

YAHOO!

INTERNET LIFE

▲ Top TV Show



▲ Top Movie



▲ Top News Event



▲ Top Athlete (female)



▲ Top Athlete (male)

OUR ANNUAL GREATEST "HITS" ISSUE

TOP

of the

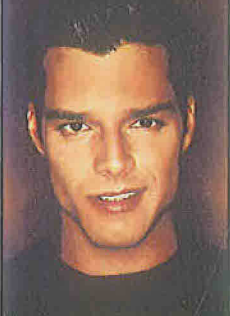
NET

plus
100 BEST SITES
FOR 2000

▲ Top Destination



▲ Top Performer



▲ Top Search (male)

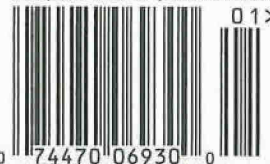


▲ Top Search (female)



▲ Top Download

USA \$3.99 CANADA \$5.99 UK £2.95



YAHOO INTERNET LIFE'S

100

BEST SITES

FOR 2000

DAUNTING

Such was the task of winnowing down a vast playing field to a mere 100 sites. But we persevered, cutting entire categories to make room for new phenomena like MP3. With our mandate to cover the broadest reaches of the Web, we may have missed your favorite niche. (What, no Ping-Pong sites?) But we're sure you'll want to bookmark these winners.

EDITED BY CREE MCCREE // **BY DINA GAN** // ILLUSTRATIONS BY CLAUDIA NEWELL

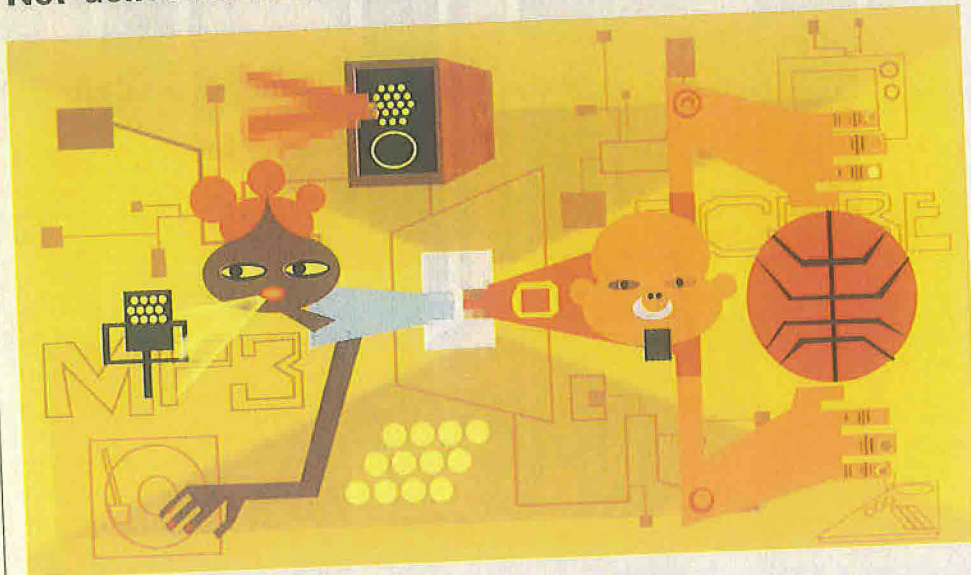
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ENTERTAINMENT & SPORTS

Now that MP3 has gone mainstream, the new frontier is Net-delivered films. Will major-league sports follow suit?



THE STORY OF THE YEAR IN THE ENTERTAINMENT sector was the MP3 revolution. By making CD-quality music available for online downloads, the new compression format emerged as an easy, viable option for millions of consumers. The major labels initially balked, fearing rampant piracy. Now, they're belatedly falling into line: EMI and Sony were the first to start encoding their music libraries for Net delivery, and others quickly got on board. Expect Web-distributed music to gain even more listeners as such MP3-compatible portable audio devices as the Rio Player and Sony's MS Walkman continue to spread. At the same time, MP3 itself faces new challenges from competing formats, such as Microsoft's Windows Media Audio.

The past year also saw the formative stages of another transformation that may do for movies what MP3 did for music: the digital delivery of films. Whether it was pirated downloads of such commercial blockbusters as *The Phantom Menace* or the online pay-per-view of the indie flick *Pi* last April, the technology for watching full-length features online has begun to come of age. And although long download

times and numerous technical glitches are still keeping the masses at bay, it won't be long before faster connection speeds give birth to the digital multiplex.

SIGHTSOUND.COM, the folks behind *Pi*, hope that's true. To jump-start Net distribution, they've been targeting college students, who tend to have high-speed connections through their schools. The biggest challenge right now, says Scott Sander, president and CEO, is "convincing the movie studios to seize the opportunity to distribute their movies online and not miss it like the music industry has." By the end of 2000, Sightsound expects to have thousands of titles in its catalog and 8 million viewers with broadband access.

And what about sports? We've seen relatively little Webcasting of American major-league games, but this past August, the British tested a technology that allowed viewers to switch between cameras at a soccer match—and even to replay the last seconds of a play at any point in the game. The U.S. Open tested a similar system in September. It's only a matter of time before we're going to want this option for NBA and NFL games. And then it'll be only a matter of time before the leagues give it to us.

BY BILGE EBIRI

1 BEST ORIGINAL WEB PROGRAMMING The Pseudo Online Network

As the network's tag line suggests, "TV you can't get on TV" includes diverse and inventive programs that would never make it on prime time—which is why we love having it on the Web. Among the current offerings: *GO! Poetry*, a virtual slam; *And Justice for BRAWL*, which pits fans against professional wrestlers; and *DesiVibe*, dedicated to Southeast Asian music fusion. Why is this better than cable? Here, you can watch and listen while chatting with the show's cast, as well as with other viewers. **ALSO: DEN: DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT NETWORK** aims its streaming video programs (*Frat Ratz*, *Fear of a Punk Planet*) at the youth market. [pseudo.com]; [den.net]

2 BEST MOVIE SITE The Internet Movie Database

The stellar IMDb is now part of the Amazon.com empire. So far, that's been a good thing. It's faster and has more data than ever before: more than 170,000 titles, including movies, made-for-TV movies, direct-to-video movies, and live-action video games. The filmographies cover more than 650,000 people, from actors to stunt doubles, and are searchable in every possible way. No wonder *Y-Life* columnist Roger Ebert recently selected the IMDb as Best Movie Site on the Web. Period. **ALSO: FILM.COM**, another Ebert pick, is noteworthy for the quality of its movie reviews and the quantity of its live audio/video, including trailers, music scores, and interviews. [imdb.com]; [film.com]

3 BEST MOVIE INDUSTRY GOSSIP Ain't It Cool News

Harry Knowles is the ultimate spoiler. One of the oldest and most widely read of the movie-rumor sites, his Ain't It Cool News has achieved cult status among film buffs and moviemakers alike. You won't find news about who's sleeping with whom, but you will find a seething cauldron of behind-

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