Did Harris preview massacre on 'Doom?"

By Kevin Simpson and Jason Blevins
Denver Post

May 4 –
As authorities examine Eric Harris' customized versions of a violent video game, those who played Doom over the Internet with Harris say he created a game level based on Columbine High School's floor plan.

Investigators at the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, which flags hateful and racist Web sites, have uncovered several home-made versions of Doom found on Harris' now-defunct Web site. The versions include a "God mode" in which heavily armed players are invincible to enemy bullets. Harris also thanks Dylan Klebold for his help in creating the hyped-up levels.
Doom is "basically a game of skill and a game of competition," said Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the center. "The version we found on (Harris') Web site is not a game of skill. It's a game of massacre."
"Here, they set the rules," Cooper said. "This was maybe even a dry run for the massacre that took place in real life." Cooper said his center's investigators also stumbled upon a disturbing aspect of the game found in Harris' files. As characters lay bleeding from gunshots, they shout out " 'My Lord, why did you do this to me?' " he said, similar to reports that Harris and Klebold asked fellow students if they believed in God before shooting them.
"It is reflective of somebody's mindset," Cooper said. "There's not a question that this was kind of the precursor for what they acted out in real life."
While Cooper said the center's investigators could not positively say Harris created a level based on the school's floor plan, authorities said they confiscated a copy of the floor plan from Harris' house which noted good places to hide and spots with poor lighting.

And some Doom players say they recall Harris introducing such a level over the Internet.
"He actually made a level of Doom that was the same layout as the high school," one metro area young man, who asked not to be identified, said during a visit to the memorials set up at the school. "He called the level "CHS.' It was as close as you can get for a computer game. It wasn't the entire school - you couldn't make levels that big. But it was definitely part of it."
"That game was basically kill everything that moves," he said.

Chris Charla, editor of Next Generation magazine, a publication aimed at video gamers, said it's not unusual for players to create levels of familiar places.

"If you go back and see what levels were posted on bulletin boards, the first level someone made was their house or school or work," Charla said. "It helps to make a level of something you know."

Harris also created a level that outlined his own neighborhood, with the home of classmate Brooks Brown as the primary target to be destroyed before advancing, according to a complaint Brown's parents filed with the sheriff's department in early 1998.

Harris' profile on his America Online account lists "professional doom and doom2 creator" as his hobbies. And his online nickname was "Rebdoomer" - an apparent reference to Columbine's Rebel mascot.

Harris, 18, used to play regularly on a now-closed bulletin board service called "Rec Zone" and "you could count on seeing him (online) two or three times a day," said the young man.

Another video game aficionado familiar with Harris' online persona said that judging from subsequent bulletin board postings he believes Harris also created a Columbine High School level of the game "Duke Nukem," a more recent generation of the Doom-style games. Included as weapons in that game were pipe bombs - a key element in Harris and Klebold's real-life April 20 assault on the school. They killed 12 students and one teacher and wounded 23 others before killing themselves.

The aficionado, who also asked not to be identified, cited a message-board posting from a fellow gamer that read, in part: "I just relized (sic) that yesterday I played him about a year ago on a map he made in dukenukem 3d dude. Guess what the map was made of? The freaking school. His school."