

This transcription was completed on March 2, 2023 with the application MacWhisper on macOS. This was done automatically, without human input during the transcription process. The application uses OpenAI's "Whisper" model. This produces the transcription as a plain text file, hence the block of text.

My hope is that by offering this transcription – however accurate it may be done by a machine/ AI – will help you, the listener. I'd love to offer full, proper transcription some day, but that is not feasible at this time. Thank you for listening and reading. I hope you enjoy the show and that this document was helpful. Enjoy.

- - -

Hello everybody and welcome to the Max Frequency Podcast. I am your host, not one of your hosts, I'm just the host, Max Roberts. And joining me this particular episode is one Ricky Frack. Hey Ricky. How's it going Max? Fine and dandy. How are you sir? I'm good. I get to do podcasts now because I no longer have to work nights all the time like I was most of last year. it's very exciting to be back in the podcast rotation. Yeah you get your uh you work normal human hours mostly. Yeah yes yes most of the time. Normal human hours are very very good. Speaking of your job you're your associate editor man over at double XP. Yeah recently rebranded from Gamepurr that happened in the middle of the night with all they were like this could happen anytime in the next 48 hours and then three hours later it just happened after I logged off for the day yeah it was it was weird and then that's strange and then some of our freelancers that work for us we're just tweeting about it in like not the middle of the night but kind of the middle of the night and I was like yeah what I just logged on got onto Twitter and they're like hey I write for double XP now I was like what no you don't and then went to our slack and they're like it happened I guess okay cool so how does that even happen I feel like this would be a more coordinated thing okay so without knowing exactly how much I'm allowed to say I'll just say that our company is technically based in Australia okay so happening in the middle of the night here yeah is not that crazy and them wanting to make sure all the traffic transfers over so we don't lose ad revenue of course they kind of it was kind of like when they think it's good to go it's gonna go and we are gonna know exactly when it's gonna happen that means more sense yeah it's been it's been a process because of them worried about rightfully so worried about how ad revenue would transfer over and luckily the next day our numbers were still the same so good nothing so far has messed up I'll lose my job or something I'll say this I like the name double XP more than Game Per. I don't think you're the only one. I think that's everybody. Yeah, I like it a lot, but I'll say this. The SEO, if you just type in double XP into Google, it's Call of Duty, Call of Duty, Call of Duty, Call of Duty. So if you could manifest, if you could grace Google's SEO by being the top Call of Duty double XP weekend article that would be you know kind of double layer there but I think it's a great name and the logo I like the logo a lot yeah yes yeah I think everything is much better than how it used to be yellow and black I'm a fan of so yeah those are my high school colors so okay you know it all comes around doesn't it it all once a boomer always a boomer of course what they say. Is that the high school slogan? Yeah that was yes every speech that was what our principal ended it with at the Woodward High School boomers Woodward Woodward High School home of the boomers. Wait was your mascot really the boomer? Yeah okay so I'm gonna I'll give you okay so I know that's funny now but let me give you the history lesson behind why it's the boomers. As you probably know, Max and people out there, there is the Oklahoma University, the home of the Sooners. The Sooners, where they got their name from is when they did the Oklahoma Land Run way back when there were people who crossed the line early and basically stole property from other people. So basically you were like a line the Oklahoma Kansas line and at a certain time you can go across the land and go stake your claim for land and people cross the line early and those are called the Sooners so they named their college mascot after cheaters which makes sense given who they are the boomers are the people who went on time the time you're supposed to go so we're the only I think the only

mascot in the whole country that are the boomers so So that's the history behind our name. It's pretty cool. Not really, but sort of. - And now it has a whole new context to it. - Yeah, yes, yeah. An unfortunate new context. - I bet, I would think the kids there now, I feel like the mean potential is high. - It's gotta be off the charts. - It's really high at that school. If you've got some really smart, funny kids there, I would think it's pretty high. - So you're associate editor over there, big time. I know a couple-- - Eh, big time. - Dude, if you look at the masthead on the site, you've got Chris up top, Chris Compendio, who I know, and you're right below. - That's true, yeah. - Associate editor, you know? And then next to you, the international editor and the features editor. Dude, you're second on the list. - I guess so. - You're a good shot. - That's like sort of true, because you know, There's obviously people above Chris. Like our site is part of a bigger conglomerate of sites. So, and then like, I would consider some of the senior writers above me in the pecking order because they've been there longer. And to be frank, they're like really good at their job. And their job is to bring in the traffic and my job is to edit their stuff. So we're like together, but yeah. - Now you're second on the masthead. I'm going to stick with that. - Okay, okay. - You're second in charge. I looked at the author page. You can click on an author's name and take the other articles. I couldn't find an article by you, so I just looked at the style of the URL and then typed in Ricky-Freck, and nothing came up. And then I realized, oh yes, he's an editor. He probably-- - Really? Nothing comes up? - I didn't see anything come up. I thought maybe some guides or something. - That can't be true, hold on. Yeah, that can't be true. That must be something in the redirect that I'll have to-- - Address? I've written guides, like I told you in a private message, I wrote 35 guides two weeks ago because... I get a 404. You don't exist. Nah, mine is here. Did I type your... Did you spell it "French" or did you spell it "frec" with a "k"? Nope. F-R-E-C-H. F-R-E-C-H. What am I missing? Am I missing a... This is great podcasting. Well I am, I'm super fascinated. Oh there's no hyphen. Oh yeah okay. Someone else had a hyphen so I assumed that was the style. Okay good. There are your articles now. I was like dang does he just only edit? I thought maybe the guides that you had told me you wrote the other day were for a different site. Nope, not allowed. That's not allowed, Max. I'm exclusive except for Survivor. I've got that... We'll talk about Survivor later, I think, but I got that in my contract that I'm allowed to write about Survivor for other sites. That was like one of my only questions when they wanted to make me full-time. That's insane. What? I want to talk... All right, I want to save Survivor. Okay, yeah. But let's talk about the guide stuff because that actually was part of the conversation. I've been writing, I think you're one of maybe four subscribers, but I've been writing a newsletter for I think 10 weeks now called Wiki Stories. Just kind of chronicling my time writing freelance guides for IGN, which is what I ended up doing. So I've got guide writing and stuff on my mind. I haven't done a guide since 2019. My last one was a particular season of that Mario Kart Live. The mobile one the iOS game. Oh, right. I did a season of that and that was the last one I worked on It's changed completely. I think the whole I feel like the whole scene on some level has changed in the past three years to whatever extent and But you still write guides and you yes You apparently exclusively do them for double XP. I Thought you still did like some freelance stuff for IGN or other sites like that. So talk me through that, the exclusivity of it. Okay, so basically, when did that happen? I guess it would have been January. Okay. I went exclusive, so full-time for them. And like my job, my job is not to write guides anymore. I did for a long time write guides for them. I was also their evening editor for a long time, time which is why I had weird hours and then when I transferred over to full-time there was like two months where they were trying to get someone else to be the evening editor who's actually now the Australian editor and so he just works our evenings even though it's the day for him that stuff doesn't matter but anyways so I really I was just supposed to be editing but like there's another guy on our staff who's also full-time who's like the sports guy he does all the sports and the racing games and so would he but because when he has stuff to do I just come in and write guides so you know like I said a couple weeks ago I wrote I think 35 and that was because he was like focused on the show so then that meant all the NBA stuff still had to be covered all the FIFA stuff had to be covered all you know all that stuff still has to happen and it happened to be a massive week for both of those games too so it just was like the perfect storm where I was writing like six guides a day or whatever. It was

