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# PlayStation 2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

ISSUE 098 MAY 2008  
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**CRACKING PREVIEW!**

# LEGO INDIANA JONES



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PlayStation 2



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# WELCOME

ⓐ REVIEWS ⓑ PREVIEWS ⓑ FEATURES ⓑ ALWAYS FIRST FOR PS2

## THE ONLY UK MAG THAT'S DEVOTED TO PS2



I have a confession to make. Several years ago, when the first Lego Star Wars game appeared on PS2, I wasn't a big fan.

Alright: I thought the idea was daft and, in a review, I gave the game a bit of a kicking, saying it was too easy and full of clichés.

Looking back, I can admit those criticisms were too harsh. Lego Star Wars was a bit of silly fun, and I was too much of an angry young man to see it. So, sorry.

### Indy mood

To atone for my error, the team and I have fought tooth and nail to bring you the biggest scoop on the new Lego Indy game that we can manage.

You'll find the glorious fruits of our labours on p48. And we challenge you to find a more action-packed preview anywhere else.

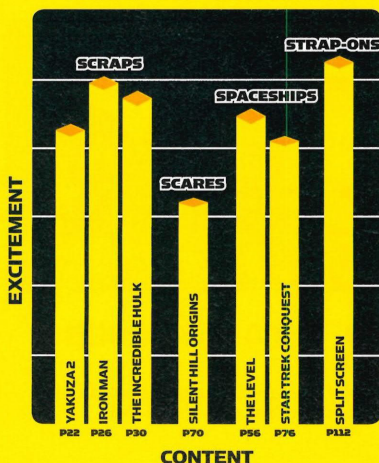
Elsewhere in the mag, we've got the skinny on the new Hulk game, Yakuza 2, Iron Man and a review of the super-spooky Silent Hill Origins.

It's all the gaming goodness you'll need to see you through the month!

**ANDY HARTUP**  
ACTING EDITOR

ahartup@futurenet.co.uk

### THIS MAG CONTAINS



**'DON A FEDORA,'  
SAVE THE WORLD  
LEGO INDIANA JONES PAGE 48**

## OPS2 #98 COVER STORIES



**P11 PERSONA 4 IS COMING** Atlus confirms the next instalment in its stunning RPG series.

**P22 YAKUZA 2** Sega's second Japanese gangsta epic is heading to the UK. We've got the scoop

**P30 THE INCREDIBLE HULK** We brave a possible smashing to snag a first-look at the new Hulk

**P48 LEGO INDIANA JONES** Nazi-whipping, snake-dodging, stud-scrounging adventuring

**P70 SILENT HILL ORIGINS** Find out where it all began with our UK-first review of Origins

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## MEET THE TEAM

### ANDY HARTUP

#### ACTING EDITOR

Such is the untidiness of Andy's desk that no one on the team is sure what he's been up to behind that massive pile of magazines and unloved review discs.

PLAYING NOW Yakuza 2

CAN'T WAIT FOR Sonic Unleashed



### SOPHIE MASON

#### PRODUCTION EDITOR

It was Sophie's last month at OPS2. She split the time evenly between being on holiday and borrowing money from the rest of us. Oh, and spellchecking the mag. A bit.

PLAYING NOW Dancing Stage SuperNova 2

CAN'T WAIT FOR El Tigre 2



### KIM RICHARDS

#### EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

For a break from Kim's usual turn-based existence, we let her loose on Silent Hill Origins. After a week of listening to the shrieks, we decided to put her back on the RPGs next month.

PLAYING NOW Silent Hill Origins

CAN'T WAIT FOR The Hulk



### MARK MITCHELL

#### ART EDITOR

Mark spent most of the month turning the team into Lego figures and using this as an opportunity to get revenge for the jokes about his age.

PLAYING NOW Samurai Warriors XL 2

CAN'T WAIT FOR His bus pass



### MIKE STERRY

#### FREELANCE WRITER

Dispatches from our spies in the wilds of Scotland suggest Mike has settled into a lifestyle of gaming, writing and reading. Some things never change.

PLAYING NOW Star Trek Conquest

CAN'T WAIT FOR Iron Man



## COVER FEATURE



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It's whip to be square! We go hands-on with this summer's hottest block-buster



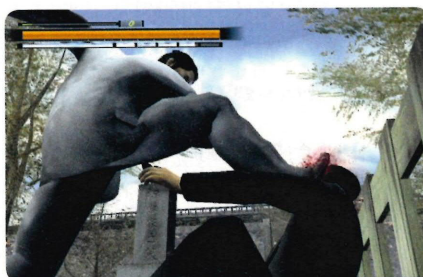
## GOT A PS3?

THEN CHECK OUT OUR MONEY-SAVING SUBS OFFERS ON ALL YOUR FAVOURITE PS3 MAGS  
**SEE P46**

### GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS COMPO

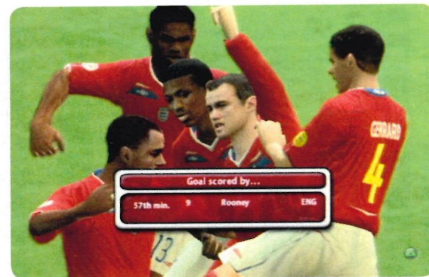
The winners of a copy of Guinness World Records: Gamer's Edition 2008 in issue 96's competition are: Callum Mackay, Mussleburgh; Vincent Hills, Abingdon; A Owed, Gwynedd; G Hanby, Dorchester; S Slevin, Lancaster; William Nicholson; Isle of Wight; Matthew Breeze, Co Durham; Ibrahim Barut, London; Vinny Morriss, London; Monica Brown, Bournemouth

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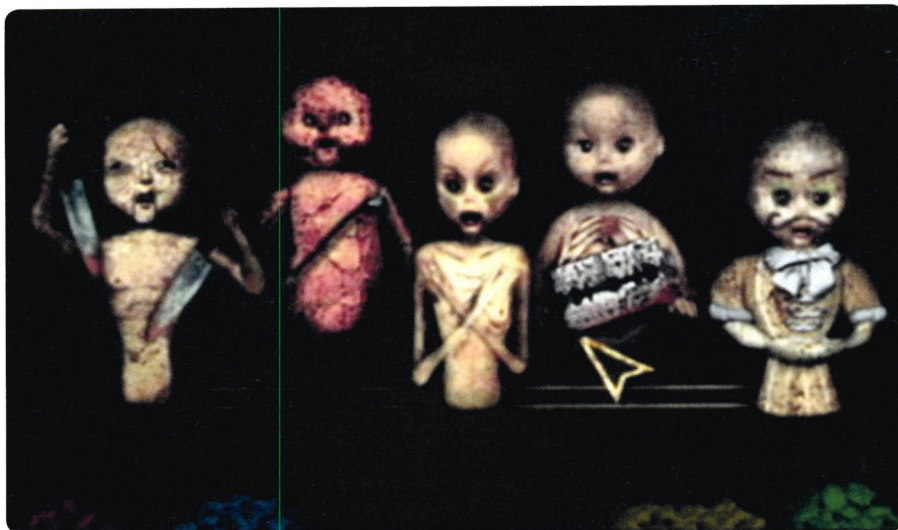
Believe your eyes! Sega's Japanese brawling sequel is swaggering your way



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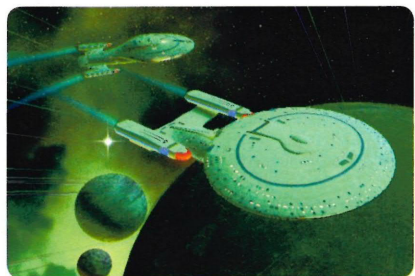
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Better than the tin man, but no match for the man of steel. His game's looking great, though



## 11 PERSONA 4 SHOOT FOR PS2

We gave Persona 3 a perfect 10, so a sequel to the game is massive news in PS2-land



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PlayStation 2  
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

# ON THE DISC

This month's exclusive demos in detail plus how you can win PS2 goodies by playing them!

## BURNOUT REVENGE

PUB EA OPS2 SCORE 10/10 WEB [burnoutrevenge.ea.com](http://burnoutrevenge.ea.com)



**CAN YOU DO THIS?**  
Finish any race in first place

**WHAT IS IT?** Rip through the streets like a road rage monster in the most aggressive racer known to car-kind. Drive like a maniac, push rivals into walls and break every single traffic law going.

### PERFORMANCE TIPS

Take out opponents with red markers (rivals)

for bonus points. Each dirty trick you pull off will fill your speed boost gauge; press **R1** to fire up the nitrous and leave the opposition in your dust!

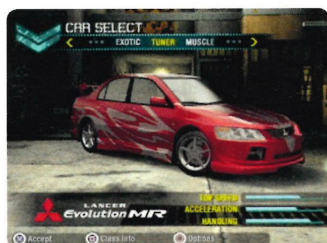
### CONTROLS

- R1** Brake
- X** Accelerate

- A** Change view
- Right thumbstick: Accelerate/brake
- Left thumbstick: Steering/aftertouch
- R1** Boost/Crash aftertouch
- L1** Look back
- R2** Crashbreaker

## NEED FOR SPEED CARBON

PUB EA OPS2 SCORE 8/10 WEB [snipurl.com/22jpu](http://snipurl.com/22jpu)



**WHAT IS IT?** Pick a ride in either exotic, tuner or muscle car flavours and go mod crazy! Then win both drift and circuit events to unlock a thrilling canyon duel.

### PERFORMANCE TIPS

In the drift race, the faster you drift, the more you score. Master high-speed drifts and you'll win.

### CONTROLS

- X** Accelerate
- R1** Brake/reverse
- A** Activate crew member
- L1** Look back
- L1** Nitrous
- R1** Handbrake
- R2** and **R3** Shift up/shift down
- Direction pad: Change view

## OUTRUN 2006: COAST 2 COAST

PUB Sega OPS2 SCORE 8/10 WEB [snipurl.com/22jq4](http://snipurl.com/22jq4)



**CAN YOU DO THIS?**  
Complete all five races in first place

**WHAT IS IT?** Put the pedal to the metal in Sega's remade arcade classic! Blast through five tracks, including the tropical Sunny Beach and tree-lined National Park.

### PERFORMANCE TIPS

If you're cheeky enough, try to catch other racer's slipstream for

a slight speed boost.

### CONTROLS

- X** Accelerate
- A** Change view
- R1** Brake
- Right thumbstick: Camera
- Left thumbstick: Steer
- R1** Gear up
- L1** Gear down



### TOCA RACE DRIVER 3



**WHAT IS IT?** Pro races: the British GT, Germany's Premiership DTM, the Baja Motorcross series and Dodge Super Speedway Tour.

### WRC RALLY EVOLVED



**WHAT IS IT?** Rally cars are go: choose a Citroën Xsara or Subaru Impreza and churn up the mud at either Bosenberg or Margam.

### STUNTMAN IGNITION



**WHAT IS IT?** Become a stuntman and drive your way through three film sets, escaping from lava and Russian spies!

### MASHED



**WHAT IS IT?** The ultimate multiplayer racer! In this demo, try deathmatches and races, or test your car's homing missiles.

### ALSO ON THE DISC JUICED

**WHAT IS IT?** Furious racing fused with gambling in two laps around the Downtown track.

### MOTO GP 3

**WHAT IS IT?** Exchange four wheels for two, and zip around Estoril in Portugal in a taster of this serious bike sim.

### FERRARI 355 CHALLENGE

**WHAT IS IT?** See Monza and Nürburgring through the windscreen of a beautiful Ferrari.

### FORMULA ONE 2006

**WHAT IS IT?** Choose a driver from the Formula One roster, then take on the rest around either Catalunya or Nürburgring.

### MICRO MACHINES V4

**WHAT IS IT?** Take on either four pals or the computer, racing teeny cars around the Kitchen, Chicken Coop or Roof Top tracks.

### SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES VIDEOS

#### MEET THE CREATURES



Exclusive behind-the-scenes footage of the creatures and

characters that inhabit the world of The Spiderwick Chronicles!

#### MEET FREDDIE



Freddie Highmore talks about his role as twins Simon and

Jared Grace and what it was like to lend his voice to the game.

## FAQ

How do I use the disc?

Switch on the PS2, put the disc in the tray and the demo menus should automatically appear.

**Help! It doesn't work!**

Try pressing Restart. If that doesn't help, send it to us at the address on p3 with your name and address and we'll send you a replacement.

# DISC CHALLENGE

Boot up the demo disc, beat the standard we set, and you could win!

## THE CHALLENGE

### BURNOUT REVENGE: FASTEST TIME

It's fast, aggressive driving at its adrenaline-spiking best and we want you to get involved! Just load up the Burnout Revenge demo and beat our time of 2:38.82 to be in with a chance of winning. Fastest time gets the prize – this challenge couldn't be more straightforward if it tried! Be sure to take out rival racers to gain speed boosts, but don't crash out yourself. In the event of a tie, the person with the highest finish position will claim the booty.

## HOW TO ENTER

### 1. BY TEXT

Snap a pic on your phone, attach it to an MMS and text CHALLENGEDISC (then a space) followed by your name and where you live to 07738647177.

### 2. BY EMAIL

Email a pic of your score to psnation@futurenet.co.uk with 'Disc Challenge' and your score in the subject line. Don't forget to give us your name and address too!

### 3. BY POST

Take a pic, stick it in an envelope with your name and full address, and send it in to us at Disc Challenge, OPS2, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

Closing date: 21 May 2008

For competition rules and full terms and conditions, see p111.



**WIN THESE 2 GREAT PS2 GAMES!**



### ISSUE 96'S WINNERS

THE CHALLENGE: SONIC RIDERS – FASTEST TIME

NAME	SCORE
1 Robert Holder, Wigan	02.18.60
2 Kurt Stephenson, Hull	02.37.70
3 Simon Sexton, Middlesex	02.37.82
4 Antony Dyson, Bristol	02.52.44
5 Mark Richards, London	02.56.98



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## UPFRONT

LATEST NEWS CUI E ON EVENTS

IT'S JUST  
LIKE 1991  
ALL OVER  
AGAIN!

I'm not prone to sudden outbursts of fanboyism but there's one bit of news in this month's Upfront that's had me leaping and whooping around the office like a man possessed.

I may even have done the Tom Cruise-on-Oprah floor-kneel move a couple of times. Yes, I'm that excited.

## Got the blues

So what was it? The one about Manhunt 2 finally getting a UK release? The fact that Persona 4 has been unveiled as a PS2 exclusive? Nope.

Both exciting, but the story that's really made my hair stand on end (a job usually reserved for super-strength hair gel) is about Sonic Unleashed. It's on p13. Go read it now (then come back here).

It's 3D Sonic with 2D gameplay – just like the good old MegaDrive days.

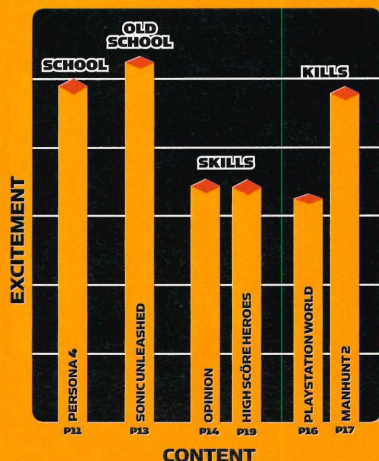
At the risk of turning this into some kind of rose-tinted retro rant, I have to say that the last time I genuinely enjoyed a Sonic game was when I played Sonic Mega Collection on PS2.

There's something so great about the Sonic gameplay of old and I can't wait to get a piece of it in Unleashed.

**ANDY HARTUP**  
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## THIS SECTION CONTAINS



# Atlus Japan confirms Persona 4

## Sequel to star roleplayer will be exclusive to PS2

Shin Megami Tensei: Persona 4 will be released in Japan on 10 July, exclusively on PS2.

Already tipped to be the hottest roleplayer this year, it follows Persona 3, which scored 10/10 in OPS2 #95.

A 17-minute trailer has been released by Japanese magazine *Famitsu*, revealing key details about P4's story, setting and gameplay mechanics.

Breaking away from the usual urban setting of previous Persona games, P4 is set in the countryside, in the fictional town of Yasoinaba.

But all is not as peaceful as it should be. Eerily, every time the

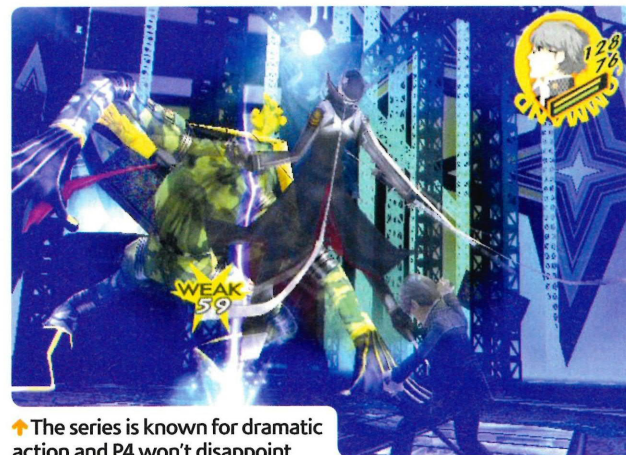
fog rolls in, someone dies. Cue our protagonist, a nameless young chap who's tasked with solving the mystery before it's too late for the town.

## Days of our lives

Like P3, the game revolves around a calendar, splitting the day into several periods and triggering plot-advancing events on certain dates.

Working with the calendar is a weather system, where different conditions will affect the goings-on in Yasoinaba.

Clearly, foggy days are to be feared, but it's yet to be seen what sunshine or rain bring.



↑ The series is known for dramatic action and P4 won't disappoint



↑ Action will be party-based but names haven't been revealed yet



↑ The story's set in the rural town of Yasoinaba

P4 will pack more than 180 Persona (the series' unique summons) and promises more than 70 hours of gameplay with multiple endings.

Shoji Meguro returns as musical director, with his distinctive blend of J-pop, hip-hop and metal.

Sadly, though, there's been no announcement yet on UK or USA release dates.



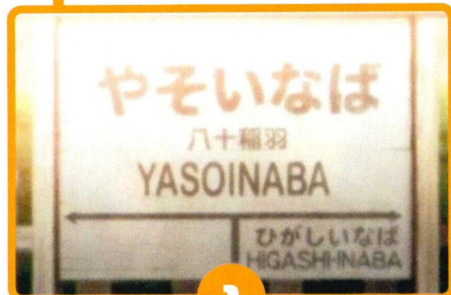
↑ As in Persona 3, making friends will be important





### 10 FACTS ABOUT PERSONA 4

We pick apart the trailer so you don't have to



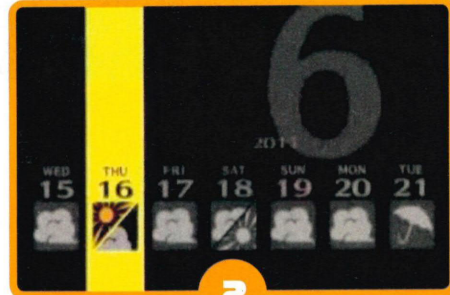
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#### 1 HOWDY, STRANGER

The beginning of the trailer sees the main character, a teenage boy, arriving at the countryside town of Yasoinaba, and experiencing some weird flashbacks (or flashforwards?) in the process. Ominous.

#### 2 HOT DATES

In the same fashion as Persona 3, the game runs on a calendar, with various events popping up on appointed days.



2



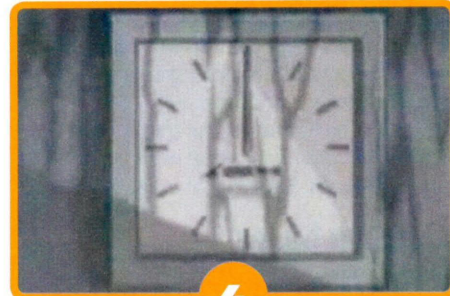
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#### 3 EYES TO THE SKIES

Coupled with the calendar is a meteorological system. Similarly to the phases of the moon in Persona 3, different weather cycles will affect the goings on in Yasoinaba.

#### 4 DARK TIMES

Sticking with Persona 3's idea of a Dark Hour, when midnight strikes, our hero is sucked into a portal and arrives in an alternative dimension with two of his friends.



4



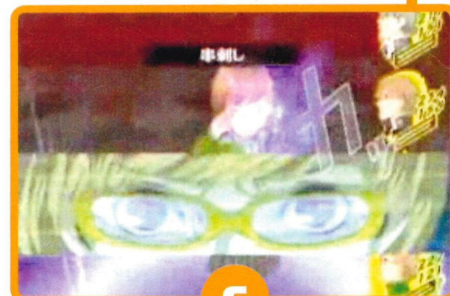
5

#### 5 HUMPTY DUMPTY

Upon their arrival at this other dimension, the friends are approached by what can only be described as a walking Kinder Egg-panda hybrid. But he seems friendly, providing support during their first battles.

#### 6 GUN AMNESTY

No longer do you have to shoot yourself in the head to summon a Persona, as in the previous game. Instead, it appears there's an even weirder method involving glasses.



6



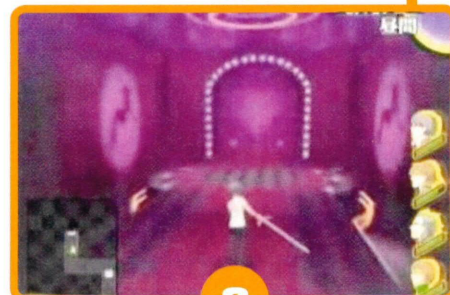
7

#### 7 PERSONA PROBLEMS

Igor makes a return and shows you how to fuse Persona together to create even more powerful summons. With more than 180 Persona to unlock, you'd better get cracking!

#### 8 FIGHTING FIT

Fighting will still be based on Persona 3's model: turn-based battles triggered by running into Shadows. Up to four people can fight, and Knockdowns and All-Out Attacks are also making a welcome comeback.



8



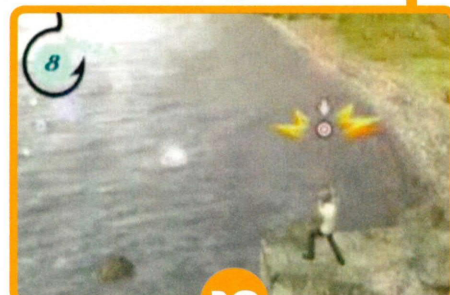
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#### 9 FOREVER FRIENDS

Social Links are also back, whereby in order to level up your Persona, you must form friendships with school friends and townsfolk, and join social clubs or go on dates.

#### 10 GONE FISHIN'

We're not too sure what contribution this has to the game, but we spotted a fishing minigame hidden within the gameplay footage. Well, there had to be one: it's cod's law.



10





# Sonic Unleashed heads to the PS2

...and new screens show it's a triumphant return to top form!

Sega has announced a brand new Sonic the Hedgehog game for PS2: Sonic Unleashed. And for the first time in ages, there's not a single tennis racket, hover board or Olympic medal in sight.

That's right: we've seen several screenshots and a gameplay trailer and all of them show Sonic returning to the way of life that made him famous.

They show Sonic speeding through well-detailed, 3D environments littered with shiny rings to grab, springs to bounce off and handy rails to grind.

## Sonic zoom

Brilliantly, despite the enticing 3D levels, the action seems to be strictly 2D, with Sonic storming through set paths.

Thanks to the use of dynamic camera angles that flip from side views to behind Sonic and even head on, the action looks

fantastically fluid and breathtakingly entertaining.

The inclusion of a 1-up life system, time counter and score bar also indicate a return to the original arcade style of gameplay that Sonic used to represent.

## Come to baddie

The storyline is yet to be announced, but judging by the screens, Dr Robotnik is making his return as evil megalomaniac supreme and is backed by an army of super-hard robots.

There's also a shot of a mysterious serpent-like creature sporting many glowing tentacles, which suggests that Robotnik isn't the only baddie Sonic faces.

They may only be a handful of shots and a brief trailer, but they're enough to make our palms sweaty with anticipation of this triumphant return to form for our favourite hedgehog.

↓ Avoiding obstacles at the speed of light: it's what Sonic is about



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## MOUTH PIECE

'Are modern games too easy?' asks OPS2's Andy



Like many of you I can still recall the pain of reaching Scrap Brain Zone in Sonic The Hedgehog on my MegaDrive, only to miss one jump too many and witness the agony of the Game Over screen.

"What? It took me three hours to get here!" I'd scream as I faced the prospect of having to start all over again from the very start of the game.

Nowadays this type of rage is seldom experienced: we have civilised game mechanics such as save points, infinite lives and checkpoints.

In terms of the actual skill required to complete games these days, though, some require more of the stuff than others. Few would describe Devil May Cry 3, Shadow of the Colossus or Resident Evil 4 as easy.

### Teh Noobz

But there is much more of a tendency for developers to hold your hand for far too long these days.

Mind you, retro games relied on you performing a small number of simple

tasks to perfection (making pixel-perfect jumps across platforms, for example), whereas today's titles are far more complex. And to the non-harcore gamer,

modern games seem infinitely more difficult than retro ones.

Why? Because the majority of PS2 games rely on players having some knowledge of what has gone before.

We know about health packs, double-jumps, taking cover and so on, but to the non-gamer these are all alien concepts. They make even blockbuster titles that we might think of as clichéd almost impossible for PS2 newcomers.

So, are games easier? Yes, for people already immersed in game culture, but for newbies they can be much tougher than the old stuff.

### EMAIL US

Send your comments to  
psnation@futurenet.co.uk

# Guitar Hero Beatles is under discussion

Van Halen may also get own version of hit game

A special edition of Guitar Hero dedicated to the music of The Beatles could be on the way.

The head of Sony/ATV (which owns the copyright to The Beatles' songs) has confirmed that the company has discussed the idea of Guitar Hero Beatles.

Marty Bandier, CEO of Sony/ATV, said it's "something we have talked about and something I'd like to pursue".

Getting the rights to the Beatles' music is notoriously difficult, but the recent use of their iconic songs on TV's *American Idol* shows that Sony/ATV could be relaxing its grip.

We can't help but be rather excited at the prospect of rocking out to famous tunes such as 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps' and 'Come Together'.

### Van'd on the run

Since GH publisher Activision announced Guitar Hero Aerosmith last month, the first in the rhythm-action series to focus on just one band, gamers worldwide have been speculating on who'll be next to get the GH superstar treatment.

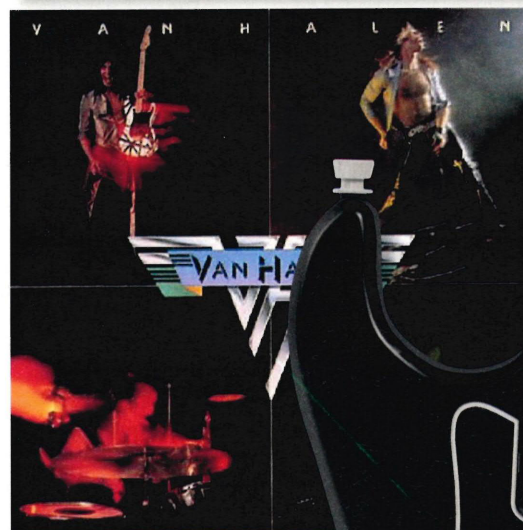
Names such as U2, the Red Hot Chili Peppers and the Rolling Stones have been tossed around, but only The Beatles have been discussed by Sony.

However, Bobby Kotick, CEO of GH publisher Activision, has hinted that legendary rockers Van Halen may be next to get their own game.

While speaking about GH's influence on the music industry recently, he said: "If we're creating this much enthusiasm and reaching a whole new group of consumers who are being exposed to Aerosmith or Van Halen for the first time, we need to capture much more of that upside opportunity."

Okay, it was possibly a slip of the tongue, and, okay, we've really no idea what an 'upside opportunity' actually is. But we think the mention of Van Halen is a strong indication of things to come.

One thing's for sure, though: with more single-band collaborations on the way, GH is set to become a cross-media phenomenon, the like of which we've never seen before.

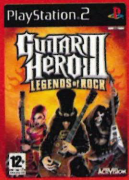


Want to play as George Harrison or Eddie Van Halen? It could happen...



PlayStation 2  
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

## PS2 UK CHARTS



**1 GUITAR HERO III**  
Finally, you've propelled this stellar rock sim to the top of the UK charts where it sits on its throne like an axe-carrying king. Well done.

Activision 9/10 ▲ Last month: 5



**2 FIFA 08**  
Despite another strong month on the sales pitch, FIFA can't quite nudge itself to the top of the charts. Runner-up for a second time.

EA 9/10 ► Last month: 2



**3 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2008**  
Like football chum FIFA, Konami's Pro Evo 2008 is stuck in the same chart spot as it was last month.

Konami 9/10 ► Last month: 3



**4 BUZZ! THE POP QUIZ**  
Seems folk can't get enough of Sony's brainteasing Buzz! series. This latest edition has rocketed into the top 10.

Sony 6/10 New Entry



**5 THE SIMPSONS GAME**  
Predictably, EA's more than adequate attempt to bring Homer and family to the PS2 is still selling like warm baked goods.

EA 8/10 ▼ Last month: 4



**6 NEED FOR SPEED PROSTREET**  
Looks like the wheels are falling off this car-tastic franchise as ProStreet slips and skids five places.

EA 6/10 ▼ Last month: 1



**7 MX VS ATV UNTAMED**  
Take a bunch of petrol-heavy off-road vehicles, lob in some rock and cover with lashings of mud: a great recipe for chart success.

THQ 6/10 New Entry



**8 WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW 2008**  
THQ's long-running ring-sim is still grappling with our hearts, it seems. This is its fifth month in the charts!

THQ 8/10 ▼ Last month: 6



**9 PDC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DARTS 08**  
Large men lobbing mini-javelins at a cork board? It's right up your street, according to the chart stats.

Oxygen 6/10 ► Last month: 9



**10 SIMS 2 CASTAWAY**  
Yikes! Looks like the Sims have run out of sales food, and their stomachs are rumbling. Is cannibalism around the corner?

EA 8/10 ▼ Last month: 7

### PS2 UK SALES TO DATE 10 MILLION

## PS2 AMERICA CHARTS



POSITION	GAME	POSITION	GAME
1 ►	Guitar Hero III	6	NE Silent Hill Origins
2	NE Ratchet & Clank: Size Matters	7 ▲	Guitar Hero II
3 ▲	MLB 08 The Show	8 ►	College Hoops 2K8
4	RE Madden NFL 08	9 ▼	The Simpsons Game
5	NE Major League Baseball 2K8	10 ►	Need For Speed ProStreet

## PS2 JAPAN CHARTS



POSITION	GAME	POSITION	GAME
1	NE Gundam Musou Special	6 ►	Tales of Destiny: Director's Cut
2	NE Nobunaga's Ambition: Kakushin	7 ▲	World Soccer Winning Eleven 2008
3	NE 12 Riven: The Psi-Criminal	8	NE Diato Giken Official Slot Sim
4 ▼	Poison Pink	9	NE Winning Post 7 Maximum 2008
5 ▲	Ryu Ga Gotoku 2	10	NE Castle Of Naraku

## TRADE IN

Stuff you could buy if you sold your old games

PlayStation 2



Trade in  
£25

**GUITAR HERO III + CONTROLLER**  
Six months old



PlayStation 2



Trade in  
£12

**SIMS 2 CASTAWAY**  
Seven months old



PlayStation 2



Trade in  
£15

**RATCHET & CLANK SIZE MATTERS**  
One month old



RRP  
£52



**AZTECSWALLOW300 TWIN SLEEPING BAG**

**GAME** All trade-in prices with kind permission from GAME and correct at time of going to press





## THE WORLD ACCORDING TO PLAYSTATION

Gang warfare is guaranteed to lower property prices. Here are some prime locations where you can snap up a *real* bargain



### 6 TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA Los Angeles, USA

### 1 THE WARRIORS New York, USA

So, you're miles from your Coney Island home, and every thug in New York is itching to take a swipe at you as you scuttle back to your turf. Gang violence is inevitable. Cue loads of bare-knuckle brawls and baseball bat-heavy stand-offs. The Warriors gang make their way across the Big Apple. The final fight, under the Wonder Wheel in Coney Island's amusement park, is the stuff of dreams for the tabloids and a nightmare for NYC's tourist board.

### 2 THE GETAWAY London, UK

Poor Mark Hammond. He thought he was done with gangs and crime, but following the kidnapping of his son, he's pressed into action once more. Desperate to protect his progeny Mark is forced to make kamikaze attacks on the Triads, the Yardies and even on his former gang, the Collins Boys. On top of that, loose-cannon DC Frank Carter is on his case, determined to shut down the recent spate of gang crime in London for good.

### 3 DRIV3R Istanbul, Turkey

Former hitman Jericho has taken to organised crime in the fair city of Istanbul, and he's causing quite a violent stir. Stealing cars, selling them on and murdering the competition gets you quite a reputation. So much so that Driv3r's hero, Tanner, goes rogue to try and shut his operation down. This means an *awful* lot of car chases and shooting out of windows, as the conflict speeds towards an epic climax between Tanner and Jericho.

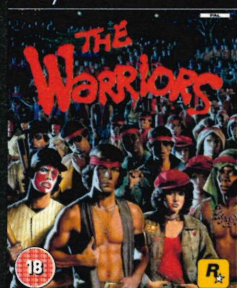
### 4 JET LI: RISE TO HONOUR Hong Kong, China

It's always admirable when gang members try to go straight, but the process usually involves heaps of hurting before "I quit" has any effect. Kit Yun is on a mission to deliver a message to the daughter of his former boss, Chiang, who recently passed away. And although he has the best of intentions, the other gangs in Hong Kong would rather stop the parental delivery – with lethal force, naturally.

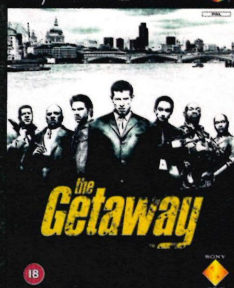
### 5 YAKUZA Tokyo, Japan

Kazuma Kiryu is having a spot of bad luck. After being wrongly accused of murder and spending several years in prison, he's released to find his former Yakuza clan in a bit of a mess. They've 'mysteriously' lost about ¥10bn, and every blaggard in Japan is tearing up the streets to try and locate it. Not wishing to be left out Kazuma sets out to find the cash too, administering a fair few beatings along the way.

PlayStation 2



PlayStation 2



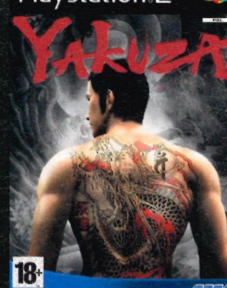
PlayStation 2



PlayStation 2



PlayStation 2





## Calls for rating rejig as Manhunt 2 goes on sale

### Government report recommends changes to age certificate system

Controversial game Manhunt 2 is finally going to be released in the UK after a year-long fight with ratings body the British Board of Film Classification.

The BBFC originally refused to give Manhunt 2 an age rating certificate, effectively banning it from sale in this country.

But after changes were made to the game, the BBFC was forced to give it an 18+ rating, allowing it to be sold.

The decision has led gamers and consumer groups to

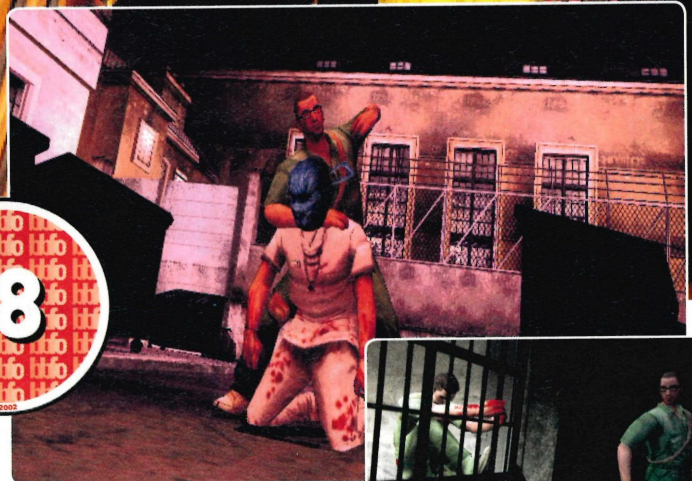
question the entire issue of game ratings and the role of the BBFC.

And a government-funded report into the effects of violent videogames on children has also called for changes to the system.

### Smash the system?

Currently, a UK-released game must be submitted to either the BBFC or European certification board PEGI for assessment.

The Spiderwick Chronicles was recently rated PG by the BBFC, for example.



Manhunt 2 is no worse than 18-rated films, says its developer

But each group uses different age gradings and logos and this is confusing for consumers, according to the report by psychologist Dr Tanya Byron.

Her study, which looked at the effect of violent videogames on children, recommends using a single ratings board and introducing a 12 certificate to accompany the existing 18 and PG (parental guidance) ratings.

Dr Byron says: "It is important to look at desensitisation to violence. The more violent images that are around... I think it does desensitise society and we need to think about that."

### Rate-teen

Many gamers say they would welcome a single, standardised rating system. Perhaps if this had been in place, the Manhunt 2 saga could have been avoided.

It began on 19 June last year when the BBFC refused to classify Manhunt 2 because the game featured, it said, 'sustained

and cumulative casual sadism' and 'encourages visceral killing with exceptionally little alleviation or distancing'.

Publisher Rockstar worked with the Video Appeals Committee, an off-shoot of the BBFC, to appeal twice against this decision, re-submitting an edited version of the game.

Then on 14 March, the VAC over-ruled the BBFC's original judgement, arguing that there's no difference between the graphic violence in Manhunt 2 and that of other media.

Rockstar told us: "We are pleased the VAC has reaffirmed its decision recognising that Manhunt 2 is well within the bounds established by other 18+ entertainment.

"We are committed to marketing our products responsibly and supporting an effective rating system."



