

A virtual football? Put away the china

September 4 2009, By Rob Watson

The last time we chatted, I wrote that somewhere in Nintendo's lair of mass mind control, "evil" scientists were patenting a game controller based on horse riding. It would look sort of like one of those bouncy balls we used to ride back in the day, but you would also have a game controller in your hand.

It seems Mario's minions weren't finished: Reports have circulated on the Web about a device much more devious and insidious and just as ridiculous.

Nintendo has submitted a patent application for an interactive football. Yes, a [football](#). It measures the throwing motion of the oblong object that represents America's favorite pastime.

This sounds pretty bizarre. And though it's spongy (think Nerf), anyone in the same room with a gamer using this thing might want to leave immediately, taking your drink, little kids, and valuable china in tow.

MIKE'S NOT LIKE MIKE, FOR NOW

By now, most Madden players have received the [Electronic Arts](#) roster download for the new game. The biggest items in the download are the addition of a purple-clad Brett Favre and Michael Vick, decked out in a green No. 7 Eagles jersey. Judging by a quick tour around some of the more popular Madden forums on the Web, many gamers haven't decided what to do with virtual Vick. Sure, his overall rating is down from two years ago (from 90 to 73), but he is still blazing fast, and his ability to

shake would-be tacklers continues to be crazy.

Vick is pretty much a glorified small running back at this point. Some have substituted him for the Eagles' Brian Westbrook in certain situations (halfback pass options and the like), while others have split him out in the slot with uneven success. Few, however, have been keen on bringing him in for quarterback Donovan McNabb, though McNabb's QB rating is 90.

It will be interesting to see how this plays out. If coach Andy Reid uses Vick in the Wildcat and he proves he can run circles around NFL defenses, we could be looking at a replay of Madden '08, where Vick was pretty much unstoppable in a roster update later in the season.

BLIMEY!

Every now and then, we post some gaming news from overseas, and it usually involves some legislative body railing against the perils of video games. Britain is usually the hotbed of such material.

Well, it seems for all of the bluster, some basics in enforcement have been missed across the pond. You see, the British Parliament passed the Video Recordings Act back in 1984. It put anyone who sold age-restricted content to kids in some very hot water. No problem with that, at least not from me.

Here is the problem, and it's a big one: The law was never submitted to the European Commission, which EU members must do for the law to take effect. In other words, this thing has been a dud for 25 years. D'oh!

"Unfortunately, the discovery of this omission means that, a quarter of a century later, the Video Recordings Act is no longer enforceable against individuals in United Kingdom courts," Barbara Follett, minister for

culture and tourism, told the London Times.

If you can't stay on top of your game, stop playin', is all I am sayin'.

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