ridiculous. And that's those guides that I'm talking about. The ones we write at Double XP are very different from what you're used to, I think, as a wiki writer at IGN, which I did do, I did, I think I did 10 wikis in under a year at IGN in 2021. That's a big deal. Yeah, it sounds like a lot, but some of them are, you know, a lot of those not a lot several of those are sports games so it's even those are way different than what you would do and like I think I read your Witcher 3 thing recently and I have done big games like well I shouldn't say big games big games in terms of content not maybe in terms of like popularity as a wiki so I did the all the side quests and everything for neo the world ends with you and that was one of those like look I love the IGN wiki team you know Miranda's great they're all good people that was one of the worst experiences in my life just because you're you know I got paid the same to write that guide as I got right to write paid to write a FIFA like the FIFA wiki for them and it took like five or six times as long yeah because there's so much to freaking do right and I actually like the wiki style more in some respects than what we do which is like you know so in a wiki you you're doing everything right you say okay max you're assigned to go do the witcher 3 guide the whole wiki maybe for which they probably wouldn't be the whole wiki you'd probably do like the main story or you do the side quests I was a sign story in the base witcher right so what we would do so like Elden Ring is really good example right now for us because Elden Ring was massive it gave us our biggest month in terms of numbers ever because Elden Ring is huge and so at double XP I'm gonna say game for multiple times but I'll try my hardest to say double XP. on brand on brand. yeah they would be it would be something like you would get a guide that is how to fight Margret, where to find such-and-such item, best build for such-and-such class, you know like they're all broken out into singular guides so that I think it makes it go faster it also means that you can have multiple people working on it once so for Elden Ring we probably had eight to ten people just churning through content in that game so it does make it faster the issue becomes if I'm trying to guide this game or help guide this game and there's multiple people doing it then what if we're all working on the same thing we don't know about it you know because we're all trying to figure out how to fight yeah Margaret yeah yeah it's very hard to coordinate that kind of stuff which makes it difficult for me as an editor now to really help with guides aside from the stuff that is super easy like sports because you know I have I have to work most of my day editing So I'm gonna be behind all of our guide writers and playing so I can't you know, you know what I mean, right? You're you're coming in doing the editing part of it and they're they're ten hours ahead of you They've been playing it and writing Yeah on the you know in real time like play right play, right and then you're like I got to edit edit And then you are you kind of know what's gonna come up in the game, too Yes, yeah elder ring was a weird one though because there's so much stuff in that game sure that I would just go behind them and Do guides of like where to find certain items or where to like crafting materials or you know? cookbooks or stuff like that that Is it is gonna be gonna bring in traffic and people are gonna search? However, it's not gonna be the top of the mind for the guide writer who going through it because they're trying to push progression to get to the next boss, to write about the boss. So that was like the perfect storm, you know? When you look at something like Kirby, which I reviewed for us, I could come through and do guides for that afterwards, but most likely it's better for me to push through the review and then hope we have guide writers coming in behind me, because it's It's just hard to do both at the same time. - It's, yeah. - Which you probably know. - Yeah, it's pretty hard to balance all that stuff out in real time. I never did a review for IGN, but I did other projects for them or things that had deadlines and, you know, what can we promote this weekend and things like that. - Right, yeah. The World Ends With You is the worst thing I ever did. But that was like bad in terms of I didn't like it. (laughs) The hardest thing I ever did that was still good was doing the NBA 2K21, 2K22 review and guide at the same time at IGN because that was a lot. - Did you see Jake from State Farm? - I did and you know, I think I'm the only person in the world who thought that was funny because it was so stupid. - I think it is hilarious. - And then Dan, Dan Stapleton, he made me take the part where I thought it was funny out of my review because he said people wouldn't like that and I was like oh fair enough I mean most people probably won't I mean he made me like make it sound more which is true call it out for being product placement you

know which is true he's not wrong. It is. It's 1000% is but it's funny product placement. But he you know he was like you need because and like and this is an issue with sports game in general I don't have a big problem with spending money in those games because I do spend money in those games because I don't play a lot of other games. I mean I don't play a lot of other games for fun. I play a lot of other games for work but if I'm gonna have like have an hour I'll probably end up playing sports games so because I play them so much I don't mind spending money so to me those micro transactions aren't that bad even though in my head I know they are and so I was like oh this isn't really that big of an issue because you either don't spend the and you can still have a fine, you know, you still be good at the game or You can spend money and it's your money. So and you know rightfully so he was like no We need to call this out that it's bad and I was like, okay Yeah, I mean it is bad But you know, I have a different perspective than other people because of how I play those games Yeah, IGN's audience probably is more on Microtransactions are terrible. You're very right about that and I'm sure Dan Tries to have that kind of balance as good as possible, especially after the whole Now it's related to microtransactions But the whole too much water thing which was his call and I'm sure that has haunted him for ever since I Once I once argued with Dan I'm I've been to IGN once it was their old building. I believe they've moved since the pandemic But I was out there in 2018 I want to say and I got to visit the wiki team Brendan Miranda Casey and John and Sam and other people there and Dan I met Dan and I had brought up how I think Iron Man 3 is the best MCU movie and I'd probably I'd probably still stand by that maybe no way home now because no way home ties in Toby and Andrew but like just it's it does I'm just kidding I haven't seen the movie, but I also don't care about spoilers. My mom didn't know that so she Like Doc Ock shows up. It's kind of the first thing and she actually apparently this is what they told me was through a fit She's like they are so lazy that they are just doing the same thing with the same actor 50 you know 15 years later or whatever. She didn't understand until they all showed up. She didn't understand The premise which I would have paid anything to be there and have my mom flip out that Doc Ock returned But back to Iron Man 3 I argued with Dan Why I thought Iron Man 3 was a really great movie. I did not win that argument Which I think is probably a sign that I was I I don't remember how old I was early 20s, whatever that may have been Yeah, I don't know early 20s and Dan has been arguing with people in like review context for Probably most of my life. He's very good at it, but I still stand by it. You cannot shake me Dan The You talking about neo the world ends with you though reminded me of my one of my really terrible wiki experiences which was coming off a good year like 2018 was it right before God of War maybe it was kicking off 2018 it was Metal Gear Survive that oh my oh my yeah I ended up with that one and so that was a game that came out after Metal Gear Solid 5 was like a tower defense kind of game but also a random random rng map and fog and survival and monsters and a really terrible story I was on the guide for that one and so you I got paid you know the standard rate at least at the time 500 bucks to grind through that atrocity but then you know I could get 250 bucks an episode for a telltale game and that takes a couple hours to like play through and then write about it so. Yeah it's definitely you like for anybody that wants to get into writing guides you definitely need to think about it and I mean that you need to look at their rate and think about how much time you're gonna spend because when I did like okay so the rates are higher now at IGN. That's great. - I mean, that's really good to hear. - Yeah. But if you're going, like, if you're going in and you want to do, okay, so I don't know how it used to work when you did it, but the way it works now is once you get in, which can be, you know, there's lots of ways you can get into it, right? You know, you can have someone recommend you, which is kind of how I got in. You can apply or whatever, you know, there's lots of ways to do it now. - I did work, I worked in Wikis for free, like three or four Wikis for free, just did that and I got in contact with Sam and was like hey is there a paid opportunity and it turned out there was so you know there's tons of routes in to becoming a freelance guide writer at least at IGN for our experience yeah the so the way it works now is until they know you and like what you're good at and what your interests are is they'll send out a feeler everyone's probably like hey I need someone to do this and such and such game and then you say oh I'd like to do that and in my opinion for for how much they pay which is not it's not bad for most games but if