Spiderwick's tame fight scenes mean it was given a PG rating



## PS2 SYSTEMS CHECK

Just got a PS2? Here's the essential kit you need

### ESSENTIAL ACCESSORIES



**MEMORY CARD** £14.99

Buy a memory card to stop all your progress being lost when you switch off the machine.



**EXTRA DUALSHOCK** £19.99

You get one with your PS2 but you should definitely buy one more for playing with mates.

**PS2 DVD REMOTE**  
From £2.50

To use a PS2's built-in DVD player, you could just use the DualShock, but this is better because it's got no wires and the buttons are clearly labelled.



### PARTY ACCESSORIES



**GUITAR HERO**

With game £49.99

Thrash your guitar like a rock god. Hotel trashing optional.



**DANCE MAT**

With game £29.99/Mat only £14.99

Pull shapes with your PS2 and the brilliant Dance Dance range.



**SINGSTAR**

With game £34.99

Turn your PS2 into a karaoke machine with these mics.



**EYETOY**

With game £9.99 to £34.99

The EyeToy games and camera make you the star of the game.



**BUZZ!**

With game £24.99 to £34.99

Buzz if you know the answer! The Buzz quiz games are a top laugh.



**MULTITAP** £29.99

Lets you plug in up to four PS2 controllers: essential if you want your whole gang to be involved.

### HARDCORE ACCESSORIES



**SONY SPEEDSTER 2 STEERING WHEEL** £39.99

Compatible with all the latest, greatest driving games.



**HEADSET** £24.99

Use SOCOM 3's headset online to chat, offline to give squaddies orders. Works with Rainbow Six.



**JOYTECH 8 INCH LCD PORTABLE SCREEN** £109.99

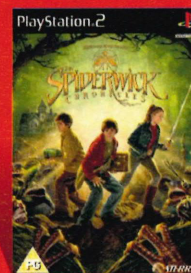
A battery-powered screen for playing games or watching DVDs.

### OPS2'S LATEST RECOMMENDED GAMES



**RATCHET & CLANK: SIZE MATTERS**

**Platformer**  
The duo are on top form in this PSP port.  
OPS2 Score: 9/10



**THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES**

**Adventure**  
A solid, addictive movie tie-in, with plenty of magical moments.  
OPS2 Score: 7/10



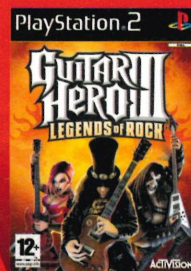
**ODIN SPHERE**

**RPG**  
Gorgeous real-time RPG with a storyline that'll break your heart.  
OPS2 Score: 9/10



**SEGA SUPERSTARS TENNIS**

**Sport**  
Sega game characters take to the courts. Ace.  
OPS2 Score: 7/10



**GUITAR HERO III**

**Rhythm**  
Pick up the axe and rock out in this foot-stomping rhythm action game.  
OPS2 Score: 9/10



**FIFA 08**

**Sport**  
2008 was a fine year for footie games, and this is arguably the best.  
OPS2 Score: 9/10

### PLUG INS

Get the right PS2 cable for your TV



**1 RFU ADAPTOR**

This offers the lowest quality visuals but will connect a PS2 to any TV via the aerial socket.



**2 AV CABLE**

Plugs into the coloured sockets on your TV, it's better than RFU but not as good as the next three.



**3 S-VIDEO**

A gold-plated S-video cable will improve the sound and picture quality you get from the PS2.



**4 RGB SCART**

The best! Ask for a true RGB SCART cable which is better than the SCART adaptor in the PS2's box.



**5 COMPONENT CABLE**

The HD option. Links to compatible HDTVs, plasmas and monitors.



# HIGH SCORE HEROES Month 5

HOT TEARS OF SHAME ARE RUNNING DOWN OUR CHEEKS AS THE ONSLAUGHT OF TOP-NOTCH NOODLING FROM READERS CONTINUES IN OUR REGULAR GUITAR HERO COMPETITION

## This Month's Challenge

Send in your score on Medium, Hard or Expert for 'The Metal' by Tenacious D on GH III or 'Killing In The Name' by Rage Against The Machine on GH II

### THE COMPETITION

**HOW IT WORKS** Each month we give you a choice of two songs to play for the highest score you can get, on Medium, Hard or Expert. We name a winner each month for each difficulty.

You can only enter a score for one difficulty, and prizes are tailored to each, so if you are a GH god, don't lower yourself to an easier difficulty just to increase your chance of winning.

We know some songs are harder than others, so we use a complex series of equations based on how close each person came to the song's maximum score to determine the winners.

**THE PRIZE** A specialised, framed OPS2 cover proclaiming your Guitar Hero prowess to the world (just like in the game)!

### HOW TO ENTER

#### BY POST

Send in photo evidence of your score, followed by your full name, address and email address if possible to the usual address (p3).

#### BY EMAIL

Email your score with your full name and address to [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk), subject line 'High Score Heroes'.

#### BY MMS

Snap a photo of your high score (make sure your capture your score, song title and difficulty) on your phone, attach it to an MMS and text OPS2HEROES (then a space) followed by your name and address to 07738 647177. Cost: 50p plus your standard network tariff rate.

Closing date: 21 May 2008

For full competition rules and text terms and conditions, see p111.

### ISSUE 95 WINNERS!



**MATT TRAFFORD** 313,055 FOR  
'HOLIDAY IN CAMBODIA' ON HARD



**CALLUM WHITE**  
128,286 FOR  
'HOLIDAY IN CAMBODIA'  
ON EXPERT



**LUCY SUMMERS**  
43,460 FOR  
'TROGDOR'  
ON MEDIUM

NEVER M  
THE BOLLO



# PlayStation®

Official Magazine - UK



The only  
magazine with  
a playable PS3  
Blu-ray disc

PlayStation 3 Blu-ray disc  
10 games to play including  
Devil May Cry 4, Conflict:  
Denied Ops, Turok, Def Jam  
Icon and more...



## First for PS3, PSP and PS2

This month: exclusive GTA IV review,  
Mirror's Edge hands-on, PSP GPS  
tested, Alpha Protocol first look  
and Timesplitters 4 revealed.

# NEW ISSUE ON SALE 18 APRIL

[myfavouriteitemagazines.co.uk](http://myfavouriteitemagazines.co.uk)

PLAYSTATION 3 PLAYSTATION PORTABLE PLAYSTATION 2



# PREVIEWS

Ⓐ EXCLUSIVES Ⓢ FIRST LOOKS ✕ HANDS-ON PLAY ⓐ LATEST INFO

## I REMEMBER FEELING INCREDIBLY STRONG...

Videogames, we are told by newspapers nearly every day, turn you into a seething mass of violent rage, likely to pop out and attack passers-by with a chainsaw just for the hell of it.

Well, I must say that after playing one of the games we've previewed this month, I see what they mean.

Which game was it? The RAWR SMASH violence of The Incredible Hulk? The tactical battling of Soul Nomad & The World Eaters?

Perhaps the gratuitous street-gang murdering of Yakuza 2? (Thanks for finally agreeing to release it in the UK, by the way, Sega!)

## Chess pit

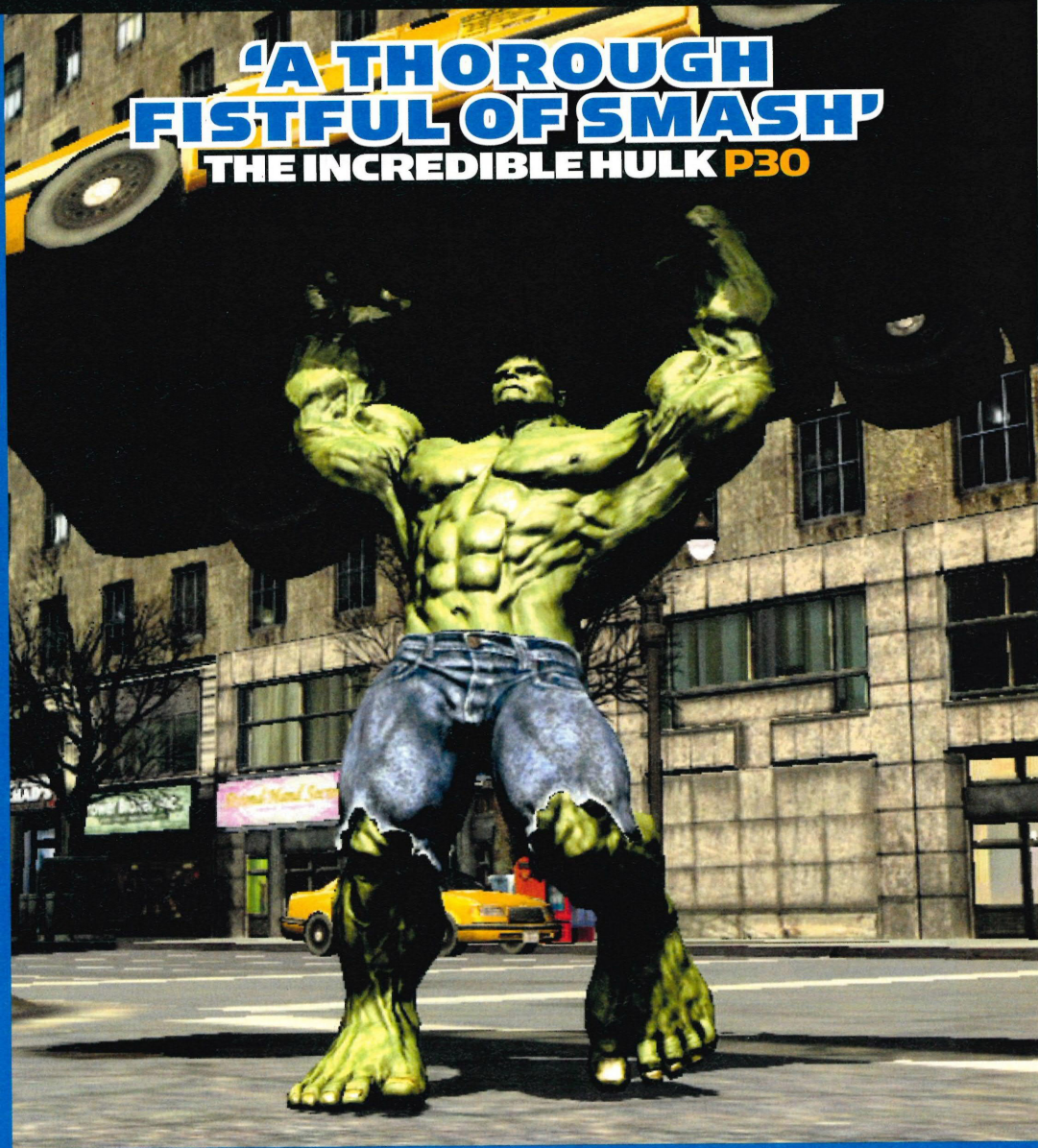
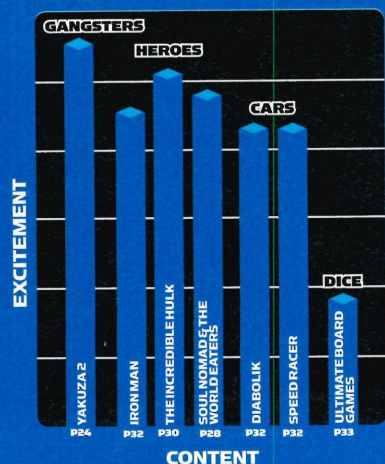
Nope, it was Ultimate Board Games. Dear, oh dear. The demo I played managed to be too easy, too difficult and really ugly, all at the same time.

If ever there was a case for the BBFC to get involved, this is it. Well, maybe it'll get better by the time it's actually released.

Let's hope so, because otherwise I'll get angry again. And you wouldn't like me when I'm angry.

**SOPHIE MASON**  
PRODUCTION EDITOR  
smason@futurenet.co.uk

## THIS SECTION CONTAINS



## 'A THOROUGH FISTFUL OF SMASH'

THE INCREDIBLE HULK P30

## IS IT NEARLY READY YET? THE KEY STAGES OF GAME DEVELOPMENT

**CONCEPT**  
The idea has just been unveiled, it's little more than a name at this stage

**PRE-ALPHA**  
Early test levels provide proof of concept

**BETA**  
A second playable version ready for final testing



**ALPHA**  
The first playable version of the game, many features unfinished

**RELEASE**  
The current release date but liable to change

## COMING SOON!

DYNASTY WARRIORS: GUNDAM	JUNE
GUITAR HERO AEROSMITH	SUMMER
GHOSTBUSTERS	OCT
LEGO BATMAN	AUTUMN
ROCK BAND	2008
TOM RABBIT UNDERWORLD	2008
BAROQUE	2008
STAR WARS: THE FORCE UNLEASHED	2008
CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: PRINCE CASPIAN	2008





# PREVIEW

Yakuza 2

# HOT IMPORT FIGHTS

Hooray! Sega finally confirms **Yakuza 2** will bring its brawling to Britain

PUB Sega DEV Sega ETA September WEB segaeurope.com

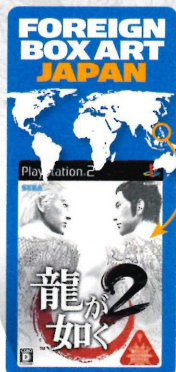


There's a lot to be said for nagging. Nagging gets things done in a way that threats, orders and polite requests just don't. And we think that Sega's decision to release **Yakuza 2** in Europe is something that happened because of constant nagging by fans of the original, **Team OPS2** among them, into the ears of Sega.

Yet at the start of 2008, we'd all but given up on the idea of ever playing the sequel to one of the PS2's most under-appreciated games.

**Yakuza** was a triumph of rich, story-led violence but sadly, although it did well in reviews, European sales of the game were less than stellar.

**Ryu Ga Gotoku 2** (the Japanese name for **Yakuza 2**) appeared in Japan a few months after the original hit UK shelves. The sequel got an incredible 38/40 score in Japanese game paper *Famitsu* – that's the same score as *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas* and *Metal Gear Solid 2* and the East was gripped by **Ryu Ga Gotoku 2** fever.



↓ The streets of Tokyo make an exciting, neon-lit playground



↓ You can rip the environment up to use as makeshift weapons

The game shot to the top of the Japanese sales charts, selling half a million copies in the first month. Sega announced a third game for PS3, but the rest of the PS2-owning world? We got nothing.

## Big in Japan

The months ticked by: no sign of **Yakuza 2** for the USA, let alone the UK. Long time readers of *OPS2* will remember that about this time last year we ran a preview of the imported version of **Yakuza 2**, presenting it as a polite request that Sega localise the game for the West.

The PS3 came, saw, conquered and people began to assume that **Yakuza 2** – a current-gen game – would never travel West. But they were wrong. It'll be here in late summer – if we had to guess, we'd say by September, latest.

So, why should you get excited about **Yakuza 2**? After all, **Yakuza 3** will be out on PS3 by the end of the year, and it's all shiny and next-gen and that.

The simple answer is that **Yakuza 2** is a fantastic game with a bewitching crime plot that puts the likes of *The*





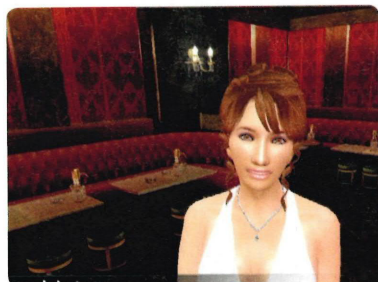
↓ Violence is the essence of Yakuza 2 and it doesn't pull any, ahem, punches



↑ The January sale at Goons'R'Us is a great chance for retail therapy

Godfather and The Getaway to shame. Skipping straight from Yakuza to Yakuza 3 would be like watching the Star Wars films but missing out The Empire Strikes Back.

If story isn't that big a deal for you, then Yakuza 2 has another ace up its gangster sleeve: brutal combat. What else would you expect from a game



↑ Naturally, all the pretty girls want to shack up with a violent crime lord

that sets itself in the middle of a fierce Japanese gang war?

It all kicks off with a flashback to the early 1980s, which shows a Korean mob boss being murdered by the foster-father of Kazuma Kiryu (sharp-suited hero of the original game).


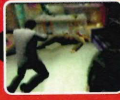





It's a little confusing to start with, but later in the game, you'll understand why this is the first scene you see.

Next we're whisked back to the present day, a year after the bloody events of the first game. Kazuma is

## YAKUZA 2 PUTS THE GODFATHER AND THE GETAWAY TO SHAME

### PS2 CHART CRIME

What's Yakuza's place in PS2's thug-'em-up pecking order?

BLOOD BATH		<b>GTA: VICE CITY</b> ROCKSTAR, 2002 King of crime games with an awesome 1980s soundtrack.
ARGY BARGY		<b>YAKUZA</b> SEGA, 2005 A feast from the East: a feast of violence, that is.
MILD MISDEMEANOUR		<b>GTA: SAN ANDREAS</b> ROCKSTAR, 2003 A sprawling mass of seething criminality.
SPUDGUNS		<b>SCARFACE</b> VIVENDI, 2006 A neat slice of bloody, potty-mouthed action.
		<b>TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA</b> ACTIVISION, 2003 Naff attempt at a GTA clone.
		<b>NARC</b> MIDWAY, 2005 Truly rancid effort to capture the spirit of being a drug lord.
		<b>MIAMI VICE</b> DAVILEX, 2003 One of the worst games ever made. A crime in itself.



↑ Is that a bowling ball or the severed head of your arch-enemy?

trying to leave a peaceful existence with his main squeeze, Haruka, but an increasingly deadly gang war between his former crew, Tojo clan, and the Osaka-based Omi clan forces him back into the action.

### Men in thwack

The rest of the game sees Kazuma taking control of his old gang in an attempt to avoid all-out warfare on the streets of Tokyo.

Meanwhile, he must dodge the bullets of his new enemy Gouda Ryuuji, who has ambitions of becoming the biggest crime lord in Japan. As you do.

Anyhow, back to the combat. The beauty of the fighting system in the ▶



# PREVIEW

Yakuza 2



↑ You play as mobster Kazuma Kiryu, who also starred in the first game

original game is that it integrates the environment in a way that actually works. So, instead of just punching or kicking your opponent into submission you can grab their head and smash it through a window.

Or, you can pick up a desk and slam it into someone's nose. Hell, you can even turn random street objects

## YOU CAN PICK UP A DESK AND SLAM IT INTO SOMEONE'S NOSE

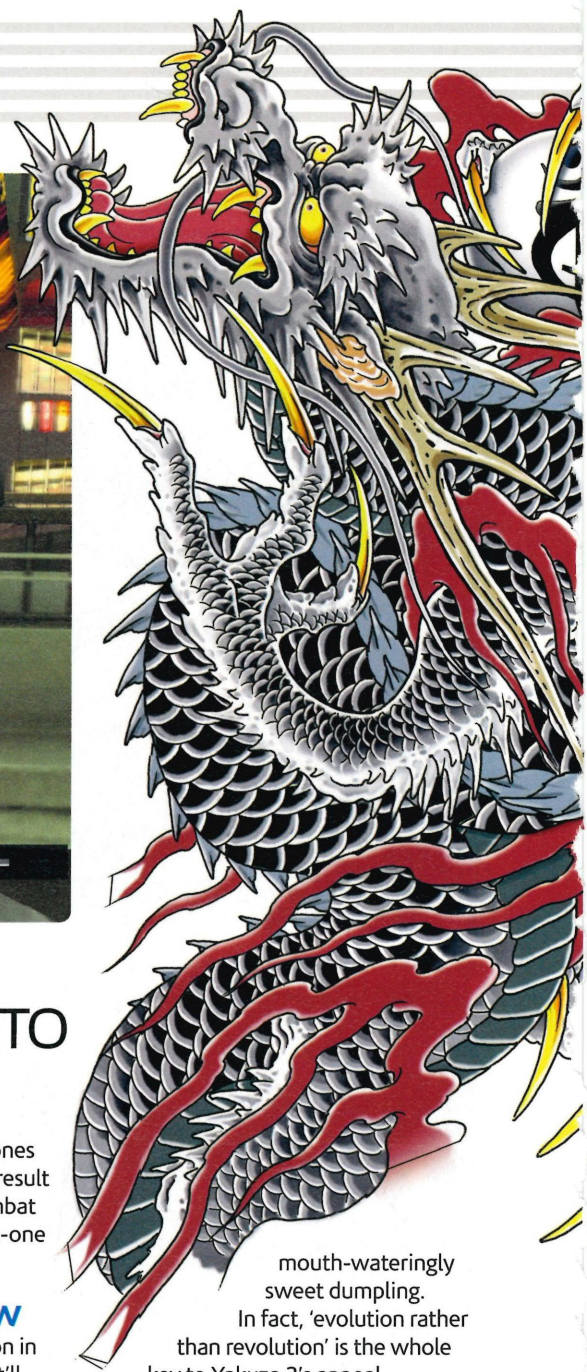
into weapons, such as traffic cones and abandoned bikes. The end result is some of the most furious combat seen outside dedicated, one-on-one fighters such as Tekken.

### Brawl together now

Yakuza 2 won't offer a revolution in terms of brawling, but instead, it'll bring a load more options into play.

New combos, plenty more environmental moves and even tag options can be learned and used to dispatch rival gang members.

You can change your direction of attack mid-combo and pull off several fresh finishing moves. It all makes an extra layer of icing on an already



mouth-wateringly sweet dumpling.

In fact, 'evolution rather than revolution' is the whole key to Yakuza 2's appeal.

Sega has been smart enough to avoid fixing stuff that isn't broken. It has focused instead on polishing and fine-tuning the Yakuza model with a host of tweaks to the original formula.

Very much in the vein of GTA, the first Yakuza lets you do far more than just cracking heads and reeling off tough one-liners.

You can shop, visit noodle bars, pick up women, play arcade games, even unwind with a game of baseball.

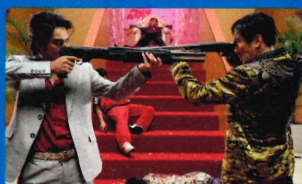
## COMPLETE YOUR COLLECTION

Go beyond Yakuza 2



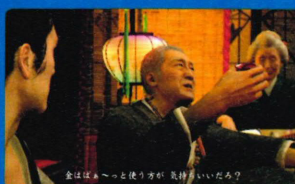
### THE FIRST GAME

It may sound obvious, but to get the most out of Yakuza 2, you should play the original game. Expect to pay about a tenner.



### THE MOVIE

If you can speak Japanese, and have access to a region-free DVD player, enjoy the rather excellent Yakuza movie.



### YAKUZA KENZAN

Got a PS3? You don't have long to wait for the third game in the series to arrive. Word has it, Kenzan is the best yet.



↑ 'Oof, yeah, that's totally sorted out the crick in my neck. Thanks, guys!'





### KEY MOMENT



あなたを傷害の現行犯で逮捕します

### MEETING THE NEW LOVE INTEREST

Okay, Sayama Kaoru is an officer of the law, but she's also a bit of a hottie. But can things really work out between a cop and a mobster?

↑ If only the real Tokyo had this handy mini-map to stop you getting lost



into the game's beautifully imagined world of crime and neon.

It's set to be one of the highlights on PS2 in 2008 and well worth the wait and frustration for fans.

The fact that Sega has decided to translate Yakuza 2, and bring its unique brand of plot and punching to the UK is nothing short of miraculous.

A conversion of this scale requires quite some effort, and that shows how Yakuza really is a labour of love for its developers.

We may have had to nag Sega for a PAL version of this game, but something tells us it was more than happy to oblige. Andy Hartup

### HOW COMPLETE?



### WEAPONS CHECK

Traffic cone



**PRO** There are plenty lying around.

**CON** Doesn't inflict a massive amount of damage, plus you look like a tit wielding one.

**BEST FOR** Humiliating opponents at the end of a long, hard fight.

SATISFACTION RATING

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Yakuza 2 opens up the world even more, with a ton of fresh minigames, side quests and leisure pursuits.

Fancy playing Pachislot or hitting a few shots on the driving range to work off the stress of a hard day's pummelling? The options are there.



↑ Turning up to a funeral in a light-coloured suit is a grave (arf!) insult and other mourners may respond aggressively



↑ Sometimes, no one wants to fight with you. Aw

You can go to a club and chat up some honeys. You can even buy the club, hire the ladies to work there, and spend your days chatting them up.

It may not have the wealth of options we're used to seeing in the GTA games, but Yakuza 2 never sets out to be a free-roaming crime adventure. It doesn't try to be anything but a linear, story-driven game and that's what makes it great.

The extra-curricular activities and minigames are there to provide a spot of light relief, and to help draw you



↑ It's not as free-roaming as, say, Grand Theft Auto, but there's plenty to explore



↑ 'Look, I won't tell you again, turned-up collars stopped being cool in 1987, okay?'





# SHOCK AND ORE

Can **Iron Man** succeed where the Man Of Steel failed?

PUB Sega DEV Sega ETA May WEB [ironman.sega-europe.com/en](http://ironman.sega-europe.com/en)

**C** Awooga! Awooga! That's OPS2's warning siren going off, because someone mentioned 'comic book', 'blockbuster movie' and 'videogame' in the same breath.

You know the score. Whether it's Batman, Superman, Spider-Man or – shudder – Catwoman, when a costumed crime fighter gets the Hollywood treatment there's always a tie-in game, and nine times out of 10 that game is more ghastly than the Green Goblin. But can Sega's Iron Man break the mould?

Marvel gave birth to Iron Man back in the 1960s, the creation of the legendary Stan 'father of Marvel' Lee and long-time writer Larry Lieber.

Tony Stark, a wealthy industrialist and scientific genius, pops over to Vietnam to demonstrate his new weapon system but gets injured and kidnapped by the North Vietnamese.

They set him to work on building weapons to fight the US troops, but Stark fashions himself a weaponised suit of iron and escapes.

## Ore blimey

Fast forward some 40 years, substitute Afghanistan for Vietnam and you have the opening of the new film and game.



↑ Iron Man's athlete's foot and eczema were really beginning to burn...

## CAST LIST



**VIRGINIA 'PEPPER' POTTS**

Stark's PA. Played in the film by Gwyneth Paltrow



**LT COL JAMES RHODES**

US pilot rescued by Stark. Becomes his right-hand man



**OBADIAH STANE**

Works for Stark, but turns out to be nasty



Version 1.0 of the Iron Man suit is ugly and rudimentary (see Weapons Check). But once Stark's finished sorting out the Taleban and makes it home, he sets about fashioning the more familiar gold and red number.

And it's in this suit that you'll spend most of the game. It enables you to fly, offers more protection than a Kevlar condom and sports weapons such as repulsor rays in its glove and a chest-mounted unibeam (think spotlight/laser hybrid).

With all that at your disposal, what could the game possibly involve? Yup, it's a shooter. A big, brash, dumb shooter. Bad thing? Well, not if you

like blowing everything in sight to kingdom come.

Combat shifts between the skies and the ground in a variety of fairly generic open-world environments (desert, ice, urban and the rest). It's always frenetic and puts us in mind of those top-down 2D shooters of old.

While airborne, you not only have to contend with enemy planes trying to fire missiles up your jacksie, you

## HE CAN PLUCK MISSILES OUT OF THE AIR AND CHUCK THEM BACK



↑ What a magnificent interior. Perfect for reducing to smouldering rubble



↓ With its relentless combat Iron Man reminds us of old-school 2D shooters



also face surface-to-air attacks from the ground. Retreat to the surface and suddenly you'll find armoured divisions multiply in number while planes drop ordnance on your head.

Fighting off this unwanted attention while completing objectives such as taking out missile silos or protecting allied emplacements forms the backbone of the game, and there's not a whole lot more to flesh it out.

↑ Ol' Tin Ribs will have this tank melting in seconds



↑ 'Maybe the red stockings were too much,' thought Stark



Upgrades to your suit and its powers can be bought with cash you earn by completing your mission objectives. Immensely powerful sonic blasts and a nifty holographic decoy generator are among the fancier bits of kit you can buy along the way.

Iron Man is also pretty useful when it comes to hand-to-hand combat (Captain America taught him, of course). As well as delivering a swift kick at close quarters, his dexterity allows him to pluck missiles out of the air and chuck them back from whence they came.



↑ Suddenly, inexplicably, Iron Man just knew he had to find a toilet. And fast

### WEAPONS CHECK

Iron Man suit v1.0

**PRO** Wrist-mounted flame-thrower, iron exoskeleton and a pacemaker to keep the heart beating

**CON** Looks more like a Cyberman than a superhero

**BEST FOR** Toasting the Taliban

**SATISFACTION RATING**

6.7/10



He can also prise the turrets off tanks and use them as projectiles. Pulling off moves like these will be reliant on precise timing, though.

### Stark raving bad?

The big worry is that it'll all get repetitive way too quickly. This is an issue in other superhero games, and despite the two-dimensional nature of the game's combat (ground and air), the action here looks disappointingly one-dimensional.

We can't imagine it being the longest game, either. Sure, there are additional plot threads and scenarios not present in the movie, and stuff to unlock, but it's likely to be a short-lived experience, albeit an explosive one. Hopefully, though, it'll be enough fun that you won't care. Nick Ellis

### HOW COMPLETE?

IRON MAN

CONCEPT

ALPHA

RELEASE

PRE-ALPHA BETA MAY





# PREVIEW

Diabolik: Original Sin

# POINT AND NICK

**Diabolik: Original Sin** and its master thief hero aim to revive a lost genre

PUB Black Bean DEV Artematica ETA Oct [WWW artematica.com](http://WWW.artematica.com)

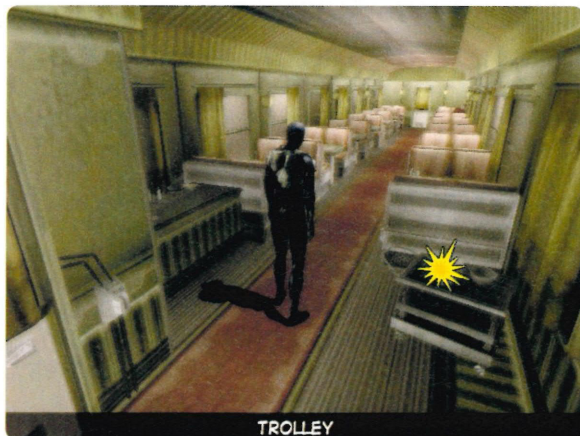


It's been almost a decade since we've had a quality point-and-click game to sink our teeth into. The awesome, *Escape From Monkey Island* from 2001 etched its name in the PS2 roll of legends, but since then we've been through more 'free-roaming 3D worlds' than we care to remember.

But now *Diabolik: Original Sin* is set to bring back the pointy-clicky and then some.

Gimp suit-clad Diabolik is the creation of sisters Angela and Luciana Giussani, and he's starred in an Italian comic since the 1960s.

↓ The graphics appear quite basic but that shouldn't spoil the fun



TROLLEY

## PLAYER PROFILE

Diabolik

**PRO** Stealthy skills make him the world's foremost burglar and he's a master of disguise to boot

**CON** That outfit is a bit *World Of Leather* and is a blow-pipe really an exciting main weapon?

SATISFACTION RATING

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9



He isn't your typical hero; in fact, he's a hardened thief with stealthy moves to rival even *Splinter Cell*'s Sam Fisher.

In *Original Sin*, his main squeeze and sidekick, Lady Eva Kant, has been kidnapped and he must steal a painting called the *Original Sin* in order to get his missus back.

## Get the point

The game is a third-person adventure with you mostly playing as Diabolik, although you will play as Eva and other characters at some points.

Every location to which you travel is laden with helpful information and

items, and this is where the 'point and click' technique comes into play.

If you're not familiar with it, it basically involves moving a pointer around the screen and clicking on things to get more information – when it's done well, this is a lot more exciting than it sounds!

One minute you'll be shimmying past guards and the next you'll be combing rooms for clues or other bits of evidence. And Diabolik and Eva are masters of deception, often using

↓ 'What? You killed him, you clear up the mess'





Based on a comic book, the game's graphics echo its source material



masks and disguises to infiltrate heavily guarded areas. So it looks set to be a varied adventure.

Diabolik isn't adverse to stabbing up a few foes along the way, either. He uses knives and a nifty blow-pipe dart that can knock an enemy out.

Most of the hand-to-hand combat will take place via minigames that require you to match button presses to symbols that flash up onscreen.

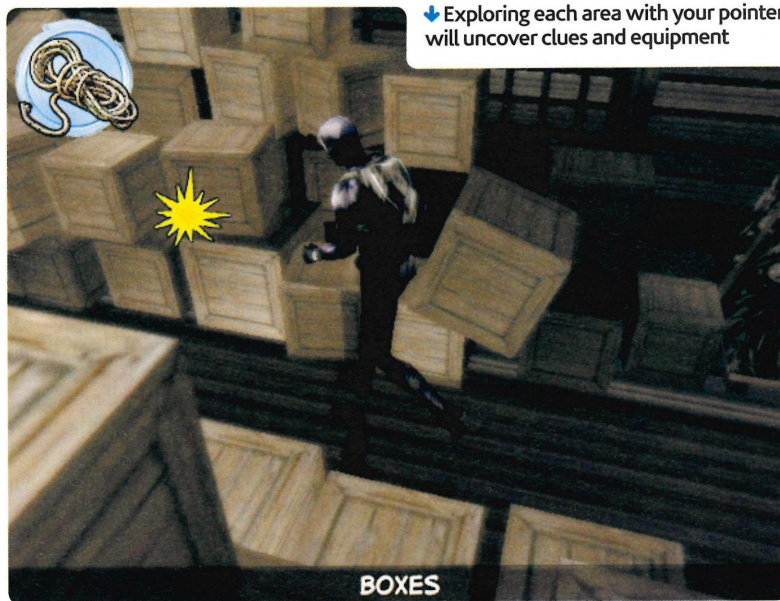
### Knifely does it

There's a truly comic-book feel to the entire game with sections fading to black-and-white comic book-style cells to progress the story.

If there's one problem we've got, though, it's that it looks a bit dated.

Diabolik appears rather rigid as he fights or moves. And the entire game seems slow-paced: a common complaint with point-and-click, although many fans of the genre see it as a plus point, allowing players to take things at their own pace.

But then again, our exclusive sneak peek was of an early version. There's plenty of time for the game to get a good polish before it's released in October, so we're optimistic.



Exploring each area with your pointer will uncover clues and equipment

### BONUS INFO

Diabolik starred in a film, *Danger: Diabolik*, in 1968. The Beastie Boys used clips from it in the video for their single 'Body Movin'.

Diabolik doesn't use guns, but he's got high-tech kit

Original Sin is an ambitious title for 2008, and looks set to be a breath of fresh air in a market saturated with racing, sports and free-roaming titles.

If the early promise of seamlessly integrated puzzles, action and stealth works out, *Diabolik: Original Sin* could be the bright spark that rekindles the point-and-click fire. Nathan Irvine

### HOW COMPLETE?

DIABOLIK: ORIGINAL SIN





# PREVIEW

The Incredible Hulk



## IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN

...but **The Incredible Hulk** does it rather well

PUB Sega DEV Edge of Reality ETA June WWW [edgeofreality.com](http://edgeofreality.com)



There's something odd about *The Incredible Hulk*. It's not that his waistband stays miraculously intact when Bruce Banner quadruples in size.

It's not that the Hulk in the game looks less like the beefed-up Edward Norton who stars in the film on which it's based and rather more like Arnold Schwarzenegger with PMT.

No, the curious thing is the sense of déjà vu. Sega's team at Edge of Reality have made a game that's remarkably

similar to *Hulk: Ultimate Destruction*, developed in 2005 by Radical.

Well, it's impossible to make a beat-'em-up without taking lessons from the *Tekken* series and incomprehensible that any developer would make a free-roamer without keeping a close eye on *Grand Theft Auto*, so it's only right that *The Incredible Hulk* takes a leaf from *Ultimate Destruction's* book.

The product of Bruce Banner's multiple personalities and a hearty



↑ Stretch denim is essential when your weight yo-yos as quickly as the Hulk's

dose of gamma radiation, the Hulk is 5000lb of human wrecking ball.

It's that exact idea that *Ultimate Destruction* nailed: the Hulk set loose in a city, with every object, whether nailed down or not, a weapon in his giant green mitts. And it's also the idea that *The Incredible Hulk* takes to the next level.

### Big green apple

Edge of Reality's new game sets the not-very-jolly green giant loose in New York City, where every tool, bus and lamp post is a weapon if you hold it in those giant, green fists.

Every building smashed or street torn up by the big green nutcase persists in the game world – a permanent scar on NYC.

↓ Um, Bruce, when we said 'catch the bus'...





No wall or skyscraper gets in his way; he's an unstoppable force of nature who can climb like Spider-Man and level a city like a bomb.

In the movie, The Hulk faces off against the Tim Roth-faced Abomination, who was – quite coincidentally – the final boss of Ultimate Destruction. He'll almost certainly be the final boss in the new game, too.

But what's a big green fella to do while he's waiting for another big green fella to fight? The hardest part of making a game about a hero as powerful as Superman or Hulk is finding sparring partners for the big guy to fight.

One lone baddy won't cut it so the Hulk needs something to smash on his way to visit The Abomination.

Pity the US military, then, and the Hulk's own particular rogues' gallery, all of whom are long overdue a thorough fistful of smash.

### You're so vein

Edge of Reality is among the safest hands in the business. It produced N64 ports of Spiderman and the Tony Hawk games way back when, more recently transferred The Sims from PC to PS2 and is currently working on an original stealthy/stabby game for PS3 and Xbox 360.

Edge only ever runs two teams and works on two games at a time, which

↓ The city is a playground where every car, bus and unfortunate passer-by can be grabbed and smashed



→ Hulk found holding the car aloft was rather tyre-ing (arf!)



