Questions to **<u>JEFFERY HUTT</u>**, **Creative Director**, Looking Glass Studios

1. Could you describe the concept of Wildwaters briefly?

Wildwaters is really a whitewater thrill ride. We wanted the game to be a very fun and character oriented.

When the player starts the game, he or she chooses one of six characters, each with a dynamic unique personality. Each character has his own set of kayaks

The environment is very stylized, almost more like a Disneyland ride than an actual river that you can see in the wilderness. These environments range from an arid desert, to a molten tropical island, or an ice-packed glacier.

There are five game modes such as championship mode, time trial or arcade. We even have a multiplayer mode

Basically, the game is intended to be fast-paced, arcade and fun. It's unlike any other product.

2. What major issues have you faced while developing Wildwaters?

We wanted to have the most realistic shallow water model ever found in a video game.

What makes this game different from Wave Racer or other water based game is that it is based in a river that actually propels the player downstream. We also wanted to have the river react to fallen trees, rocks and boulders, and to create vortices, backwashes and eddies that are realistic.

So, we contracted the services of a Professor at the University of Washington, from the Atmospheric Sciences Department, to create equations for us. It helped us build a simulator that allows our design team to place objects, evaluate the river and determine what is fun without having to do any guess work.

3. Is Wildwaters a simulation?

As far as the water is concerned, it is a simulation. Realism is a big part of creating a river and making fun to interact with.

But the key still is fun and we are not creating a game where if the player misses a gate he will have to turn around, go upstream and pass through the gate again. We really want this game to be intuitive to play, much more arcade like in its style and much more colorful and dynamic as far as the characters and environments are concerned.

At the end of the day, this game is more about fun than simulating the real event.

4. What makes Wildwaters stand out from the competition?

We have gone to great lengths to create a river that really places the player right in the wilderness. We have complemented that realism with dynamic characters, lots of animations and three level of control ranging from simple moves for beginners to advanced stunts and tricks for advanced players.

Again, from our standpoint, this game is really like no other product out there.

5. What about the stunts?

Controls are a big part of Wildwaters. We have broken them up so that the game can appeal to a large audience.

The first level of controls is essentially paddling and basic steering. The second level is advanced maneuvers that are useful for controlling the kayak under extreme situations. And the third level is the stunts.

We have a variety of flips, rolls and summersaults that the player can do off the waterfalls. And unlike any other product, the stunts in Wildwaters are geared so that the reward factor for performing them is much higher. That is another opportunity for us to give the player another fun element that they can really enjoy while playing the game.