they were like hey I need someone to do God of War Ragnarok that's it someone full-time needs to do that that's a lot that's a lot to ask a person you know and because you're limited there in some ways because you there's it's not I think it can be a negotiation but usually it's a base fee whereas like a site like double XP and I'm not saying this to say we're better than IGN because obviously they're way huge and they're always gonna rank like I remember them asking me to write the inscription guide months after that game came out and I was like why would we write like people already how are we gonna track on this and I was like wait this is IGN if I write it it's gonna be a top result it'll be in the top because yeah so it didn't matter that we were behind because we is IGN you know what I mean like there is speed doesn't mind yeah so like we they operate on different levels but the reason I like the way we do it where you get paid per guide is it takes off that cap that monetary cap and so yeah obviously it's there has to be traffic there you know I'm not just gonna let someone write 40 guides in a week because they want to. It's got a track with your actual ad revenue and like where you're getting money in to pay them. But if you're into Elden Ring, which obviously this is over now, but if you're at Elden Ring you could write, you know, you can make a month's worth of money in a week if you want to, you know, because it's just like free rein to go. Whereas in IGN, you know, you're kind of capped. And there's other sites that work similarly to us like tech rap tech radar no what are you called crap I should have this tech Raptor tech Raptor is very similar fan by is also another good place to look at if you're looking for guides nowadays they pay very well okay and like especially if you're a sports person I found I did a bunch of it will be the show stuff for them last year and it was great both time investment and how much I got back and then FanBite, this is very niche but it's related to my story and like how I got here I guess, FanBite also bought Wowhead and when they wanted guides for Diablo 2 Resurrected they knew that I played that game a lot and they were like hey can you come in and write guides and in my head I was like do you want me to write guides for a game that came out in 2000 and 2001 maybe it's 2000 yeah but they paid me very well to basically go refresh myself on a game I put probably 3,000 hours in as a middle school student so it was like that was some of the easiest money I've ever made because I already knew everything you know what I mean yeah so that was yeah I I'm a big like Obviously I'm a big double XP fan, but I'm also a big Fanbyte fan as places to work. I think they're both pretty great. - Fan of Fanbyte. - And they treat their people way. Fanbyte treats their people very well, as do we. And not that IGN doesn't, but you know. - I do think just like the, IGN has always treated me good when I was working for them. - Yeah, same. - It's always good that, you know, they paid, you'd get games sometimes early, they worked with you. I'd probably say half-ish of the guides. I was on some form of a team where a full-time person was there, which was always good. They would let me pitch certain games and be like, "Hey, can I work on this?" And sometimes I'd get the green light for that. And then somehow they would hire/trust me to work on some of the biggest games in the last seven years, like God of War and Red Dead 2 and Zelda and stuff. Those are stuff I probably, I don't know. They needed more hands on deck than they had. I don't know how I could work on those games. It was nuts. But I think at the time, and again, it could be different now, it sounds like at least they pay more, but like the scale there for some games to others is just whack. 'Cause you could, like The Witcher, now I was compensated later for Witcher work because I kept doing work for it, and I think almost like you were saying, traffic was high for that game, especially when it came out, that they ended up retroactively comp. But up front, I was only hired for that \$400 cap. Then I kept working on stuff and they were like, "We'll give you more money, I guess." And so that ended up working out in my favor, but I put, I think my PS4 says I put like a hundred, I have it right here, I should just look at it. I put 174 hours into The Witcher. - And that's just playing. - That was just play. And I haven't played it since. Like this is an extra play time. I didn't play the second round of DLC 'cause I wasn't hired for it. You know, that's just play. And then there's all the editing, the writing, the uploading. It's bonkers. And you know, that was, say 120 of those hours, 140, was just the base game, that was only 900 bucks. That's not a good hourly rate of just playtime. But then there were other games, like one of them, which I'm excited to write about, I think it's in a few weeks. In 2016, Sam approached me to write about McDonald's Monopoly. Like, the one

where you go to the restaurant and peel off the cups and fries and stuff and play Monopoly. I wrote a guide for that. - Okay. - Right, it was one of the easiest. Now that wasn't the \$500 rate that was purely traffic based but that was not hard at all. So that ratio is way higher than something like the Witcher as time, money, investment stuff. It's just some of that stuff. I worked Black Friday for them one year. That is insane. - I bet. - Dude, those-- - That sounds crazy. It's also how I learned how Wario64 makes all of his money. It's those darn referral codes. - Yeah, yeah, yeah. - It stuff's crazy. - I will say that one thing that I am really interested about IGN, and this is very specific to them, but I know this because I applied for this job and did not get it, is they just hired, and I don't know who it is, but they just hired a new guides editor whose focus, and this is why I applied. I didn't apply because, I don't like my job, but I applied because it's like very much up my alley. But the focus of this new editor is to do live content, which is something they like had just started to dabble with when I was there, which is kind of wild to me that it's this far. - Right. - You know, it's 2022 and they're, so I think, I don't know if I was the first person, but they brought me into, I did the Forza 5 guide, full guide and then they had me stick around to do the first month of live content so every Thursday I would update the guide. Well I know Fortnite they had people on yeah but I feel like Fortnite's almost a separate beast even though it is a live game. And they might have someone on Genshin I feel like those are the two but it seemed like they were trying to dip into sports some and some other stuff like that. So I think that maybe some of those games would be good because I mean look I know from experience and being able to look at the numbers that there is money in putting out guides about all the new FIFA stuff that happens every single day of the week almost. Right. It's to me it's interesting this is kind of the big thing I think of as having changed at least in my experience of guide writing to like the stuff you're doing today. Is these more one-off articles of like how to do X or here's what's new in FIFA. Those articles existed while I was doing this type of work, but it was never what I was working on. They would find out what they could pull from my guide and make a promotable article out of like here's how to save everyone in Until Dawn. That's something that could be nice on the weekend or whatever. But I never was writing, here's how you unlock Terminator or Mortal Kombat or whatever. But I think that's the big thing because you're generating more pages which could then generate more clicks, more eyes, you're bouncing around. It's not all in one place, so to speak, But search is the way people navigate the internet. It is how do I do this? How do I unlock this? How do I go there? Where is this? A guide, WikiGuides are just the digital version and version of the paper guides with also letting, taking in like form style posts where people could contribute, just kind of merging those two together. but these articles are more buzzfeed-like in a way, not so much the clickbait, look at all of our pictures, buzzfeed signature style, but the, we have all of this content for this one thing, instead of one thing that covers all of this, one guide that you can branch off it to, it's one topic spread across so many different pages or writers and articles. I think that's the fascinating thing. you can crank out stuff way faster. - Yeah, definitely. And I mean, I don't know, I go back and forth. I do like the Wikis because I like the hard part about when you do those one-off guides, even if they're not one-off, you know, say it's a game where you have 100 guides on it on your site, it's hard to, you can't link to all those other stuff on the page. - Right, it's separated. It's not all in one place. - So I don't know what the perfect solution is, But I wish there was one because if there was a way to I don't know I'm a big I So my favorite guide writer is on still on game facts Yes, I don't know. I don't know if you are a yakuza fan. No Okay, I have well I haven't played them yet to someday Okay. Well when you do play them, please make sure you go see I think it's Cyrix Z They make the best some of the best guys on the internet and they're like pretty much only do it for the Yakuza games, but they are so detailed and So like they go so in-depth and tell you exactly where you need to go exactly need to do they are One of the biggest lifesavers for those kids and I have pulled up right now. Oh, I love them They're so good five as the first game I could think of well, yeah, you chose one of the worst ones Oh, well, what which what guide should I pull? Look, okay. Look look look the guide is probably great. I said the game is bad. Okay. I just thought it was like This is like super well segmented. There's a table of contents and yeah, this is like a manual Yeah, it's exploring walkthrough, huh? Yeah Sorry, this is one person. Yes one person what I

know it's crazy and they're doing on game facts game facts I've been going to Game Facts since I was in elementary school. I know but I probably vote in that daily poll. That's probably the most consistent thing I've ever done on the internet. You're still voting in the poll? Yeah, every day. Oh wow, okay. I didn't know there were still Game Facts fans out there. It's all I, well, I use Game Facts primarily for two things. I go here for the poll every day and And when I'm playing an old game, I go here for cheats and guides because I feel like these kind of capture the spirit of that time. And it takes me back seeing these like ASCII art, you know, walkthroughs and facts and stuff. It's just fun. We're working on season three of Chapter Select right now. I'll tell you later, Ricky, what the game is, but it's an older one where it definitely has game fact pages and I was using it for some of the stuff I was getting stuck on in this older game and it just, it's part of it is comforting and the other part is super frustrating because how did anyone beat games like this because some, you know, this is some other guy or kid who was in their basement writing this stuff in a text editor and no editor was looking at it. It's so, and you can find different levels of commitment or dedication to it and people are knocking it out of the park and apparently this Cyrix Z person out here killing it. Yes, yeah. They are the best. They are a lifesaver for me personally at least. That is wild. I'm going to link this in the show notes. Absolutely. This is cool. That is so neat. Maybe we should just all go back to Game Facts. That's how guides should be. that would be great remember remember in YouTube promise that it would incorporate YouTube with stadia and you could say like how to do this and then a video would pop up oh what a time I've been cool would have been cool would have been super helpful if anyone used stadia how were they planning to curate that and make sure you didn't get they probably were just yeah who knows what you could have got. I don't know. It doesn't matter because it doesn't exist and never will. That's true, yeah, fair enough. Fair, fair enough. You know, one of the things you brought up a lot, which I think makes sense because A, it's what you seem to like the most and B, you've also done a lot of work on is these sports games. Yeah, I don't know if I would say... Do I like them the most? Sometimes I feel like I'm a gambling addict more than a fan. Okay, I could see that. I got, I guess to segue naturally, to kind of flow, like how does a guide, how does a guide work for a sport game? Because that's got to be, you've got to be on top of that game. Like it's not like once it's out you're done with it. Like you always have to be looking at it. Yeah, okay, so Here's the the secret I could teach you how to write sports game guides in probably five minutes And you would be good to go you just have to know when it comes out and you have to know like the format that it needs to be in right because To be honest once you get past the first week where you're writing gameplay guides of actually how to play the game It's just keeping up with the live content So like there's a thing in FIFA, which is it's the best the best and easiest example. So they're called squad building challenges So what it is is I don't know if you've ever played FIFA's ultimate team. I have never played one second of FIFA Okay, so the way ultimate team works and this is how they get all their money from people is You start and you have your club and there you have, you know, 11 players I don't know how many players 18 players in your team and over time all those players are represented by cards right and so they have like their little card art and blah blah blah and Over time you're going to get better players new cards that take up those Spots right so then okay as you get better players, and you can you know progress and play against theoretically You can get better at the game and play against tougher Opposition in the form of either the computer or more likely against other humans online So there are things called squad building challenges and what these are is those cards you're not using so you've either like packed them out of packs that you get for rewards or you spent money and you bought packs you know nothing wrong with it it's your money if you're an adult it's okay It's just like trading cards. Yeah except for trading cards are real and you know they don't go away at the end of the year so you're gonna take those cards and you know into a squad building challenge and you're gonna there's gonna be like some kind of like puzzle where it'll be you know you have to make a squad of 11 players that has two Brazilians and the total the squad all together is gonna be rated as 83 and you have to do it with a certain amount of chemistry I won't explain it all that means because it doesn't matter but you're gonna put in the little players the little cards wherever, you know, in the right order, in the right

