

y Yves Martin

Dear Santa,

With all the work you're getting this time of year, I'm not quite sure that you'll welcome my letter. Especially considering the great new lineup of Macintoshes and the fact that there are more great games on the Mac than ever this holiday season. You and your overworked reindeer are probably cursing anyone who works for Apple — especially the guy whose job it is to handle entertainment software marketing.

Although hauling Macintosh Performas all over the world means overworked reindeers, you know that on Christmas morning there will be thousands of Happy Mac faces flashing on screens and an even greater number of Happy Mac users gathering around them.

But not at my neighbor, Jack's. Jack doesn't have a Macintosh.

He's a great neighbor though. He loves computer games — like me. He's got one of those snappy new Pentium systems and one of those new 32-bit consoles.

He's invited me over, many times in the past years for some fun. But lately, he seems aloof. I think his coolness towards me started last Christmas when he came over to my house to play Marathon from Bungie on my Power Macintosh. Somehow, he felt that it just wasn't right — he too should have this game on his "system." His attitude got worse in the summer when he saw Dark Forces running on the Mac.

When he heard that I would be getting Rebel Assault II from LucasArts and Allied General from SSI at about the same time he would. . . his wife asked my wife what the heck I had done to Jack.

Then, last week, Jack called and asked me to come over to see some hot new stuff. Jack was radiant.

Thinking ahead, I remembered that one of Jack's passions in life is car racing. I rushed down to the nearest software dealer and brought back both AI Unser Jr. Arcade Racing from

Mindscape and IndyCar II from Papyrus. Now I was all set.

Jack was somewhat cocky at first. After all, both programs are also on the PC. Jack mumbled that the graphics on his PC were about as good as what I had, and that anyhow he knew that he should be buying a new monitor. Well, when I started showing him the speech recognition option in IndyCar II, Jack's mumbling turned to silence.

But he did get the last laugh. After all, even the most brilliant technology can't be expected to cope with a lousy French accent. Jack loved hearing me repeat things over and over again until I got them right. He told me this was great training. Of course, the speech recognition worked really well with his Texas drawl.

The real winner in all this is the Macintosh.

This Christmas, Macintosh users will be experiencing something different and better than what's available elsewhere. What we are seeing happen today in the car racing simulation space is a perfect demonstration that, not only are there untapped markets (sports simulations), but also the Macintosh, with its power and innovative technologies is the right platform to showcase leading-edge technologies.

So, Dear Santa, I'm placing an order for next Christmas for creative developers who will exploit the possibilities in Macintosh entertainment. And by the way, Jack's coming over again next weekend. Don't be surprised if you get a letter from him too — he's been asking me what the best Macintosh models are. . .

Sincerely,

Yves Martin

Yves Martin is the Apple "Home Entertainment Solutions Manager" although he likes to refer to himself as the "Mac Games Crusader." He welcomes comments, ideas, suggestions at MARTIN.Y@Applelink.Apple.Com