

## **FOXSports.com Launches "Hit the Pros": World's First Online Sports Game with Real Pitches from Actual Major League Games**

*WildTangent's technology delivers next generation online game combining arcade-quality gameplay with actual up-to-date Major League Baseball results and statistics*

**LOS ANGELES, CA, July 9, 2002** - FOXSports.com will introduce the most realistic and dynamic online baseball game ever created when "Hit the Pros" debuts in conjunction with this year's Major League Baseball All-Star Game on July 9. Baseball and gaming fans alike will be able to access the game through [www.FOXSports.com](http://www.FOXSports.com) (keyword: games).

"Hit the Pros" gives online players the opportunity to bat against simulations of actual pitches thrown by Major League players from games broadcast on FOX Sports Net baseball coverage and other Major League Baseball games. Players can pick their batters from a list including hitters like Barry Bonds and Sammy Sosa, then swing at pitches thrown by Randy Johnson or Roger Clemens during a real game. This data is gathered using cameras and tracking software and is updated immediately so that online players can challenge pitchers who played that same day, as quickly as 30 minutes after the actual game concludes.

Developed by FOX Sports and broadcast games pioneer WildTangent, "Hit the Pros" combines the best of arcade, fantasy and live action sports. Utilizing WildTangent's Web Driver™ technology, it offers the production value of a console game with game play features exclusive to the Internet.

Cameras strategically positioned around every Major League stadium capture pitch data live, and the telemetry data, captured by QuesTec, Inc. is compiled and translated for the online game. This same technology has been used to demonstrate pitch location during FOX Sports telecasts of Major League games.

"This is where video games meet fantasy sports, creating a new genre and the next evolution of video entertainment sports. It's an interactive fan's dream," said Ross Levinsohn, senior vice president and general manager of FOX Sports.com. "For the first time in the world of sports gaming, players will actually be able to experience what it's like to hit against the best pitchers in the big leagues. We anticipate "Hit the Pros" will become one of the most dynamic and engaging multi-participant online sports game around."

"Hit the Pros is truly a next generation online game that provides a super compelling experience for casual fans and fantasy league players alike," said Dave Madden, executive vice president of sales and marketing for WildTangent. "By taking advantage of WildTangent's technology FOX Sports was able to

uniquely leverage their broadcasts and existing online initiatives to create a loyal online audience and drive incremental revenue."

"Hit the Pros" features detailed three-dimensional graphic interpretations of every Major League stadium, giving participants the choice of where they want to challenge the likes of baseball's best players. The game takes on the flavor of a FOX Sports baseball telecast with the voices of FOX Sports television broadcasters Joe Buck, Tim McCarver, Thom Brennaman and Steve Lyons offering play-by-play "analysis" and commentary. The baseball players featured in the game are modeled after real Major League players.

**Three Ways to Play** There are three game modes to "Hit the Pros," including a subscription-based mode in which players participate in online leagues or play in tournaments against other players around the world.

Two other game modes allow participants to play for free. The first mode matches the player against a major league pitcher in a "home run derby" style of batting practice in which the batter collects points for every hit out of approximately 10-15 pitches.

The second mode allows participants to challenge their friends online or anyone on the game leader board to a five-pitch batting contest. You pick the pitches your opponent will face (Pedro Martinez slider, Curt Schilling fastball, etc.) and your opponent determines what pitches you will try to hit. Subscribers can send unlimited challenges to opponents.

Thanks to an agreement between FOX Sports.com and the Major League Baseball Players Association, participants pick their hitters and pitchers from among real major league players. The batter's current real-life statistics, streaks and slumps will help determine how they will perform in the online game. This allows the serious subscription mode player to build in strategy to outsmart and outplay competitors using statistics and performance.

In addition to its home at [www.FOXSports.com/games](http://www.FOXSports.com/games), "Hit the Pros" can be found through EarthLink.net, GameSpy.com, GamePro.com and additional portals, ISPs and OEMs to be announced.

The game will provide a "greatest hits" challenge during the off-season, allowing for continuous year-round competition.

The subscription price for "Hit the Pros" is just \$19.99 for the entire 2002 season.

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