place, and then submit those. They go away forever, they're gone, those are out of your club, they don't exist anymore, and you get something new. It might be a new player, it might be a new pack that you can open, and those come out almost every single day. And so you can go write a guide and you're like, "Here are the requirements, and here is we've solved the puzzle for you. We've already done it. Here's a solution. You just have to go buy these players, put them into your squad, bup bup bup, and then you have whatever you want. So like you can do that every day almost and make whatever your place charges for guides. And then also there's some that are like objectives in gameplay so it'll be like you have to score so many goals and fortunately for guide makers none of these sports games do a good job of giving you that data while you're in the game so unless you're writing it down for yourself, which I do, a good thing to have is like have a guide open that has you know here's the objectives I have to do during this game to get this new thing in my game and so you know it's it's very very simple is a very very easy if you know what you're doing and to know what you're doing you have to be playing it all the time and you know no one countless like in my head every day I'm like it's 10 o'clock I have to go check NBA it's new and I have to go check FIFA it's - I have to go check it will be the show you know like I know they're really schedule better than my own schedule and so I just go check everything that's happening and if there's something right about now at this point if there's something right about and no one else on writing about it then I'll write about it but yeah it's sports games are very easy to cover but also no one wants to cover them it sounds like they don't end they did they well I mean they don't end until the comes out but then the next one starts so they don't they don't end truthfully do you do you just have like pen and paper next to you to keep track of the stuff are you keeping track of it on your phone and a no or do you have an actual like article open on a laptop next to you that you're filling this out as you play a game of FIFA or something okay so do you mean when I'm writing article or when I'm playing myself like you were saying that you keep track of like if a game has so many objectives score this many goals block this whatever you know you keep track of it because the game apparently doesn't communicate that very well yeah so in front of me right now I have two monitors and a 50 45 inch TV right up here and so when I'm playing sports games I'm just looking at my computer and I have like a Google Sheet open that's tracking what I need to be tracking to make sure that every like I have... NBA is much more complicated than FIFA because they have these things called... I apologize because you're getting really into this and I'm sure you don't really care that much. I'm fascinated by this. Okay so they have these things called EVAs and what that means is it's a player that will if you do certain things with them they will evolve into a higher rated player and right now... Like Pokemon. Sort of, kind of. Is it like a rookie Michael Jordan that will evolve into pro Michael Jordan or is it this player turns into a completely different player? Okay so it is what you're the first thing you said okay but I want to point out that NBA 2k22 and WWE 2k22 has in my personal opinion the worst way of like raiding cards because what you just said we were like oh it could be a rookie into a pro that would make sense within the game of NBA because that's the thing that happens in 2k22 cards begin as a gold card which makes sense that's FIFA also has they have bronze silver gold and then special so like special can be all kinds of crap but in NBA goes from gold to emerald to sapphire this is Ruby yeah Ruby amethyst diamond pink diamond galaxy opal and finally when you hit level 99 you are a dark matter what because because that makes sense dark matter yes I don't know it doesn't make any sense it's so stupid but it's what that's what they do dark matter so they kind of have like a Pokemon kick there and then they just go almost League of Legends II and then just sci-fi it's just it's absolutely ridiculous and I've never I hate it because I hate writing in my articles galaxy opal and pink diamond because it seems so stupid but that's what they call it you got to use their jargon - Because that's what people are searching for. - Uh huh. - Ew, that doesn't sound fun on the work side, or even as a player to like really keep track of that. - No, no. - That doesn't sound fun at all. - And no one calls them that. Everyone, like, so if it's a dark matter, of course everyone just shortens it, so it's just DM, or a galaxy opal is geo, right? So like, no one's like-- - Go and DM, yeah, 'cause those search terms are really helpful. - Yeah, yeah. But yeah, it's just so lame. - It's so lame, I hate it. - Have you made a slide into DM joke in any of your guides? From Galaxy Opal to DM? Slide

back? - There has not been, I will though probably, but I don't know if there's been a, so we don't write about cards that go into packs. Because there's nothing to write about there, right? So there might have been a card that evos from a Galaxy Opal to a Dark Matter in packs. There hasn't been one in rewards. So something we could write about, 'cause it's something you can earn. But if there is, I will now use that joke. - Go slide into DM, see, bam, right there. - That's a good excerpt, that's a good excerpt for sure. - That's your subheading. FIFA suddenly teaching you, or NBA, whichever one that was, suddenly teaching you how to talk to people that you're interested in possibly dating and getting better at their sport video game. So why, so these games are like live for a year or whatever, or really they have a dev cycle of eight, nine months or something and then. Why, why isn't it just a service at this point? Like, is this a good or bad thing? My brain thinks, why isn't there just FIFA and you pay an annual subscription and then they update the roster or what have you? Does that make sense or is that not what the players want at all? I think... I think... Okay, so... I think that the players think that's what they want. Even I think that's what I want. But the issue comes is... Okay, the reason that they do it is because they make more money. The reason that you could say for like an Ultimate team having a new version every year is if you have to plan your power curve so you start out with low level teams and then by the end of the season you have these like god tier this everyone has disgusting teams whether they paid money or not if you have to start that curve and plan it for like five years instead of a year people are going to be playing with those crappy teams for a whole year right so or at least a year So it's not going to be as exciting and it might feel even more pay-to-win because then you know people are going to go buy the good players if they can and then they're gonna you know they're gonna be better than you because they have better cards which isn't always the case. Sometimes I'll play people that have the best cards and they suck but you know a lot of times if you have really good cards it can bump you up a couple tiers in how good you are just because you have better players than somebody else. So I think that's the big reason why they couldn't just say, you know, okay when the new season starts, which works really well in a basketball game, obviously FIFA is more difficult than that because like European season, so like Premier League, Serie A, Ligue 1, the Bundesliga, all those are gonna end in like the middle of May, whereas the MLS goes through the summer right so and not that MLS is on the same level as those other leagues but there's not a schedule is not the same right so you couldn't just say the new season is starting so now everyone has to start over from zero so there and then I don't know it's just very like it'd be very confusing because you either have a super long power curve that would piss people off or you would make people you would like do the forced reset and then Like what would they do with those old cards? Like what would you like I get it from it makes sense from everything Except for ultimate team standpoint. So you talk in career mode Just normal online play where you're not like building your own team Anything like that. It makes it would make sense not to have a yearly cycle But in terms of the thing that makes them money, which is ultimate team for all of these sports games even you know Madden the show 2k FIFA although that's where they make all their money it doesn't make a lot of sense to go that way and Like I think the players think it's a good idea and I think they're probably wrong Mm-hmm, but I could but I could be wrong. Who knows I could be completely incorrect. It just depends on how the people at FIFA at EA Sports at visual concepts and Sony Sony sent note. Yeah, Sony San Diego how they like make the game happen because that whole power curve thing is such a very delicate balance and they have look Like 2k has completely ruined their power curve this year. It is People are way too good way too early and it is like that game is dying a little bit right now because people are so bored In terms of like you can't make a better team now, you know, cuz you're already at the top Yeah, everyone already has like incredible players. They have like Seven foot two guys that can shoot threes and like hit a step back in your face and shoot over you. It's The power curve has gotten a little too strong this year and like FIFA's messed up The so they have like the transfer market where you can buy and sell players So like I could sell I mean, I wouldn't sell it to you I just sell it to anybody but I could sell a player I don't need on the transfer market and get money to go buy my own players in game currency money in game currency Okay, yeah for now people think NFTs are gonna come in some way. I'm sure I'm sure