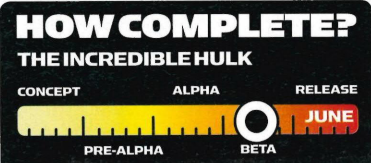
has led to some sturdy work over the years from this perennial port-house.

But Hulk is Edge's biggest game yet – a fully open-world smash-'em-up for five hardware platforms.

While Ultimate Destruction developer Radical is off making Prototype on next-gen systems, Edge of Reality is picking up the Hulk ball exactly where Radical left it, it seems.

And that means the best possible preview of The Incredible Hulk is already on shop shelves.

If you haven't done so already, seek out a cheapo copy of Ultimate Destruction and imagine everything in it super-sized. Yeah, Incredible Hulk is looking *that* good. Michael Gapper





# PREVIEW

## Speed Racer



# ZOOM ZOOM

Japanese cartoon proves that there still is a need for **Speed Racer** on PS2

PUB Warner Bros DEV Sidhe Interactive ETA August WEB [sidheinteractive.com](http://sidheinteractive.com)



What do you get if you ask the makers of the *Matrix* trilogy to work with the developer of GripShift, the classic but under-appreciated PSP speed-fest?

A balls-out rollercoaster of a racer, laced with a kaleidoscope of brightly coloured tracks, that's what.

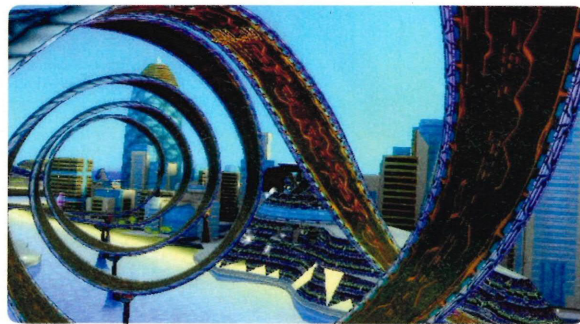
Speed Racer is based on a comic that has spawned a TV series and a film written and directed by the

Wachowski brothers, who are most famous for the *Matrix* films but who are also involved in this game.

For those unfamiliar with the franchise, Speed Racer revolves around a family of drivers including the main character 'Speed'; a teen with aspirations of becoming the greatest racer in the universe.

He drives a car called the Mach 5 which can achieve the kind of mph Jeremy Clarkson can only dream of.

But naturally, young Speed is racing for much more than personal glory.



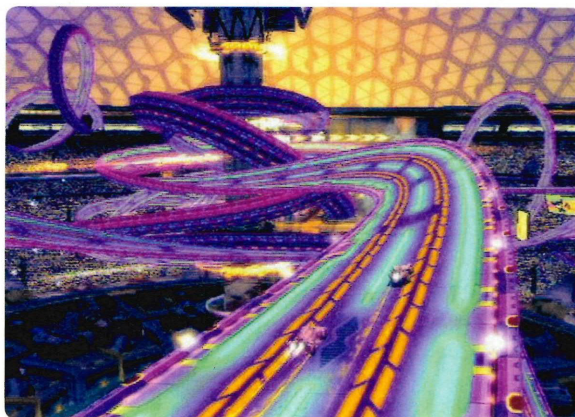
↑ This is probably not the best time to open that Ginsters pasty you bought at the last Esso garage...

### CLICHÉ ALERT



A wide range of vehicles travelling at insane speeds while trying to force each other off the track.

**ASSEEN IN** Burnout, GripShift, Mashed, Crash 'N' Burn, Pursuit Force



It's all to do with his brother Rex Racer, who snuffed it in The Crucible – a cross-country race that is as dangerous as it is lucrative. This is where you take the wheel.

### Up to Speed

Developer Sidhe's PSP classic GripShift featured insane racing with tracks that would corkscrew, loop and hurl you across massive jumps.

Speed Racer looks to be taking the same course, as you can tell by these screens. It's a lot like WipeOut with its vertical peaks and breakneck speeds,



↓ Love Wipeout's crazy, gravity-defying speed? Then you'll love this



↓ If opponents can't out-race you, they'll shunt you off the track instead



except there's always the chance you'll fly off the track to your death.

There are 13 drivers in all, and each will have their own style of driving. So the dastardly Racer X, for example, will try to force you into an 'accident' whereas Snake Oiler (voiced by Phil LaMarr, who also plays Hermes in *Futurama*, fact fans!) will use his

### GAME LAW

#### THINGS THAT ARE TRUE IN SPEED RACER

- 1 You and your car can fight as one using Car-Fu.
- 2 Smashing into opponents and sending them to their doom is fair.
- 3 It's physically possible to drive around tracks that look like rollercoasters.
- 4 Bright colours are always best.
- 5 'Speed', 'Oiler' and 'Racer' are good names for people.

acrobatic skills to jump gaps more easily than rivals.

Characters aside, though, this game's tracks of the real stars of the show. They're twistier than a rucksack full of rattlesnakes.

You'll dash across sections that almost touch the clouds, thunder down drops at 90° angles and boost through so many twists and turns you won't dare blink.

### Car-tial arts

But it's not all about full-on racing. There's fighting involved, too. Rather cleverly dubbed Car-Fu, this in-race combat is being developed by the Wachowski brothers, who did a similar sort of thing with bullet-time in *The Matrix*.

It's unclear as to how the fender benders will play out, but we're expecting slow-mo stunts akin to those in *Burnout*.

There hasn't been any word on a multiplayer mode yet, but we're expecting four-player split screen at the very least.

All in all, *Speed Racer* looks beautiful and we're hoping that the



↑ If the insane speeds don't make you vomit, the colour scheme will



↑ Racer X gets a bit sulky if he doesn't win

developer can reproduce the magic that it conjured up with *GripShift* (and sidestep the moments of tripe it managed with its other big title, the erratic *Jackass: The Game*).

If so, then we're in for something special. Fingers crossed it doesn't crash and burn like most games licensed from films. Nathan Irvine

### HOW COMPLETE?

#### SPEED RACER





# DICE, DICE BABY

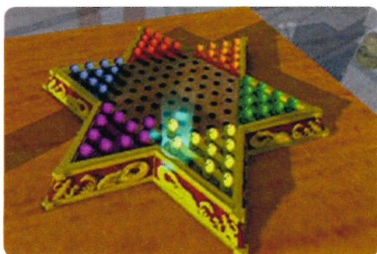
If the weather is rubbish this summer, you can always curl up with **Ultimate Board Game Collection**

PUB Empire DEV Valcon Games ETA May WEB [valcongames.com](http://valcongames.com)

There's something infinitely satisfying about dusting off an old copy of Monopoly, gathering your family together on a Sunday afternoon, and utterly crushing your little brother by bankrupting him with a flurry of ruthless hotel placements. Sadly, Monopoly is absent from Ultimate Board Game Collection. As is Trivial Pursuit, Risk, Cluedo, Scrabble and Mouse Trap.

Hmm, not really the Ultimate Board Game Collection we were hoping for. Let's be honest, though, 'Board Game Collection' lacks a certain punch, and thankfully the 20 games that are stuffed onto the DVD in time for its summer release are tried and tested classics.

Chess, for example. Everyone loves a bit of chess, even if their opponents are budding Kasparovs like the unfriendly AI in the preview version of the game that we played. Hopefully things will be a little better balanced before UBGC hits the shelves. Battleships is here too, although it's sailing under the name Naval Battle, and fans of crippling eye-strain will be pleased to note that there are around



↑ A handful of the games on offer enable six players to get involved

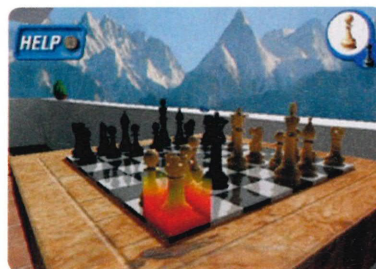
## BONUS INFO

Here's a full list of pastimes in Ultimate Board Games: Chess, Connect, Checkers, Naval Battle, Enigma, Backgammon, Reversi, Snakes and Ladders, Parchesi, Dice, Dominos, Chinese Checkers, Word Cubes, Mahjong, Concentration, Tic-Tac-Toe, Mancala, Go, Anagram Cubes, and jigsaws.

↑ Real or virtual, backgammon is a cracking game



↓ 800ft drop down a jagged alpine crevasse? Don't tempt us...



100 jigsaw puzzles to ponder your way through.

## Board already?

However, what are board games without buddies? As you'd expect UBGC enables you to play with mates in almost every game: indeed, some – like Chinese Checkers and Anagram Cubes – are six-player bonanzas. And the addition of a human, competitive element is what makes this game. After all, you can probably play most of the classics on this disc by searching



for freeware on the interweb, but few let you actually compete against your own, devious friends. Bless 'em.

Another neat touch is the ability to change the environment you're playing your chosen game in, so whatever bores you silly, it won't be seeing the same virtual room for the umpteenth time as the AI thrashes you hard like a dominatrix. Sadly, the music leaves a lot to be desired. It sounds like lift music mixed by a chimp, only slightly more wretched, but thankfully you can choose to turn it off completely and listen to the sound of death breathing lightly on the back of your neck instead.

Still, all joking aside Ultimate Board Game Collection will come at a budget price. Add that to the fact that it's much less space-intensive than having twenty dusty boxes stashed on your shelves, and this just might be a 2008 family favourite. **Andy Hartup**

## HOW COMPLETE?

ULTIMATE BOARD GAMES COLLECTION

ALPHA RELEASE

PRE-ALPHA BETA MAY



# DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

Possessed by demons and still saving the planet: it's **Soul Nomad and the World Eaters**

PUB KOEI Ltd DEV Nippon Ichi ETA Summer WEB [thesoulnomad.com](http://thesoulnomad.com)



No, it's not a new popular music combo set to storm the hit parade. Soul

Nomad & the World Eaters is actually a game. And with a name like that, eyebrows are raising cynically all over OPS2 Towers even as you read this.

But wait! Lower that brow. For Soul Nomad & the World Eaters is backed by publisher KOEI's reputation for Roleplaying Games of the Third Kind such as Disgaea and Atelier Iris 3: Grand Phantasm.

In fact, KOEI connoisseurs will recognize several trademarks: a bulging catalogue of fantastically bizarre characters, endless amounts of tactical menus to explore and a wonderfully kooky sense of humour.

The story is as convoluted and ambitious as you'd expect from this kind of Japanese RPG.

Two centuries before we join the action, the planet was beset by war and troubled by humungous monsters called World Eaters under the control of a demon called Gig. The war ended when a lass called Layla sealed Gig's soul into a sword.

Skip to the present and Layla's given you that sword, allowing malevolent Gig to possess your body. Cheers, love!

SNatWE is a tactical RPG, so prepare for gridded battlefields and 'end turn' commands. Pre-battle, you can buy team members and arrange them by selecting a 'room' (a platform



↑ The terrain you choose to fight on will affect your party's performance

↓ Destroy the World Eaters and save the world, all two dimensions of it!



that'll imbue them with a status effect such as Attack +5%).

By locking characters into rooms, you'll be able to create a catalogue of teams that are effective against certain enemies and terrains.

## Rooms for manoeuvre

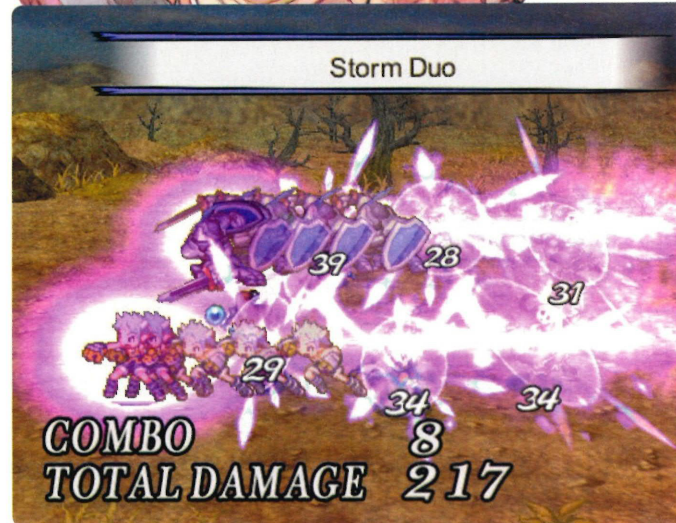
There's a hefty pile of customisation options to trawl through, from your character selection to battle formations to story options.

You'll have the opportunity to explore different story threads. Weirdly, it's actually possible to end the game within one hour, by giving in to Gig's offers of godly powers at the expense of your body and soul.

Looks-wise, the traditional JRPG



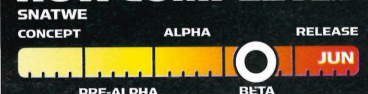
↑ Create 'rooms' with different characters and they'll be imbued with special statistics according to that room



feel continues. SNatWE is presented in ye olde pixilated style, similar to Disgaea and Atelier Iris 3, which means sumptuous backgrounds and cute, boggle-eyed sprites.

It may put people off with its 2D graphics and brain-taxing mechanics, but given KOEI's touch, it may turn out to be a curious champion of the tactical RPG. Kim Richards

## HOW COMPLETE?





**"It's the era of casual games, the Wii and DS... it's vital that MGS4 succeeds to make the games industry healthy again"**

Hideo Kojima. March 13, 2008

Find out why Hideo Kojima is fighting for PS3 and gaming as we know it in "The Games You Must Play Before You Die" - available only with PSM3 Issue 100

Only in  
**PSM3**  
#100

**PLUS!**

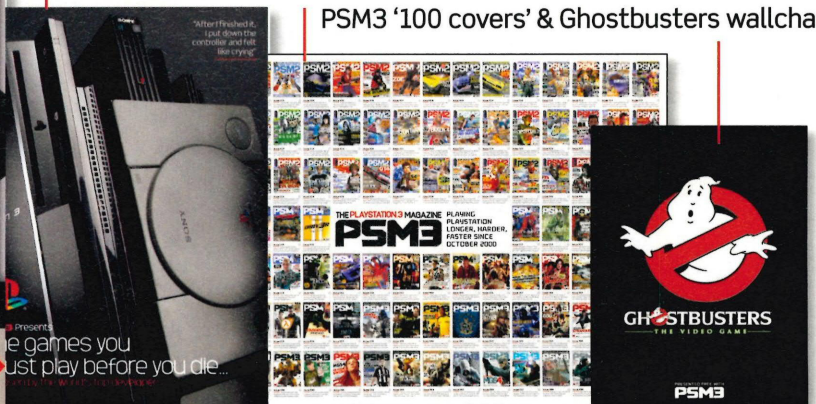
We've finished MGS4! Live new info from Japan

Dual-sided  
Hi-Def DVD



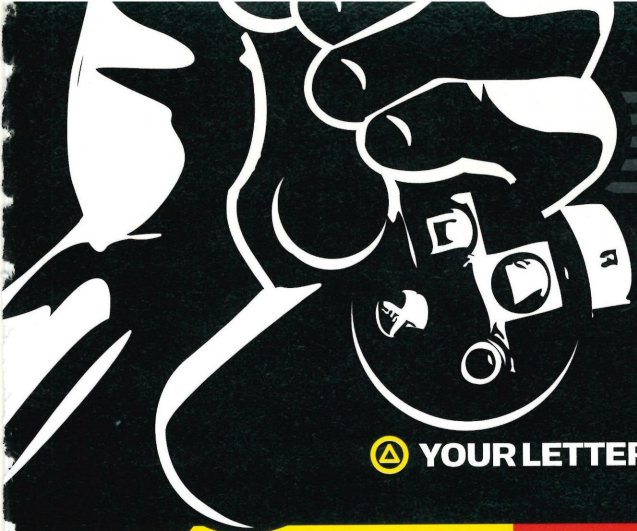
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PSM3 '100 covers' & Ghostbusters wallchart



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# PLAYSTATION NATION

⚠ YOUR LETTERS Ⓞ YOUR REVIEWS ✕ TIPS & SECRETS 📺 STUFF



## YOU CAN LEAVE YOUR FEDORA ON

This month, I went up to the rather posh town of Knutsford (where the football players live) to visit Traveller's Tales, developer of the forthcoming Lego Indiana Jones.

It was so exciting that I've been humming the theme tune non-stop ever since my return, making me one of the most popular people in the office, as you can imagine.

## Memory Lane

Thanks to our rare PS1 games feature in Issue 96, I've also taken a trip down memory lane, as have you, judging by your letters!

I've reminisced about the happy hours I'd dedicate to Chrono Trigger and Final Fantasy VII – and, like reader Mark Dorney, wished these classics could be remade on PS2.

Meanwhile, the boob debate rages on, as do the Guitar Hero wishlists and Rockband worship.

But for now, I just wish for a fedora hat, whip, and some way of rigging a speaker to play The Raider's March wherever I go...

**KIM RICHARDS**  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT  
psnation@futurenet.co.uk

## WHAT'S GOT YOU TALKING THIS MONTH

CEREBRAL  
MELTDOWN

PS1

BLOODBOILING

PASSIONATE  
RAVING

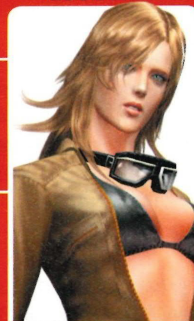
SERIOUS  
INTEREST

RAISED  
EYEBROWS

TOTAL APATHY



NORKS



ROCK BAND

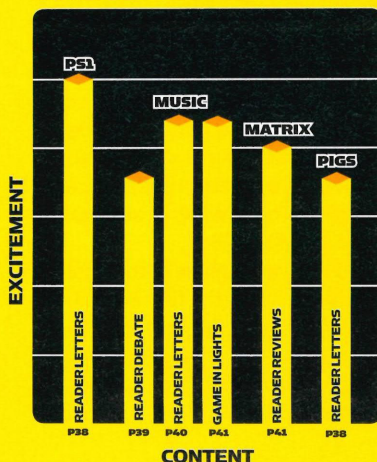


GUITAR  
HERO



**'YES, IT WAS A BIT WEIRD  
BUT THAT'S THE APPEAL'**  
GAVIN EVANS **P38**

## THIS SECTION CONTAINS



## SEND US STUFF LIKE THIS!



↑ **YOUR REVIEWS**  
Loving or hating a game? Write down some words, preferably in English, and tell us why!



↑ **YOUR GAME IN LIGHTS**  
Got a game idea? Tell us about it!



↑ **STUFF ABOUT YOU**  
Fancy having a whole column dedicated to you? We can fix it!

## CONTACT OPS2

POST OPS2 Magazine  
Future Publishing,  
30 Monmouth St  
Bath BA1 2BW

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SMS Text PSNATION, then a space,  
then your message to 87474  
(costs 25p plus your usual rate)

MMS Text PSNATION, then a space,  
then your pic to 07738 647177  
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# INBOX

**FAST** PSNATION@FUTURENET.CO.UK

**SLOW** PLAYSTATION NATION, OPS2 MAGAZINE, FUTURE PUBLISHING, 30 MONMOUTH ST, BATH, BA1 2BW

## PS1 PRAISE



Your 'Blasts From The Past' feature (OPS2#96) was absolute quality. It's a very interesting

subject to raise. People should definitely replay PS1 games, no matter what day and age.

Even though the games have crappy, square graphics and poor voice acting, you really don't notice it once you start playing them.

You just get an amazing feeling of nostalgia and you really do love every second of it: it's just like reliving your childhood.

Videogames are created purely to entertain and excite, and that's exactly what PS1 games do.

They still provoke as much emotion now as they did back then, from Aeris's tear-jerking death scene in FFVII to your first chilling encounter with a Licker in Resident Evil 2.

Replaying PS1 games has nothing but advantages: ridiculously cheap prices, involving gameplay and grade A, top-dog entertainment. I seriously recommend it to everyone.

**CHRIS GALLAGHER, WARRINGTON**



*We do our best to entertain, Chris, and we're glad you loved our feature. We agree with your feelings on replaying PS1 games: it's like reliving your memories and proves that graphics aren't everything.*

## TOMBI TIME

I greatly enjoyed issue 96's article on rare PS1 games, but there was one rare game that you left out: Tombi.

Released in 1998, the game centres around the exploits of a pink-haired, green shorts-wearing caveboy who wrestles pigs. Yes, it's a bit weird, but that's where the game's appeal is.

↑ Chris Gallagher agrees with us that great games never die

## WIN THIS!



This month, all letters published in the main body of this section will receive a PS2 game. The writer of the Star Letter gets three games! So what are you waiting for? Get scribbling!



One minute, you're farting in people's faces and turning them into babies; the next, carrying a lost frog home on your back.

It is considered to be a rare treasure, highly sought after by collectors. The fact that it was absent from the list, despite being rare that many of the games on it just goes to show that it has been forgotten, lost to the mists of time.

**GAVIN EVANS, WALES**

*Oh, there are so many rare classics we'd have loved to have put in, but unfortunately we only had eight pages! And yes, Tombi is a cult classic: did you know it had a sequel?*

## RETRO REMAKES

It's generally thought that games such as Spyhunter and Golden Axe don't need remakes, and the memory often gets tainted.

But I was thinking, which games would be perfect for remakes? I've played a lot of games where their ambition far exceeds the technology.

For example, 'Corporation' for the MegaDrive has a great idea behind it, but the poor graphics and clunky controls make it hard to play and see what is going on.

Other games, such as Another World, prove compelling but could really benefit from a more advanced engine. I think games like these are perfect to be remade, or advanced on a console like PS2.

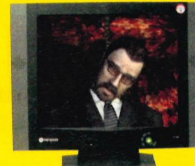
We know it can be successful; it's a similar tale with the first Metal Gear games before they game out on PlayStation. So, what games would you consider perfect for a revamp?

**MARK DORNEY, EMAIL**



↑ Tombi and its sequel are insane but fun, writes Gavin Evans





## DEBATEBOX

Last month we asked you...

# GUITAR HERO: DUALSHOCK OR GUITAR?

The vast majority of you play with the peripheral, but a few defend the use of the PS2 controller...

## 15% DUALSHOCK

I've found that I can enjoy the music and songs more (feeling the riffs, pulling rock poses/faces etc) and get into the songs more. Guitar Hero has always been about the songs, rather than how well I can play them, and the controller gives me the most enjoyment.

**ADAM LAWRENCE**, WEST MIDLANDS

The guitar is for noobz: real dexterous experts who master the DualShock are the true heroes of rhythm action.

**BEN ROBINSON**, SHEFFIELD

My brother smashed the guitar in a Who-style rock'n'roll moment so now I have no choice.

**BEN ROBINSON**, SHEFFIELD

## 85% GUITAR

You're a guitar hero, not a DualShock hero! Playing with the pad defeats the purpose!

**GEMMA GREEN**, BRIGHTON

You can do much more with it. It is almost impossible to repeatedly tap a note/chord quickly on a DualShock.

**MARCUS BEARPARK**, FACEBOOK

I find it way harder with the controller than with the guitar, because I constantly forget which button is which, because it's all on the shoulders.

**JOHN THORNTON**, LEEDS

### NEXT MONTH'S DEBATE

SHOULD VIDEO GAMES BE TURNED INTO MOVIES?  
EMAIL PSNATION@FUTURENET.CO.UK OR JOIN IN ON OUR FACEBOOK GROUP (SEE P3 FOR DETAILS)

→ A doctorate in archaeology and another in looking damn good

Deep breath: Chrono Trigger, Silent Hill, Vagrant Story, Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix, Hogs of War, Colony Wars, G-Police, Power Diggerz, Abe's Oddysee and Sheep, Dog'n'Wolf. Among others...

→ We loved them then, and we'd love them even more if they were remade



## BOOBY TRAP

I can't say I am surprised at the gaming industry's 'boobification' of female characters at all, because it is run/written by/aimed at the male of the species.

In fact I find it incredibly funny that any woman is actually offended by the portrayal of women as mindless, scantily clad, monster bait.



## THE SHORT ANSWER

Is it true that Mark Wahlburg is playing Max Payne in a film?

**KATE SMITH**, CHESHIRE  
Yes.

→ Bek Barker thinks characters like this are 'what geeky male egos require'

Come on, girls, this is what those geeky male egos require. They can't get a real woman, so let them have their little fantasy bimbos.

I love roleplaying games and laugh each time a new female character is introduced with her larger-than-life cleavage and bubble-headed remarks.

Most RPGs are of Japanese origin and they do appear to have a particular fixation with the mammary glands... just watch any anime to realise this.

Get over it, girls, and just think: the most lusted-after pixelated character actually has a doctorate in archaeology and a damn fine body without the enhanced boobage.

**BEK BARKER**, DERBY

We can see your point, and it is a good one. But with more women entering the videogames arena as developers and gamers, maybe it's time to re-address what the target audience wants?





# PLAYSTATION NATION

YOUR LETTERS REVIEWS TIPS SECRETS STUFF

CONTACT OPS2 MMS  
TEXT PSNATION, THEN A SPACE,  
THEN YOUR PIC TO 07738 647 177



↓ Rock Band is exhilarating to play, says Aaron Lee

## HELLO NEW YORK!

Back at the end of February I visited New York. In between posing for pictures by famous landmarks and obsessing over comic superheroes I had the great opportunity to play Rock Band at Gamestop!

My friend went for the drums and I took up the mic. We played Nirvana's 'In Bloom' with a fellow American gamer.

I belted out each chorus as it came, the drums crashing along beside, with our new friend repeated scoring Overdrive just to impress the crowd that had formed behind us!

By the end of it all of us felt exhilarated and excited that we'd pulled it off.

The small crowd clapped and cheered: no other game makes you feel this way!

Although Guitar Hero gives you a great sense of high-adrenaline rhythm action, it's nothing compared to the collaborative explosion you and your

buddies feel when playing Rock Band together. This game truly excels when it comes to multiplayer gaming. Rock Band is poised to take over the world!

**AARON LEE**, VIA EMAIL

*Our experience of Rock Band was pretty exhilarating too, it really does win out over Guitar Hero when it comes to playing with friends. We still prefer GH solo, though.*

## THE SHORT ANSWER

Is Persona 3 FES coming out in the UK?

**MATT DONOHUE**  
IRELAND  
Not yet

## ZEP HERO

Without a shadow of a doubt, if any band should get its own Guitar Hero game it has to be

Led Zeppelin. How can any person who's played GH not want to pretend to be Jimmy Page, playing 'Stairway To Heaven' on that double-necked guitar?

**CARL FIDCZUK**,

LEIGHTON BUZZARD

*Hell, yes, Carl! And wouldn't it be awesome if there was a double-necked Gibson EDS-1275 peripheral made to go with it?*



↑ Guitar Hero Zeppelin would kick ass, says Carl Fidczuk



## PLAYSTATION PROFILE

### DANIEL GAY IS...



HOPING THE NEW TOMB RAIDER HAS ALL THE BEST BITS OF THE LAST TWO

**BIRTHDATE** 26/08/72

**HOMETOWN** CHURCHILL

**FIRST GAME** BALDUR'S GATE: DA

### MY FRIENDS



JON



CLARA



JUDE



ANIA

### FAVE GAMES



CANIS CANEM EDIT



TOMB RAIDER ANNIVERSARY



THE SIMPSONS GAME

### FAVE CHARACTERS



LARA CROFT (TOMB RAIDER)



MAX PAYNE (MAX PAYNE)



SIR DANIEL FORTESQUE (MEDIEVAL)

### WHAT I'M PLAYING NOW



### SILENT HILL

Yes, the first one! It may be ancient, but it's still creepy as hell.

**MY RATING**

0 10

### MY LOCAL GAME SHOP

GAMESTATION, NEW STREET, BIRMINGHAM



### GAME PET

Scree (Primal)  
Not so much a pet as a sidekick! But a more loyal, wise and witty one, you couldn't wish for.



### MiTUNES

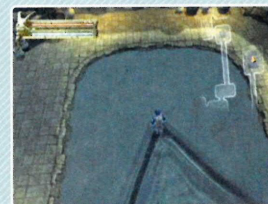
WHAT I LISTEN TO WHEN I'M GAMING



SILENT HILL SOUNDTRACK

### MY BEST MOMENT IN A GAME...

THE FIRST TIME I SAW WATER



I'll never forget the moment when I first cast eyes upon the rippling water in my first ever PS2 game, Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance.

### MY LIFE

**INTERESTS**  
WRITING, BLOGGING, PS2

### MUSIC

NIN, GOLDFRAPP, FAT BOY SLIM, LED ZEP, ORBITAL, RIDE, ELBOW, DUFFY

### FILMS

MATRIX TRILOGY, THE RESIDENT EVILS, ANYTHING INVOLVING SIMON PEGG

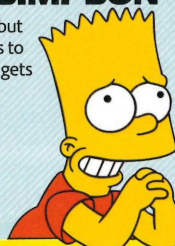
### BOOKS/COMICS

STEPHEN BAXTER, ROBERT RANKIN, THE MATRIX COMICS AND BOOKS ON PARENTING (I'M GOING TO BE A DAD!)

### GAME CHARACTER MOST LIKE ME...

### BART SIMPSON

Life's a game, but when it comes to the crunch he gets things done.



### SEE YOURSELF HERE!

Want to be our featured reader in a future issue? Just email [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk) with your name and age and we'll get in touch if you're picked for a profile!





# READER REVIEWS

**REVIEW  
AND WIN!**

The writer of the star review gets a top PS2 game! Email [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk)

## THE MATRIX: PATH OF NEO

REVIEWED BY **SHEONAI ADAMS**, VIA EMAIL  
WE GAVE IT 7/10 IN OPS2 #66



Just when you thought Matrix games had lost their way, The Matrix: Path Of Neo let you be Neo and take his path through the Matrix trilogy.

The first level – “Have you ever had a dream, Neo?” – is where you unleash Neo’s fury. After that, it’s red pill or blue pill.

It’s very, very violent. Run up a wall, jump off, shoot a guy and come back down. Then kick everyone.

Then, oh no, here come the agents! They’re very easy to get rid of, though. The first time you meet one, keep on shooting until your ammo’s out, then push him off the side. Easy!

It gets a bit harder next time. You’re all geared up and standing there is an agent who morphs into every single guard in sight.

And if you thought that was hard, meet Agent Smith. The only way to get onto the next level is to run him over with a train. And even then he’s still alive!

Good points: it’s very, very fun to play; being Neo and unlocking powers; there’s a whole lot of combat and guns.

Bad points: the 1980s, arcade-style health and focus; the graphics are iffy, but who cares?

In short, this game is The One.

**9/10**

## YOUR GAME IN LIGHTS!

Got a great idea for a game? Share it with the world here!

### SFX LEAGUE: SONIC SOUND TEAM

DESIGNER  
OWEN MCCARRY, GLASGOW

#### THE PITCH

You and your trusty friends must team up to try to win the prestigious Mega Crystal in the rock-hard Sonic Sound League. Go up against ancient demons and creepy ghouls. Win the Crystal, save the world and cause mass destruction on the way!

#### OPS2 VERDICT

Intriguing and unique, Owen! We like the idea of mixing hardcore battling with musical elements, and of course mass destruction is one of our most favourite things after Guitar Hero!

**DEAL OR  
NO DEAL?  
DEAL!\***



CHANCE OF **SFXL:SST** BEING THE NUMBER-ONE GAME AT CHRISTMAS...

**SLIM**  **REAL!**

\*SFXL:SST doesn't really get a publishing deal, but Owen does get a framed copy of our design for his game's box art!

### SEE YOURSELF HERE

Post your pictures and game ideas to Your Game In Lights, OPS2, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW or email [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk)

## NEED FOR SPEED PROSTREET

REVIEWED BY **MARK COLLINS**, HORSHAM  
WE GAVE IT 6/10 IN OPS2 #93



Need for Speed ProStreet is the most boring game I've ever played. Most Wanted and other Need For Speed games are amazing; I always buy the latest one, but ProStreet has taken a backwards step.

I thought NFS were supposed to be based on illegal street racing, but the races are pointless!

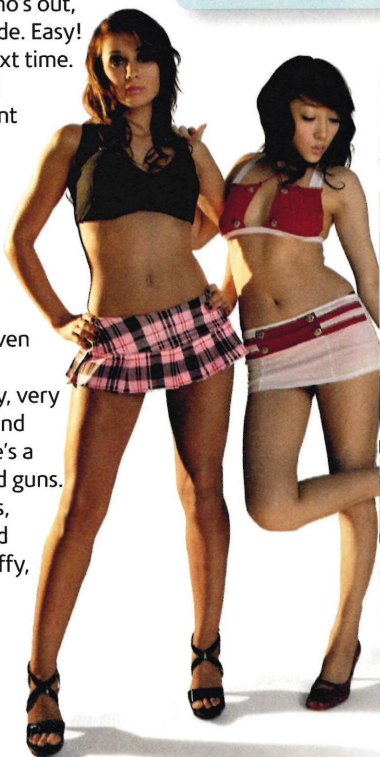
Why make two drag races (quarter and half a mile)? What's wrong with one? If you damage your car it costs £1000 pounds for a little repair. If you're starting the game, can't handle the car, and damage it in a race you will have no money to do it up or even buy a new car: it's pathetic.

I got bored with ProStreet during the first day I had it. The game theme is poor. There is no free roaming, no traffic or cops. This is Need For Speed with all the fun sucked out of it. Also the map in the career mode is rubbish.

**5/10**

### WRITE FOR OPS2!

Say why you love or hate a PS2 game in no more than 250 words. Give it a score out of 10 and email the review to [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk) (note, reviews will be edited before printing).







# THE BRAINDRAIN

It's draining on your brain; get to the end, win some prizes!

## SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



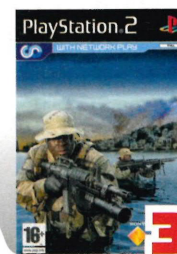
⊗ There's only one difference, but it's subtle! Text **OPS2SPOT** then a single space followed by your name and answers to **87474**



## NAME THOSE GAMES



They're games with no names! Can you guess what the real titles are? This is one of the seven star prize questions. See below for details on how to enter.



## PS2 MATCH MAKER



Match the character to the game. This is one of the seven star prize questions. See below for details on how to enter.



## ANDY'S CRAP DRAWING OF THE MONTH



Who is this mysterious character? If only they weren't drawn so badly! Figure out who this PS2 character is, and let us know! You need to answer this question to enter in the Star prize draw. See below for details on how to enter.



## MULTIPLE CHOICE



Answer the three questions and text **OPS2CHOICE** then a single space followed by your name and answers to **87474**

- Which game doesn't feature 'When we were Young' by the Killers?  
**A** Singstar **B** Guitar Hero **C** Rock Band
- Which game features Tom Morello as a playable character?  
**A** Singstar **B** Guitar Hero **C** Rock Band
- Which game isn't actually released in the UK right now?  
**A** Singstar **B** Guitar Hero **C** Rock Band

## HOW TO ENTER

### STAR PRIZE

For your chance to win the star prize, you must answer ALL SEVEN questions that are marked with a ★. To enter by SMS, text **OPS2STAR**, then a space, then your name and answers to 87474. Or email your answers to [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk) with **OPS2STAR** as the subject.

### OTHER PRIZES

To win one of the four single-question prize bundles, match the prize on the right-hand page to the PlayStation symbol on the question and follow the instructions given to enter by text or email.

All texts charged at 25p plus your standard network tariff rate  
Closing date: 21 May 2008  
For full competition rules and text terms and conditions, see p111



## VIDEOGAME MATHS

Know your numbers, do the maths and send us the answer you come up with. This is one of the seven star prize questions! See below for entry details.

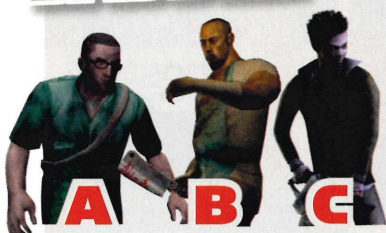
The number of letters in the Playstation Nation section	The number of this page	Which Final Fantasy featured Vaan, Penelo, Fran and Balthier?	The number of red buttons on a Buzz! controller	<b>TOTAL</b>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>+</b>	<b>×</b>	<b>÷</b>	<b>=</b>	<input type="text"/>

## WORD FINDER

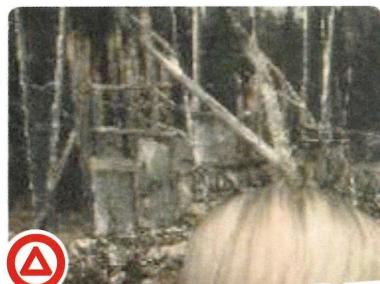
Answer the questions, decipher the game-related anagram highlighted in red and that's the answer. A star prize question: see below for entry details.

- Complete the title: Grand ... Auto: San Andreas
- Boxing game called ... Night Round 2
- The name of our editorial assistant: ... Richards
- The flower girl from Final Fantasy VII

## WHO'S YA BADDIE?



They all look nasty, but only one of them is actually evil. Tell us which one. Text **OPS2BADDIE** then a space, then your name and A, B or C to **87474**.



## IMAGE ZOOM

Here's a little bit of scenery from a very popular game. Recognise it? Then text **OPS2ZOOM** then a single space followed by your name and answer to **87474**.

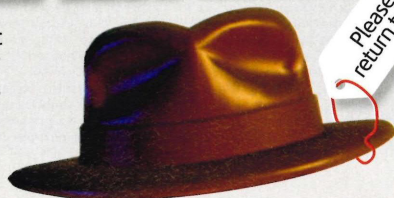
## VIDEOGAME PICTO-PUZZLE

These pictures are clues to the name of a game. But what is it? This is one of the seven star prize questions! See opposite for details of how to enter.



## PRIVATE PROPERTY

This has turned up in Lost and Found. Do you know who it belongs to? This is a Star Prize question. See left for entry details.



