

jerseys for Original Six teams.

Player control and movement are exceptional. The goalie may be controlled either by the computer or by the gamer (which is much more difficult, but makes the action much more exciting). The netminder goes into the butterfly position, flops, poke checks, knocks down shots and dives on the puck — all in an extremely realistic fashion.

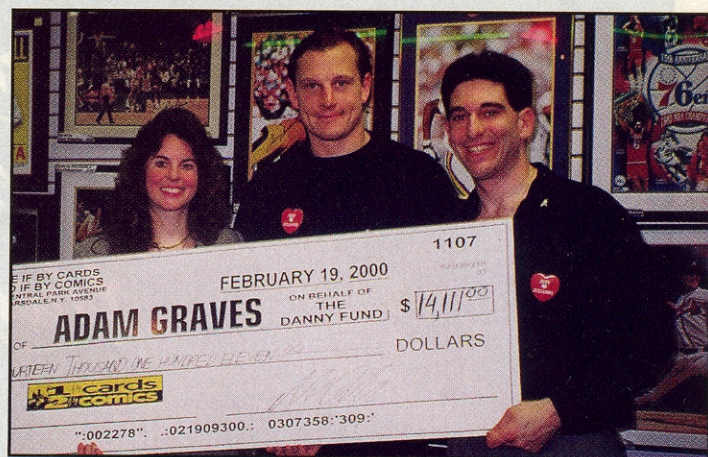
Beyond the extraordinary graphics and control, NHL2K packs the same punch as any 64-bit hockey game on the market: updated rosters, trades, custom players, line editing, coaching strategies, multiple difficulty levels and game speeds and of course, the ever-popular fighting. Exhibition, full-season and playoff modes also are available.

Penalty Box: As with all disc-based games, NHL2K does have a loading delay. This can be quite annoying for short attention span gamers.

More troubling are the announcers: they are flat-out irritating. They consistently are behind on the play-by-play and often make errors as to who has the puck. They also are saddled with a limited number of analytical remarks for each team, so the same statements are repeated period after period, game after game. Your television remote mute button will never seem more of a blessing.

Final Score: Overall, this game blows the competition away. If you're a technophile hungry for the latest and greatest in hockey games, go pick up a Dreamcast and NHL2K.

— Adam Purvis



JULIANNE'S HERO

Hockey hobbyists idolize players for any number of reasons: HOF-caliber stats, tons of potential, or a single big season. But if you're looking for a real hero, you might want to look at Adam Graves.

The Rangers power forward has put together the sort of

career that earns him legitimate hobby love: a team record 52 goals in 1993-94, four 30-plus goal campaigns and the 1994 Stanley Cup makes Adam a winner on the ice.

But it's what he does away from the spotlight that really makes him worth idolizing. An example:

Graves made an autograph appearance at One if by Cards, Two if By Comics, a Scarsdale, NY shop, on Feb. 19. The signing was a benefit for Julianne Borsella, a 7-year-old Pelham, NY girl who is battling a rare form of cancer.

Graves was scheduled to sign at the shop from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., a nice donation of time and effort on a rare free Saturday in the midst of a tense playoff run.

But the winger is one of the team's most popular players, and a tremendous crowd lined up around the store. It quickly became obvious there were far more people than he could possibly accommodate in two hours.

Not wanting to disappoint anyone, Adam offered to stay until every person that showed up got the signature or photograph they came for. He then went into the shop's back room to sign for people

BY THE BOX

1999-2000 Upper Deck Wayne Gretzky Hockey

Collation data from a randomly selected box

BREAKDOWN

Packs Per Box: 24

Cards Per Pack: 8

Cards Per Box: 192

Set Completion: 69 percent (125 of 180)

Duplicates: 37

INSERTS

Total: 33

Expected: 30

Hall of Fame Career (1:1) - 24

Elements of the Game (1:6) - 4: Keith Tkachuk,

Theo Fleury, Brett Hull, Peter Bondra

Will To Win (1:13) - 2: Dominik Hasek, Steve Yzerman

Changing the Game (1:27) - 1: Sergei Samsonov

Great Heroes (1:27) - 1: Patrick Roy

Visionary (1:167) - 0

Tools of Greatness (1:139) - 1: Arturs Irbe

500 Goal Club (1:3,455) - 0

500 Goal Club Autographed (serial numbered to 25) - 0

Great Memorabilia (1:2,351) - 0