that will I I don't think it would work but people seem to think it's gonna be a thing I don't think NFTs would work, but I do think that a game company will try. Yeah That's fair Did you? Never mind It's survivor related. There's a new NFT survivor game. That is very shady that I saw the other day Anyways, that doesn't matter but yeah, I don't know how exactly that would work if they switch it over because like the power curves are already so weird and for different reasons like wildly different reasons Based on what they've been doing in the game to change things up and part of that might be that they're worried about legislation coming out about loot boxes Yeah, I don't know. It's good. I mean, yeah, it's all very weird right now and I'm not quite sure Like what the path forward is FIFA's in a really weird spot because I think they're gonna get rid of the FIFA license I think yeah, I remember something about Them losing that license and isn't not that it's soccer related, but isn't the NCAA Coming back as a game - yes Max I'm okay. Look I Play FIFA and 2k because for a couple of reasons, right? I like I Really like soccer. I watch soccer Way more than any other sport and FIFA is a great way to like, you know play with those players I like it makes you you know, make you feel cool. You're like, oh I'm playing with Cristiano Ronaldo. That's awesome Also, it is like the ultimate podcast game. This is a big thing for me It's like I can watch a video and play it I don't have to be clearly checked in and when it's 10 o'clock on a Monday and I have two hours where I go to bed I don't want to sit and play Yakuza. I want to play somewhere I can just turn my brain off and not pay attention So that's why I play a lot of sports games FIFA's perfect for that 2k is a little different I don't watch the NBA anymore, but the gameplay like they there's 2k is so much in terms of content to do Like there's always something you be playing and again, you don't have to pay attention. I could just you know smack down a computer team 75 to 20 on the hardest difficulty because I've gotten that good at the game and I can be watching old Are you afraid of the darks which is what I've been doing for the past couple days You know, but when the NCAA football game comes out, I don't know if people see me again When is that does that have a window at all, I think it's I think it's 2023 I hope I I really hope. Yeah, I think I paid for NCAA 14, which is the last one they made, and somehow I lost my copy. I think I paid \$115 for that. And I would say it was worth every single penny. Those are one of the best video games, not sports games, those are the best video games ever made. And if it's even half as good, look, Madden is in the worst place it's ever been, and it's not even close. Madden is trash so if you like football you do not have a video game to play right now but if NCAA football comes back and it's as good as it used to be it's gonna be gross how much money I spent on that game. It does look like summer of 23 and at least what they initially were aiming for back in December of 21 so let's hope yeah for those folks definitely. I'll just quit my job and become a streamer. Yeah, NCAA streamer. Probably not good enough video games to do that, especially because I'm old. My reflexes aren't what they used to be. Yeah, that's, I'm kind of curious, in the age that we seem to be in with the console and other big publishers and developers, this age of streaming where everyone has a streaming service. Game Pass. Now we've got PlayStation Plus Ultimate. Is that what they call it? Or Platinum or something? I don't know. Number? Yeah, I think it's an E. No. The first one's an E. Essentials. Essential? Ultimate? Essential is like the baseline, I think. And then I think it's Extra and then it might, you might be right. I think it is Premium or Platinum. Premium, that's what it is. You know, so that's coming out and then EA's had EA Play, I think that's what that's called forever. Ubisoft has one. These services just, I think Grand Theft Auto just launched one, which is wild, but they just did that. But I wonder if these sports developers and publishers are looking to or will look to integrate into that model. I mean if you look at at least the one example I can think of personally is MLB the show is on game pass and that day and day game pass. So even Sony wants that game pass money, you know, and they did it last year and it's now this year and as anyone could have predicted and will be the show 21 left game pass right when 22 came out and so the new season new game has started and that existed on Game Pass for a year and so Microsoft and theoretically Sony are like getting a cut of that as play on top of whatever players are purchasing I guess in the game so they're almost they're probably making even more money yeah I would think so I mean I think the show is the most I guess the word would be generous of the sports games in terms of like what you get for what you pay okay don't have to spend extra money there's so much more to do in

that game than other games. Unfortunately I just suck at it so I don't really play it. But also on top of that they are... so 2k does one sale on what they call virtual currency. So that's like the currency you can buy to then go buy stuff. They do one sale the entire year. Maybe two. It will be the show they call their stubs. And stubs go on sale all the time. All the time. So if you're like a show player you are not only are you getting what I would say better value for your money than something like FIFA but also if you want to spend more money it's not as expensive right so yeah the show is doing dollar stretched further in something yeah show than it is in FIFA yeah that's interesting but FIFA makes way more money so you know I don't know it is the biggest sport in the world so it does have more players that's true I I would think, so. I find that, it's such an interesting realm in the games industry that I have never touched. Honestly, the closest probably is Gran Turismo 7, and that's something I never played Gran Turismo before, and I picked up the new one and I'm totally hooked. And that's a sport game in the way, I haven't even done the GT Sport stuff in the game yet, so I haven't even raced other people or spent money on car currency, and I understand that racing in that particular game is wildly different than what you're doing in FIFA or the show or Madden. You know, those are, you're buying packs, which are loot boxes essentially, and players building teams like you were talking about. It's way different than I want to buy 20 million credits to buy this Ferrari. It's different in that way, but I do, it's such a big chunk of the market I'm fascinated by people that play it and like what hooks it in like gets their hooks in there. It's cool to hear about Yeah, it's also weird how little it's talked about in the game press. Yes, which it very much falls in that Roblox style thing where like Roblox is massive, right? But you don't hear like giant bomb doing a an hour on Roblox ever even though cuz they're not they aren't playing it Yeah, yeah, they might be right now because of the Kim Kardashian thing They may talk about that, but no one's playing roblox like kids are playing it and that's why it's big and I think even Minecraft would fall in there kids were our were playing Minecraft maybe fortnight has transcended that because I think yeah in a way I Mean we do roblox guides all the time Because they're probably brings in a lot of traffic. Yes, very good traffic. Those kids are probably probably, you know, searching like how do I... I don't even know what you do in Roblox besides build games and play games so... I never played it. How do I get free Robux? I don't know. That's probably the wild thing. But yeah, it's crazy. It is kind of wild how many things in this industry are not... like how many gigantic audiences we just don't have a way to meet from the games press side of things where you know if you could get like just because I use them I'll use giant bomb as an example but if you could get like a small small percent of roblox players starting to watch like if Jan started a roblox stream or something and then they started watching that they could get you know you get so many more people onto whatever your product is you know if there was a way to do it but it's you know and same with sports like you get a ton of people watching your stuff but the problem is is you know a lot of people in games press don't care about that stuff and a lot of those communities already have their own like influencers yeah so you know unless you're like bringing in Ty Debo to be the NBA 2k 22 guy at IGN I just not gonna get his audience to come over. Mm-hmm. So then you're almost having to sign talent, which I imagine is in some ways like bringing commentators and stuff over for real sports, like on a network or something. And I know right now a lot of rumors are swirling that the Sunday ticket for the NFL, the Dish deal was up this year or something and so it's been a bid war and it sounds like Apple is pretty much got locked between them and Amazon. And so, you know, there's probably some talent stuff there, where those contracts fall, who, you know, do they then bring on the people that they're used to, folks are used to hearing. - Right. - They just started that Friday night baseball stuff on Apple TV Plus, and that's like a new chunk of, I think Hunter Pence is one of the commentators. - Huh. - But it's, so I imagine it's probably a similar mentality there of, Well, if we want to do a show about 2K Live or whatever, we would need talent that people would want to come watch to bring that in. It's harder to build it from the ground up, even if you are one of the biggest sites in the world. - Yeah. Yeah. Unless you just want to bring me in to do it and then, you know, let's do it. - All right. - I at least know what I'm talking about. - I don't. Don't bring me in. Unless that's your angle. Guy who knows nothing. - Yeah, that'd be a great angle. awesome okay here's what we do let's start it we'll start a series where I play your