## WIN ALL THIS! THE PRIZES

Match the question symbols to the prizes, and you could win all this!



### WAR GAME BUNDLE!

You must enter all seven Star Prize question to be in with a chance to win the Star Prize which comprises: Brothers in Arms: Road to Hill 30 game; Rainbow Six 3 game; SOCOM hoodie; SOCOM US Navy Seals CD wallet

### PRIZE BUNDLE #01

Phantasy Star Universe game; PSU: Ambition of the Illuminus game; Rogue Galaxy art book; DDS2 poster, Shadowhearts poster

Email your answer to [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk)  
Subject line OPS2SPOT

### PRIZE BUNDLE #02

Two retro game T-shirts and and Art of Fighting Anthology game

Email your answer to [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk)  
Subject line OPS2CHOICE

### PRIZE BUNDLE #03

NHL 08 game; NHL 06 game; Let's Make a Soccer Team game; and World Snooker Championship 2007 game

Email your answer to [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk)  
Subject line OPS2BADDIE

### PRIZE BUNDLE #04

Shin Megami Tensei: Persona 3 game and exclusive art book; DDS2 poster and Shadowhearts poster

Email your answer to [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk)  
Subject line OPS2ZOOM



### ISSUE 96 WINNERS

Star prize: Sarah Forest, Bristol  
Spot the Difference: Brian Reynolds, London  
Multiple Choice: David Vincent, Norfolk  
Who's Your Baddie?: Tom Capon, Bristol  
Image Zoom: Lee Phillmore, Caterham





# READER OFFERS

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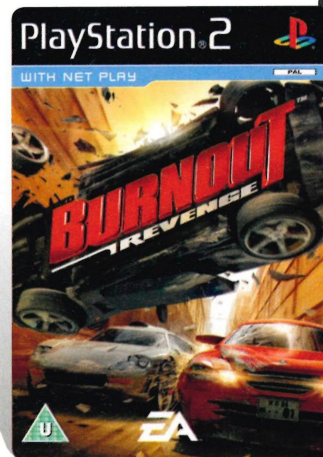
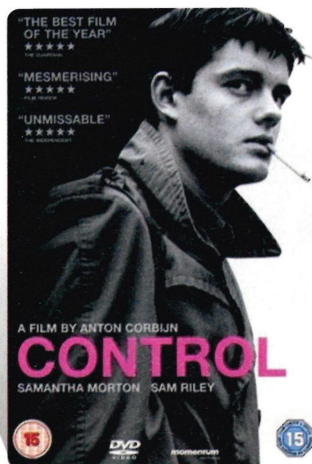
Then make a list of the games and DVDs you want.

The first disc on the list will be posted to you as soon as possible.

When you've finished with it, send it back and the next one will be sent out. You don't even have to pay the postage either way!

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### HOW IT WORKS

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2. Sign up for a 30-day trial using promotion code **FUMAGV8**
3. Make a list of the DVDs and games you want
4. Kick back and wait for the first one to arrive
5. When you're done with it, send it back and wait for the next!



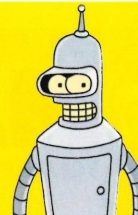
### HOW TO GET YOUR £10 VOUCHER

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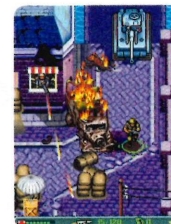
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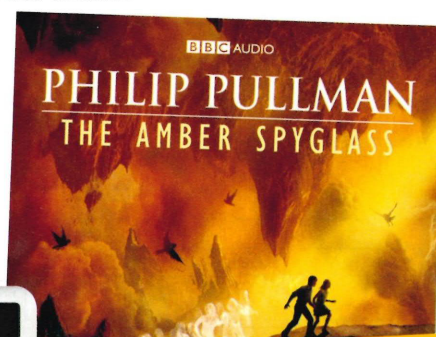
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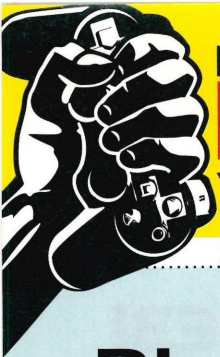
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If adventure has a game, it must be

# INDIANA JONES™

The background of the page is a detailed illustration from the LEGO Indiana Jones: The Video Game. It depicts a jungle scene with a wooden railway track. A small train with several LEGO minifigures is on the track. In the foreground, a LEGO minifigure of Indiana Jones, wearing his signature fedora and holding a whip, is shown. To his right, another minifigure is holding a large red snake. The scene is set against a backdrop of dense green foliage and a warm, golden light, suggesting a sunset or sunrise.

Question. What do China, South America, Europe, the sub-continent and England have in common? Answer: they've all been visited by Dr Henry Indiana Walton Jones.

He's thwarted gangsters in Shanghai, explored temples in Peru and navigated the catacombs of Venice. As for England? Rumour has it Indy has been spotted in the village of Knutsford, lending a hand as developer Traveller's Tales brings his traveller's tales to Lego life in Lego Indiana Jones: The Video Game.

Oozing danger, adventure and shabby chic from every pore, Indiana is the hero everyone wants to be. And now we gamers are about to get that chance to take up the whip, don the fedora and save the world with block-tastic Indy.

To find out more, OPS2 embarked on its own quest to the mystical village of Knutsford, just south of









Manchester. Our target: the hidden studios of Traveller's Tales and their Lego Indiana Jones secrets within.

The first thing we can confirm is that this highly anticipated game is in the best hands possible. Traveller's Tales has a long history of making good games from licensed properties (such as Bionicle Heroes, Finding Nemo and of course, Lego Star Wars).

## Stars in their eyes

On top of that, the development team from Lego Star Wars is on board for Indy, using the same core technology. So expect to see endless studs to collect, destructible environments and a quirky sense of humour – all the best bits of LSW.

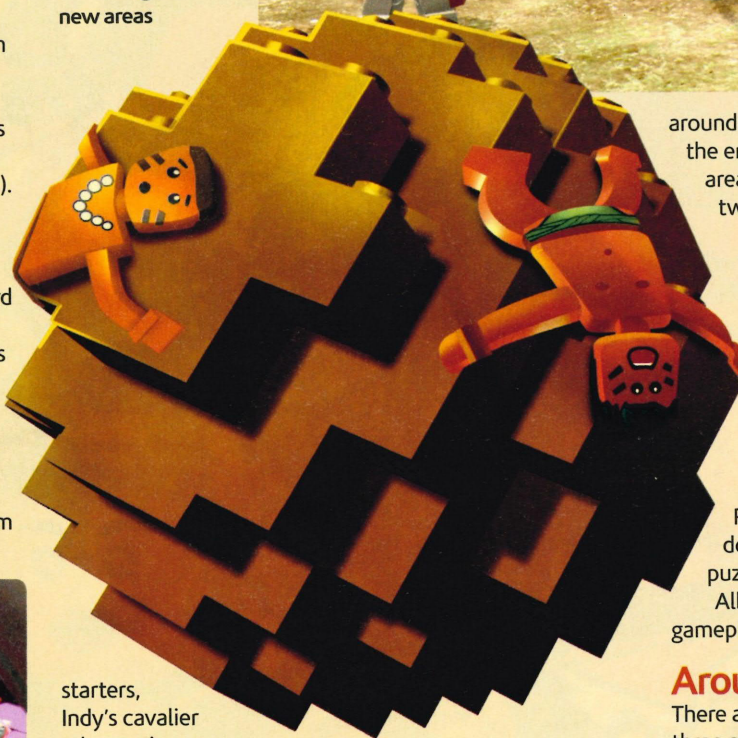
But this doesn't mean that everything's going to be identical. Lego Indy will be quite different from his intergalactic predecessors. For



↑ Singer Willie struts her stuff onstage. Hummuna hummuna, eh lads? Er...

↑ Indy can climb ropes and vines and swing into new areas

↓ Lego elephants are not only cute, they provide invaluable transport



around and put down or slotted into the environment to open up new areas. And there's more focus on two-player puzzles.

One bit that we saw in the Well of Souls requires Indy and Sallah to work together, traversing movable pillars; you either need two players or for one person to switch back and forth between characters. And the AI has been tweaked so that, should you be playing alone, the PS2-controlled character doesn't end up solving the puzzles for you.

All these changes really raise the gameplay from LSW to the next level.

## Around the world

There are six stages for each of the three movies, plus bonus areas.

Absolutely nothing is left out, not even Barnet College, where Indy is a professor. It functions as the central hub, where you can relax between adventures and admire all the treasure you've collected.

Our quest took us through the pleasingly puzzle-ridden Well of Souls and down the dark mines from *The Temple of Doom*.

## INDY'S GUIDE TO ADVENTURING

### PART 1 | Bridge-building



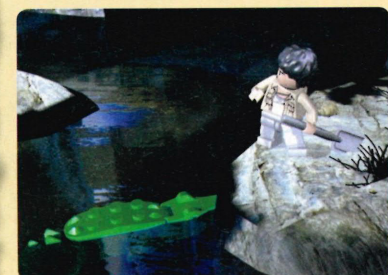
#### BUILDER'S BUM

Confronted by a bottomless chasm? Simply look around for blocks that could form a bridge. Assemble a pile, toss it across the void and...



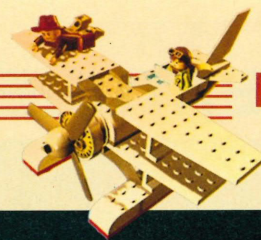
#### CHASM CHUM

...hey presto! You've created yourself a handsome rope bridge that's more than capable of bearing you over to the other side.



↑ Lego crocs are just one worry: there are also giant spiders, snakes, scarabs...





## WHAT'S IN A LEVEL? Café Raven, Nepal

### HIGH AND MIGHTY

If Indy can't reach high ledges or balconies, use a female character. They can jump a little higher than the stocky blokes.

### SWINGSTAR

Unlike in Lego Star Wars, characters can now climb up ropes and swing around.

### HIT THE BOTTLE

Bottles can be picked up and used as weapons: handy if your bar is about to be overrun by bad guys lusting for your amulet...

We also experienced Indy fearlessly jumping from truck to truck while chasing after the Ark, and fighting alongside Marion in Café Raven.

We were very impressed. Each level is richly coloured and surprisingly detailed. The warm sunbeams that shone through Panakot Palace windows were so realistic that we wondered why Indy wasn't tanned.

Levels are scattered with studs, as well as a plethora of weapons and tools that can be picked up and used.

Shovels can be used to dig up hidden goodies or propel a raft across crocodile-infested waters. Discarded

clothes can be pinched to disguise your crew and fool the bad guys.

### Skin and Jones

One thing that really sold the Lego Star Wars series was the abundance of playable characters available, and Lego Indiana isn't going to disappoint.

So far, we've seen Satipo, Indy, Marion, Sallah, Short Round, Willie, Young Indy and Indy's father.

You'll have two to three characters adventuring at any one time, and can

### DISCARDED CLOTHES CAN BE PINCHED TO DISGUISE YOUR CREW



↑ South American Indians, Egyptians and Germans: Indy's annoyed a lot of people

easily switch between them. Each category of character has special abilities; for example, female characters can jump higher than male ones, and 'academic' types can decipher runes. You can even take unlocked characters back to previous levels to open up bonus areas.

↓ Puzzles and traps are abundant and imaginative







# COVER FEATURE



As veterans of Lego games will know, Traveller's Tales doesn't like to punish players with criminally challenging gameplay or intense combat.

The main route through the game is fairly obvious; markers indicate where you can put items, 'hidden' objects are quite shiny and clues are plentiful.

But as you become more comfortable with the game mechanics, you'll discover hidden bonus areas. This means you can play



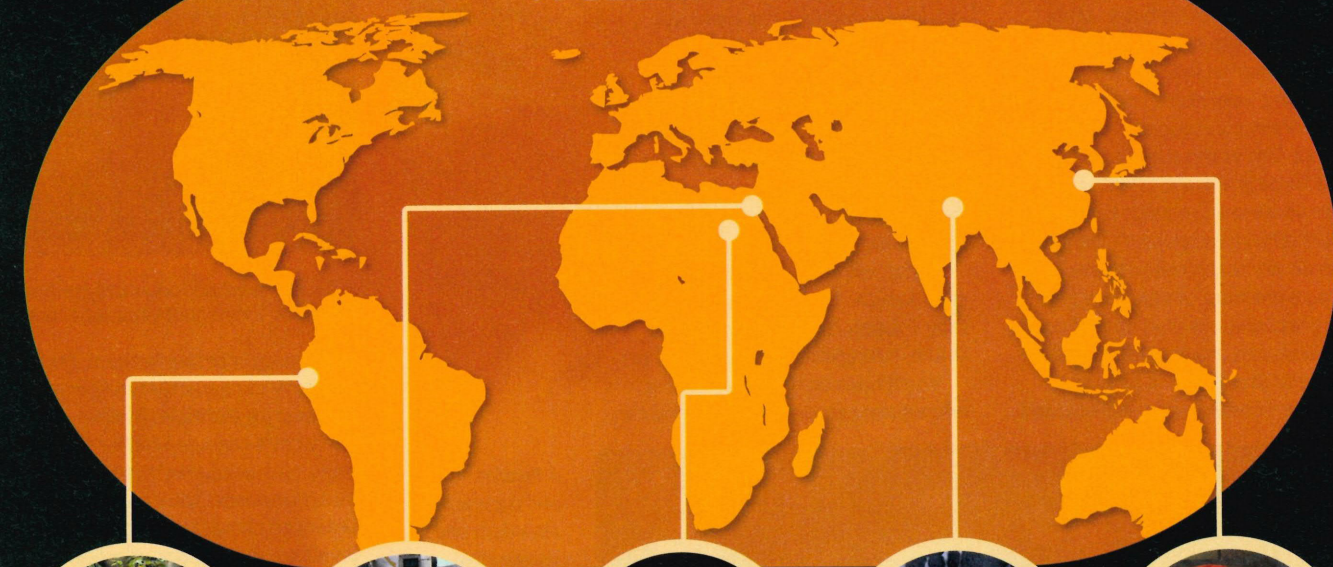
↑ Another gripping instalment of Indy's ongoing adventures

the way you want: if you're looking for more of a challenge, you'll find it.

And don't worry, not everything's going to be handed to you on a plate. Key puzzles that feature in the films (for example, Indiana's journey through the temple of the Holy Grail) have been Lego-ified so you won't

## INDY'S GUIDE TO WORLD ADVENTURING

### WORLD MAP



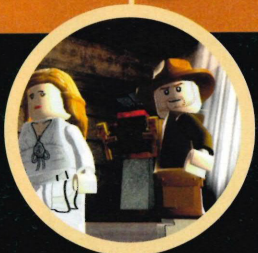
#### THE LOST TEMPLE PERUVIAN JUNGLE

Fraught with booby traps and vampire bats, the Lost Temple is where we first see the legendary Dr Jones demonstrate his tomb raiding moves. The prize in question: a golden idol.



#### BAZAAR CAIRO

Packed with merchants and vendors, Cairo is home to skilled Egyptian digger Sallah, who helps Indy seek out the location of the Ark of the Covenant.



#### WELL OF SOULS TANIS

A labyrinth of underground chambers that house the powerful Ark of the Covenant and, as Indy discovers, a whole truckload of snakes.



#### CAFÉ RAVEN NEPAL

Indy heads to Nepal to find his old mentor, Dr Ravenwood. Unfortunately, he's died but his daughter Marion remains.



#### CLUB OBI-WAN SHANGHAI

The opening location from Temple of Doom, this club is home to singer Willie, who regularly entertains notorious gangster Lao Che.





## YOUR PLASTIC PALS

### THE GOODIES



#### INDIANA JONES

Professor of archaeology by day, fearless adventurer by, er, day.



#### MARION RAVENWOOD

Indy's old flame. Knows how to look after herself.



#### SALLAH

The best digger in Egypt and one of Indy's oldest friends.

### THE BADDIES



#### SATIPO

Sneaky turncoat who initially helps Indy, then turns on him.



#### RENE BELLOQQ

Indy's arch-nemesis, this rival archaeologist wants the power of the Ark.



#### MAJOR TOHT

Evil German agent Toht is sent to retrieve an amulet from Marion.

know the answer simply from watching the film. Does anyone know the Lego word for God?

### Whipped to the post

Indy's main weapon is, of course, his famous bullwhip. Not only can he take out bad guys with it, he can use it to crack their weapons away from them or to swing across pits.

You can also pick up anything close to hand to aid you in a scrap: bottles, pistols, machine guns, even tools such as spades and spanners can be used to conk a dimpled dome.

And it's not just human thugs that you're up against. There's a whole host of scarabs, crocodiles and giant spiders to contend with.

Brilliantly, every time you load up a level, the screen displays Indy's journey to the location, in the same style as the map screen in the movies.

But it's not all about air miles. Indy and pals can use llamas, camels, horses, elephants and jeeps for

### YOU WON'T GET THE PUZZLE ANSWERS FROM THE FILMS

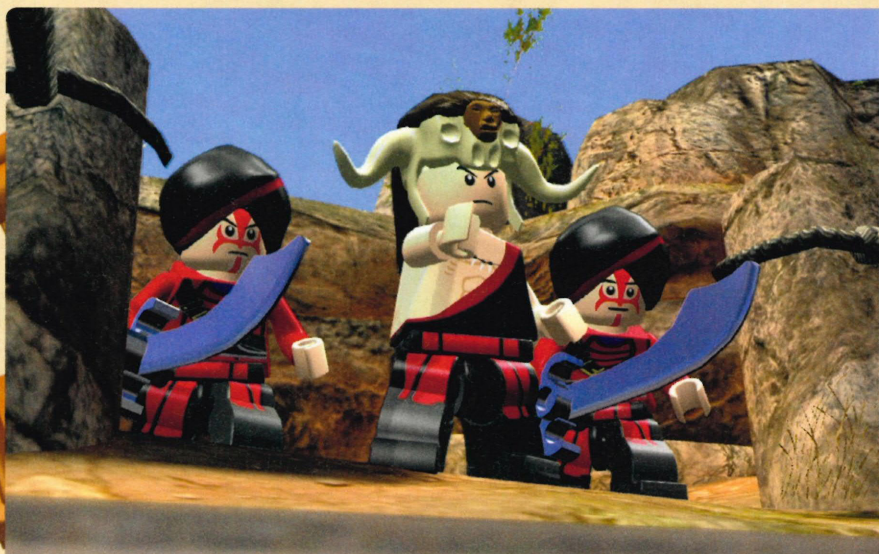
transport, even rafts. And, should anyone fall into the water, they'll be able to swim around – a Lego first.

Whether it's crocodiles nipping at your feet or bad guys shooting at your caboose, there's no shortage of peril at any location. And it's far from mild.

Best of all are the traps. Some of the ones we saw were stone faces that shoot out darts (but spit out studs instead if you whip them around), spikes coming out of the floor and, of course, the rolling boulder. Ingeniously, if you're nippy, you can pick up the floor spikes and use them as weapons. ▶



↑ Lego llamas are among the four-legged friends that you can use as transport





**'HANG ON LADY! WE  
GOING FOR A RIDE!'**





## WHAT'S IN A LEVEL? The Peruvian Jungle

### TRAP-TASTIC

All traps can be foiled. For instance, this grumpy statue shoots out darts from its mouth. But whip him around, and he'll spit out collectible studs instead.

### SMASH'N'GRAB

A fair amount of the environment is destructible, and will turn into studs or hearts to pick up.

### DIGDUG

The shovel is a handy tool. Not only can you dig out hidden artefacts and crucial puzzle pieces, but you can use it to paddle rafts or hit people on the head with it.

Thanks to the fact that Traveller's Tales have the full rights to the movie music, Indy's famous theme tune kicks in during fights and action scenes. The rest of the time you have ambient adventuring accompaniments that are just as easy on the ears.

And that's not the only movie magic in this game.

The quirky sense of humour for which Lego videogames have become known is present throughout, fitting in well with the tongue-in-cheek atmosphere of the source material.

## INDY'S FAMOUS THEME TUNE KICKS IN DURING ACTION SCENES

And plenty of Lego Star Wars references pop up. For example, at one point Indy pulls out C3PO's shiny noggin in an attempt to trick arch nemesis Belloq from pinching the golden Hovito idol.

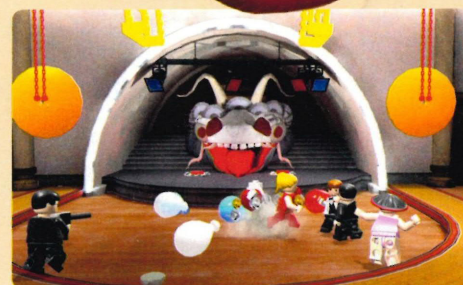
Meanwhile, you'll notice that Cairo looks eerily familiar to Tatooine... could Mos Eisley Cantina be nearby?

## Details of derring-do

One thing that really stuck out from everything we saw of Lego Indy is the level of attention paid to every detail.

The characters' outfits, for example, change according to the relevant section in the movie.

Furthermore, characters will stick items they pick up into their back



↑ It's not as combat intense as Lego Star Wars, but Lego Indy still features fights

pockets, rather than make them disappear into some kind of unspecified cyberspace as so often happens in games.

It's high-quality development like this that guarantees Lego Indiana Jones is going to be more than just another spin-off franchise.

In fact, we reckon it'll be the biggest blockbuster of the year when it hits shops in June. Kim Richards



↑ The attention to detail includes changing costumes for the characters

## INDY'S GUIDE TO ADVENTURING

### PART 2 | Trap-foiling



### HEAVY METAL

You need to attach a key to that statue, but there are spikes in the way. Try standing on this pressure plate, it seems to lower them...



### THROUGH THE KEYHOLE

... so, lure the angry-looking fella with the spear onto the plate, then you can dash across and click the key into place. Bosh!





# THE LEVEL

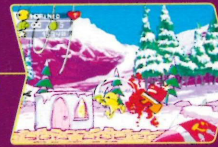
We celebrate a classic sequence in **Alien Hominid**

## THE STORY SO FAR...

Our Alien Hominid hero has been accidentally shot down by a Soviet missile that was intended for the USA. Now the yellow peril finds himself in the cold wastes of the USSR, with the KGB in possession of his flying saucer...

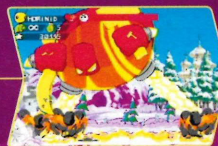


↑ The Red Army soldiers that prod the Alien awake soon regret doing so because our hero leaps up, slices them in two and goes on a rampage!



↑ After dealing with the missiles the Alien recognises the beast's eyes as a weak spot and subsequently peppers them with his blaster.

↑ More soldiers descend from the sky but are easily dispensed with: the Alien combines speed and agility with a cold-hearted efficiency in the kill.



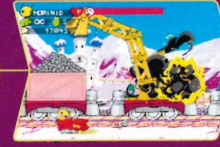
↑ Targeting the head with his laser blasts, the Alien dodges the lethal sickle with some quick rolls and desperate leaps, and comes out victorious.

↑ Our hero spots a empty mobile rocket launcher and uses it to devastating effect before it's torn apart by enemy fire, leaving him to continue on foot.



↑ Dodging the falling debris, the Alien again targets the face with a rapid barrage of bullets that soon wipe the smile off the metal monstrosity.

↑ The industrial terrors just keep coming as the extra-terrestrial has to duck and dive to avoid the deadly jackhammer that has laser innards.



↑ Hopping into a snowmobile, the Alien gives chase to a Red Army freight train that has our hero's flying saucer among its cargo.

↑ It's a chase that's made far more complicated when a crane part starts chucking large clumps of coal at the speeding extra-terrestrial.



↑ As the train comes to a halt, the Red Army is spreading bird seed in order to attract some giant and extremely deadly feathered threats.

↑ The pursuit continues through a timber yard full of hazardous machinery that leads to a launching area dominated by a huge scaffolding tower.

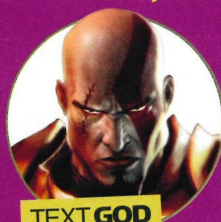


↑ Finally back in the cockpit of his beloved spaceship, the Alien strikes for home, taking out the Russian satellite on his way.

↑ Soviet spaceships give chase but, via some liberal use of the plasma cannon and some heat seeking missiles, they're sent packing.

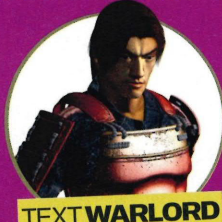


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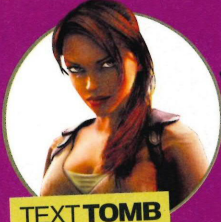
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from God Of War



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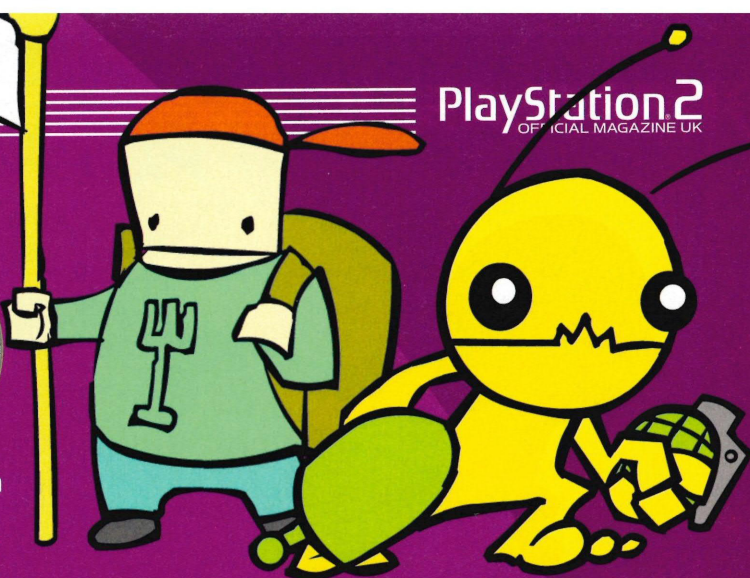
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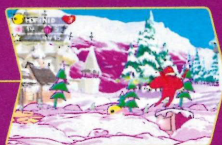
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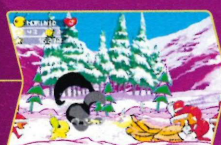
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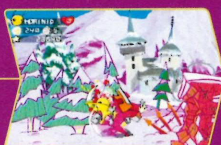
↑ Bouncing over the bullets, the Alien uses his full array of attacks, mixing up laser blasts with grenades, hand-to-hand combat and biting heads clean off.



↑ The Red Army counter by sending out a hulking robot that blasts out heat-seeking missiles then ascends to the heavens with an almighty spring.



↑ The action becomes more intense as the Red Army set up barricades and hurl grenades from fortified positions that are difficult to outflank.



↑ The Alien's progress leads him to the Red Army's superior officer who has surprise in store: a huge airship armed with a hammer and sickle.



↑ The Alien frees a yeti that's been captured by the Russians and in return gets a lift and a very large hand in destroying the enemy defences



↑ The next test is a troop of floating mechanical Russian bears, followed by a particularly evil looking scrap crushing contraption.



↑ The next threat to the Alien is far more sleek and deadly – a powerful lithe humanoid with a laser blast that obliterates anything in its path.



↑ The Alien avoids the main blast by digging into the ground, popping up to deliver a devastating volley of shots that rips the robot apart.



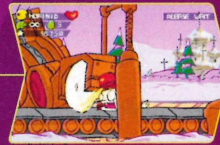
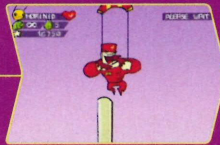
↑ As the train approaches a bridge the Alien realises he's running out of room and so makes a leap for the train! Then he makes his way up the carriages...



↑ ...oh no! Another crane stands in the Alien's path! He blows it away with his raygun while avoiding its wildly swinging arm.



↑ It's a tough climb to the top of the tower because of explosive barrels being rolled down the ramps and a laser satellite taking shots from orbit.



↑ The Red Army officer takes off in the UFO, but is shot out of the air and descends for what would've been a safe landing... if wasn't for that eagle.



↑ The last thing standing in the way of the Alien's freedom is a heavily armed space station that takes an almighty battering before it's defeated.



↑ Sadly our intergalactic hero is nabbed by a US military space ship. He's sent off to Area 51 where the story continues...

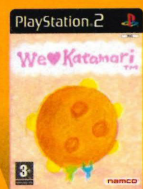




# THE PS2 GAMES YOU SHOULD OWN #09

Colourful, crazy and utterly unique, there's something wonderfully magical about **We ♥ Katamari**

## KNOW THIS



**Publisher**  
EA  
**Developer**  
Namco  
**Genre**  
Puzzle  
**Score**  
8/10 OPS2 #69

**WE SAID...**  
*A genius piece of eccentric gaming*

**NOW WE SAY...**  
Still the most original, entertaining puzzler on PS2

**T**here's absolutely nothing else in games like We ♥ Katamari. We're not sure what type of tea the board members at publisher Namco had been drinking when the idea was pitched to them, but we're endlessly grateful to them for giving it the green light, because without We ♥ Katamari the world would be a much gloomier place.

The concept of the game is simple. You roll a sticky ball (the titular 'katamari') around different environments, picking things up and therefore making your ball larger. Once the timer runs out, you're judged on how large your ball is.

In fact, if you strip We ♥ Katamari down to its bare essentials in this way, it sounds rather mundane and unspectacular. It's not.

Sure, simplicity is part of Katamari's charm, but the game's real appeal is in its presentation.

From the moment you boot up the game, you're catapulted into a world of utter nonsense and joy.

The title sequence itself is an explosion of colour, noise and the kind of craziness usually reserved for the most adventurous of Japanese TV game shows.

Delve into your first play, and you discover you're playing as a prince, son of a chap who has what appears to be a rolled-up, garishly patterned yoga mat lodged in his skull: the King Of All Cosmos.

## Odd balls

He informs you that your task is to make katamari balls out of, well, stuff, that he can transform into miniature planets.

So off you go, rolling your katamari through various themed stages and picking up – yes – stuff.

The debris you stick to your balls depends on the stage, and each area has a wonderful cornucopia of things to collect.

For example, there's a garden stage where you're picking up flowers, butterflies and even small mammals such as rabbits.

Later on, you're in cities, and as you build your katamari's size by picking up small stuff first, you can collect bigger items. You end up a rolling behemoth, scooping up skyscrapers and even entire neighbourhoods as you go!



↑ Yes, that's correct. It is a massive bolus made of flowers and ducks



↑ Really odd characters give the game more heart than your average puzzler



✦ Furniture, animals, people... if you want to win, you gotta roll 'em all



And it's all ridiculously funny too. There's something very satisfying about chasing down a bunch of pedestrians walking their dogs and rolling them up as they struggle and protest. Yes, each living creature, from the smallest birds to the biggest beasts, still wriggles helplessly as it rolls around with the rest of the stuff you've gathered.

## Joy story

In fact, it seems everything in We ♥ Katamari has been programmed in to



✦ Think you've got balls of steel? Okay. But what about balls of... fish?

make you smile. Even the level select screen, which has you (as the prince) wandering around a field talking to random people and animals, will leave you with a cheeky grin.

And the co-op multiplayer is a recipe for hilarious post-pub antics, with two people controlling one ball and thus having to shout instructions at one another.

In short, Katamari is happiness on DVD.

In a sea of predominantly brown war games and endless sports updates, We ♥ Katamari is a glowing beacon of originality.

Despite never achieving massive

## TOP FACT

'Katamari' is a Japanese word that translates as 'clump' or 'clod'. Makes sense to us!

## 3 REASONS TO OWN IT

Rollin', rollin', rollin'...



01

### PSYCHEDELIC HUES

There's too much battlefield brown and industrial-complex grey in games. Katamari has other colours.



02

### CRAZY CO-OP

You and a friend both control one ball, so you must communicate (read: scream at one another).



03

### MAD CHARACTERS

The King Of All Cosmos is a fairly eccentric chap, and his chat is as far out as his headgear.

sales success, it has garnered a hardcore cult following: a group that's made sufficient noise to ensure that the series has been given both PSP and next-gen releases.

And when the PS2 is long gone, this will still be talked about as one of the maddest, most life-affirming games ever made. Andy Hartup

✦ The 8:07 to Truro was delayed due to a massive ball of debris on platform 12

## IN THE MIX

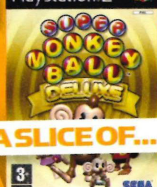
What meats go into a Katamari rissole?

### ASCRAPING OF...



The lurid colour palette of Jet Set Radio

PlayStation 2



### ASLICE OF...

The ball-tilting party fun of Super Monkey Ball Deluxe

PlayStation 2



### A HANDFUL OF...

Killer 7's wrong-headed madness (in a good way)





## FASTEST!



### Sonic the Hedgehog Sonic Heroes, 2004

The Blue Blur is the classic anthro: wide-eyed, upright and completely naked apart from a pair of gloves. He was created to take over from Alex Kidd as Sega's mascot and was originally called Mr Needlemouse.



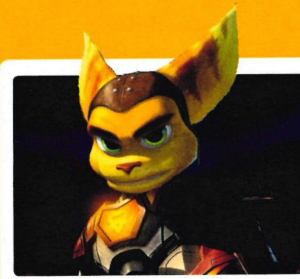
### The Social Bunny The Sims 2, 2005

The Social Bunny appears when your Social meter drops to leper-like lows. He's fluffy and pleasant for your Sim to cuddle as they slowly lose their mind.



### Fran Final Fantasy XII, 2007

Like all viera, Fran's personal style combines a slammin' bod, a taste for revealing clothing, rabbit ears and, er, toe-claws. Could beat you up and then fix your car afterwards.



### Ratchet Ratchet & Clank, 2002

Strictly speaking, Ratchet is a Lombax, but to describe him as a 'gentrified bobcat' isn't far from the mark, either. Although furry all over, he wears a space-suit: apparently it gets quite parky in space.



### Blinky Spyro: A Hero's Tail, 2004

According to game law, foxes must wear hunting gear, Basset hounds must wear deerstalker hats and moles such as Blinky must wear glasses and mining helmets.



### Spanx Whiplash, 2004

Once a lab animal, now a free spirit, aside from the fact that he's chained to a rabbit called Redmond.



### Alex Tekken Tag Tournament, 2000

A genetically modified dinosaur who was taught how to wrestle by Armor King. Likes 10-pin bowling.



### Uncle Pey'j Beyond Good & Evil, 2003

A pig with moobs, Pey'j is the uncle of the game's human heroine, Jade. Fortunately they are related only by adoption, otherwise something most definitely beyond good and evil would've had to have occurred.



### Daxter Jak & Daxter, 2001

Daxter is the greatest man-weasel ever on PS2. He's also the only one, but considering his ability to put his foot in his mouth, that's probably for the best.



### Gromit Wallace & Gromit: Curse Of The Were-rabbit, 2005

Cleans windows, catches pests, invents and works as a part-time private eye. Truly man's best friend.



### Wolverine X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge, 2003

Surly X-Man Logan crosses over into beast-dom thanks to adamantium claws that shoot from his knuckles and a tendency to follow his instincts over his social learning.

## ODDEST!



### Judgement Boy Gregory Horror Show, 2003

This time it's a set of scales that's been given a face and free will. Judges people by swinging his arms about. Sort of like Gordon Ramsey.

# GREATEST HUMAN

Glove-wearing hedgehogs, windows, vegetables that rap: with non-humans acting like

'Anthropomorph' may not be a word you use every day. And 'humanimal' definitely isn't a word you use at all (we know because we just made it up).

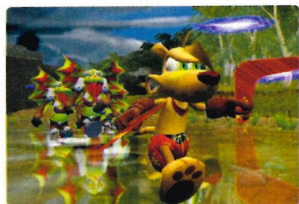
But we all know one when we see one: the animals and other non-human creatures that, for the purposes of entertainment, have been imbued with human characteristics and personalities.

Sometimes they're cute, sometimes they're creepy but they are most definitely everywhere in that big old crazy world called 'popular culture'.

## Not-so-dumb animals

Animated films are loaded with rats that cook, cars that smile, bees with career worries. Adverts feature talking chocolate drops and blackberries with death wishes. The musical hit parade, even, has been troubled by a motorcycling frog. God help us all.





### Ty

**Ty the Tasmanian Tiger, 2002**

Humanimals love a pair of gloves, and this time they're leather gauntlets because Ty is tough, no matter what the board shorts and the rather fey neckerchief suggest.

### CUTEST!



### Aiai

**Super Monkey Ball**

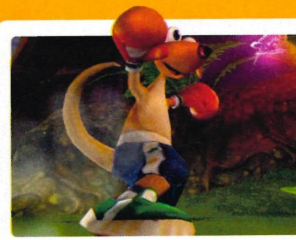
Named after the sound a monkey might make when falling from a tree, this Monkey Ball champion rocks the 'shirt-no-pants' look.



### Sly

**Sly Raccoon, 2003**

Sly 2: Band of Thieves won Best Anthropomorphic Game at the 2004 Ursa Awards (formerly known as the Annual Anthropomorphic Literature and Arts Award).



### Kao

**Kao the Kangaroo: Round 2, 2005**

Aha – the loveable kangaroo. And what do all loveable kangaroos wear? That's right, boxing gloves!

# ST PS2 IMALS

dogs that clean  
PS2 is stuffed  
humans...

And in games, they've been a feature since the year dot. Who could forget such legends as Brian the Lion, Titus the Fox and Midi the Squirrel? Um. Well, anyway, here are the 24 top talking, two-legged-walking, non-people people on PS2. **Dave Harrison**

Did we forget your favourite PS2 anthropomorph? Email [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk) and tell us all about him! Or her! Or, er, it!



### SMELLIEST!



### Master Onion

**PaRappa the Rappa 2, 2002**

The honorable sensei who teaches us that kung-fu is 'all in the mind', is a big vegetable with a moustache and a vicious sense of rhythm.



