody was willing to loosen their grip on the licenses long enough to do it.

So, if you ever wanted to jump into one of these movies and show them how to do it, here's your chance.

In ALIENS VS. PREDATOR (AvP), you get the chance to play one of three races—the Aliens, the Predators, or the Colonial Marines. Single-player and deathmatch levels are provided for all three types, although the beta I'm playing right now has only some of the levels and a partial weapons list for each character. The single-player missions

I've gone through are tough—really tough. None of your opponents is going to give you a second chance if you make a mistake.

Aliens vs. Predator

GENRE: Action

RELEASE DATE: Q1 '99

DEVELOPER: Rebellion Developments Ltd.

PUBLISHER: Fox Interactive



BAD EGGS Stumbling across Alien eggs never bodes well, unless you're looking for a nice kiss o' death from a face-hugger.



OLD FRIENDS This gigantic, alien husk is just one of the many things taken directly from the *Alien* and *Predator* movies and placed in the frightening gameworld.

I've Got a Bad Feeling About This...

The first thing I noticed about the level design in AvP is that everything is really dark. Remember in *Alien* how it

seemed as if anything could be hiding anywhere in the corridors of the *Nostromo*? Well, thanks to the minimalist lighting, creative use of textures, and the use of ambient noises, AvP is positively

creepy. Some of our favorite movie locations are here, including the derelict ship from *Alien* and the penal colony from *Alien3*. There are military installations for the Predator to hunt in, and some standard "Let's get the hell out of here" levels for the Marines. The deathmatch levels also show promise with lots of places for crossfire, stalking, and hiding.

Stop Your Grinnin' and Drop Your Linen!

The most striking feature in this game is the extreme power of all the combatants. It's almost redundant to talk about how lethal any of the three are. What it boils down to is that you'll get no second chances here. Aliens descend on you with blinding speed, and the Predators' shoulder cannon will blow a hole in you so big



that you'll need a manhole cover to plug it. Just so you don't think that the Marines are fodder in this one, remember Vasquez's smart gun? You know, the big cannon mounted on a swing arm? That baby will cut through an alien like a samurai sword through cottage cheese. Just be sure none of that acid splatters on you!

Despite the very different abilities and extreme power of each of them, the three races seem oddly balanced here. In my play-testing, none of them seemed to have any huge advantage over the others. The deathmatch potential alone makes this a game to keep on your motion tracker.

Let's Meet Our Contestants

ALIEN

Unlike the Predators and the Marines, the Aliens don't have weapons and don't need power-ups. They can crawl along ceilings and walls, drop down behind you, and tear you to pieces in a second. Their attacks are incredibly fast, and their very appearance can send a squad of Marines into a panic. Playing as the Alien race is a dream come true, and playing against them is



PREDATOR

Do the Predators in AvP have that cool cloaking field we all saw in the movies? You bet. In the limited beta we have, they also have their wrist blades, a spear gun, the shoulder cannon that tracks with head movement, and a medical rig. Also present is the glowing green blood that marks where the Predator was injured, both on the walls and on the



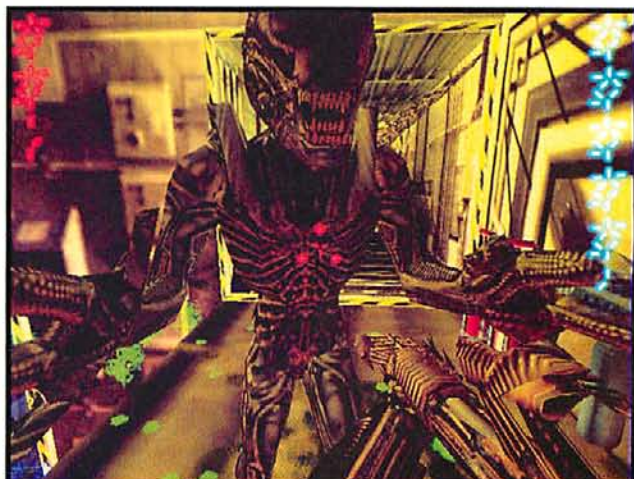
MARINE

The Colonial Marine personifies overt firepower. Everything about the Marine screams destruction. From the pulse rifle with attached over/under grenade launcher to the smart gun, which tracks your target and makes it damn hard to miss, *arsenal* is the operative word here. We've got grenade launchers, flame throwers, miniguns, and rocket launchers. We've also got one of the key tools of the Colonial





UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL If you plan on getting this close a look at an Alien, make sure you've told your loved ones what you want done with your body, uh, your remains.



BAD BLOOD Cornered by an Alien, this Predator had better kill the buggler before that acidic green blood or those vicious claws turn him into something even a mop won't pick up.

Let's Dust Off and Nuke the Site From Orbit...

ALIENS VS. PREDATOR shows a lot of promise, even at this stage of its development. With a little spit and polish and a gamma

control to fix some of the locales (a few are way too dark), this game could be one of our all-time favorites.

Don't take my word for it—play the exclusive ALIENS VS.

PREDATOR Marine demo on this month's CG-ROM! I'm sure you'll agree that, barring any major mistakes as the game is finished, this is going to be a must-have title for a lot of us. **CGW**

Greg Fortune gets a warm sensation every time he sits down for a session of AVP. (Although he only stopped playing HALF-LIFE for long enough to write this preview.)

ALIEN

a nightmare. You even have to be careful how you kill them, since they spray acid blood during their death throes and can kill you by bleeding on you. Of course, the main disadvantage of the Alien species is their lack of a ranged attack. But what they lack in long-range fire, they more than make up for

in speed and ferocity. Add to that the Aliens' uncanny ability to spot either of the other races—cloaked or not—by the fiery blue halo around them and you have one nasty killing machine. If you like sneaking up on people and scaring the hell out of them, this is the race for you.



PREDATOR

Predator. The Predator has another useful tool in his grappling hook, which allows him to gain easy access to high places. From there, his cloaking and ranged weapons give the Predator excellent hunting opportunities. The "medicomp" is also well done, which offers the Predator unlimited healing as long as it has energy. When used, the medicomp

provides the Predator with a pair of barbed syringes, which he can jab into his stomach. This, of course, is painful and causes the Predator to scream, giving away his location to interested parties everywhere. The Predator's use of stealth combined with his cool high-tech weaponry make him the favorite of those who prefer to hunt their prey for sport.



MARINE

Marines: the motion tracker. Sensing motion in a 180-degree arc in front of you, this baby tells you direction and range. So while you won't be able to conceal yourself on the roof like an Alien or cloak like a Predator, just let one of those suckers move and we'll see some fireworks. To help them gain access to higher ground and break long falls, the

Marines are equipped with a jetpack that gives basic vertical functionality. Don't expect to be flying around the levels wasting enemies, however. Your boots will still be your main source of transportation. If you like walking into a room knowing that you're packing the biggest gun around, we've got a job for you in the Marines.