manager and tell you like get you the players and tell you what to do before the game but then when it starts I can't hands are off it's all the coach on the sideline yelling at me yeah as long as you wear a suit like they do in basketball on the side I do that I'd wear I have two suits I'll wear a suit I I would be terrible at this. I would be so bad. The other... is it fair to call it a sport? I'm gonna call it a sport. The other sport that you love, and I know this because you're my exposure to it, is the show Survivor. And just like I'm fascinated with these sports games and like this, you have opened my eyes through this whole fantasy survivor drafts that you've done over on Bantam Banter like survivor is huge and I wrote my brain just process that survivor existed but didn't wasn't as big as it seems to actually be and so you you've inspired me Abby and I watched the very first season we started season two but then we just stopped, not because it wasn't interesting, but I think life got away from us and Survivor floated off in the sunset. But I guess it's Logan was telling me the other day with her like on season 40 something. - 42, yeah. - The show's alive and kicking. So I guess, where to start? All I know about Survivor is season one, what I've experienced with you in these fantasy things, And then I remember my parents and their friends being into it whenever Boston Rob was around, the first time. I know he's come back and other stuff. But it was such a big deal at the time, in at least the reality TV space, that he, in this, I don't even know what the lady's name is. I believe they're still married. - Amber? - Amber. - They are still married, yes. - They fell in love on the show, it was, oh. And he came in second and then proposed live when they gave her like a million bucks or whatever. - That was actually the second, that was both their second season. - See, look at me, I don't even know. But that's all I really know about the show. And you sir, are an expert, I believe. - Yeah, I mean, okay. - You sound like one. - It's weird because, okay, I've seen every season at least three times. - That sounds like an expert to me. - Yeah, except for a couple. But then it's weird 'cause, you know, I would say I'm an expert at sports games. But when I listen to people who podcast about Survivor who'd know I mean I watched a guy he's been on the show too on Survivor His name's Rob Cestronino. He's from he's on two seasons. He's on Amazon and all-stars with Rob the other Rob I watched him name every single cast member That's ever been on the show Now and that to me is insane like that's an expert, you know, like sure I could tell you every season's winner and like the order, you know and stuff like that But and like a lot of the big moments but to know every like that's a real expert, you know what I mean? So, I don't know. I guess I am an expert but it's weird because I know people who are I would guess I'm a superfan and there are super duper fans. I guess it's a way to say super duper fan. I can roll with that. I Guess my first question is like how a survivor still on TV Okay, here's my opinion obviously you should go without saying that I think survivor is one of the It's first or second best show on TV in my opinion It kind of like it depends on how good the challenge is that season like survivors much more consistent than the challenge But they're both very very good and they're both, you know, very entertaining and they're always different But I think the main reason survivor is still on TV is you got to think about how much cheaper that show is to film Then most other shows you know what I mean? Like to film a season of survivor is not going to cost the same as you know, I don't know. What is the Big Bang Theory like the Big Bang Theory is probably like ten times more expensive than survivor and especially in the now nowadays when everything is on streaming I Wouldn't be surprised if we get even more survivor like if there are more spin-offs, I mean they're trying to do one right now It's called beyond the edge. It's like Celebrity survivor, but it's not really survivor It's not very good, but it has like Singletary and Ray Lewis and His name is no longer meta world peace it is now oh my gosh, I can't remember real his first name meta Ron Artest he used to be our test and then he was meta world peace and now he's like Ron meta his wife's last name or something like that yeah yeah something I knew it was weird oh is it meta Sanford our test that's what Google's given me the former professional basketball player yeah yes so it has like ex pro athletes and the host it's hosted by Mara Ranallo who used to be on WWE commentary and does a bunch of like UFC and fighting events Oh and it has a It's the middle Daughter in full house. I think her first name is Jody Jody sweetens I think whatever Stephanie real name is I don't know but Steph. Oh, yeah. Yes, Steph It has her on it and other like B or C list celebrities It's not very good. But I think that is the biggest reason survivors still on TV is that it is

Entertaining so it has like a very dedicated core audience, but then even more than that it is cheap to produce compared to other TV shows And like they have now this beyond the edge thing I mean, I guess I see it in her face. She looks obviously oh, she looks like she's screaming in the water. What happened? So is this hosted by the same oh, no, you said it was no by that guy but it's They don't win money for themselves, do they? - Yeah, they're playing for a charity. - Yeah, usually when it's celebrities, they play for charity. - Usually. I think in Celebrity Big Brother, they play for money for themselves, which is weird. - That is a little weird. I feel like-- - 'Cause like, it's like-- - You already have-- - Chris Kattan was on there. Yeah, I mean, you would hope so. Chris Kattan was on there. People from, what's that show called? The Real Housewives were on there. - Ooh. Also, not very good, but Big Brother isn't very good in general. So I don't know, that might be a hot take for some people out there, but Big Brother used to be good. Big Brother sucks since like season 15. And we're on 23 or 24 now, or max. So it's been a while since Big Brother was good. And it's only once a year, unlike Survivor, which is twice a year. So it's been a while. Wow. That's crazy. So my other question is apparently at some point this show, Survivor, flips a switch and becomes this mind game where they're really messing with each other in kind of a, you correct me if I'm wrong, but like a backstabby, manipulative, hardcore, it is mental and physical, know all the way through or whatever. When does that happen? There's some of it in season one, which is all I'm familiar with, but it sounds like it goes to another level at some point and becomes the show that I think is on now essentially. So there's like, you can kind of look at various eras of Survivor, kind of where like the game Evolved so I think you brought up Boston Rob earlier his first season Marquesas, which is season four Was the first time that there was a like so You'll remember in season one. There was an alliance but like if you were on the bottom of the Alliance You weren't gonna go work with the other people that weren't in your Alliance You were just gonna hope you made to the end right because we weren't in an alliance Yeah, they were kind of Almost casual about their alliances in a way like it was just like oh I they were almost people of their word to a degree Except some of them who put those people are generally at the top like dr. Sean wasn't going with Jervis to go flip on you know, rich and Sue and all them could have changed everything Yeah, yes, definitely Marquesas is actually the first time that happens where the people on the bottom An alliance flip to the other tribe and then they vote out that the the people on top which I guess sorry I'm spoiling a little bit of survivor for you If you ever watch it, you probably forget it by the time you get there if you've all watched one season in like a year So and that it's not really so much Rob that does that I mean he like gets the ball rolling, but it's really other people that do it and then you have all-stars, which is like really weird because their friends in real life and then they turn on each other in a very dramatic way and it gets really nasty and gross and then You know you have a couple of seasons where it's you know, I mean obviously like their strategy, but it's not anything crazy and then like You know stuff gets added to the game. So they add an individual hidden individual immunity. So What it is, it's like this is in those fantasy things you've done. Yeah So that gives players who don't have as big of an alliance more power and so it like Makes stuff happen that wouldn't happen before but then really where you get to like the game where it turns it really becomes more of a Like a I guess a game than a social experiment is Samoa which is season 19 which is a guy named Russell Hance comes on there and he is just one of the most despicable human beings you'll ever see. He makes it very very far and he is like finding... so before him the only way you'd find an idol is if you had a clue to it and then you could be like oh this is where it is I'll go look for it there and find it. Dude just like walks out into the the onto the beach and like hunts for him he's like a like a truffle pig for idols like he can just he finds him and the way he does it is like he can see that if he goes to a certain place more camera people are following him because they know the idol is close so he might find it so he like uses the camera crew to like lead him to idols in this really ingenious way Wow yeah whoa yeah and then kind of from there just like it's off like a rocket the part the problem is though for a while as they started casting a lot of what they call "maktors" which are like model actors like people who don't never watch Survivor before but they're hot and so they brought them out to look hot. So they look good on the beach on a desert island and sure. And that era is definitely rougher which is

