



dvd it yourself

Macintosh computers have always been video-friendly, but some of the new Power Mac G4s up the ante by delivering everything you need to edit your own movies and author them on DVD. System prices start at \$3,499, which includes a 60-

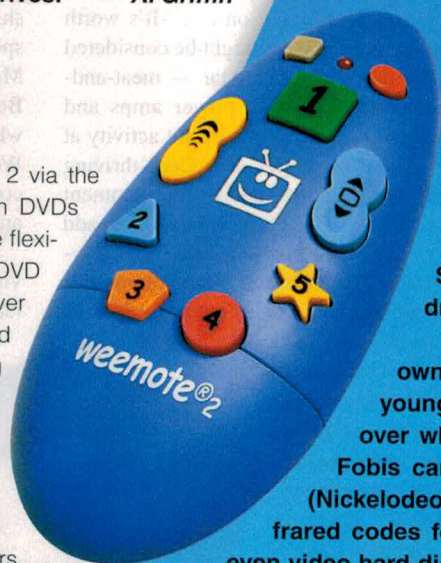
GB hard drive, 256 MB of RAM, and a versatile drive that records onto blank DVD-R, CD-R, and CD-RW media. The G4's software complement includes Apple's entry-level iMovie2 editing package and the new iDVD authoring program. Using iDVD, you can create polished-looking DVD movies with menus. The discs will play in most standard DVD players (check Apple's Web site for a list of compatible models) as well as computer DVD-ROM drives. — *Al Griffin*

Apple 800-692-7753, www.apple.com

wish fulfillment

Why be tethered to your PlayStation 2 via the game pad's 7-foot cable to watch DVDs when you really want the wireless-remote flexibility of a regular DVD player? Saitek's DVD Remote Controller (\$20) includes a receiver module that contains a pass-through pad connector so you don't have to unplug the game controller. A planned Saitek version for Microsoft's forthcoming Xbox, however, may not be as straightforward. Unlike the PS2, its DVD capability must be unlocked through an optional kit, according to Microsoft, so Xbox users who only want to play games won't be charged the licensing fee to the DVD consortium that's passed along by manufacturers of DVD players.

Saitek 310-212-5412, www.saitekusa.com



flash hit

Science-fiction fans with Flash-enabled browsers should visit the animated original series *Chi-Chian* (chee-chon). The title character (left), voiced by Bai Ling, is a Betty Boop-esque pacifist in a destroyed Manhattan forced to take up arms to protect her friends — a race of good-natured, 6-foot cockroaches. No kidding. A new episode was to be added weekly for 14 weeks beginning April 10.

The Sci Fi Channel www.scifi.com



toy fair fun

Torn between a Richard Simmons photo op with "a personal tour of his doll collection" and meeting Rudy from the first *Survivor* series, I instead turned my Razor scooter (named Toy of the Year) toward the TechnoPlay hall at the American International Toy Fair.

My first stop was to see the Cybiko wireless personal digital assistant (above, \$99). Imagine: while your kids are swarming the mall with their PDAs, they can get messages — with a vibrating alert — from you or from other Cybiko-equipped kids nearby. They can also listen to music by plugging in the newest accessory, the MP3Cy-Card (\$89 without memory), which holds a tiny SmartMedia memory card. It's a must-have for children who multitask.

Now that they have their own PDAs, getting their own TV remotes may be a bit anticlimactic. Still, for younger kids — and parents who want more control over what they watch — the Weemote 2 (left, \$30) from Fobis can be programmed to exclude selected channels (Nickelodeon, yes; the Playboy Channel, no). It also has infrared codes for other devices, including TV/VCR combos and even video hard-disk recorders. For the latter, Junior doesn't get his first QuickSkip button but simply a channel changer.

Board games are back, and one for three or more people that lets you leverage your music collection is *Music Mayhem* (\$30) from Solboe Sunnfjord. The designated DJ plays songs from CDs, a digital jukebox, or a computer while the other players rotate the "LP" spinner, guess the tunes, and keep score by moving guitar picks across the "equalizer" game board. Playing *Music Mayhem* at parties is a fine excuse to sample all those songs you downloaded during a Napster feeding frenzy.



Finally, radio-controlled racers from Simplefun empower your boy to talk into a mike on the controller and be heard from a speaker on the car. He could stay in his room, send the racer to the kitchen, command his mother to "Put cookies in seat," and wheel back the snacks. Then again, Mom might respond with smacks.

S&V

Cybiko 877-429-2456, www.cybiko.com

Fobis Technologies 305-253-8387, www.weemote.com

Simplifun 800-735-2456, www.goenchi-maru.com

Solboe Sunnfjord 414-332-5512, www.musicmayhemgame.com

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