

# Put up the scoreboard – they know

This is not exactly a news flash. I just think all the soccer-meisters out there who are worried about their little darlings' self-esteem should be aware – the kids know about keeping score. They have known for a long time, and whether we like it or not, the little competitors love the concept.



**You can't beat a system you can't understand**

By Sam Bari

If you don't believe me, play a video game with one of them and watch as they laugh with glee after kicking your virtual butt.

I know. I have had my butt kicked by a 6-year-old who publicly humiliated me and went on to celebrate his victory. I might never recover from the experience. What about my self-esteem? Doesn't that count in the grand scheme of things?

It all started when my son, Roman, told me that my grandson, Kalani, wanted to play a video game with me when I came to visit. I told him I had never played one before, but I would try.

When I walked in the door, the little guy had the Play Station ready to go. He said, "We'll start with an old game. It's really easy." I gave my son my suitcase and took my place behind a control station in front of a 60-inch monitor. I must admit, it was awesome. I felt as if I were in a "Star Wars" movie.

The game we played was called "Sly Cooper," and it involved a band of raccoons that were thieves. Kalani assured me that it was the easiest game he had and I would understand how to play in no time. He was wrong. He explained how the control station worked and told me to try it before we actually

started the game.

Believe me, flying a Boeing 767 commercial airliner is less complicated. If I pressed one button, my little character would jump up. If I pressed another, it would jump up and move forward. If I worked a joystick, it would run. If I held the jump button down, it would jump higher and take longer to land. Other controls made it duck, stop, move sideways and take cover. Then the ultimate feature was the button that made him swing his weapon.

Within five seconds of attempting to make this raccoon character perform my commands, I understood why gamers are the best candidates to be fighter pilots.

I didn't lose because Kalani was better at it than I was. I didn't even get to the start. My character kept falling on his face and running into walls. He did everything except stab himself. Kalani laughed so hard he was crying.

"I'm sorry, Granddad, but you'll have to practice before we can play a game," he said sadly. "You're just not good enough."

The disappointed look on his face was heartbreaking. I was mortified. However, I watched him play a few of the more advanced games. He was incredi-

ble. Now I understand the intense concentration, the locked-in expression on the gamers' faces as they manipulate their buttons, joysticks and sometimes foot controls for the race car and driving games. And, they do it at lightning-fast speed.

His hand and eye coordination was mind-boggling. Good gamers cannot be distracted. They have total focus. I was amazed.

I decided that I wasn't going to let him down. I went home and bought all the gear, the play station, a monitor, the latest games – the works. I told my son about it and he laughed.

A few weeks later, Kalani called and told me he had a game we could play online. All the new video games have built-in servers so the games can be played online. Everybody who has that game can see the scores because they are automatically messaged that a game is in progress.

I don't remember the game, but I do remember that I never got past the first bad guy in the trial setup. That's what is played before actually playing the game. My character was dead seconds after I started. Messages from literally thousands of players popped up: "Lag," "Noob," "ROFL" and other humiliating comments like, "Kalani, where did you find this Newbie?"

I called and he forgave me for my ineptitude. Out of curiosity, I asked if he played on a soccer team. He said, "No way. Why would I? They don't even keep score."

Not keeping score is more living proof that we live in a system we can't understand.

What would you like to say?



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Karen agrees with her brother, *“BankNewport has always been there for us, they've truly been a partner in our growth,”* she says.