### The Crazy Frog

**Crazy Frog Racer, 2005**

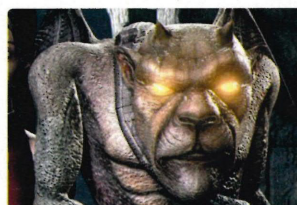
Who can forget his catchphrase? 'Ring-ding-ding-kill me-ding-ding-ding-ding. Ring-ding-ding-seriously, murder me with an axe-ding-ding-ding.' What? That's what it sounds like to us.



### Ilorek Byrnison

**The Golden Compass, 2007**

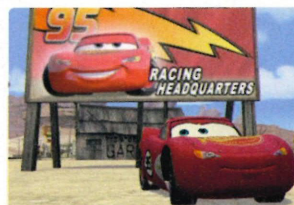
A talking polar bear, you say? One that fights standing up, wearing armour? And he's an expert blacksmith? Yup, Ilorek is every bit the classic humanimal.



### Scree

**Primal, 2003**

Hardly loveable, but at least likeable, Scree is the ultimate sidekick. He's a handy guide, and when you get thirsty he can dispense a stream of water from his mouth. Or not.



### Lightning McQueen

**Cars Mater-National, 2007**

Not only does he have human features, he also has human traits such as greed and vanity. That is, until some other anthropomorphic cars teach him about friendship, teamwork and not being a tool.



### Taz

**Taz Wanted, 2002**

If it isn't nailed down, Taz'll scoff it. He'll blow in like a whirlwind, leave the whole place in a right mess, and bugger off with nothing more than a growl. Reminds us of our mates.



# PS2-O-METER

# OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2

# EVIL-O-METER

From the mildly mardy to the downright dastardly, here are the wickedest villains ever to (dis)grace the PS-boo...

START  
HERE

## VOLDEMORT

He may look a bit like camp *Crystal Maze* presenter Richard O'Brien, but Harry Potter's mortal enemy is so evil that even speaking his name at Hogwarts is taboo.



## JAWS

Smashing the notion that sharks are misunderstood creatures, Jaws snaps his way through half the residents of America's West Coast for kicks in *Unleashed*.

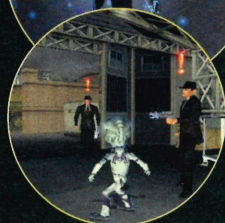


## BALD

## FISHY

## G MEN

They're government employees, but essentially the G Men are trigger-happy bad-guys. Good job we get to fry them in *Destroy All Humans*.



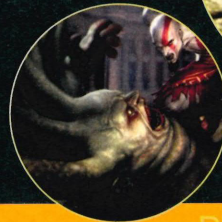
## MULGARATH

The *Spiderwick Chronicles*' goblin king is desperate to get his mitts on the *Field Guide* to Faeries and thus take over the world.



## EURYALE

Not the toughest boss in *God Of War II*, but one of the most vicious. But you did kill her sister in the first game, so no wonder she's cross.



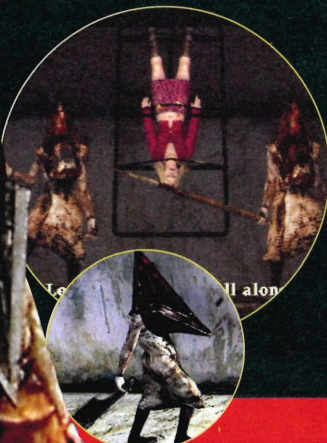
## CIVIL SERVANTS

## OVERLORD

## DROOPY

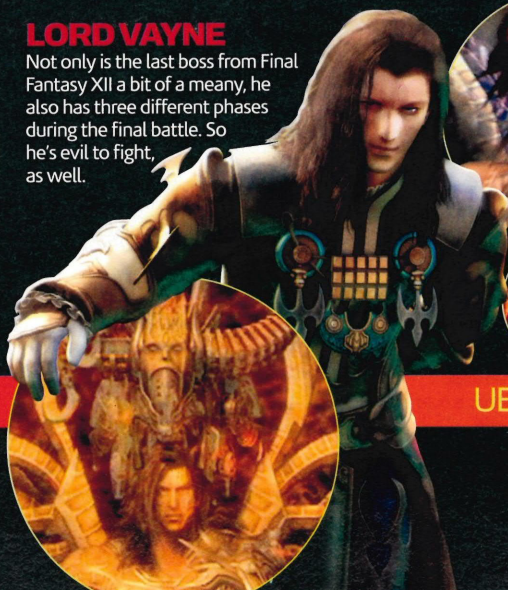
## PYRAMID HEAD

Silent Hill's enigmatic super-baddie is evil incarnate. He cannot be killed, he cannot be stopped, he cannot be banished. If you spill his pint, you may as well dig your own grave...



## LORD VAYNE

Not only is the last boss from *Final Fantasy XII* a bit of a meany, he also has three different phases during the final battle. So he's evil to fight, as well.



## WRONG

## UBER EVIL





## SHADOW THE HEDGEHOG

Not only did Shadow introduce guns to the Sonic the Hedgehog series, his self-titled game was pretty evil in itself.



PRICKLY



## DHOULMAGUS

Dragon Quest is one of the cuter roleplaying games around, but its main villain Dhoulmagus is a powerful black magic user and all round ne'er-do-well.



TRICKSTER

## RED GRANT

Tall, blonde and built like a boulder, Major Grant of OCTOPUS – and of From Russia With Love – is the Bond baddie to define them all.



PSYCHO

## GENERIC NAZI

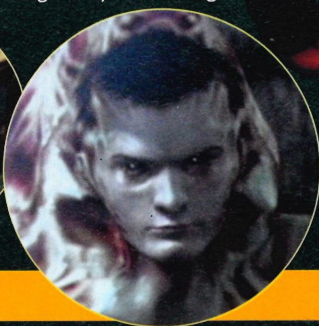
If we had a Euro for every Nazi we've killed on PS2, we could hire Bill Gates as a scullery maid. For the Hun is, without fail, the ultimate WW2 game villain.



FASCIST

## KENNY MATTHEWS

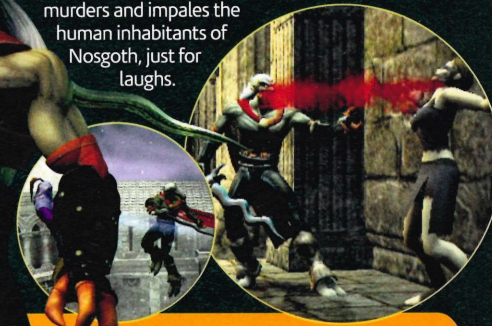
In US college horror *Obscure II*, Kenny turns into a hideous plant monster, rapes one of his 'friends' and forces another to commit suicide. Omigod, major douchebag!



TEEN

## KAIN

The *Legacy Of Kain* series' main villain is so at home to Mr Evil that he casually tortures, murders and impales the human inhabitants of Nosgoth, just for laughs.



ANCIENT

## THE THING

The Thing can change its appearance to ensnare its unsuspecting victims before consuming them. And to make matters worse, it's an immigrant! From space!



JUST EVIL

## AMANDA

Being a tattooed emo hottie doesn't stop Amanda from *Tomb Raider Legend* being a nasty piece of work. How so? She's raising an undead army to take over the world.



SUPER EVIL



# QUIT OR RETRY?

Are games racially diverse?



**Dave Harrison**  
Freelance writer

**YES!**

Games are increasingly becoming a reflection of 21 century society; but when it comes to race, are their attitudes stuck in the 1950s?



**Kim Richards**  
Editorial assistant

**NO!**

Of course games are racially diverse and here's proof: Street Fighter 2. It's the story of a Japanese guy, an American, a Thai, a Brazilian, a Chinese lass, an Indian and a Mexican, all kicking ass on equal terms.

If you had them walking into a bar you'd have the mother of all Bernard Manning jokes; if they were all kids you'd have a Michael Jackson video.

Okay, Street Fighter 2 is a good start. There's no denying that it's got a mix of races represented in its cast. But it's part of a minority of racially diverse games.

Take a look through the OPS2 Top 100 and you'll find that, ooh, about 95% of the leading characters are white people of a decidedly Western origin. And the other 5% are animals, aliens or, er, vehicles.

That's hardly an accurate representation of the big wide world that we live in, is it?

Well, quite a lot of those cars are black, though. Um. Well, you might be correct that games aren't particularly representative of the make-up of the world's population, but surely they don't have to be?

Surely they only have to be representative of the worlds they create? Games are racially diverse enough for the type of world they're trying to represent.

## WEST BUYS

Many games are set in the West, particularly those created by US developers so there's bound to be a Western slant on the way the game is visualised.

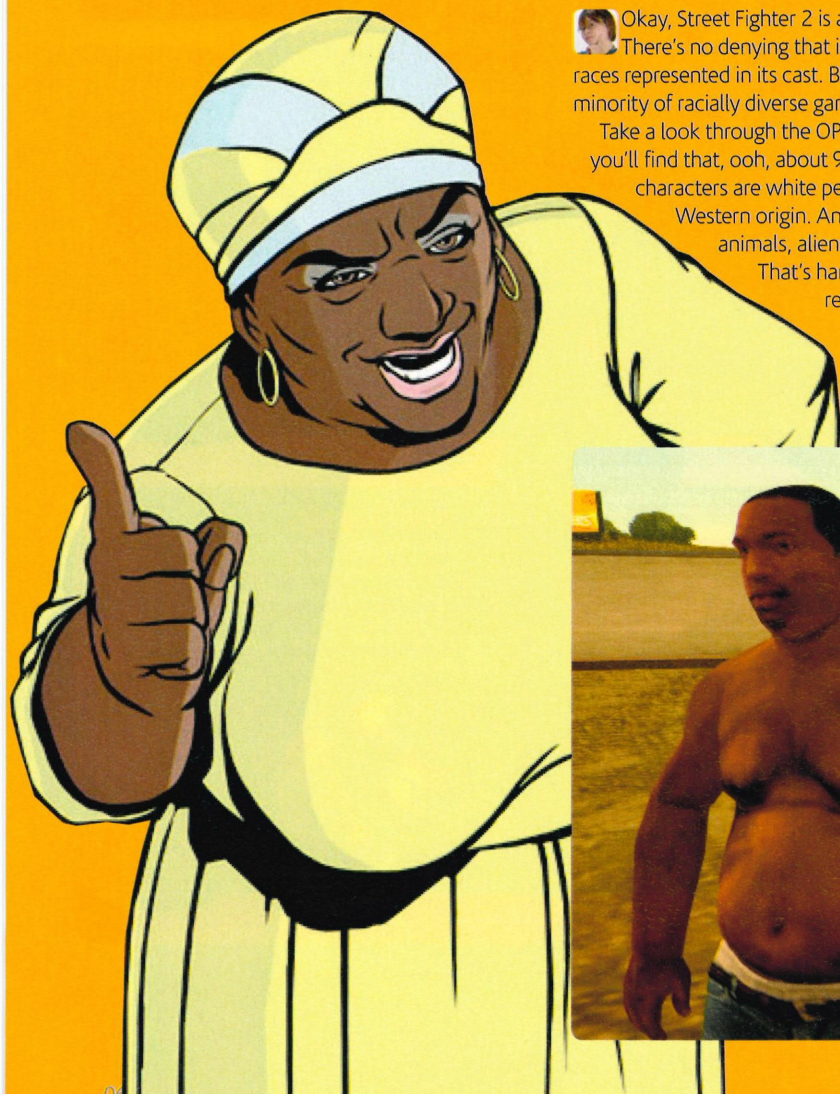
Then there's the fact that action adventures with prominent leading characters are heavily influenced by Hollywood, which is itself focused on the white male hero.

No, I don't accept the 'games aren't in real worlds' argument. In many cases, the world portrayed in the games I'm talking about is our own Mother Earth.



Why are the only people of colour in games the hoodlums or comedy sidekicks?

GTA: San Andreas has a black main character, so you can't say all leads are white





As for those games that represent futuristic, historical or fictional realms, it's not a very fair projection that planet Earth – or any other planet for that matter – will be, was or may be in future entirely filled with blond, blue-eyed Westerners.

And it's not fair to imply that when a planet's in trouble, it's always the blonde, blue-eyed people who will save it.

The really odd thing is that so many of the worst-offending games in this respect are made in Asia with a target audience of Asian people.

**Games use non-white characters when it's appropriate, so you have Hispanic leads in Just Cause and Total Overdose, black Americans in Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas and Men of Valor and Japanese characters for Dynasty Warriors.**

If people start randomly filling games with different nationalities, race suddenly becomes an issue that the game has to deal with, or it just smacks of tokenism.

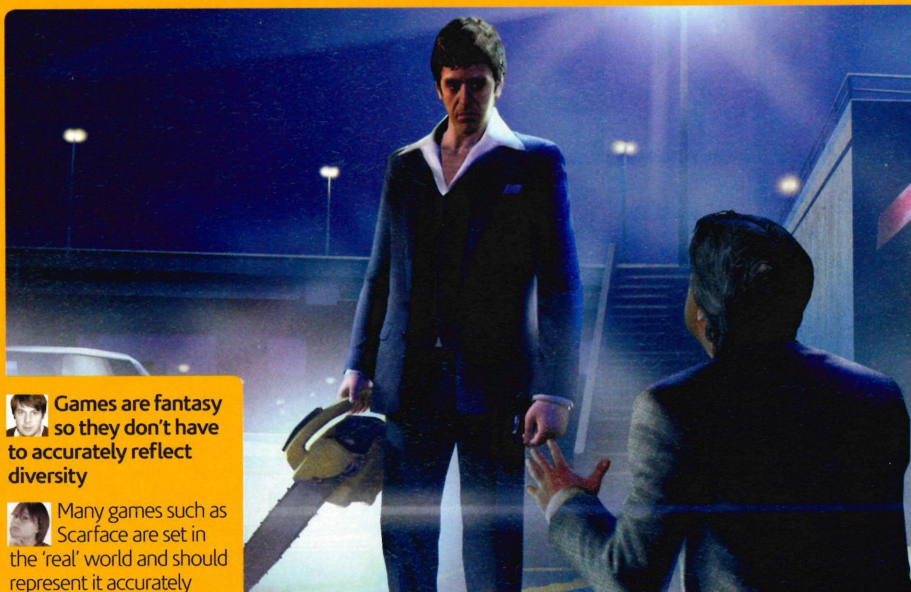
Just like how it smacks of tokenism when the only African-American character is the comedy sidekick or the police chief?

It'd be a good thing if developing games to show a more rounded society results in raising race issues. More often than not, a way to deal with sensitive topics is to bring them out into the open, raise awareness and tackle them head-on.

**With many games allowing you to create your own character the choice will be the gamer's when it comes to race.**

The situation is getting better so it seems unfair to criticise games for not blazing a trail in terms of racial diversity when it's on a par with much of mainstream media.

But perhaps it's time for videogames to take a step forward from mainstream media and set the current stance on racism, rather than just follow the trend. Why should the idea of a Chinese, Spanish or even a dual-heritage person being the lead character cause such a stir?



Games are fantasy so they don't have to accurately reflect diversity

Many games such as Scarface are set in the 'real' world and should represent it accurately



# 95% of game lead characters are white Westerners

## Games are just on a par with all mainstream media



Surely the 21st century is the time for some form of media or industry to support a more accurate social image? No one accuses your beloved Street Fighter 2 of tokenism, after all.

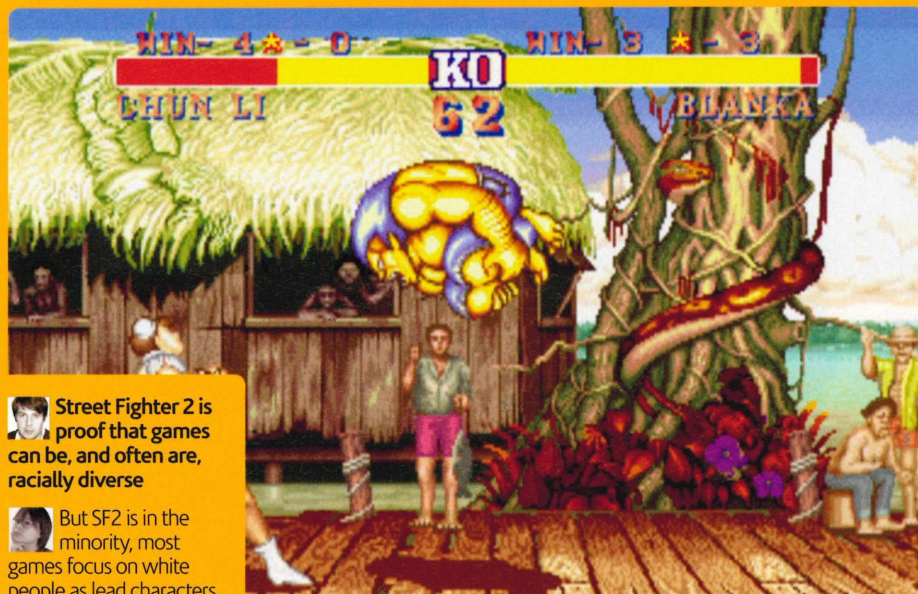
### ALL WHITE, STILL

The argument of white people being the leads because the game is based in a Western country is now obsolete, given that these days people of different ethnic backgrounds are living and growing up in all sorts of different countries.

I don't think that having a lead character of colour would cause a stir because

most gamers are extremely accepting of characters of different race. I also think that the micro-culture we're all a part of - as gamers - is developing well. Forcing any sort of change isn't the way forward.

Gamers may well be accepting of their heroes, but that's because this white, middle-class norm is perpetuated by all forms of media. I think the lack of fuss about games' racial diversity – or lack thereof – stems from apathy rather than people being genuinely happy with the situation.



Street Fighter 2 is proof that games can be, and often are, racially diverse

But SF2 is in the minority, most games focus on white people as lead characters

### QUIT OR RETRY



YES!

Games reflect society  
Character creation lets us choose  
Gamers are happy with their heroes



NO!

Too many blondes!  
Tokenism is rife  
Games are part of a wider problem

### THE VERDICT

Games represent the society they're made for. It isn't racist to have oriental leads in Japanese games and white people in Western ones.

We're a multicultural melting-pot and our digital media needs to take responsibility for representing that.



### WHAT DO YOU RECKON?

Who's right? Are they both talking cobblers? Mail in your thoughts to [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk) and we'll feature the best comments in the mag.





# UNSUNG HERO

**#09** Sired by superheroes, beloved of billions and a man described as 'too handsome to die'... by himself. Meet the living legend that is **Captain Qwark**



Captain Qwark may not be a familiar name to you, but that's not the case in the universe of Ratchet & Clank. There, he's simply known as the greatest

superhero that ever lived – and if he isn't, his media consultants aren't doing their jobs properly.

This is a hero who has 'defeated more despots, rescued more damsels in distress, saved more civilisations than any other hero in the galaxy', at least according to his own people. So it's difficult to identify where the myth ends and the man starts.

What we do know is that Copernicus Leslie Quark had a troubled childhood. He was different to the other teenagers in high school: he was 26 years old.

But that didn't stop him from mixing with the kids, beating up the weaker ones whenever he could. It's through this senseless violence that he developed his Crouching Kitten combat style, which he later used when defeating the evil pirate Captain Black and his crew of robotic pirate ghosts.

Other heroic deeds include the time he faced the Amoeboids in the Blackwater sewers. He immediately executed Emergency Response Plan: Number 2, then coordinated the city's

defences from the ladies' toilets at Galaxy Burger.

None of the fame ever went to his head, though. Qwark was humble enough to stand aside to allow Ratchet to freefall onto the heavily armed planet of Terronosis, even though it was Qwark's plan.

## The Qwark side

He's also sensitive (he's allergic to prunes) and then there's his charity work, which he doesn't like to talk about, putting all of his reward money into the Qwark for Tots Scholarship Fund. The Fund 'provides makeovers and buxom bimbos for needy people... called Qwark'.

Okay, he did try to feed Ratchet and

Clank to a Snagglebeast, framed them for a crime they didn't commit and has constantly betrayed them, but hey.

There were also dark times: selling knock-off Personal Hygienators just to get by and being a human guinea pig for the testing of Megacorp's Full-Body Waxinator and the Crotchitizer.

But the reason we fall is so we can learn to pick ourselves up, and that's exactly what Captain Qwark has done. These days the Qwark Cadet fanclub is thriving and he even has his own HoloVision channel. Yet, despite being loved by billions, he can still be classed as 'unsung'. Just don't say it to his face. **Dave Harrison**



## YOUR HEROES!

Do you have a favourite PS2 character who doesn't get the respect he, she or it deserves? Nominate them to be an OPS2 Unsung Hero! Each month we celebrate one of the console's lesser-known stars; vote for your choice by emailing [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk)



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# BLOODY BRILLIANT!

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Official Magazine - UK  
Issue 36 2008 ■ £4.99

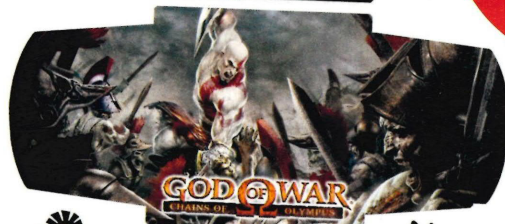
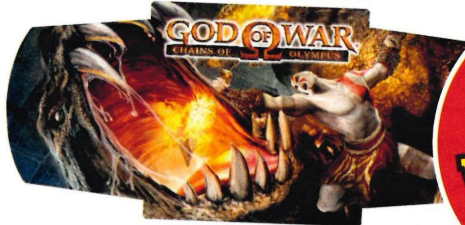


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# REVIEWS

Ⓜ LATEST GAMES Ⓜ TESTED Ⓜ BUYING ADVICE Ⓜ KICKINGS

## AFRAID OF THE DARK? YOU SOON WILL BE...

Terror. Horror. Sickness. Revulsion. Fear. This review section is stuffed full of all these things, from the teeth-chattering Silent Hill Origins to the shockingly poor George Of The Jungle.

I'm a massive fan of Silent Hill, so it was great to watch Kim play through the game, unearthing the series' creepy secrets.

Konami has packed a fair few nasty revelations into its 'where it all began' game, so be warned!

## Shlock and gore

Another, less nightmare-inducing, surprise this month was UEFA Euro 2008. Spin-off games tend to be nothing more than derivative rehash jobs, with fresh player rosters shoved in, but UEFA Euro 2008 is a genuine step up from last year's FIFA 08.

If you're fed up with the fact that England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland's national teams all failed to qualify for the real-life tournament, this game could be just the tonic to chase away your footie-shaped blues.

**ANDY HARTUP**  
ACTING EDITOR

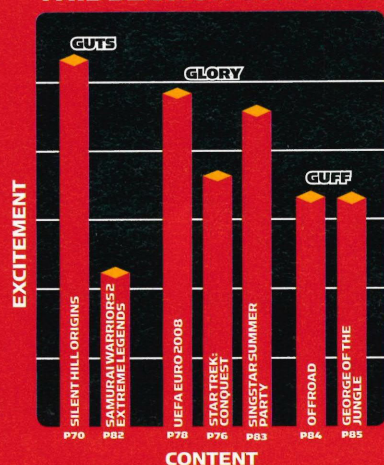
psnation@futurenet.co.uk

## 'A CONSTANT AIR OF WRONG'

SILENT HILL ORIGINS **P70**



## THIS SECTION CONTAINS



## UNDERSTAND OUR SCORES!

### 10 ESSENTIAL

If you have a PS2, you owe it to yourself to own this game

### 9 OUTSTANDING

Truly innovative with lasting appeal: well made in all respects

### 8 AWESOME

A sterling effort, very playable and highly recommended

### 7 VERY GOOD

Falls short of brilliant, but still a great idea, well executed

### 6 GOOD

Has flaws, but fans of the genre or series will still enjoy it

### 5 AVERAGE

Not much cop, but maybe worth a go if you find it in a bargain bin

### 4 BELOW AVERAGE

Disappointing and boring, with few redeeming qualities

### 3 POOR

Oh dear. We recommend you steer well clear of this one

### 2 AWFUL

Broken, very badly made or actually unplayable

### 1 HORRIFIC

Not so much a game as an insult to console owners



## AWARDS

The Star Game medal is for great games that just have to be played, regardless of your usual genre preferences. The Hall Of Fame medal is for titles that rock our world so hard they'll be inducted into our OPS2 Hall Of Fame next issue (find this month's complete listing on p88).





# REVIEW

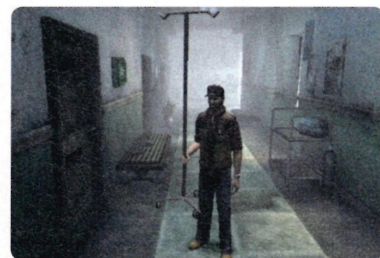
## Silent Hill Origins



Release May Publisher Konami Developer Climax Price £29.99  
Players 1 Web [tinyurl.com/36dpqg](http://tinyurl.com/36dpqg) Also try Forbidden Siren 2



↑ Dripping fog, demonic abominations and no way out. Welcome to H... er, Silent Hill



# SILENT HILL ORIGINS

### Should the root of all evil be left buried?



There are some places that you shouldn't visit in summer: Australia, for instance. There are some places you shouldn't visit in winter, such as Moscow. And then, there are some places you should really, really steer clear of all the time: a Midwestern US town called Silent Hill being the prime example.

You don't want anything to do with Silent Hill. Really. Don't holiday close to there, don't drive past it, whatever your map says, and don't pick up baby girls left abandoned near it, no matter how cute they look.



In fact, if you even *know* anyone with any connection to this cursed place, cross them off your Christmas card list right now.

You know this, we know this. But sadly, trucker Travis Grady didn't, and decided it'd be a neat idea to take a short cut right through the town.

Oh, Travis. If only you'd stuck to your original route to Brahms, then police lady Cybil Bennett could have told you why a short cut was a really bad idea.

### Begin the mood

Except that, technically, Cybil hasn't visited Silent Hill yet. You see, as indicated by the title, Silent Hill Origins is set right at the beginning of the story of the town at the centre of this survival horror



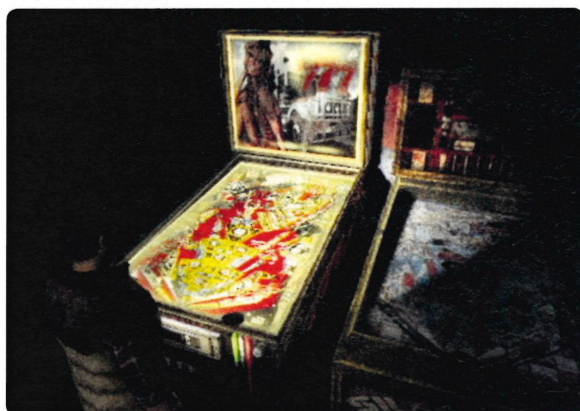


### WHERE ARE THE MONSTERS HIDING?

IN FRONT OF YOU  
BEHIND YOU  
EVERYWHERE  
IN YOUR MIND



↑ Not everyone in this town is a stomach-churning monster. Yet...



↓ Travis takes a break from surviving to shoot some pinball

↑ These dolls represent inmates at the Sanitarium. They're not nice

series. It delves into the reasons why this town became such a Freudian mind-mess in the first place.

The game begins with Travis rescuing a girl from a burning house. He is unaware that she's Alessa, the girl with the freaky mind powers that make Silent Hill the place it is, and that he's saving her from becoming a sacrifice to the local cult's dark god.

After blacking out, he awakes in the heart of Silent Hill wondering just what the heck happened.

Left to wander lonely streets shrouded in dense, soul-sapping fog and buildings full of dust and ruin, Travis must follow Alessa's trail through the blood-drenched Alchemilla hospital, the disturbing Cedar Grove Sanitarium and the claustrophobic Artaud Theatre.

Wherever our hapless trucker goes, there's a constant air of wrong. Although Travis never questions it, the lack of human life imbues you with a sense of intense paranoia.

But the story told by what the absent citizens left behind is even more perturbing. For example, the janitor's corridor at Riverside Motel is

## THE LACK OF HUMAN LIFE IMBUES A SENSE OF INTENSE PARANOIA

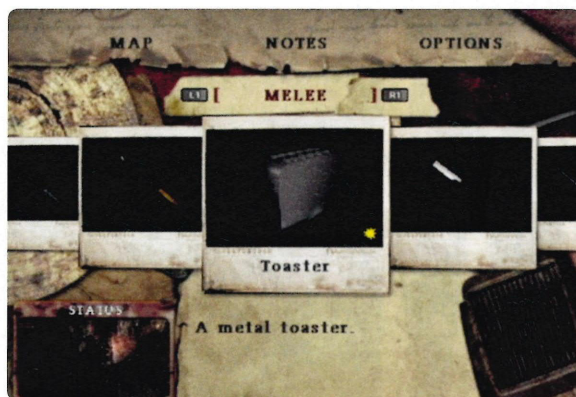
peppered with peepholes and there's an old-fashioned video camera. Ick.

### The sound of fear

A major element in the unsettling atmosphere is the sound design by Akira Yamoaka. It's pure genius.

Silence reigns for the most part, but

↓ Monsters don't like toasters. Fact.



## THE GRADY BUNCH

With a family like this, it's no wonder Travis is messed up



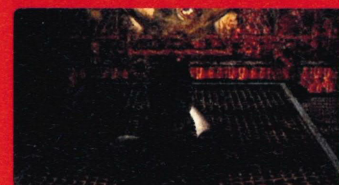
### TRAVIS GRADY

Travis can't really remember his childhood: perhaps that's a good thing, given his mum and dad.



### HELEN GRADY

Committed to a sanitarium after trying to kill Travis on the grounds that he was possessed by a demon.



### RICHARD GRADY

Couldn't cope with his wife's incarceration and, after a long stay at Riverside Motel, met a tragic end.



# REVIEW

## Silent Hill Origins



harsh clanking and metallic groaning will suddenly crash in, putting you right on edge. Other times, there'll be a haunting piano melody, or the distant sound of clanking, dripping or a pumping respirator.

But worst of all is when a thin piercing noise starts up and gets louder... and louder... as you get nearer to your target location.

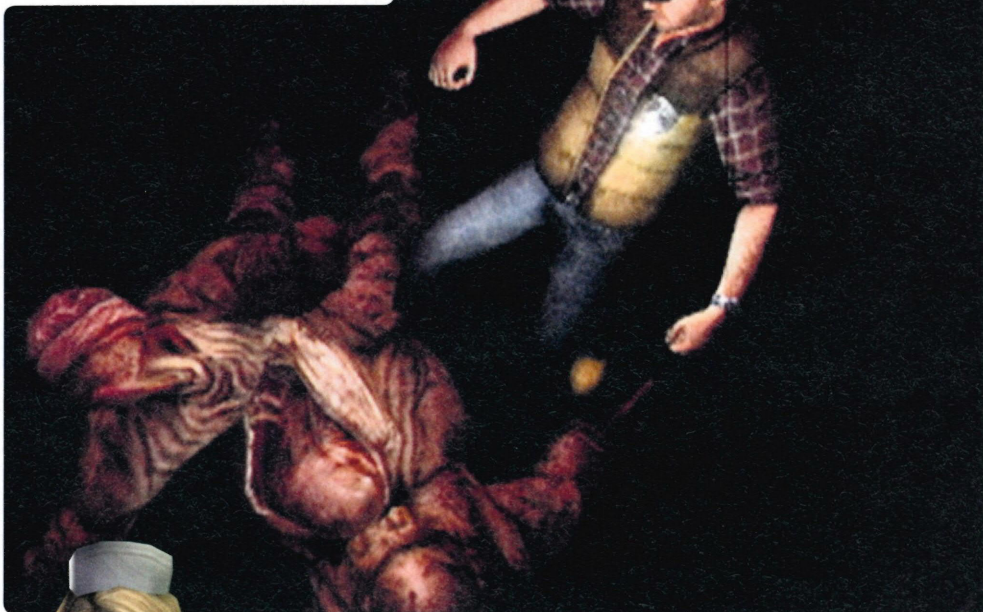
Just when you think it's safe to take a quick breather, you'll start to hear your radio crackle with static. Suddenly, a horrible sight lunges out of the dark, flailing something that might have been limbs, once.

Your radio's going crazy, the screen is distorting like mad and this thing is coming for you with murderous intent. Yes, that's right, the abominations from Alessa's mind are sick, and their tendency to emerge



✦ Minus the flash-fried skin, Alessa looks relatively normal. She's not

✦ The Two-Back monster represents one of Travis' fears... we think we can guess



suddenly from the shadows will leave you in no doubt about what the symptoms for a heart attack are.

Shocks aside, exploring deserted buildings and solving puzzles that reward you with story-progressing items are what this game is all about.

But this ain't Tomb Raider. Even the puzzles are messed up. For example, to get a key in the sanitarium, you have to find a really disturbing set of dolls and put a pill in each doll's mouth.

### Mirror, mirror

There's one gameplay mechanic that's new to the franchise, too: spooky mirrors. Touch a mirror, and you'll be

✦ If you're low on health, a health drink or other medical items will make it better



transported to the Otherworld (Alessa's darker representation of Silent Hill).

This adds another level to navigation, because if an area is inaccessible in one dimension, you can jump through a mirror and a new route will open up.

Useful as it is, it unfortunately ruins the horror behind one of Silent Hill's freakier motifs. In other installations,

## FIX THIS!

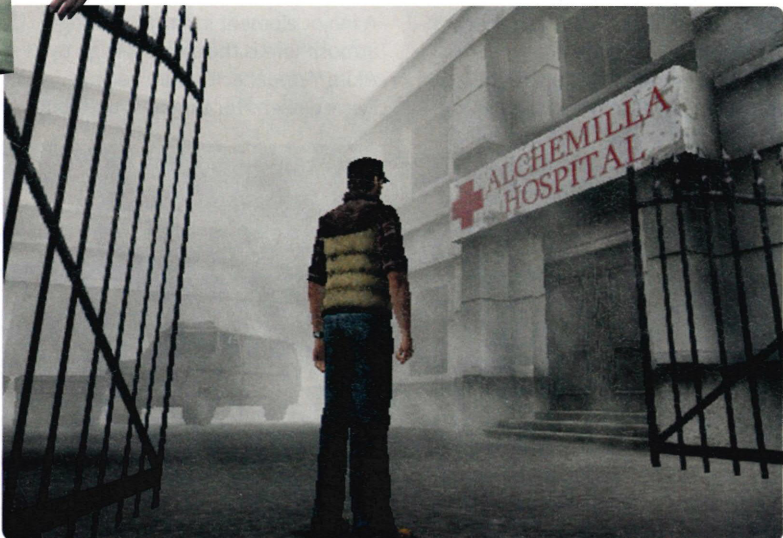


### SADISTIC CAMERA ANGLE

It won't be satisfied until you've backed into a corner and are being relentlessly humped by a Two-Back

CAN THEY FIX IT?

☐ YES ☒ NO ☐ MAYBE







↓ Rearranging body parts is an 'offally' tricky puzzle

characters are dragged kicking and screaming into the Otherworld at Alessa's whim.

Having accessible portals makes it seem like you're just popping though to get some sugar from the local demon corner shop. And this is where the cracks in SHO begin to form.

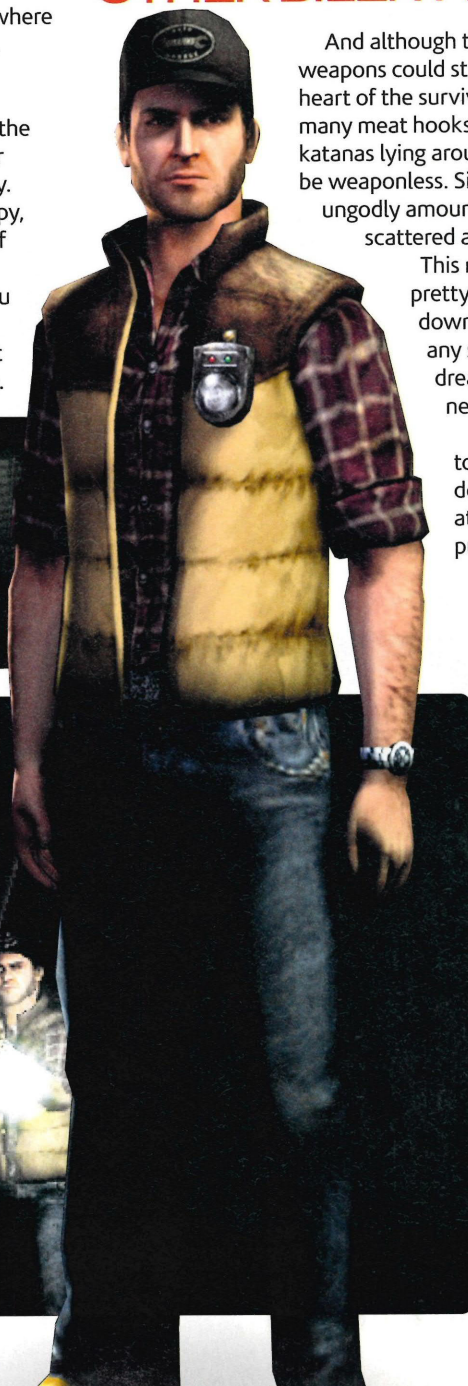
### Battle fatigue

Basically, SHO just doesn't have the atmosphere that made the other games in the franchise legendary.

Sure, the environment is creepy, thanks to the endless swathes of thick fog and the unsettling soundtrack. But after a while you get used to this, and you don't really get the feeling of constant dread that other SH games have.



## IT DOESN'T HAVE THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE OTHER SILENT HILLS



A big part of this is the combat. Unlike other SH lead characters, Travis is quite adept at fighting.