like 21 to maybe 24 so it's like four or five seasons in there they're kind of rough but then after that they've since then they've pretty much been casting more like people who actually want to play and also you got to think like when it was first on nobody had seen anything like this before for the most part by the time you're in season 30 all these people watching you know have kind of like grown up with the show yeah all the people playing so they like I've seen stuff last ten years watching survivor yeah so it's just gonna evolve in that way too where people are gonna say oh I would have done this and so that so when get out there I'm gonna do you know such and such so I think that's a big part of why it's evolved it's like people watching it but also they have definitely gone really far in terms of how many twists they add to the game so like there's nothing in the first season it is like straight up back to basics I mean I guess not back to basics it was the basics you know just very simple there's nothing extra now you got like extra votes steal a vote knowledge is power. Idols. You have an amulet that three people get one of them and if three people are there and you all use it together you can steal a vote but if one person gets voted out now that thing becomes more powerful and then if another person gets voted out that has amulet you have soul control and now you have something... it gets crazy. You have people like getting beware advantages and now they don't have a vote until they say a secret phrase before an event and then two other people from it have to have secret phrases. This is my favorite survivor gif you just shared. I didn't mean to do that right now but I wanted to... we'll talk about it in a second. But yeah it is there's there's so much stuff in the game and like some people don't like it and to some degree I don't love it like I think there's a big twist I'm gonna is just a twist spoiler it's not gonna be a big spoiler but in season 41 right they've had so far so far away. If you're gonna watch the whole thing it'll take you a while to get there. Season 41 they had they had a year off because of COVID right so they're like you know we've gone to the drawing board we have all these new ideas we're gonna add them to the game and they added this thing called the the hourglass twist and so what happened is at the merge instead of merging they they put them in two teams, right? And you compete. If your team wins, you're immune at the first vote of the merge, which is huge. It's awesome. Amazing. You don't have to worry about getting voted out first of the merge. If you win, you also have to select someone from the other side that goes to their own island away from everyone else. When that person gets to the island, they get the chance to smash an hourglass. And if they do that, The people who won that challenge are now no longer safe. People who lost are now safe. And so Jeff is like, "All right guys, you're perfectly safe." And then two days later he's like, "Oh, just kidding. You're not safe." And everybody hated it. Everybody. They brought it back for season 42. I will say it's not as bad, but it's still annoying. Like it's like one of the, I think it's one of the worst twists ever. So sometimes they, Jeff and his team get a little too cute with it. And this is one of those times. yeah I think there's definitely eras we are in okay there has been there's one season very recently that had is like almost skippable I will say because of how gross it is there's some like borderline sexual or I shouldn't even say borderline there's some sexual harassment in it that is kind of hard to watch and does not make Survivor production look very good. But otherwise... That's unfortunate. Yeah we've had some pretty good seasons ever since I don't know probably I mean really since I started watching which is season 25 Karamoan there's like a couple of duds in there but most of these have been good I'm looking at it now. Looking at the whole list of it. I mean I will say there's probably I would probably call like seven seasons of survivor bad so I mean but when you're in a pool of 42 seasons I mean I guess that's I'm bad at math but 7 divided by 42 that's I mean that's below 25% probably yeah it's below yeah 20 I don't know the math I'm not great now I have to pull up a calculator and do it now I just feel bad for being a goofball so see we're gonna take seven divide it by 42 and multiply by that's only 16% yeah that's not bad 16 points is it 16.66 yeah yeah so that's okay because I want to watch the show. I want... it's definitely more than I ever thought it was just kind of in passing in pop culture. It seems pretty actually engaging and exciting in a game sort of way. So I want to watch more. I have Paramount+ right now for Halo, which I've watched all of one episode and I didn't think it was that great. So maybe I should just pivot and focus on Survivor instead for this period of time. Well if you're if you're anything like my wife and I we will sometimes binge an entire season in a day over a weekend we'll just be like up it's a Saturday

let's watch all of token chains again so I don't know if we're Abby and I will be there but maybe in the summer when she's not she's a teacher so she won't be working in the summer so maybe possibly who knows. The other survivor question, a few times I've done shows with you in the past you've talked about how you will be on Survivor someday. Yeah I'm manifesting. How does one, is it like other shows where you just send in an audition tape and you get selected? Yeah so you usually I try to do it in August every year. You've actively done this? Oh yeah I think I've applied four times now. Do you like hear back either way or is it you will only is it like job applications where you only hear if they want to talk to you? You only hear if they want to talk to you and I will say my first few videos were bad like really bad I think my last one was okay I have some ideas for my next one it's just for me I am not very good at being entertaining when I don't have someone else to talk to like I feel like when you know like me and you talking I could be funny and riff off you, but if it's just me standing there speaking, I feel like my personality doesn't really come through very well. So that's always been an issue with, even with job applications, I feel like if I get the interview, then I could probably get the job, but the problem is getting the interview. I feel like I'm getting past the application phase. Yeah, I feel like I'm a pretty good talker, although one time I did not get the job, but that's because it was for an RA position, and one of the people in the job interviews was my old RA and he was not a fan of me as a freshman in college. Couldn't sweet talk your way past those freshman years. I tried hard. I was like, "Man, you did so much good for us and you know you taught me so much. You know I've grown so much since then and a lot of it's because of you like teaching me the right way to do stuff, blah blah blah." Hey! Did not work. Also, he, that, man, that dude, okay, it's for an RA position at a small state school and he was like you should never show up to a job not in a suit or a job interview not in a suit and I was like what I mean I was I was not like in bad clothes but he but he was like every job interview you had you should be in a suit yeah every job interview you should have in a suit I was like what are you kidding he's the only person there in a suit but he was saying everyone should show up to us in a suit and that was like part of the reason he didn't hire me was I didn't show up in a suit that's like clothes clothingism I don't know it's weird so then like every other interview I've ever had except for the one it Double XP when they technically when they interviewed me even though they'd already known me for nine months to do the full-time position I've shown up in a suit to every other job interview I showed up to a suit this is so dumb okay so I used to be a teacher much like your wife although I taught PE and was our athletic director so it's very different so during the summer I did a job where I did a rock climbing, like a rock climbing camp for kids and for that job to interview, to get that job I showed up in a suit. It was a real, I was like why did I do this? You let that guy get in your head again. It's been 10 years and that guy's still in your head. Please tell me you rock climbed in the suit like as a donor of your ability. I did not do that. I did not do that. That's wild that that one RA has had such an impact on your style of interview. Like the way you go to a job and that's crazy how the mind works. Like you just don't want that to be the reason again, you know? Yeah, like fool me once, shame on me, fool me twice. Or shame on you, fool me twice, shame on me. But you get the idea. You get what I was going for. Yeah, for sure. - Oh my gosh. So in your application videos for Survivor, are you wearing a suit? - You know, I'm not actually, so maybe that's what the change I'll make. - That could be, you could start and then rip the suit. And then run into the ocean. - Yeah man, that'd be sweet. - Having never seen an application video for Survivor, I imagine it involves showing off some of your physical activity as well as your personality. - So that's, I don't know, it's weird what gets accepted because sometimes it's just like people talking because that's the thing they want to see right is like they want you to be you know obviously they want you to be entertaining and like personable but the really thing they're looking for someone that can narrate so someone that can talk over a scene and like explain stuff so they want someone who's good in confessionals so it's not so much like one way i mean i will say i told you when you were scheduling this podcast that i'm currently on a diet and part of the reason i'm losing weight is i mean well one I'm not like overweight but part of it is like I am about to turn what year is it 20 I'm about turned 34 and I'm like well you know I work out a lot that makes me sound very I work out every day and like you know can you very regular with your workout

