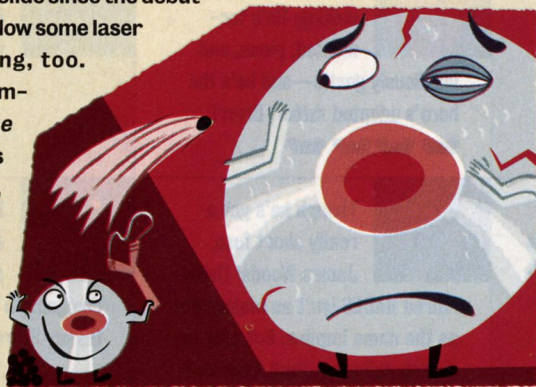


# LASER TAGS TAKE A HIT

**W**HILE THERE'S STILL no telling whether the American public will ever trade in VHS for DVD as its home-video format of choice, laserdisc, long the connoisseur's choice, is certainly feeling pressure from the Little Disc That Might. The market for laserdiscs has been in a slide since the debut last spring of DVD. Now some laser prices are dipping, too.

"I've got titles coming out like *The Longest Day*," says Rodney Jackson, video buyer for New York City's Virgin Megastore in Times Square, "all marked down from \$60 to \$40."



Still, such tags don't begin to match DVD prices, which are generally \$24.95 to \$29.95 for new studio releases, and as low as \$12.99 for the public-domain and B-movie properties that some labels are dredging up to get shelf space. Picture quality on cheapies like John Travolta's 1976 TV movie *The Boy in*

*the Plastic Bubble* (Essex) is often no better than that of VHS. But caveat emptor and God bless! While music CDs continue to creep up in price, CD-size DVDs are in a position to keep the lid on costs for laser collectors.

—Michael Giltz