Re-introducing an idea from Silent Hill 4, he can pick up mêlée weapons (meat cleavers, scalpels, wrenches sledgehammers), which degrade with use and eventually break.

There are also one-hit weapons such as portable TVs, filing cabinets and iron weights. But Trav takes such a long time to heft these about that he'll take a few hits in the process, rendering them pointless.

And although the idea of breakable weapons could strike fear into the heart of the survivor, there are so many meat hooks, typewriters and katanas lying around that you'll never be weaponless. Similarly, there are an ungodly amount of firearms scattered at your feet.

This makes the monsters pretty damn easy to take down, seriously crippling any sense of foreboding dread when entering a new area.

Even if you're down to your fists, simply dodge the opening attack and you'll punch the thing

### LUST LIST

Our favourite abominations from Travis' mind



#### STRAIGHT-JACKET

The epitome of self hatred, these guys are trapped by their own skin and belch acid vomit in your face.



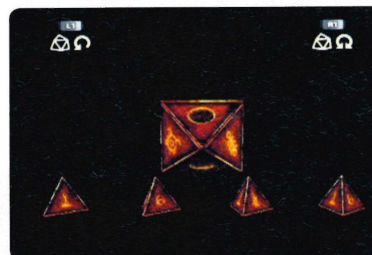
#### ARIEL

Essentially an old wooden puppet that hangs from the ceiling and walks on its hands.



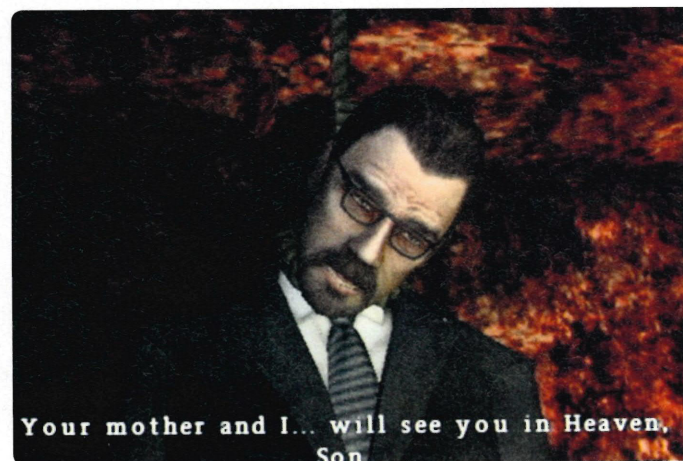
#### TWO-BACK

Yes, it really is what you think it looks like. No, you don't want to know what it does when it pins you down.



↓ Assembling the Flauros artifact involves a bit of lateral thinking

↓ Travis' family is a bit messed up, to say the least



Your mother and I... will see you in Heaven.  
Son





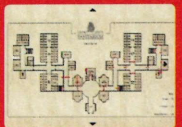
# REVIEW

## Silent Hill Origins



### PUZZLES

The disconcertingly designed puzzles will cause a headscratch or two.



### THE MAP

Each area has a contextual map and Travis will scribble notes on them.



### SILENT HILL

The town is a masterpiece of fog and primal fear. Great place for a day out, yes?

## LOVING

## HATING

### EASY BOSSES

They're big, they're ugly, but all you do is empty a gun in their bodies and walk away.



### CLUNKY COMBAT

We started to avoid monsters just because it was too much hassle.



into the ground before it can snarl. Even the bosses are pitifully easy, needing only a few rounds emptied into them before they crumble.

This doesn't mean that fighting is straightforward, though. It's quite a clunky affair, requiring you to hold **RT** while hammering **X** to swing, stab, shoot or punch.

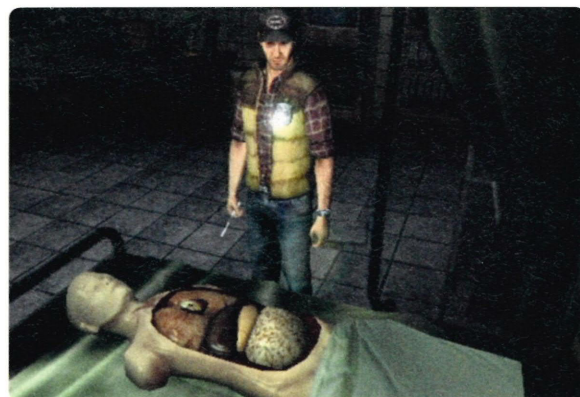
When you've abused your target enough, it'll fall to the floor, where you must hit **X** to stamp it into oblivion. But Travis must be in exactly the right spot for the finishing move to trigger, which is often nigh-on impossible if you've backed the beast into a doorway or corner.

Should you accomplish the death stomp, it simply exposes some sloppy animation whereby Travis' foot hits the space where the monster *isn't* but yet still manages to kill it. Odd.

### Hard to port

Unfortunately, there are several shortcomings that make it painfully apparent that SHO is a PSP port.

For starters, there are only seven monster models, three of which are heavily overused. In fact, of the measly five bosses, two of them become regular baddies.



## THE STATIC CAMERA MEANS YOU'LL OFTEN MISS ITEMS

And for veterans of the Silent Hill series, they're all far too familiar. Even The Butcher is just a scaled-down version of Pyramid Head, complete with enormous chopper and a masked-metal face.

The whole game is short, too. Four buildings function as levels and the streets to get between them are incredibly restricted.

Simply lifting a few barriers or adding an extra level

← The motel's security staff are curious-looking but effective





### SURVIVAL KIT BAG

Get properly prepared before settling into the 'Hill



#### A SOFA

To hide behind when the going gets insane



#### THROAT SWEETS

Because all that screaming hurts



#### CLEAN PANTS

For the shock horror moments



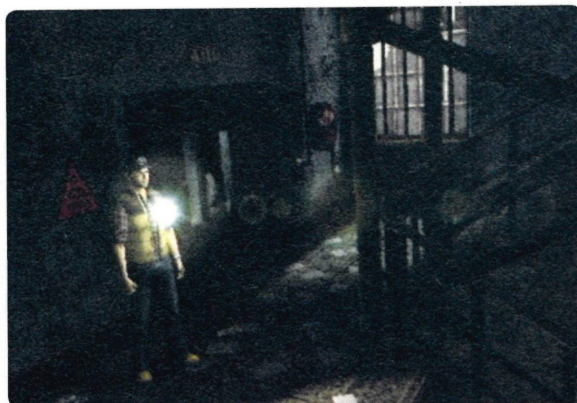
#### KITTEN PHOTOS

To remind you the world's not all bad

→ And that's why you shouldn't leave your groceries in an unlocked car



→ Handily, Travis has a torch attached to his top pocket



→ After you've downed a monster, you hit ⊗ to finish it off with a kicking



could have easily distracted you from remembering that this is a PSP title.

And if prizes were being handed out for having the most unhelpful camera known to humankind, SHO would clean up.

When you enter a room or street, it'll often jump to a stylishly cinematic yet awkward position.

Sure, this provokes the feeling that something's watching you from the shadows. But the static angle means you'll often miss items, get trapped in a table or, in worse cases, you'll end up running into the thing you're trying to run away from.

→ The Flauros Demon is not a happy hell-bunny. Hope you packed plenty of ammo



## FEAR IS REPLACED BY A FEELING OF INVINCIBILITY

As a series, Silent Hill has a reputation for being so deliciously crafted that it creates a genuinely unsettling, deeply disturbing and obsessively addictive experience. A fine mix of uncomfortably eerie

atmospheres, horrific monsters and psychological storylines, it is the champion of survival horror.

But SHO lets down the fine name of the series. There are moments, especially at the beginning, where you'll feel tendrils of dread grip you as you tentatively pad down a gloomy corridor armed with only a knife.

But as you gather weapons, guns and health kits, the fear is slowly replaced by a feeling of invincibility.

Sure, the levels are well designed and atmospheric, but it's tainted by the unwieldy combat and easy enemies. It's an enjoyable game, but if you're looking for classic survival horror, look elsewhere. Kim Richards

PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK

## VERDICT

- ☺ Truly disturbing sound design
- ☺ Level designs pleasingly fiendish
- ☹ Feels too much like a port
- ☹ Heinous combat system

There are moments that'll have you on the edge of your seat, but unwieldy combat and easy enemies takes away from the fear

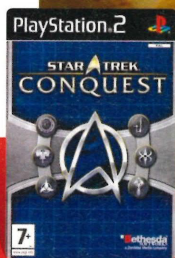
# 7



# REVIEW

## Star Trek: Conquest

↓ Cheap and cheerful, the game focuses on scrapping rather than famous faces



Release Out now Publisher Bethesda Softworks Developer 4J Studios Price £19.99  
Players 1 Web [startrek.bethsoft.com](http://startrek.bethsoft.com) Also try Star Trek: Voyager Elite Force



↑ Fighting consists of wearing your foes' shields down until they go 'boom'



# STAR TREK CONQUEST

Boldly going where no budget game has gone before

Star Trek, videogames, tabletop strategy games, solitude: all habits enjoyed by nerds the world over (us included). Star Trek: Conquest combines all four into a budget game that, unfortunately, will satisfy neither Trekkies nor strategy fans.

You can forget about the labyrinthine plots the television shows

↓ Ramming speed? Not here. Ships bounce off each other like bath toys

have painstakingly developed over the decades. The premise behind Conquest is this: everybody is at war. Period.

So if you've watched the show and have at least a working knowledge of the web of alliances between all the races, suppress it, because Conquest is about senseless galaxy-wide slaughter. No diplomacy, no observing the Prime Directive, just pure galactic conquest played out on a static 2D map.

### Trek lightly

To be fair to Conquest, its wider turn-based strategy element has some meat on it, but rather than feeling like you're employing cunning tactics as you conquer planets and build

HOW MANY  
TIMES  
DID I DIE?

That's how many  
USS Enterprise  
clones we lost.

36



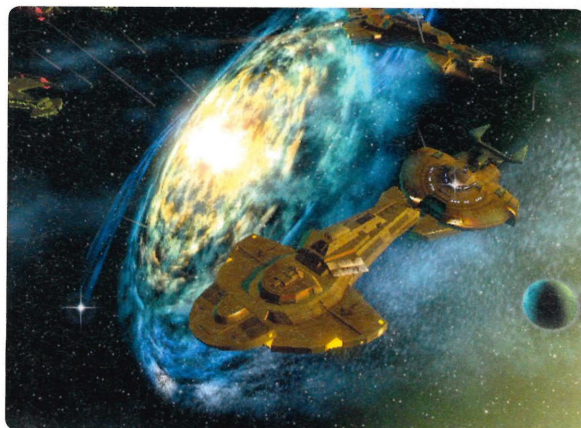
↑ Despite featuring nine races, Conquest only features three classes of ship

starports and mining colonies, Conquest is a game of balance.

That is to say that it feels like you're struggling to balance spending with starship construction, and making sure your fleets are large enough to take on whatever your enemies throw at you.

So, with the game's strategy element playing like a colourful spreadsheet, it's down to the real-time ship-to-ship combat to provide Conquest's main thrills.

When you encounter an enemy fleet, combat can be resolved in two







↓ When two fleets attack one another, expect a confusing round of combat



↓ Defending your starports from attack borders on what's known as 'fun'



↑ If you know whose ship this is, you are officially a Trekkie!

↓ Combat-zone backdrops are reasonably nice to look at

ways: you can elect to let the game scrap it out for you, or you can enter the 'arcade' mode and sort it out for yourself. Both options are problematic.

### Picard mode

If you let the AI resolve combat for you, chances are you'll find your entire fleet destroyed by a lesser force.

Take control of your ships manually, though, and enter into the pseudo-3D combat zone, you'll find you can lay waste to entire fleets of Cardassian warships with a single ship.

But even this fails to be fun, chiefly because your starships control like bumper cars riding around on a sea of hot lard, while your fellow ships are adept at getting themselves destroyed when not under your control.

Often you'll begin a battle with, say, seven vessels, only to end up with the

one you were controlling all along. There's also literally no depth to this arcade mode either, as your ships are manoeuvring about on a flat plane, so don't expect to pull off any of the acrobatics you see in the shows.

You're given six races to start with, including the Federation, Klingons, and the Dominion.

Three more are unlockable, too, including everybody's favourite loveless assimilators, The Borg.

There are minor differences between races, such as the Klingons' ability to build cheap ships, or the Federation's ability to research upgrades faster than rivals.

Practically, though, your choice comes down to who you think has the coolest ships; that and whose looped dialogue you can tolerate the longest.

Despite the healthy number of races on hand, the game, surprisingly, lacks a multiplayer component. There isn't even a pass-the-controller mode.

So Conquest smacks more than a little of callous cash-in. It seems the definitive Star Trek game is as far off as ever. Beam us up. Mike Sterry

### VEHICLE CHECK

Dreadnought starship



**PRO** The chariot of Captains Kirk, Picard and, erm, Archer, these ships put the hurt on foes.

**CON** It was never called a dreadnought starship in the television show.

**BESTFOR** Zapping out phaser fire on pitiful Ferengi scout ships.

**SATISFACTION RATING**

8

PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK

### VERDICT

- Too simple and repetitive
- Little respect for its inspiration
- Combat has little substance
- Ignores the Prime Directive

Despite a budget price, Conquest still feels like a wasted attempt at Star Trek strategy. Fans and gamers deserve better than this

# 5





# REVIEW

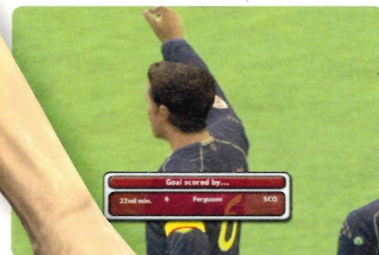
UEFA Euro 2008



Release Out now Publisher EA Developer EA Canada Price £29.99  
Players 1-8 Web [ea.com](http://ea.com) Also try Pro Evolution Soccer 2008

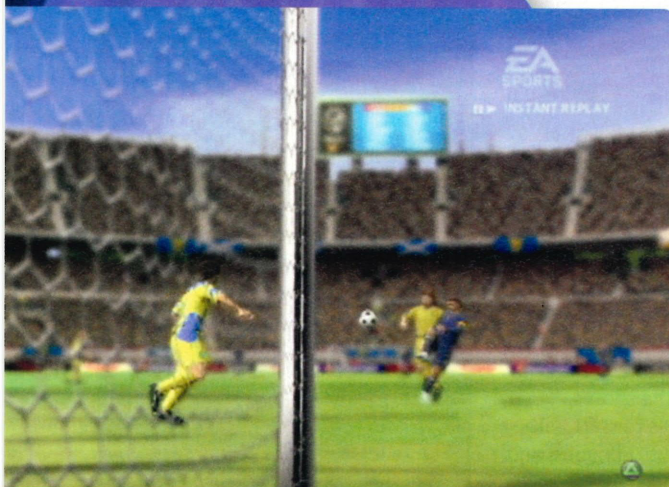


↑ With sights like this likely, maybe it's a good thing England didn't qualify...



# UEFA EURO 2008

England's only shot at a trophy this summer



We've got it made when it comes to football games, and not because the great This Is Football 2004 costs about £1.79 these days.

While EA and Konami struggle to get FIFA and PES right on PS3, their PS2 incarnations remain the best virtual footie games around. So Euro 2008, the latest game to roll off EA's FIFA conveyor belt, was always bound to be a bit special.

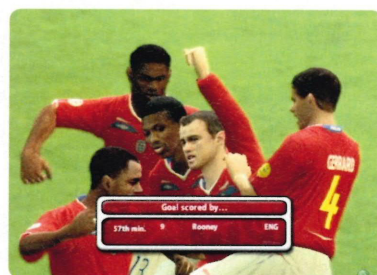
And it is. As you'd expect this does exactly as it says on the tin: it's the official game of this summer's tournament taking place in Austria and Switzerland, in which fab Fabio's bunch of club-badge-kissing, money-driven under-performers will play no part (cheers, Macca.)

Still, England are here with all 49 of the other nations who participated in the qualifying stages, and each (with the exception of Holland) with real kits and names. The eight stadia from the finals are here too and look great.

It's been the same in every EA footie effort over the past decade, but that's not to say the publisher shouldn't be praised for its unflagging attention to detail.

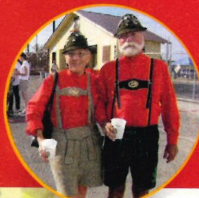
## Shooting for victory

Equally worthy of applause is the decision to build this game on top of FIFA 07 rather than FIFA 08, because some of the tweaks made for '08 actually hampered enjoyment. The most obvious, and frown-inducing,



↑ Player faces are spot-on – see Micah Richards celebrating in the background

## OPS2 BOARD OF CLASSIFICATION



UEFA Euro 2008 has been passed suitable for

- Austrians and the Swiss
- Football game completists
- Mad-at-McLaren tabloid writers
- Anyone frustrated with PS3 PES



Between games you can sort through mountains of stats. Happy now?



The balance between goalies' great saves and unforced errors is spot on



of these tweaks was the change to the shooting mechanic.

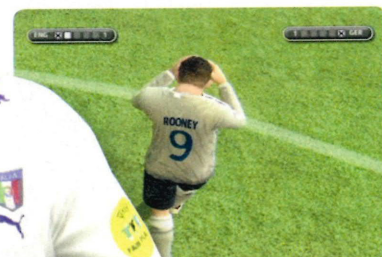
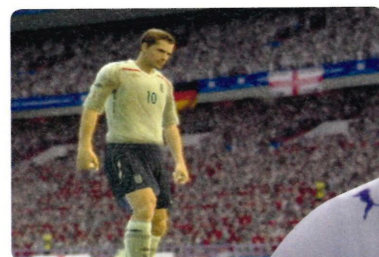
Scoring from distance was made tougher, while the power bar became more sensitive – leading to more balls thundering over the bar and towards deep space, Darren Bent-style.

The change was made in order to prevent the goalfests of the previous year, but it shifted the balance too far the other way: 'bore draws' became way too common, as though EA Canada wanted gamers to know how season ticket holders at the Reebok Stadium feel on a fortnightly basis.

Now the shooting is back the way it was, and Euro 2008 is better for it. Fill the power bar a decent amount and shots from distance have real zip to them. Scoring from close range is a little easier too, although never a foregone conclusion.

The way the game takes the context of how and where a shot is

Contextual shooting is superb – here's Rooney fizzing a volley just over



### CLICHÉ ALERT



Despite the fact that these days he's as effective as a one-legged, blind ostrich, Michael Owen is still one of England's star players – and deadly in front of goal. Hellooo? Researchers?

**ASSEENIN** Every football game from 1996 onwards.







# REVIEW

## UEFA Euro 2008



↑ Having the real stadia really enhances the atmosphere

struck remains sound too: Drill the ball from 10 yards out with Rooney and, unless the keeper pulls off a cracking save, it'll rocket into the onion bag.

Take a speculative pop with Philippe Senderos's left peg from 30 yards and the only person likely to be troubled is the steward telling fans to sit down in Row ZZ.

### Sound basics

Once you factor in deflections – and there's a smug satisfaction about seeing the ball fly in off a defender's backside – Euro 2008 has the most realistic and satisfying shooting of any football game, on any format.

But as anyone who has followed Rob Earnshaw's career will tell you, being red hot in front of goal can only take you so far. Fortunately, Euro 2008's all-round skillset is equally accomplished.



### WHAT'S NEW?

This year's new and improved features



#### KICK STICK

Make your set-pieces more accurate by using the right analogue stick to curl and power the ball. We like.



#### PENALTIES

The kick stick has made them a little easier, as long as you can cope with the new above-and-to-the-side-of-goal angle which accompanies them.



#### CAPTAIN YOUR COUNTRY

Play as one player throughout an entire campaign in this likeable but ultimately shallow spin-off of FIFA's Be-A-Pro mode.



### WHAT'S IT MADE OF?

- 100% Officially licensed everything
- 28% Long range scorers
- 17% Right analogue stick trickery
- 10% Stats and squad screens
- 10% Petr Cech's padded headgear

EA Canada has taken an 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' approach to the core game.

Passing is crisp and, for the most part, the game does an admirable job of recognising who you're playing the ball to.

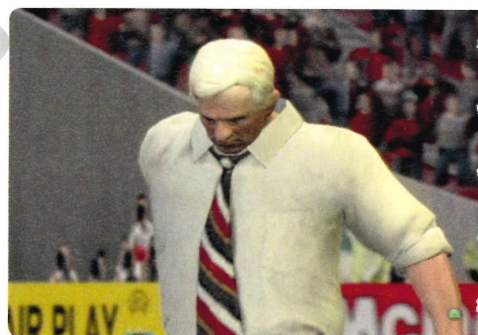
Dribbling is tidy, although you'll need to master the tricks on the right analogue stick if you want to get really good at it; it's still unrealistically difficult to beat a man with a well-timed change of pace or direction.

AI is excellent: forwards make sensible runs, midfielders break from deep, and your AI team-mates do a decent job of tracking their men.

What is new is the Kick Stick, which initially seemed like a tacky EA gimmick, but has since won us over.

On set-pieces – corners, free kicks, goal kicks, penalties – you can use the right analogue stick rather than ⊗ or ⊙ to kick the ball.

Sounds lame? It's not. While holding the left stick to control direction, you pull down on the right stick to start your player's run-up, at

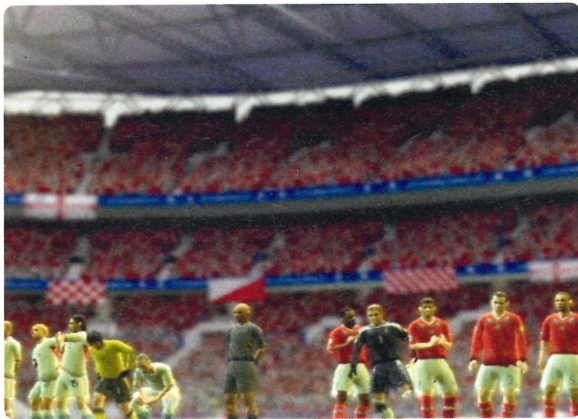
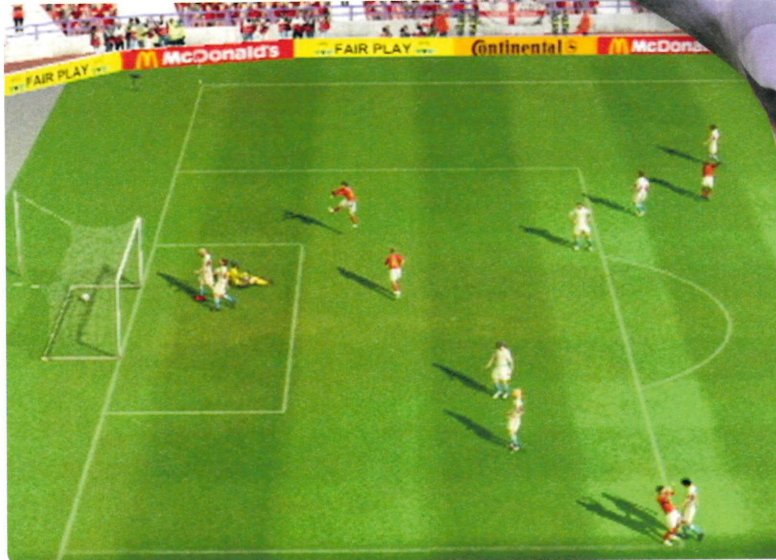


↑ Even real managers have made it in. Here's Czech boss Karel Brückner





↑ Clean, crisp passing is one of the reasons Euro 2008 is a joy to play



which point a vertical bar on screen begins to fill. You then move the right stick upwards to kick the ball, with curl added by flicking it diagonally up-and-left or up-and-right.

Flick as the player completes his run up (the top of the vertical bar) and you're rewarded with greater accuracy; leave it too late and he mis-kicks and looks like a total ass.

It takes some practice to get used to initially, but pretty soon you'll appreciate this mechanic actually gives you far more control and accuracy during your set-pieces.

↑ You can even play at Wembley!



But after all this praise, there must be one drawback, right? This, after all, is a FIFA spin-off, and don't they always do something wrong?

### No catch

Not this time. Euro '08 is a top quality football game with bags of playability, that will keep you hooked throughout the summer. It affords you the opportunity to replay England's entire qualifying campaign without Fat Frank, and maybe win that big jug-eared pot at the end of it.

Of course, you *could* complain that it doesn't have Brazil or Argentina in it – but if you do that after buying a game specifically called Euro 2008, your summer might be better spent with some geography textbooks and a globe. It's not like the box doesn't warn you... Ben Wilson

↑ Scot skipper Barry Ferguson smashes home a volley against Kazakhstan

## EURO 2008 IS TOP QUALITY FOOTIE WITH BAGS OF PLAYABILITY

PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK

# VERDICT

- ☺ Authentic and packed with licences
- ☺ Even better than FIFA 08
- ☺ Will help get you through the summer
- ☺ Will be out of date in six months

The perfect accompaniment to the upcoming big cup and one in which England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland all have a shot

# 9



# REVIEW

## Samurai Warriors 2: Xtreme Legends



↓ Combos are generally limited to **△** and **Ⓢ** but **Ⓛ** offers a couple of other attacks



Release Out now Publisher Koei Developer Omega Force Price £24.99 Players 1-2  
Web [koei.com/sw2xl](http://koei.com/sw2xl) Also try Any other Samurai Warriors game ever



↑ All the mission objectives basically amount to 'kill everything'



# SAMURAI WARRIORS 2 XTREME LEGENDS

Your yearly dose of hack'n'slash déjà vu

### BONUS INFO

Should you already have the previous game, Samurai Warriors Xtreme Legends, you can use the SWXL disc and a previous save to transfer across characters and game modes and increase the character level caps in SW2XL.



There could be a few explanations for the existence of Samurai Warriors 2 Xtreme

Legends. Perhaps staunch followers of the series suffer from acute amnesia.

Perhaps they have the constitution of a glass-eating sideshow freak.

Or perhaps, quite simply, they can't get enough of slaying vast swathes of soldiers from the Chinese Dynasties or Japanese Edo Period.

How else could you possibly explain another game in the Dynasty Warriors/Samurai Warriors franchise?



→ Use Musou moves when swamped by opponents

Developer Omega Force has churned out essentially the same game – give or take the odd giant robot or real-time strategy element – more than 20 times for over a decade.

Each time it gets the critical equivalent of a dry heave from Western audiences.

But year after year another variation on the same tired theme is wheeled out with the same dull combat and yawnsome mechanics.

### Dusty dynasty

And every time, we say: "If you've played a Dynasty Warriors title before, you've played this."

Pick a general, run around a battlefield carving your way through hordes of sword fodder, level up your character with new skills and weapons. Repeat until repetitive strain injury kicks in.

Okay, so there is some new stuff. This time around you've got interchangeable bodyguards with

whom to perform tag team Musou moves. There's also a Mercenary mode, where you can hire other samurai to work alongside you, as well as higher character level caps.

But that's not nearly enough to mark this out as anything other than another flogging of a thoroughly dead horse. Shaun Curnow

PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK

## VERDICT

- ☹ New bodyguard mechanic
- ☹ Higher level caps
- ☹ None of the new stuff is exciting
- ☹ Dull and repetitive

A poor excuse for an expansion from a poor excuse for a sequel from an utterly knackered series

# 5



# REVIEW

## SingStar Summer Party

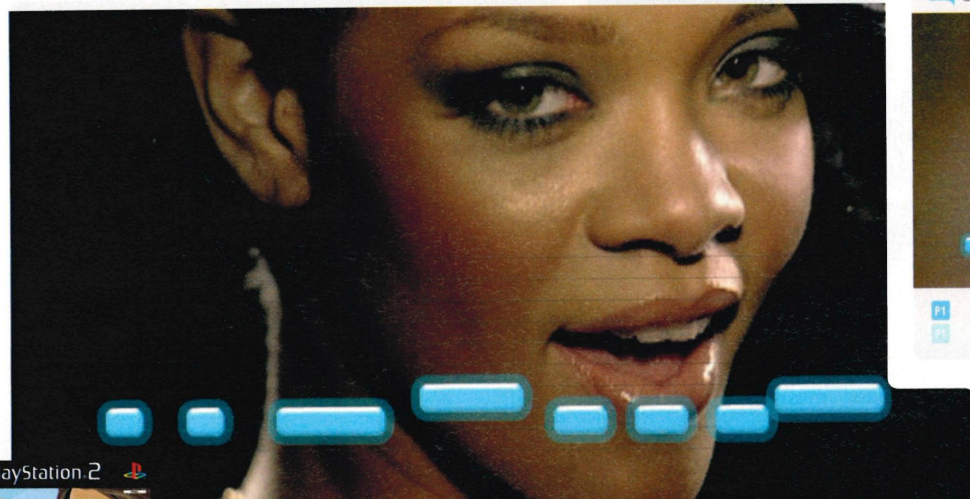
⬇ Not had enough of this song yet?  
Then this is the game for you!



TIME 01:14

P1 02260

⬇ There's a good mix of  
classics and recent hits



Un- der my um- br- el- la- -  
El- la, el- la



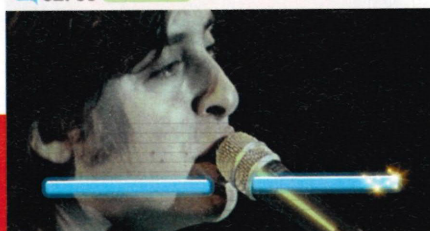
Release Out now Publisher Sony Developer Sony Price £19.99  
Players 1-2 Web singstargame.com Also try The X-Factor: Sing



The tide is high  
But I'm hold- in' on

TIME 01:15

P1 02750



Bang, bang  
You're dead

TIME 00:20

P1 00130



# SINGSTAR SUMMER PARTY

Warm up your vocal chords and raise your Umbrella (ella, ella)

⬇ You don't get  
points for dancing,  
but heck, do the  
moves anyway



Wow! So have you heard  
about the new SingStar?  
It's got gold-plated mics  
for superior sound quality!

And notes scrolling vertically down



P1 P2 And call the shots now - - - - -  
P1 P2 For me - - ooh

## PS2 BOARD OF CLASSIFICATION



SingStar Summer Party has  
been passed suitable for...

- ✓ Weepy girls' nights in
- ✓ Middle-aged Chesney fans
- ✓ Annoying the neighbours
- ✗ Karaoke bar booze hounds

the screen, just to make things  
different! And EyeToy functionality  
that enables you to appear in videos  
alongside your favourite artists! And...  
and... and... and then we woke up.

Of course, SingStar's been such a  
successful franchise on PS2 that every  
edition of Sony's all-conquering  
karaoke game is now a conveyor-belt  
expansion pack.

The mics and the scoring system  
and everything else are the same as  
ever. You're still not really scored on  
your singing ability, yet it's still the  
best party game going.

### One for the ladies

That said, to get your next bash  
rocking with this tracklist you'll need  
to get the girls round. They get  
Blondie's 'The Tide Is High', Mel & Kim's  
'Respectable', the recent Girls Aloud  
smash 'Call The Shots' and a dozen  
more hen night faves to choose from.

Meanwhile, the only tracks blokes  
are likely to argue over singing are  
'Disco 2000' by Pulp and Kaiser Chiefs'  
shouty 'I Predict A Riot'.

Still, two tracks rescue it from  
mediocrity: cheesier-than-liquid-Edam

pop-power bomb 'The One And Only'  
by Chesney Hawkes and Rihanna's  
'Umbrella'. Turn the 'rap scoring'  
option on for that one, by the way – it  
forces the combatants to attempt Jay-  
Z's "no clouds in my stones" rhymings,  
always with hilarious results.

Both are guaranteed to get that  
summer party kick-started. But if you  
want it to last more than half an hour,  
you'd best have some other  
entertainment planned as well (no,  
keep your pants on...). **Ben Wilson**

PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK

## VERDICT

- 😊 'Umbrella' on SingStar at last!
- 😊 Plenty to attract the ladies
- 😊 No new gameplay mechanic
- 😊 The tracklist is a little shallow

A decent addition to  
your SingStar library,  
but Rocks! or Rock  
Ballads are better if  
you're new to this  
karaoke franchise

7

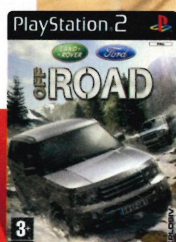




# REVIEW

Off Road

↓ The title hints at no-rules racing, but Off Road delivers few real thrills



Release Out now Publisher Xplosiv Developer Razorworks Price £19.99 Players 1-2  
Web icewaterdesert.com Also try Gran Turismo 4

## OFF ROAD

Fancy driving bloated 4x4s slowly over hills? No, us neither

Car racing games have to be two things to be worth playing. They have to be fast and be packed with a host of cool rides that you'll probably never afford. Off Road is neither.

Chugging around in 4x4s made by Ford or Land Rover – at 'dizzying' speeds of 98mph – simply isn't sexy. And especially since they feel like over-sized go-karts instead of the sturdy beasts they are.

Even the tracks are hideous. At first glance they look pretty big but, in reality, they're made up of narrow chutes carved in the land that see you bouncing off the sides until the finish line like a drunken bobsleigh rider.

**WHAT'S IT MADE OF?**

- 9% Collecting cash in Gold Rush mode
- 10% Buying new Fords and Land Rovers for your garage
- 80% Skidding around ugly tracks in Chelsea tractors
- 1% Achieving a sense of fulfilment while racing

There are multiple shortcuts to take but since they're not always clear and rarely lead you to victory you'd be wise to steer clear of them.

### Bland Turismo

While it's a million miles away from the likes of the awesome Gran Turismo series in terms of looks, playability and all-round goodness, Off Road does share an unwanted similarity in that there's no cosmetic damage to the cars (no damage? In an off-road racer?!).

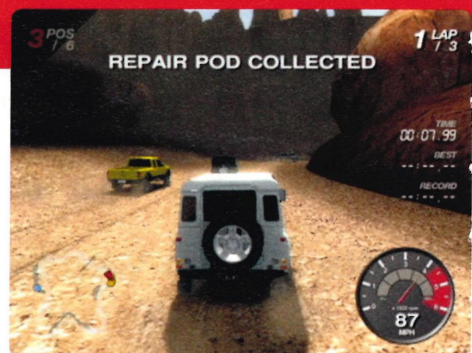
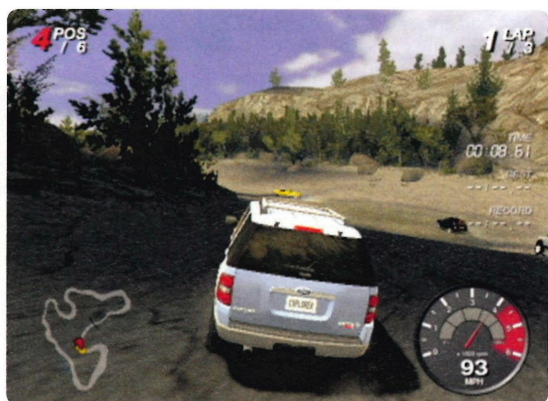
You can happily smash into giant boulders and not even get a dink, but for some reason your engine will conk out if you take too much pummeling.

The problems don't end here either. The whole presentation of Off Road is so lacklustre that we're not sure if the



↑ The Land Rover Defender is famously hard, but in Off Road it's indestructible

→ Oops – the school run's taken a bit of a detour



↑ We'd drive straight off the edge of a canyon if the funnel-like tracks let us

developer actually intended you to enjoy it at all. Even if you overlook the visuals and physics, the racing requires little skill to master.

In short, there are far, far better secondhand games you can pick up for less than 20 notes, so leave this dodgy motor in neutral. **Nathan Irvine**

PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK

## VERDICT

- ☹ There are plenty of race types
- ☹ Why are the physics so bad?
- ☹ Cars sound like 50cc mopeds
- ☹ Presentation is very lacklustre

The previous Ford games at least had some character, but this is dreadful. It's too slow, too ugly and too pricey for what it is

# 3

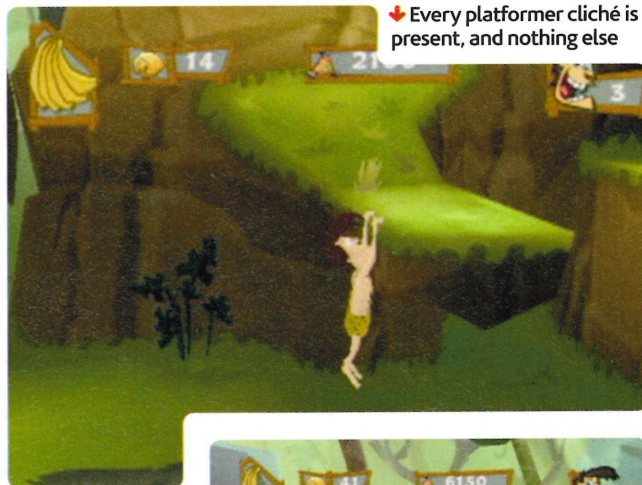


Here, George is hoping to be punched clean into a different, better game



Release Out now Publisher Ignition Developer Papaya Studio Price £19.99  
Players 1 Web [ignitionent.com/gotj/](http://ignitionent.com/gotj/) Also try El Tigre

Every platformer cliché is present, and nothing else



# GEORGE OF THE JUNGLE

Swinging onto PS2 for his debut and landing painfully. Ouch



Platform games are 10-a-penny. So to really stand out in a crowd filled with Ratchets, Jaks and even Simpsons, you've got to do something unique. Step forward, George of the Jungle – a game that achieves this by being possibly the slowest platformer ever. Oh dear.

This 2D adventure, based on the current Nickelodeon cartoon feels like you're wading through syrup from start to finish.

George can run, jump, climb, swing on vines and punch monkeys in the



Nice cartoon, shame about the glacially slow gameplay

kisser, all in super slow-motion, which we guess is an attempt to cater for small kids. Sadly, even the youngest of gamers will find this a breeze.