yeah I can lift a lot of weight I can run pretty far but I eat like crap because I do those things so like it's you know that's my eating part as well as your consistency in working out. Yeah and I'm like I'm about to turn 34 I've never in my life had abs. If I don't do it now it's never gonna happen because I'm too old so let's just do it but then the other part of me is like well if I get abs then I could rip my shirt off in my survivor videos that would look good right? So it's like half that half just like what would happen I mean I've never done it before so like why not? As long as As long as like you and like just normal health goal, like I've never had abs before, why not? If as long as that's the primary reason, sure. And then survivor's a benefit. But if survivor's the goal, that could turn unhealthy. - Probably, yeah. Yeah, that's not, it's like, yeah, it's probably like 45 to 55%. - Hey, it's strategy, 'cause you wanna be on the show. - It's true, I'm gonna be on the show. - You are going to be on the show. - It's happening. I'm looking at survivor application. - Yeah. - Survivor casting. So it's every August? - Well, okay, so. - Apply now for season 43? - Yeah, you can apply whenever you want, but I would, I like to apply at toward the end of the summer because that's when they're like ramping up production. So they're like looking for people. - So we will be taping season 43 between mid-May of 22 and early July of 22. - Yeah, they already got all the people for 43 and 44 though, I think. I mean, maybe you could get a late call, but I'm already in the 45-46 cycle mindset. Interesting. How do you submit this? Is it like an unlisted YouTube video? You can do it that way. I mean, you could just upload a video to their thing. Okay, they have a thing you can just send it to. Yeah, it's also really annoying because it can only be three minutes, which is hard to say very much about yourself in three minutes, you know? you almost would have to script it. Like, yeah, tightly write a three-minute script and almost you would have to, you know, storyboard like shots or if you if you were going to that level of like, you know, this, okay, so here's how I'm thinking of it. Within the past, since we got married probably a little bit into our marriage, so within the past five years, The Bachelor has become a part of our lives, which I think only is similar to Survivor in the sense of it is a reality TV show. And Bachelor is just, it's schlock. It's just fun, delicious schlock to watch and just see people ruin their lives in the best way. It's fantastic. People make the dumbest choices and I love it. So we watched that. But those show application videos initial episode and it's usually beautiful people like in athletic clothes running on the beach and going I want a day you know I could find true love and there's like a limited I think of it like an elementary school or middle school vocab test there is a vocab box and you have to use all the words and fill in the blanks and you know I believe in the process and true love and all this other you know a snake if you took there's probably drinking games for a bachelor that that involve, you know, every time someone's called snake, you take a shot and people probably ended up in the hospital. So I'm picturing survivor application videos in the same way where it's showing you doing survivor stuff while you also talk about yourself. Is that accurate or is there more, is it different? - I mean, I think people do that. - Sure. - I have, I'm not gonna send it to you, but I have a Reddit thread of like every successful video that's been posted publicly. like it's very different like a lot of it depends on you too you know obviously if you're like I was about to say a person's name from this season but you don't know they are maybe Jervis like I feel like Jervis is probably shirtless you know or like mm-hmm you know someone who is good-looking is probably gonna want to show that off whereas me not so good-looking I have to like show off that I am either like funny or smart or strategic and so that doesn't need as much I would assume obviously I haven't gotten a call back yet but I would assume doesn't need as much visuals as some other people might need but you know maybe that's I mean I've tried both ways to be fair I've done both and neither of them have worked so it sounds like a an intense creative process almost to like you have to sell yourself to a network in three minutes yes - Against how many competitors are there a season on average? - I mean, there's gotta be thousands of people that apply. - But how many do they pick in the end? - 20, usually. - So you've gotta go up against, you've gotta fit in dynamically with 19 other people. - Right, yeah. - Because you know, they have a roster in their mind of like, this is what we're going for this season, these people seem to fit in this formula we're shooting for. And unfortunately, I would guess that like geeky, nerdy, maybe funny white guy is probably the person they get the most applications from. - So probably. - Yeah. - Huh. - So it's tough to think of a way to stand out,

except for maybe like if I have abs. - Well, I wish you the very best with your ab journey and I'm excited to see you on Survivor someday. When you end up on Survivor, I definitely will be tuning in live for that one. 'Cause I would actually know someone on Survivor. So that would be fun to do someday. And maybe I can convince Abby to start it back up with me. - I will say, if I may, I know I said it in our chat earlier as kind of a joke, but if you like The Bachelor, y'all might like The Challenge more than Survivor. Because it is like the perfect mix of like that bad drama from The Bachelor and the competitive strategic part of Survivor that you don't really get anywhere else. Also, and it has a lot of seasons available on Paramount Plus as well. - Okay, duly noted. I will look at the challenge now. My other, before we go, I remembered that I sent this in chat unsolicited. What is the origin of this smiling gif? Because it's iconic. I know it, I think a lot of people know it. but it's these two women in front looking like shocked and surprised in a negative way. I can't believe whatever just happened happened, but the man behind them just like slow turns into a giant smile and it's like it looks like someone broke their leg, but he's really thrilled that they broke their leg. So you got to tell me the context of this. Okay, so this is from one of a lot of people's least favorite Survivor seasons, or at least up there, Survivor Gabon. It is set in Africa, so it's very different from a lot of normal survivors because they don't have like, they're not on a beach or anything, you know, and they can see elephants and stuff. It's different, it's cool. is the thing Survivor used to do back in before the 20s when now it's all in Fiji they used to go to different places and do cool stuff. This is a guy whose name is Matty he's a great character actually he's really not a great character he's kind of boring but he's definitely famous now and basically so the way Survivor works is you're split into tribes right and so you don't know who gets voted out from your tribe from the other tribe the night before so this clip where the girls are like in shock and Maddie delayed...delayed-edly? how do you what would you say there? Has a big smile with a delay yeah a delayed smile. There's a delayed smile, there we go. What's happening is is the other tribe is coming in to that challenge so Maddie's tribe is already there and the other tribe comes in and they're seeing the person who got voted out and so the girls are like shocked that it's Marcus and Maddie is excited. Okay he sees an opportunity. Uh-huh yeah. And they're like I can't believe so-and-so got kicked out. Yeah. That's awesome because it is it's it's iconic. It's a very good gif yeah there's some very good survivor gifs but that there's that one and then there's another one that is the probably my two favorites where there's a girl who's like she's like on a on like a rope and she's like holding ropes trying to walk across it and it's like a very much like I can't handle what's going on right now this is see if I could find it and that's not good podcasting but yeah I've well there's I just typed survivor rope gift but that didn't lead me anywhere rope girl I'm gonna find it she is it purple rope yeah purple rope she looks very intense maybe I'll find it some She's she's struggling she's struggling. All right, it is right there. Yeah Angela who is oh there in motion makes it wait Angela Angela is one of the greatest modern characters and survivor. She's not a very good player, but that girl Rope with her neck It's a really good gift studies will be in the show notes for sure (laughing) - And I think on Net Girl here, that's where we'll wrap up this episode. Ricky, thank you so much for joining me - Yeah, for sure. - for this episode. Where can the people find you on the internet? What would you like to plug? Anything? - I mean, obviously like Twitter, it's just my name, Ricky Freck, and then one of our friends, Michael Ruiz and I, do a podcast sometime. It's very... (laughing) We do it just for fun, so it's not like we're trying to make it a thing. Really, it's just like an excuse for Michael and I to talk about whatever we wanna talk about. It's not like this show where, like, I mean, I came in here, Max has show notes, like this is a real podcast. Michael and I are like five minutes before we're like, hey, you wanna talk about Are You Afraid of the Dark this week? Hey, let's make a bracket about all the best backyard sports people. Like we just are like, let's have some fun. - Pablo Sanchez is the correct answer. - Yeah, Pablo Sanchez was not eligible because he is the correct answer. not win so we we pretended i think we did a a karate tournament so it's an even playing field they never played the sport before and in that universe Pablo Sanchez had died so it was the Pablo Sanchez Memorial Karate Tournament um but yeah that pod yeah that podcast is called Bantam Banter uh named after a bar in the Yakuza series it's a good time it's kind of off the rails a lot but in a fun way usually I have I've been on one episode of that show

that I don't think is live yet yeah yeah it could take a while which is totally fine but it's one of the episodes the PlayStation Island episode Bantam banter a little episode 11 which has our friend Logan Moore on it you guys did a survivor style bracket of PlayStation characters and I could not believe it - It was Sackboy, right? He had at least two or three immunity idols. That was a journey. I highly recommend that episode. And then you guys invited me for a Nintendo themed Survivor Island bracket, which also was a journey, I thought. So I had a lot of fun with that. Gosh, I can't believe there was a car in the PlayStation episode, it was so good. That was so much fun. So, links to that stuff in the show notes as well. You can also check out Ricky's writing over at Double XP Now, formerly Game Per, so definitely go check that out as well. He is the associate editor over there and writes lots of guides when other people aren't or he doesn't have something to edit. - Yeah, and some reviews. - And some reviews, like the Kirby one. - A few features here and there, yeah. - Kirby. If you wanna find me, you can follow me on Twitter @MaxRoberts143 and my writing over at maxfrequency.com. There's this show, which you're obviously listening to now, so thank you very much. You can also check out our seasonal podcast I do over there called Chapter Select, which I do with Logan Moore. Ricky was on an episode with us, Super Paper Mario, for season one, so you can go listen to us talk about that game. Season three is coming very soon. We are in the middle of production right now, and we'll announce that soon-ish, I believe, So we're getting ready to plug away. And for you fine folks listening, you know, one of the guests this season is Michael Ruiz, who co-hosts Bantam Banter with Ricky. So there you go, little crossover action with the Bantam Banter universe. So thank you all very much for listening to this fine episode of the Max Frequency Podcast, and until next time, adios.