### A vine mess

You run from one part of the Monkey Kingdom to the other, searching for documents that have been lost by a scientist. Along the way you get tedious boss fights with boxing gorillas or baboons with explosives, and each one is as dull as the last.

To make things worse, the collision detection in most fights is really wonky, so you'll be cursing George's missed hits as you lose another life.

It doesn't look too bad, with the bold and colourful visuals paying testament to the lovely looking cartoon it's based on.

However, this is not nearly enough to break from the over-familiar routine of jumping over spikes and knocking out chimps again and again.

The overly cautious gameplay is too light to entertain and too slow to keep you hooked. Our advice? Just leave George hanging. Nathan Irvine

PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK

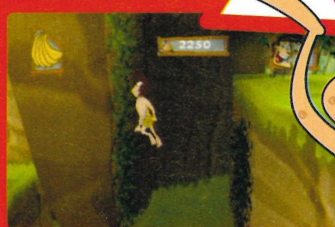
## VERDICT

- Looks like the cartoon series
- Run, jump, roll, punch, repeat...
- Boss battles are tricky and boring
- Why is it sooooo sloooooow?

You'll have to be a huge fan of the cartoon to get any joy from this. The slow pace and dreadful combat are just too hard to ignore

# 3

### CLICHÉ ALERT



Wall-jumping, smashing through weak flooring and avoiding pop-up spikes

ASSEENIN Tomb Raider, Prince of Persia, Sonic, Crash Bandicoot



computer  
and  
video games  
— since 1981




www.cv9.co.uk



## HALL OF FAME

Ⓐ PS2'S 100 GREATEST Ⓞ BEST GAMES EVER ✕ CLASSICS □ HISTORY

WELCOME  
TO THE  
OPS2 HALL  
OF FAME


I don't own a suit. I generally associate the wearing of suits with boring office jobs.

But Hitman's Agent 47 is a man in a suit who has one of the most exciting jobs there is (he's a hitman, in case you didn't work it out).

Sneaking around glamorous locations; strolling brazenly past henchmen, wearing a masterful disguise; distracting goons while one-shotting their boss; silently disposing of fresh corpses.

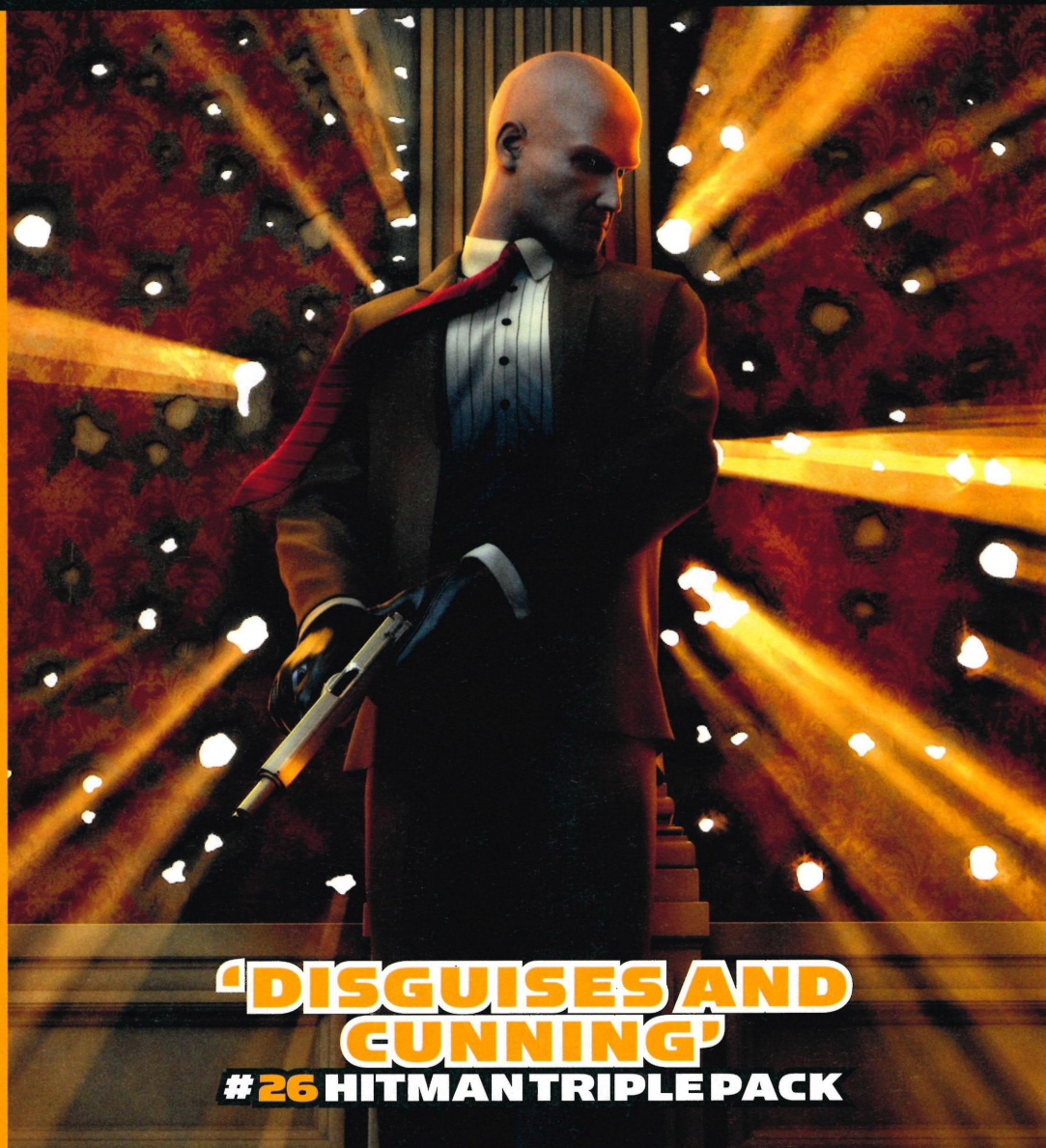
These are all in a day's work for 47 – and for you, via the medium of his games. Laced with tongue-in-cheek humour but with a dark heart, they really get the pulse pounding.

## Hit me baby

And if, like me, you're a bit rubbish at shooters, Hitman's great because it's about lateral thinking, patience and initiative rather than being able to strafe and shoot at the same time.

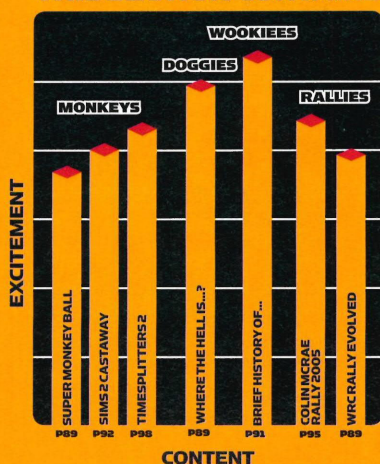
Blood Money's the best but in the triple pack you get all three on the cheap. Exciting, gruesome *and* a bargain: what's not to like?

**SOPHIE MASON**  
PRODUCTION EDITOR  
smason@futurenet.co.uk



**'DISGUISES AND  
GUNNING'**  
#26 HITMAN TRIPLE PACK

## THIS SECTION CONTAINS



## HALL OF FAME ESSENTIAL INFO

HOW A GAME GETS  
IN THE TOP 100

We don't award membership to the Hall Of Fame lightly. To prove itself worthy of induction, a game must demonstrate many of these qualities: outstanding gameplay, glorious graphics, pioneering innovation, superior use of sound and great replay value.

WE USE OLD  
REVIEW SCORES

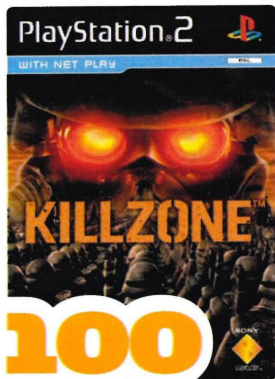
Scores for games listed in the Hall Of Fame are those that were awarded when the game was first reviewed in OPS2. Times change and technology evolves, so some of the games released early in the PS2's life, while still great, may not have the same polish as more recent titles.

## AWARDS

If you see this medal on the verdict box in a game review, it means the title is worthy of a place in the Hall Of Fame and will be inducted in the following issue.

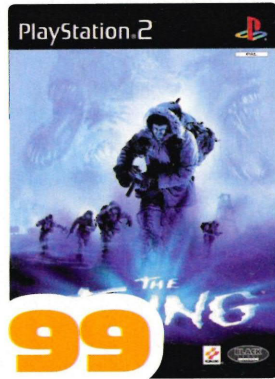






**KILLZONE**  
Sony, 2004 **Shooter**  
Didn't turn out to be the Halo-killer that it was billed as, but worth a blast anyway, if only to see what all the fuss was about.  
**Buy it if...** you need a lesson in vaulting ambition and you like blasting aliens.  
**OPS2 #51 9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



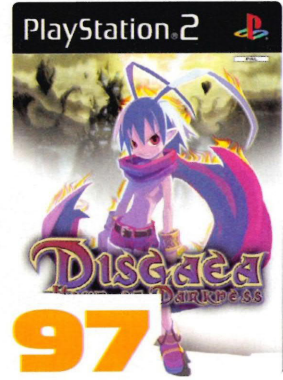
**THE THING**  
Konami, 2002 **Horror**  
Takes up where the 1982 sci-fi/horror movie left off: you and your troops must survive a nightmarish Arctic in a tense, atmospheric thriller. Chilling stuff (arf!).  
**Buy it if...** you don't feel the cold.  
**OPS2 #25 9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



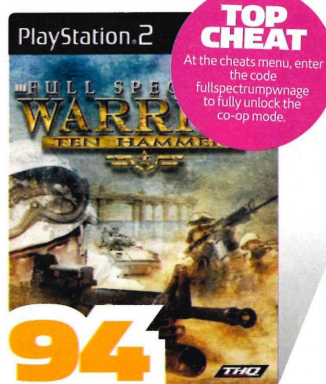
**MASHED**  
Empire, 2004 **Racing**  
Birds-eye-view driving with weapons that just screams to be played with three mates via multitap. The definitive party racer.  
**Buy it if...** the local garage won't fit homing missiles to your motor.  
**OPS2 #48 9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



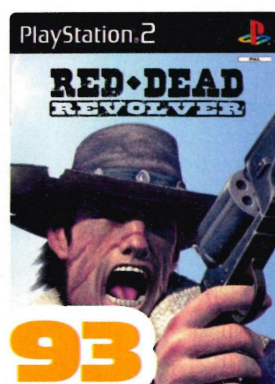
**DISGAEA: HOUR OF DARKNESS**  
KOEI, 2004 **RPG**  
Strategic RPG with more depth than the Marianas Trench and it's full of giggles.  
**Buy it if...** the idea of deploying exploding penguins in a tactical RPG appeals.  
**OPS2 #47 8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



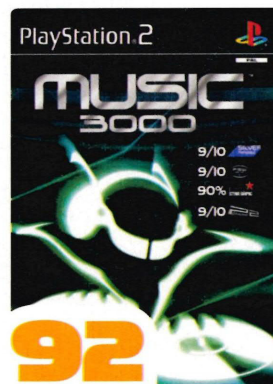
**FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR: TEN HAMMERS**  
THQ, 2006 **Tactical shooter**  
Hardcore, squad-based tactical sim used by the US Army to help train new recruits.  
**Buy it if...** you failed your Territorial Army recruitment physical.  
**OPS2 #72 8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**RED DEAD REVOLVER**  
Rockstar, 2004 **Adventure**  
Not quite as good as Gun (see #76), but if you love John Wayne and shooting greasy robber-barons in the face, this is for you.  
**Buy it if...** in your house, 'spaghetti' goes with Westerns, not bolognese.  
**OPS2 #47 9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



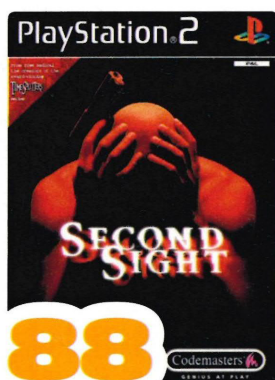
**MUSIC 3000**  
Jester Interactive, 2003 **Music**  
A powerful music editor. There's little else like this on PS2; it lets you sample MP3s, CDs or even your old GameBoy.  
**Buy it if...** you tout yourself around as the new Fatboy Slim.  
**OPS2 #33 9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



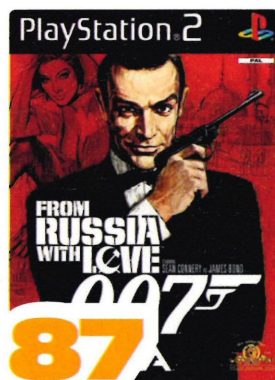
**RATCHET & CLANK: SIZE MATTERS**  
Sony, 2008 **Platformer**  
A welcome return to form for the intergalactic action duo.  
**Buy it if...** you like the idea of turning your enemies into cows.  
**OPS2 #97 9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**SECOND SIGHT**  
Codemasters, 2004 **Adventure**  
There aren't enough games that let you telekinetically throw people off buildings.  
**Buy it if...** you ever wondered what Professor X from *The X-Men* would be like with no wheelchair and an SMG.  
**OPS2 #50 8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**JAMES BOND 007: FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE**  
EA, 2005 **Action**  
Superb adaptation: as close as you'll get to being 007 without actually killing a man.  
**Buy it if...** you've been ex-schpecting it, Mr Bond.  
**OPS2 #66 8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**NBA 2K7**  
2K Sports, 2006 **Sport**  
You don't have to be a b-ball fan to enjoy the subtleties of this top-tier basketball game. If you are, well, 2K7 will have you believing in true love.  
**Buy it if...** the local court is rained out.  
**OPS2 #79 9/10**

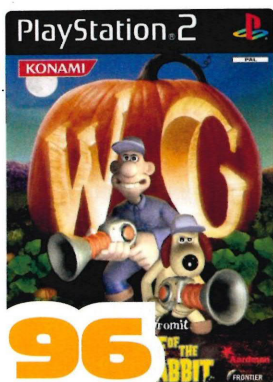
■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**ZONE OF THE ENDERS: 2ND RUNNER**  
Konami, 2003 **Action**  
Metal Gear Solid creator Hideo Kojima's other series, it couples scraps in flying mechs with a bonkers plot to great effect.  
**Buy it if...** you're a Transformers fan.  
**OPS2 #38 8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT





### WALLACE AND GROMIT: THE CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT

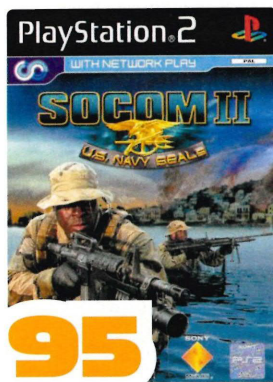
Konami, 2005 **Platformer**

Well-crafted, with pleasing graphics that do justice to the original characters.

**Buy it if...** you wear the wrong trousers.

OPS2 #65 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



### SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS

Sony, 2004 **Shooter**

The daddy of squad-based tactical war simulations, SOCOM still boasts a thriving online community.

**Buy it if...** you've yet to experience the joys of squad-based online play.

OPS2 #43 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

## SECRETS ARCHIVE

Cheats, Easter eggs and hidden goodies from some of the PS2's greatest titles

### WEAPON MASTER!



### RESIDENT EVIL 4

There are a bunch of unlockable weapons in Resi 4: here are our faves. To unlock the infinite ammo rocket launcher, beat the game once. To unlock the PRL 412 (lightning gun), beat the game on Professional.

### KEEP ROCKIN'!



### GUITAR HERO III

If you're floundering in Career mode, enter this series of chords at the menu screen to unlock all songs: YO, RB, RO, GB, RY, YO, RY, RB, CY, GY, YB, YB, YO, YO, YB, YR, RY, RYO.

### FIDDLE WITH YOUR SNAKE!



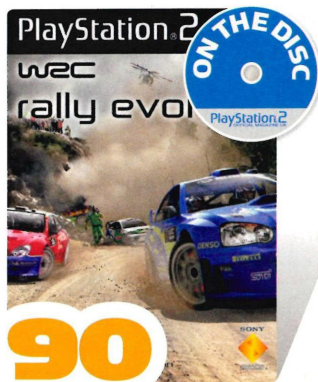
### METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER

You can mess with the intro movie to this game by pushing various buttons on your pad. Try experimenting to see what you can do...



### SHOW US YOUR EASTER EGGS!

Email your game tips to [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk)



### WRC RALLY EVOLVED

Sony, 2005 **Racing**

Sits neatly between punishing sim and fluffy arcade racing and remains accessible while gradually ramping up the challenge.

**Buy it if...** you've already nailed Colin McRae Rally 2005.

OPS2 #65 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



### SUPER MONKEY BALL DELUXE

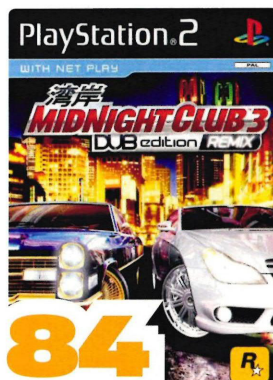
Sega, 2005 **Puzzle**

Crazy action-puzzler-racer with chimps locked in giant plastic balls. A bit like that dream we have after eating cheese.

**Buy it if...** hamster balls fascinate you.

OPS2 #59 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



### MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION REMIX

Rockstar, 2006 **Racing**

Nitro-tastic, open-world street racer with a generous selection of authentic vehicles, modding options, race types and tunes.

**Buy it if...** you're a fast-driving insomniac.

OPS2 #72 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



### HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX

EA, 2007 **Adventure**

Roam freely around Hogwarts in a surprisingly fantastic game that Potter obsessives and lay folk alike will enjoy.

**Buy it if...** you're not a Muggle.

OPS2 #87 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

### WHERE THE HELL IS...?

### Fur Fighters

Acclaim, 2001

This month's great game that didn't quite make it into the Top 100 is cute third-person blaster Fur Fighters. OPS2 acting ed Andy is livid it isn't included because "it's one of the funniest, slickest shooters of this generation, with awesome four-player split-screen action".

**Did we miss out your fave game? Tell us why it should go in! Contact details on p3.**





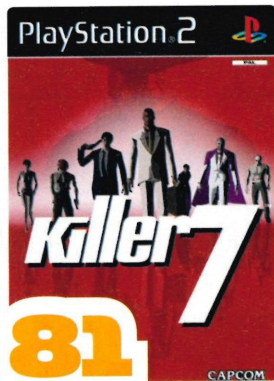


**82**

**RATCHET & CLANK**  
Sony, 2002 **Platformer**  
One of the finest games of the PS2's early years, the original R&C is still one of the most entertaining, inventive romps you can buy, even after three sequels.  
**Buy it if...** you haven't played it already!  
**OPS2 #26 9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

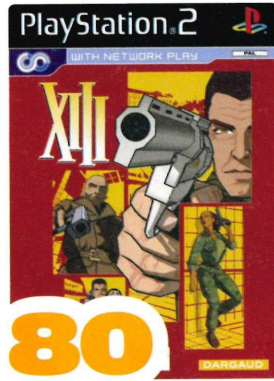
**TOP FACT**  
Ratchet & Clank have had cameos in no fewer than nine other games, including Jak II and Resistance: Fall Of Man.



**81**

**KILLER 7**  
Capcom, 2005 **Action**  
Unorthodox, on-rails shooter where you play as a wheelchair-bound assassin who can call on seven personalities with special powers to work for him.  
**Buy it if...** the voices tell you to.  
**OPS2 #61 8/10**

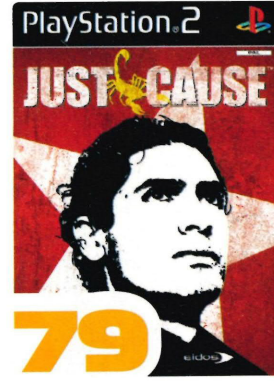
■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**80**

**XIII**  
Ubisoft, 2004 **Shooter**  
Highly original shooter starring a special-forces agent with amnesia who must crack a global conspiracy. Presented just like the cult comic book it's based on.  
**Buy it if...** you love graphic novels.  
**OPS2 #40 8/10**

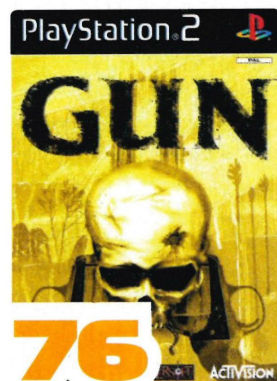
■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**79**

**JUST CAUSE**  
Eidos, 2006 **Action**  
Parachute into the shoes of a CIA agent and bring down a corrupt government. Huge, beautiful and free-roaming.  
**Buy it if...** the idea of Grand Theft Auto with politics gets you excited.  
**OPS2 #77 8/10**

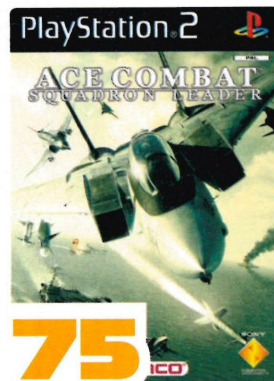
■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**76**

**GUN**  
Activision, 2005 **Shooter**  
Gun-totin', horse-ridin', baccy-chewin', poker-playin', free-roamin' Wild West action with a classic cowboys'n'injuns storyline and great voice acting.  
**Buy it if...** you're an outlaw.  
**OPS2 #67 9/10**

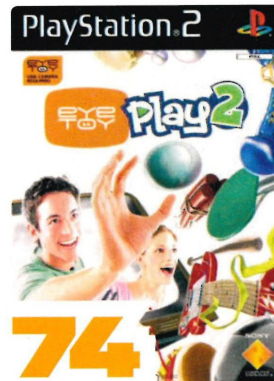
■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**75**

**ACE COMBAT: SQUADRON LEADER**  
Sony, 2005 **Shooter**  
An unashamedly arcade flight sim with tons to do and all kinds of aerial combat.  
**Buy it if...** you failed your eye test for the RAF.  
**OPS2 #56 8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**74**

**EYETOY PLAY 2**  
Sony, 2004 **Party**  
Twelve entertaining, movement-based mini-games, plus the ability to turn your EyeToy camera into an inexpensive home security system, will make you smile.  
**Buy it if...** you dream of being on the telly.  
**OPS2 #53 8/10**

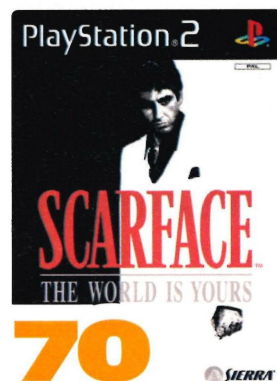
■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**73**

**SLY 3: HONOUR AMONG THIEVES**  
Sony, 2005 **Platformer**  
Cartoon japes starring a light-fingered raccoon and his gang. Sly is slick, stylish and bursting with ideas.  
**Buy it if...** diamonds are your best friend.  
**OPS2 #52 9/10**

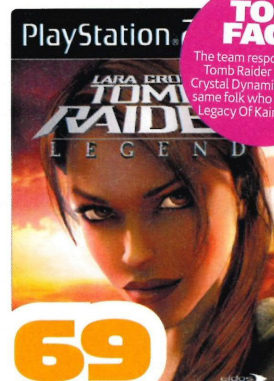
■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**70**

**SCARFACE: THE WORLD IS YOURS**  
Vivendi, 2006 **Action**  
A GTA-inspired swear-a-thon that has you guiding Tony Montana from death's door to top of the Miami underworld.  
**Buy it if...** you wanna play rough.  
**OPS2 #78 8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**69**

**TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND**  
Eidos, 2006 **Adventure**  
Helping us forget the horror that was Angel Of Darkness, Lara's real PS2 debut is a trifle easy and a little short but a return to past form nonetheless.  
**Buy it if...** you had a happy Anniversary.  
**OPS2 #71 8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

**TOP FACT**  
The team responsible for Tomb Raider Legend, Crystal Dynamics, are the same folk who made the Legacy Of Kain games.



**68**

**ROGUE GALAXY**  
Sony, 2007 **RPG**  
An excellent intergalactic roleplayer that borrows heavily from Star Wars, but in the most affectionate way. And with pirates.  
**Buy it if...** you want great characters, settings and story. With pirates.  
**OPS2 #86 9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**67**

**VIEWTIFUL JOE**  
Capcom, 2004 **Fighting**  
A sexy marriage of snazzy, comic-book visuals and a retrotastic difficulty level, this loves to be hard but is hard not to love.  
**Buy it if...** the words 'challenging' and 'retro' quicken your pulse.  
**OPS2 #52 8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



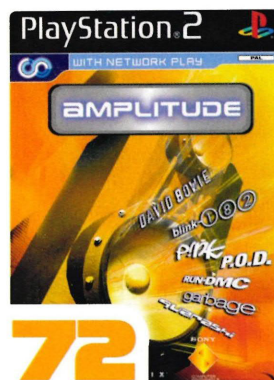


## 78 ODIN SPHERE

Square Enix, 2008 **Action RPG**  
Jaw-droppingly pretty, and deeper than an oceanic trench, this late arrival is an absolute must play for all PS2 owners. **Buy it if...** you like to think of games as true, artistic masterpieces.

OPS2 #97 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## 72 AMPLITUDE

Sony, 2003 **Music**  
Vastly under-rated rhythm-action title: perform, mix and remix your way through classic tunes from the likes of David Bowie, Slipknot, BT, Pink and Run DMC. **Buy it if...** you're a bedroom DJ.

OPS2 #38 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

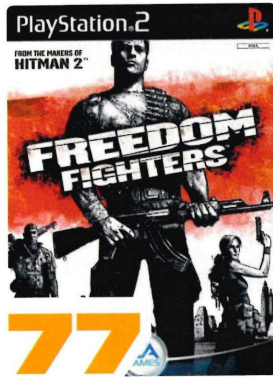


## 66 FAHRENHEIT

Atari, 2005 **Adventure**  
Ambitious and engrossing, this plays like an interactive movie. You must find out how you were made to commit a murder before the police catch up with you. **Buy it if...** you like messing up your mind.

OPS2 #64 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

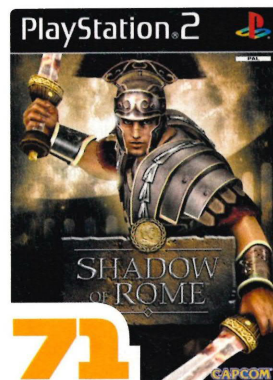


## 77 FREEDOM FIGHTERS

EA, 2003 **Shooter**  
Insanely addictive strategic and tactical shoot-'em-up set in a bleak New York overrun by Communist Russians. **Buy it if...** you wonder what it would've been like if Russia had invaded the USA.

OPS2 #37 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

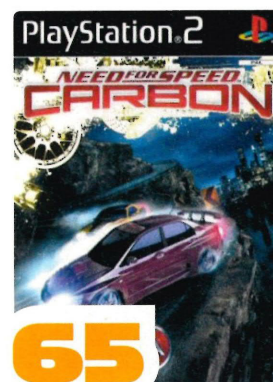


## 71 SHADOW OF ROME

Capcom, 2005 **Action**  
Gruesome toga'n'slash action mixed with stealthy detective work and a story that has more twists than Homer's *Odyssey*. **Buy it if...** *Gladiator* and *The 300* are your favourite films.

OPS2 #56 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## 65 NEED FOR SPEED CARBON

EA, 2006 **Racing**  
A blur of spoilers, nitros and elaborate paint jobs that speeds past you in the outside lane doing 175mph, this is the best in the Need For Speed series so far. **Buy it if...** you feel the need.

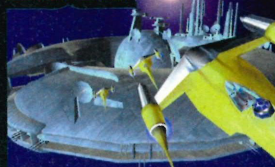
OPS2 #79 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF... STAR WARS GAMES

Has the Force been strong with PS2, or is the console shy of a midi-chlorian or two?

## 2001



## STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER

After watching the Star Wars brand slowly degenerate into a sloppy mess on PS1, the epic space battles of *Starfighter* gave us hope that the SW was on the up again.

## 2002



## STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER

Despite the rich source material, Star Wars and shooting never quite marry well for some reason. This third-person shooter was a solid effort, but a definite step-down in quality from *Starfighter*.

## 2004



## STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT

Easily the finest Star Wars multiplayer game available, *Battlefront* was a real hit with fans. It's got the frantic battles, the authenticity and, these days, the low price.

## 2005



## STAR WARS: EPISODE III ROTHS

A fitting conclusion to George Lucas' rather lacklustre series of prequels. *Revenge Of The Sith* isn't a bad adventure game, but it certainly won't win any awards.

## 2006



## LEGO STAR WARS II: ORIGINAL TRILOGY

Who'd have thought it: Lego and Star Wars make an awesome partnership. Thanks to plenty of cartoon humour and addictive action/platformer gameplay, *Lego Star Wars II* is cute and stonking at the same time.

## COLLECTOR'S ITEM

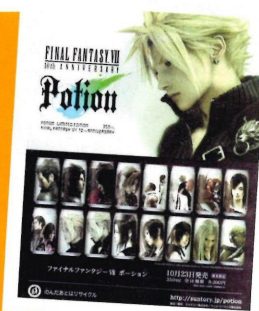
## Final Fantasy VII Potion (2nd Edition)

Final Fantasy fans are a loyal bunch. They'll happily fork out for figurines, buy spin-off games and dress up as their favourite characters on the weekend. So, for £79, plus postage from Japan, this set of 16 very rare Final Fantasy 'potion' drinks is a snip. Probably.

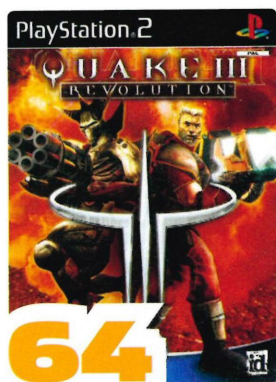
## RARITY VALUE

BINGE DRINKERS

TEENAGE TEETOTALERS

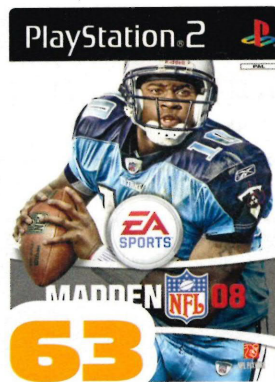






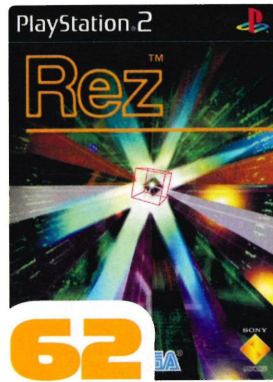
**QUAKE III REVOLUTION**  
EA, 2001 **Shooter**  
Old as the hills it may be, but Quake's only appearance on PS2 remains a solidly enjoyable, stress-relieving blastathon. **Buy it if...** you need a breather from TimeSplitters 2 (see number 4).  
OPS2 #6 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**MADDEN NFL 08**  
EA, 2007 **Sport**  
Another improvement on EA's superlative gridiron sim. With an in-depth Franchise mode and accessible on-pitch gameplay this really is American Football for all. **Buy it if...** rugby looks too dangerous.  
OPS2 #90 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



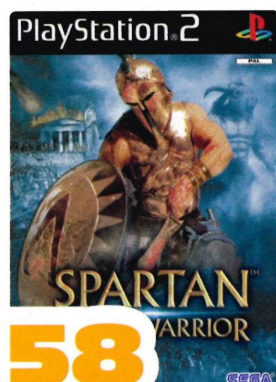
**REZ**  
Sega, 2002 **Shooter**  
A brain-frying, psychedelic, on-rails shooter-cum-music game where you hear colours and see sound. No, really. **Buy it if...** taking your brain to another dimension sounds like a good idea.  
OPS2 #16 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



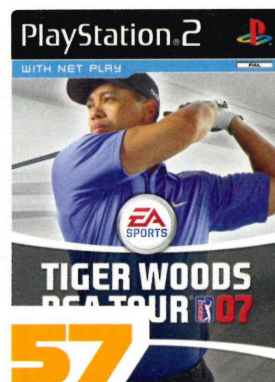
**SIMS 2 CASTAWAY**  
EA, 2007 **God sim**  
You wake up marooned on a desert island. What do you do next? Anything you want in this addictive, funny adventure that is open-ended but never feels aimless. **Buy it if...** you want a holiday.  
OPS2 #92 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



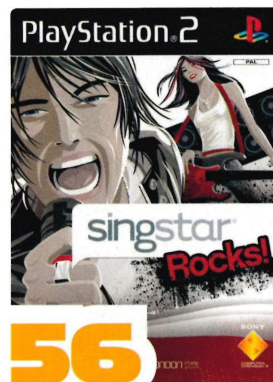
**SPARTAN: TOTAL WARRIOR**  
Sega, 2005 **Action**  
A battle-heavy romp through the ancient world that blends the historical and mythological with swords and sorcery to great effect. **Buy it if...** you want to be one of the 300.  
OPS2 #64 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07**  
EA, 2007 **Sport**  
With excellent analogue stick controls for your swing and a dazzling array of official licences and customisation options, this is the definitive pro tour title. **Buy it if...** you're a serious golf fan.  
OPS2 #78 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



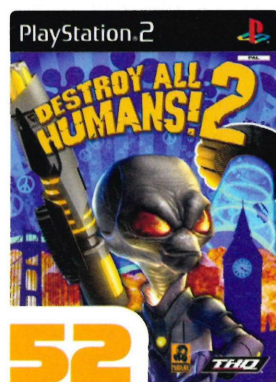
**SINGSTAR ROCKS!**  
Sony, 2006 **Karaoke**  
Our favourite of the SingStar series, with Bloc Party, The Killers, Coldplay, The Rolling Stones and Keane on the tracklist. **Buy it if...** you wanna rock! Also try SingStars Pop Hits, '90s and Legends.  
OPS2 #72 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



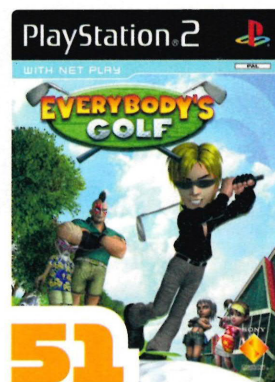
**PROJECT ZERO 2: CRIMSON BUTTERFLY**  
Ubisoft, 2004 **Horror**  
A gore-free yet terrifying ghost story; your only weapon is a camera that can exorcise the spirits trying to steal your soul. **Buy it if...** you dare.  
OPS2 #46 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



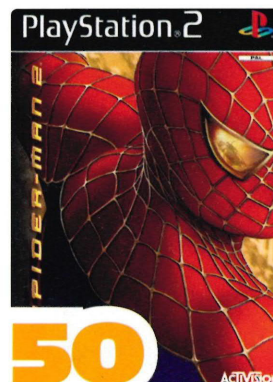
**DESTROY ALL HUMANS! 2**  
THQ, 2006 **Action**  
B-movie-inspired shooter that puts you in an alien's spacesuit, hands you an anal probe and lets you take revenge on mankind for all the ET-blasting games. **Buy it if...** you hate the human race.  
OPS2 #78 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**EVERYBODY'S GOLF**  
Sony, 2005 **Sport**  
If you're not bothered about official PGA licences and don't mind the cute, cartoony looks, you'll find this to be the finest and friendliest golf game of all time. **Buy it if...** you can live without Tiger.  
OPS2 #65 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**SPIDER-MAN 2**  
Activision, 2004 **Action**  
Free-roaming and beautifully animated web-slinging adventure based on, but also expanding on, the movie of the same name. The best Spidey game, bar none. **Buy it if...** your spider senses are tingling.  
OPS2 #49 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT II**  
Activision, 2005 **Shooter**  
Offers both tactical and arcade gameplay options plus all your favourite characters, vehicles and locales. **Buy it if...** you can feel a disturbance in the Force.  
OPS2 #66 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT





60

**BURNOUT DOMINATOR**EA, 2007 **Racing**

Reckless driving? We don't recommend it. Burnout Dominator? Yup, totally recommend it. Great soundtrack, too.

**Buy it if...** you don't want to lose your no claims bonus.

OPS2 #83 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



59

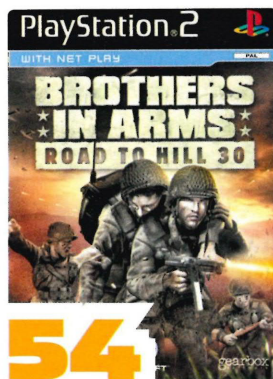
**BUZZ! THE MEGA QUIZ**Sony, 2007 **Party**

Quiz show-style fun for all the family that comes with special buzzer controllers. Kids should try the Buzz! Junior series.

**Buy it if...** you like quizzes but can't stand that Noel Edmonds.

OPS2 #84 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



54

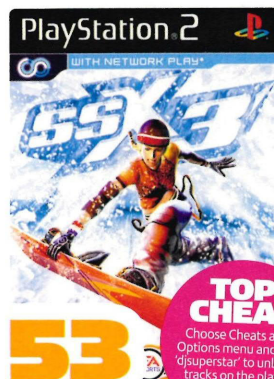
**BROTHERS IN ARMS: ROAD TO HILL 30**Ubisoft, 2005 **Shooter**

The story of a squad from the 101st Airborne in Normandy after D-Day. Realistic, atmospheric and respectful.

**Buy it if...** all's quiet on the Western front.

OPS2 #58 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



53

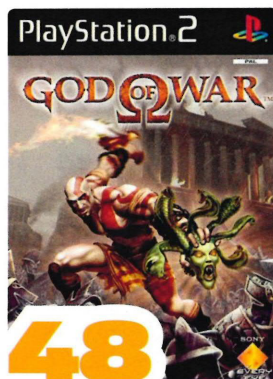
**SSX 3**EA, 2003 **Sport**

Sublime snowboard sim with one giant mountain to play on, dozens of disciplines to learn and hundreds of tricks to pull off.

**Buy it if...** bailing on concrete is too painful a prospect.

OPS2 #40 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



48

**GOD OF WAR**Sony, 2005 **Action**

Blessed with divine inspiration, this gore-spattered hack-fest begins the tale of Kratos, the angriest man in ancient Greece. Bettered only by its sequel.

**Buy it if...** you want to stick the knife in.

OPS2 #60 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



47

**PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN**Ubisoft, 2007 **Adventure**

Combat-heavy platforming with a spellbinding story adds up to an electrifying experience.

**Buy it if...** you can run up walls.

OPS2 #54 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

## GREAT GAME INGREDIENTS

# GOD OF WAR

What gives this series its bloody genius?

### MASSIVE BOSSES



There's something intimidating, yet utterly exhilarating about facing off against something that's roughly 100 times your size. Kratos does so plenty of times in both God Of War games and all are stand-out moments.

### GORE



God Of War is stuffed full of delightfully bloody finishing moves and they give the game a real 'oh my god!' factor.

### PUZZLES



The odd, genuinely engaging, head-scratcher is one thing that sets God Of War apart from other hack'n'slashers.

### CHAINS



Kratos' Blades Of Chaos are some of the most savage weapons ever committed to game. We love them.

### EPIC LEVELS



It's not just the boss battles that astound with their size and scale. Regular levels are pretty meaty too.

### SEXY TIME



Hey, Kratos is human. Sometime he needs a little lovin'. Plus, if you get it right, you get loads of red orbs.



### DO YOU LOVE GOD OF WAR?

Send us your memories: [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk)

## TOP 10

### PS2 let-downs

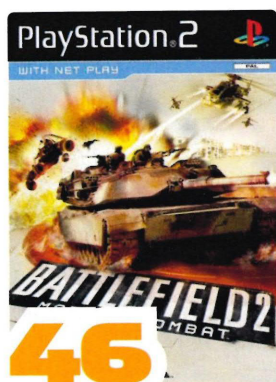
- 10 Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing
- 9 Headhunter 2
- 8 Tenchu: Fatal Shadows
- 7 Rainbow Six: Lockdown
- 6 Spider-Man 3
- 5 Need For Speed: ProStreet
- 4 Devil May Cry 2
- 3 Silent Hill 4: The Room
- 2 Driv3r



## #01

Tomb Raider:  
Angel Of  
Darkness





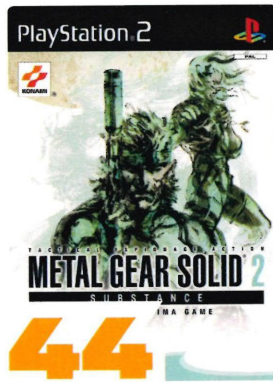
**46**  
**BATTLEFIELD 2: MODERN COMBAT**  
 EA, 2005 **Shooter**  
 A superb modern warfare shooter that lets you switch between soldiers at the touch of a button. Great in multiplayer, too.  
**Buy it if...** you're an armchair general.  
 OPS2 #65 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**45**  
**TOCA RACE DRIVER 3**  
 Codemasters, 2006 **Racing**  
 Variety is the spice of life and with all sorts of wheels on offer this multi-disciplined racer is a potent feast for petrol-heads.  
**Buy it if...** you love motorsports but can't choose a favourite.  
 OPS2 #69 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**44**  
**METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE**  
 Konami, 2003 **Stealth shooter**  
 The plot may be complex but MGS2 is still one of the most thrilling, cerebral games on PS2. Substance includes extras galore.  
**Buy it if...** you can follow the storyline.  
 OPS2 #32 **10/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**43**  
**DEUS EX**  
 Eidos, 2002 **RPG**  
 PC gamers: they think they're all that. Well, they ain't. PS2 owners have one of their greatest games in the shape of Deus Ex.  
**Buy it if...** you suspect you may actually be a nanotech-enhanced superhuman.  
 OPS2 #20 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**40**  
**FIFA 08**  
 EA, 2007 **Sport**  
 The best season yet for the veteran footie sim, a plethora of licences combined with striking gameplay. The awesome Be A Pro mode is worth the price in itself.  
**Buy it if...** you want to keep it official.  
 OPS2 #91 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**39**  
**FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3**  
 EA, 2006 **Sport**  
 There's nothing quite like punching a man in the chin and watching as sweat and blood flies off in slow-mo.  
**Buy it if...** you need a legal outlet for your anger-management issues.  
 OPS2 #71 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



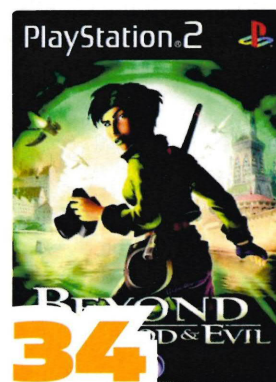
**38**  
**CALL OF DUTY 3**  
 Activision, 2006 **Shooter**  
 There are roughly one million WWII games out there, but this is by far the best of them thanks to some intense action and great multiplayer.  
**Buy it if...** you hate Nazis.  
 OPS2 #80 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



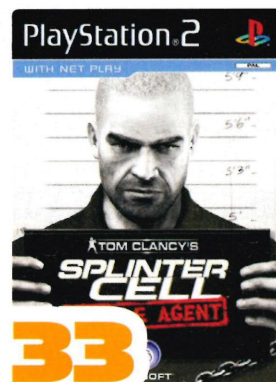
**37**  
**MANHUNT**  
 Rockstar, 2004 **Stealth**  
 The grisliest game ever to find its way onto PS2, this sinister stealthy drips with atmosphere and twisted tension.  
**Buy it if...** you have a lust for gore and are looking for a sicko storyline.  
 OPS2 #42 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



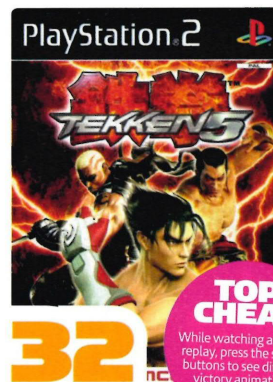
**34**  
**BEYOND GOOD & EVIL**  
 Ubisoft, 2003 **Adventure**  
 Under-appreciated weirdness starring a female photo journalist and her piggy uncle fighting off an alien menace.  
**Buy it if...** you've got an eye for a photo and a penchant for green eyeshadow.  
 OPS2 #40 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



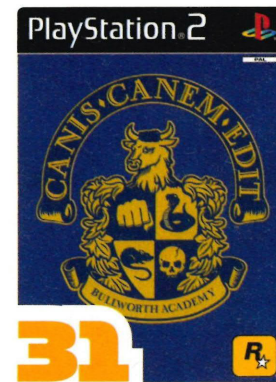
**33**  
**SPLINTER CELL: DOUBLE AGENT**  
 Ubisoft, 2006 **Stealth**  
 Pinnacle of the futuristic stealth series on PS2, this has moral dilemmas to get to grips with as well as nailbiting action.  
**Buy it if...** you can think as well as sneak.  
 OPS2 #79 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**32**  
**TEKKEN 5**  
 Sony, 2005 **Fighting**  
 The King Of Iron Fist Tournament returns with more fighters and fancier settings than ever. The quintessential 'easy to play, hard to master' scrapper.  
**Buy it if...** you heed the call.  
 OPS2 #61 **8/10**

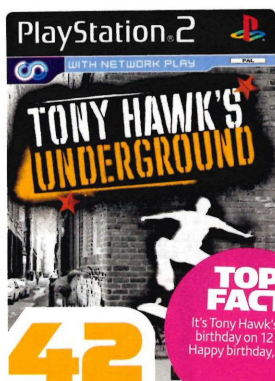
■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



**31**  
**CANIS CANEM EDIT**  
 Rockstar, 2006 **Action**  
 Grand Theft Auto meets Grange Hill for free-roaming adventure fun set in an American private school.  
**Buy it if...** you like melting Jelly Babies in test tubes.  
 OPS2 #79 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT





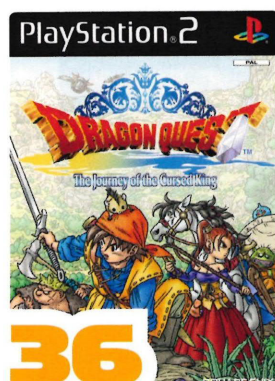
## TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND

Activision, 2003 **Sport**  
With its story-driven trickplay, this is the best of the many titles in the skate series.

**Buy it if...** you ever dreamed of pulling a backside 360° heelflip to fakie.

OPSP2 #40 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## DRAGON QUEST VIII: JOURNEY OF THE CURSED KING

Square Enix, 2006 **RPG**  
A truly epic, old-school roleplayer with alluring visuals and a strong narrative.

**Buy it if...** you've 100 or so hours to spare.

OPSP2 #71 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



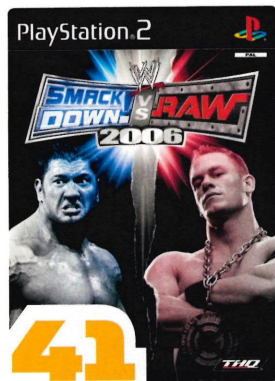
## KINGDOM HEARTS II

Square Enix, 2006 **RPG**  
The stars of Final Fantasy make friends with the Disney crew for a super-cute adventure that's as deep as it is handsome.

**Buy it if...** Donald Duck and Cloud Strife in the same game is your idea of heaven.

OPSP2 #78 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



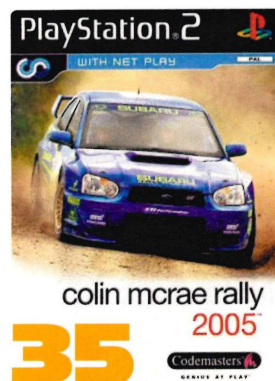
## WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW 2006

THQ, 2005 **Fighting**  
It's not the most recent in the franchise but pound for pound, SmackDown! Vs Raw 2006 is the best wrestler out there.

**Buy it if...** you're a wrestling fan.

OPSP2 #66 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



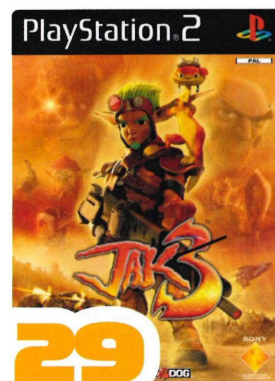
## COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005

Codemasters, 2004 **Racing**  
Rally legend McRae will be remembered not only for his racing, but also for the ace games to which he lent his name. This is the best mud-slider on the market.

**Buy it if...** you live life close to the hedge.

OPSP2 #51 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## JAK 3

Sony, 2004 **Platformer**  
Second only to Ratchet & Clank in the PS2's platformer-cum-shooter stakes, Jak and Daxter's third outing has variety and charm in brightly coloured spades.

**Buy it if...** you're a Jak of all trades.

OPSP2 #53 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

# PLAYSTATION WORKOUT



**Sophie Mason** trains her brain with a four-week course of PS2's best puzzle games

## WEEK 01



**EASY**

## WE ♥ KATAMARI

Yes, we're always banging on about this game, but there's a reason: it's magnificent. Simple to learn, fun with friends and completely hatstand from start to finish, we promise you'll love it.

■ **PLAY IT ON** CO-OP MODE

■ **MUST DO** TRY TO AVOID THE KING'S EYE-LIGHTNING IF YOU LOSE...

## WEEK 02



**MEDIUM**

## PUYO POP FEVER

Move coloured blobs down the screen and match them up with other blobs – it's the basic premise of many a puzzle game, but on PS2, nothing does it better than Puyo Pop.

■ **PLAY IT ON** MULTIPLAYER MODE

■ **MUST DO** USE CHAIN-ATTACKS TO MESS UP YOUR OPPONENT

## WEEK 03



**HARD**

## BOMBASTIC

Things get more complex here as you match up dice on a board with others showing the same number, to set off chain reactions with those next to them that are the same value or one lower.

■ **PLAY IT ON** STANDARD MODE

■ **MUST DO** BLOW UP YOUR MATES IN A MULTIPLAYER GAME

## WEEK 04



**KILLER**

## LEMMINGS

Help suicidally stupid green things get across obstacle courses. You'll need lightning-fast fingers and a super-sharp mind to choose the right bridge and tunnel-making tools before the time runs out.

■ **PLAY IT ON** LEVEL 150 – IF YOU CAN GET THERE

■ **MUST DO** USE YOUR EYETOY TO MAKE BRIDGES WITH YOUR BODY

## TOP CHUMPS

## Hermione Granger

Swot's up, doc?

Alright, love, you're brainy, we get it. But why do you think that gives you licence to nag at us incessantly in that whiny, posh voice? Whoops – we seem to have smacked you in the head with a bench while casting Wingardium Leviosa. Hand must've slipped. Oh, and again! So clumsy. See her in *Harry Potter & The Order Of The Phoenix*







## 28 ONIMUSHA 3

Capcom, 2004 **Action**

Jean Reno stars in this demon-slaying Samurai spectacular that flips between modern day Paris and feudal Japan. **Buy it if...** you think the film *Leon* would have been better with a spear whip.

OPS2 #48 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



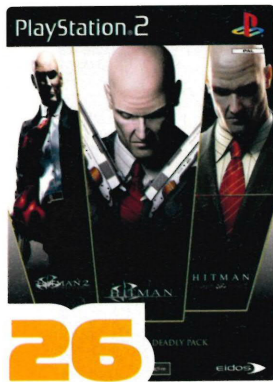
## 27 PSYCHONAUTS

THQ, 2006 **Platformer**

Quirky, funny and genuinely entertaining, this is one of the greatest yet sadly most overlooked platformers on PS2. **Buy it if...** you like a side order of laughs with your gaming.

OPS2 #65 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



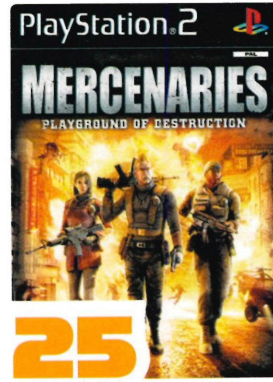
## 26 HITMAN TRIPLE PACK

Eidos, 2007 **Stealth**

All three PS2 games – worth getting for Blood Money alone. Sneak around using disguises and cunning to carry out hits. **Buy it if...** you fancy yourself as a genetically engineered assassin.

OPS2 #88 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## 25 MERCENARIES

Activision, 2005 **Action**

Hijack tanks, demolish buildings and topple a dictatorial regime in North Korea – all while making a pretty penny. **Buy it if...** you think the explosions in Grand Theft Auto are kind of puny.

OPS2 #55 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



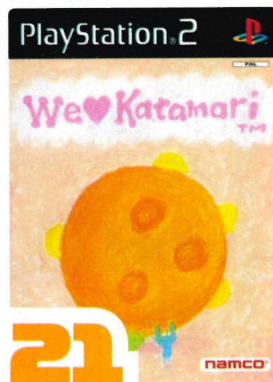
## 22 LEGO STAR WARS II: THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY

Activision, 2006 **Adventure**

The best *Star Wars* game money can buy. It's fresh, funny and cute without being sickly sweet or disrespectful to the films. **Buy it if...** you liked the Ewoks best.

OPS2 #77 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



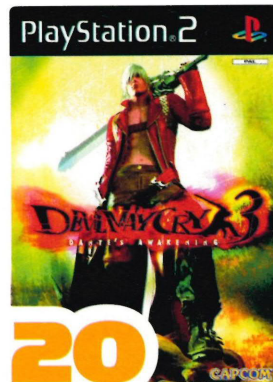
## 21 WE KATAMARI

EA, 2006 **Puzzle**

Completely mental, utterly unique and dangerously addictive, Katamari's genius is in its simplicity. Just roll a sticky ball around a city and collect stuff! **Buy it if...** your life isn't weird enough yet.

OPS2 #69 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## 20 DEVIL MAY CRY 3: DANTE'S AWAKENING

Capcom, 2006 **Action**

Super-hard prequel to the first-rate demon-slaying action series. Buy the Special Edition if you're inexperienced. **Buy it if...** modern games are too easy.

OPS2 #77 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



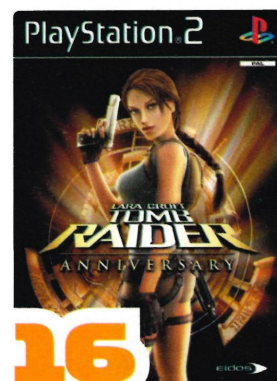
## 19 SHIN MEGAMI TENSEI: PERSONA 3

Atlus, 2008 **RPG**

A sublimely detailed roleplayer that blends thrilling demon-slaying with a unique 'school lessons and socialising' mechanic. **Buy it if...** you have an 'interesting' fringe.

OPS2 #95 **10/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## 16 TOMB RAIDER: ANNIVERSARY

Eidos, 2007 **Adventure**

This stunning revamp of a classic title expands upon the original by extending fiendish tombs and adding extra puzzles. **Buy it if...** you want globe-trotting action.

OPS2 #85 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## 15 GRAN TURISMO 4

Sony, 2005 **Racing**

PS2's most comprehensive and authentic racer offers some 700 of the world's finest cars and 50 tracks to drive them around. **Buy it if...** you never miss an episode of *Top Gear*.

OPS2 #57 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



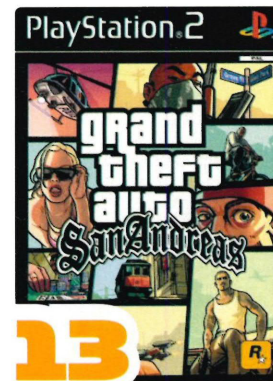
## 14 RATCHET & CLANK 3

Sony, 2004 **Platformer**

This third helping of pan-galactic, combat-centric platforming is a riot of barmy weapons, barmier enemies and glorious environments. **Buy it if...** you want *Star Wars* with smiles.

OPS2 #53 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## 13 GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

Rockstar, 2003 **Action**

A massively ambitious, crime-filled romp with planes, trains and automobiles by the score and 1001 things to see and do. **Buy it if...** you're the original gangster.

OPS2 #54 **10/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT





## DARK CHRONICLE

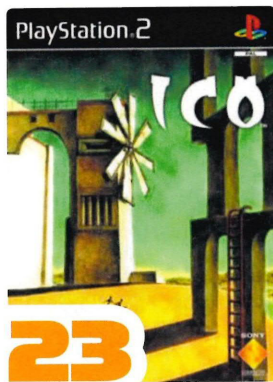
Sony, 2002 **RPG**

An engrossing, attractive Japanese RPG with a great storyline, real-time combat, time travel and town planning among its many delights. Nick's favourite game!

**Buy it if...** you enjoyed Rogue Galaxy.

OPS2 #35 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## ICO

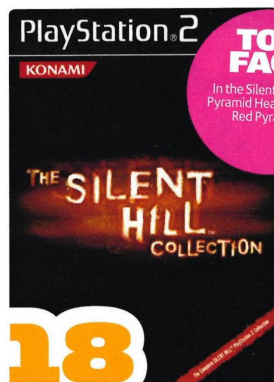
Sony, 2002 **Adventure**

Visually stunning, intensely atmospheric puzzler with simple combat. Reminds you how emotionally powerful games can be.

**Buy it if...** the puzzles in Tomb Raider were a bit easy for you.

OPS2 #69 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## SILENT HILL COLLECTION

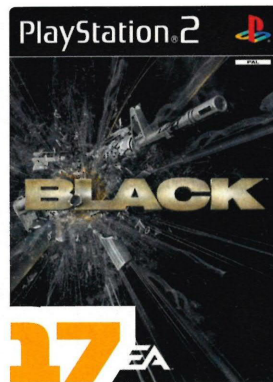
Konami, 2006 **Horror**

A bumper pack of Silent Hill scares: each chapter has you guiding doomed visitors through a twisted, terrifying ghost town.

**Buy it if...** you want to own a meaty chunk of horror history.

Not reviewed

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## BLACK

EA, 2006 **Shooter**

The makers of Burnout set their sights on the shooter genre with delightfully destructive results. As fine a guns'n'ammo game as you could wish for

**Buy it if...** you love to blow shit up!

OPS2 #69 **10/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## SOUL CALIBUR III

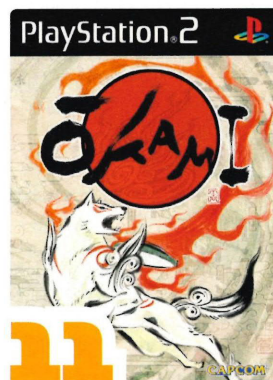
Sony, 2005 **Fighting**

Some purists cry foul at a fighting game involving weapons, but Soul Calibur III is as deep and engaging as they come.

**Buy it if...** you've a hankering for some stunning-looking swordplay.

OPS2 #66 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



## OKAMI

Capcom, 2007 **Adventure**

Restore life to a cursed world with a magic 'paintbrush'. An epic, emotionally charged journey with stunning, picture-book art.

**Buy it if...** you'd like to make the world a nicer place.

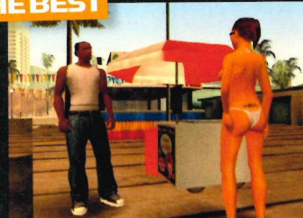
OPS2 #81 **10/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

# THE YEAR IN PLAYSTATION 2003

Jacko is arrested, Johnny Cash dies and the USA invades Iraq. Meanwhile on PS2...

## THE BEST



### GTA: SAN ANDREAS

Action, Rockstar

As far back as we can remember, we'd always wanted to be gangsters. And in this virtual crime spree, we could live the dream.

## THE WORST



### CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON

Action, Ubisoft

An insult to a beautiful film, this is a mess of button-bashing, two-step animation and a horrible camera.

## UNDER-RATED



### WORMS 3D

Strategy, Sega

Critics got hung up on a few glitches in the worms' turn to 3D, and thus talked down a fundamentally fun, tactical game.

## OVER-HYPED



### ENTER THE MATRIX

Action, Infogrames

Touted as 'the fourth Matrix film', this turned out to be rather shallow, despite the involvement of film auteurs the Wachowski brothers.

## FORGOTTEN



### GHOSTHUNTER

Adventure, Sony

Ethereal visuals plus a spooky story make an atmospheric game that sadly suffered from bad camera-itis. It's worth persevering, though.

## NEVER AGAIN!



### MARY-KATE & ASHLEY: SWEET 16, LICENSED TO DRIVE

Mini-games, Acclaim

Whoever put this rubbish on the market should be breathalysed.

## SCENE STEALER



## The beardy bassist

Guitar Hero II  
RedOctane, 2006

Sure, you're the superstar, but Guitar Hero's backing band has a star of its own: the Captain Caveman-a-like on bass. When the camera pans, you can't help but look at this furry funkster, this hirsute hipster, this icon of rock style. What he's looking at, though, we're not sure.



# OPS2 HALL OF FAME



10

GOD OF WAR II  
Sony, 2007 **Action**

Accessible, exhilarating and macho as all hell, the second thunderous outing for PS2's angriest anti-hero is an essential buy. **Buy it if...** you're feeling a little tense – and have a strong stomach.

OPS2 #83 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



09

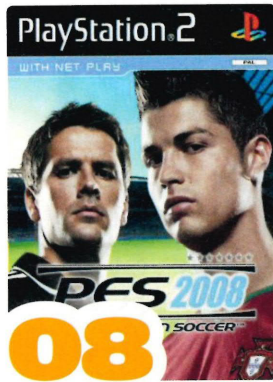
FINAL FANTASY XII  
Square Enix, 2007 **RPG**

The latest in the fabled roleplaying series is as engaging of plot, epic of scale and achingly beautiful as any of its ilk.

**Buy it if...** you're on a quest to find the apex of sword and sorcery adventuring.

OPS2 #81 **10/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



08

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER  
2008

Konami, 2006 **Sport**

The ultimate PS2 kickabout, even more so than last year's fantastic PES 6. Also: plays better on PS2 than it does on PS3. Ha!

**Buy it if...** the world is at your feet.

OPS2 #92 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



07

GUITAR HERO III

Activision, 2007 **Rhythm action**

The best in this rock-tastic series, with real songs, loads of co-op multiplayer options and fiendishly fierce two-player battles.

**Buy it if...** you're a legend in your own living room. Or anyone else's.

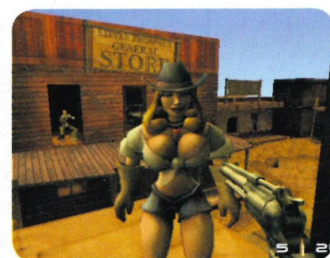
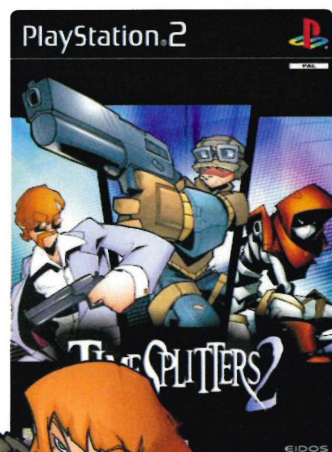
OPS2 #93 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

RUNNER-UP!



ON THE PODIUM!



TIMESPLITTERS 2

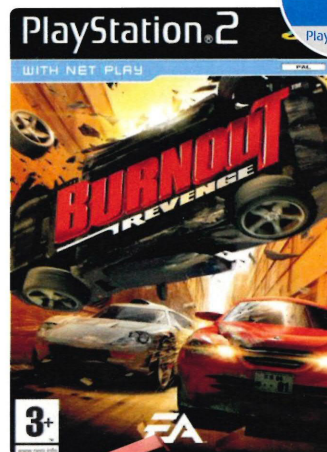
Eidos, 2002 **Shooter**

Killzone, Medal Of Honor, Call Of Duty – they all pale in comparison to this, simply the best first-person shooter on PS2. The singleplayer affair stands up by itself but it's in the expansive multiplayer modes that the game really shines. A copy of 'Splitters 2 plus a multitaip equals countless hours of fun.

**Buy it if...** you have friends.

OPS2 #25 **10/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



BURNOUT: REVENGE

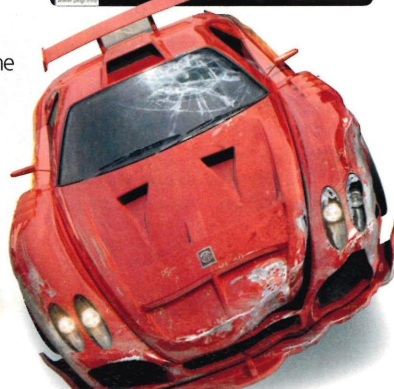
EA, 2005 **Racing**

Insanely chaotic race'n'crash action – speed through rush-hour traffic, shoving ultra-aggressive opponents off the road, then watch slow-mo replays of the massive explosions that result. Great online multiplayer, too. All the Burnouts are classics, but Revenge is the definitive version.

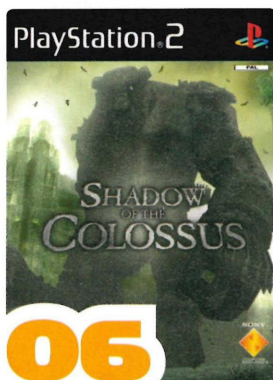
**Buy it if...** VROOM! SMASH! and BOOM! are your favourite words.

OPS2 #64 **10/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT







06

## SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS

Sony, 2006 **Adventure**

Battle a series of gigantic monsters in a world touched by artistic genius and have your heart warmed by PS2's most original and unique game.

**Buy it if...** you've got the wanderlust.

OPS2 #68 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



05

## METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SUBSISTENCE

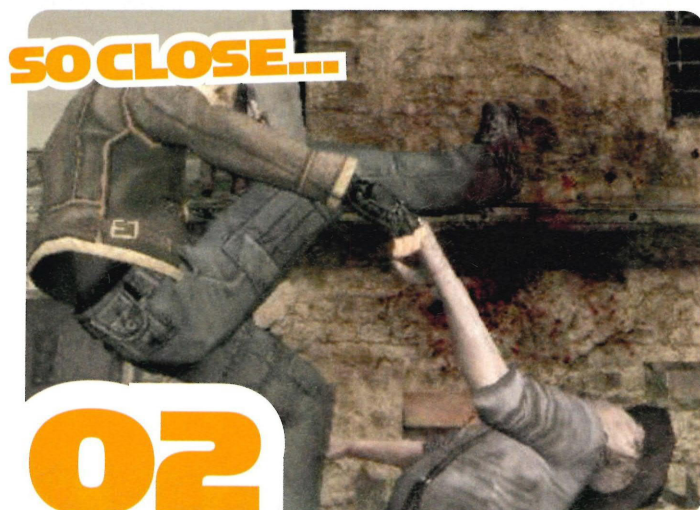
Konami, 2005 **Stealth shooter**

The finest blend of sneaky and shooting that money can buy includes two extra discs containing a mass of extras.

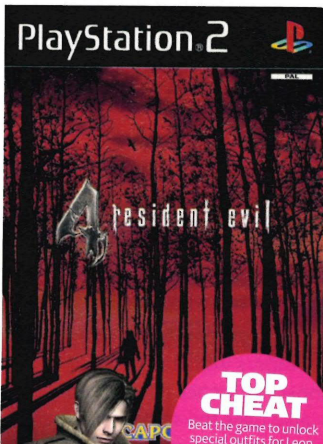
**Buy it if...** you like to stay hidden.

OPS2 #78 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



02



TOP CHEAT

Beat the game to unlock special outfits for Leon, Ada and Ashley.



## RESIDENT EVIL 4

Capcom, 2005 **Survival horror**

An immaculate adventure that outshines every other horror title and most other games full stop. A blend of beguiling plot, puzzles, boss battles and barmy villagers out for your blood, you can play the main game through numerous times without getting bored and there are bonus missions galore too. Essential.

**Buy it if...** your veins contain blood.

OPS2 #65 **10/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



TOP CHEAT

To make boats hover, enter  
↑ ⊙ ↑ ⊙ → ⊙ →  
↑ ⊙ ⊙ during gameplay  
without pausing.

01  
WINNER!

## GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

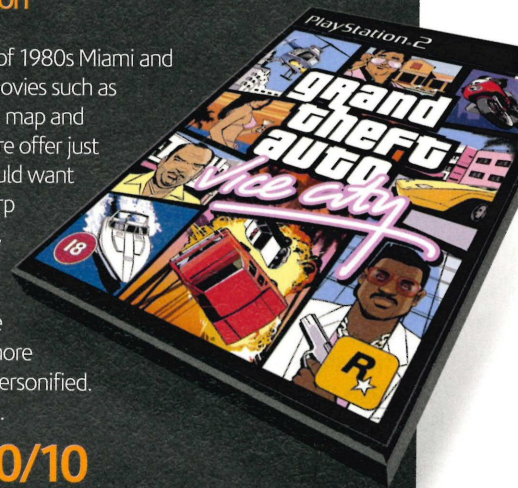
Rockstar, 2004 **Action**

Set in Rockstar's version of 1980s Miami and taking inspiration from movies such as *Scarface*, the open-world map and freeform mission-structure offer just about everything you could want from a game: a razor-sharp script, superb voice work, awesome music, fast driving, helicopter gunships, shooting up the 'hood and oh, so much more besides. Gaming genius personified.

**Buy it if...** you own a PS2.

OPS2 #27 **10/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

HALL OF FAME  
FEEDBACK FORMOI! YOU'RE  
WRONG!

Dear OPS2, I disagree with your Top 100 in the following respects:

GAME NAME	OPS2 NO.	MY NO.

I am right, you are wrong, so change the list immediately. Thankyou.

Name

Email

Alternatively email feedback to [psnation@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:psnation@futurenet.co.uk)



# PS3 IN OPS2

All you need to know about what's happening in next-gen



## FLIGHT OF CLANCY

Fly the unfriendly skies with **Tom Clancy's Hawx**

PUB Ubisoft DEV Ubisoft Bucharest ETA Autumn WEB ubi.com/uk



There's one major problem with flight sims. They look brilliant on the box, with jets dodging heatseekers or spewing leaden death. Inevitably, though, you find yourself scanning the horizon for a speck to lock onto. Sigh.

Hawx, despite having the worst name ever, has found a way around the problem. Use the electronic flying aids provided and it's all very Ace Combat. Switch off the assistance though and it gets interesting.

Things change from the in-plane view to an external cinematic camera, and while you fly normally, you get to savour all the aerobatics on screen.

The key skill to master is 'drifting', which is the jet fighter equivalent of a handbrake turn. Get it right and you can pull off stunning manoeuvres.

For example, you can nose dive at the ground before drifting into an upright position and opening the throttle to kick into a vertical ascent.

Master the technique and you'll even be able to flip the plane 180° to fire at bogeys while flying backwards.

While flying in this external view is showy and very exciting, it does cut you off from features you can only use while in the traditional cockpit view.

### HUD and thunder

The best of these is the Enhanced Reality System. Like the Ghost Recon HUD, it projects useful info onto the screen. Want to get into a good firing position behind an enemy, or dodge missiles? ERS will plot a route as a series of hoops to fly through.

Happily you've got backup from fighters, bombers, and infantry – including the Ghost Recon team.



↑ You can choose to watch your acrobatics from outside the plane

Just as in GRAW 2, you use the D-pad to select units and issue orders, so you can assign bogeys to fighters, issue bombers with targets, and task the Ghosts to locate enemy units. Hawx also uses the same voice-control tech as the promising Endwar.

Finally, completing missions nets you XP that can be used to enhance abilities and unlock skills, while cash will enable you to modify your warbird in readiness for online play.

### HOW COMPLETE?

TOM CLANCY'S HAWX  
CONCEPT ALPHA RELEASE  
PRE-ALPHA BETA



## HIGH ON STRIFE

With future shooter **Haze** almost finished, it's time to choose sides: will you be a doped-up techno-trooper or a canny rebel?

PUB Ubisoft DEV Free Radical Design ETA 30 May WEB haze.game.com

**C** A quick recap for the uninitiated: Haze is set during a war between the Mantel Corporation and a militia group called Promise Hand.

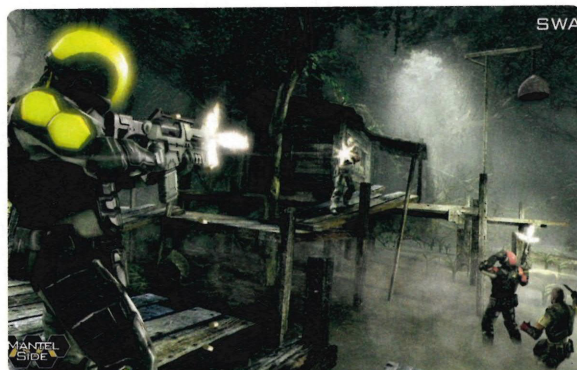
The rebels are a makeshift band of skirmishers, the Mantel troopers fight under the influence of Nectar, a drug that numbs their perception – screams and corpses fade so as not to trouble their consciences – while enhancing their fighting abilities.

### Fade away

Initially the temptation is to favour the tech-heavy troopers, firing up Nectar with **12**. But the rebels' hit and



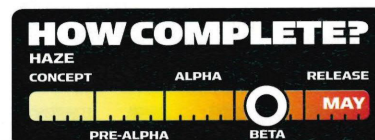
↑ Mantel troopers have tech-heavy kit



↑ Multiplayer promises to be a war of wits

run tactics have advantages too – like a play-dead move that renders you invisible to the doped enemy. Winning as the underdogs is very satisfying.

The best thing is that, thanks to the main game's dual gameplay – you switch sides mid-game – it acts as a launch pad for the multiplayer mode.



## CHOP AND CHANGE

Sega's 1989 arcade classic **Golden Axe** is coming to PS3

PUB Sega DEV Secret Level ETA Summer WEB sega.com/gamesite/goldenaxe

**X** White face paint, red hair, obscenely small bikini... She looks like the sluttier sister of Heavenly Sword's Nariko, but this is Tyris Flare – star of this remake of 1989 arcade game Golden Axe.

She's got a taste for revenge and a talent for dismemberment. And as well as swords and magic, Tyris can capture beasts from enemies and then ride them into battle.

### Creature comfort

The first beast we meet is an Abrax, a cross between a Chocobo from Final Fantasy and a dinosaur. It packs a lethal tail spin and breathes fire.

Then there's the Lynth: a big cat with horns. It's the fastest beast in the game, and is handy for jumping over obstacles. If you're looking for power



↑ Swords, magic, bikini-armour: yep, just another morning in Ibiza

the elephant sized Krommath is a better bet. Our fave is the Mirigore. Nicknamed 'beast killer', he looks like a gorilla on steroids and is particularly fond of ripping other creatures apart.

To win a beast you need to take out its rider and hop on board. We saw Tyris use two methods: a flying kick

## PS3 TOP 5 CHARTS

The UK's best-selling titles – and that's official!

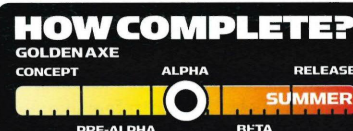
- 01 RAINBOW SIX VEGAS 2**  
 Publisher Ubisoft  
 OPS2 Score Not reviewed
- 02 COD4: MODERN WARFARE**  
 Publisher Activision  
 OPS2 Score 10/10
- 03 ARMY OF TWO**  
 Publisher EA  
 OPS2 Score 6/10
- 04 RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN**  
 Publisher Sony  
 OPS2 Score 7/10
- 05 UNCHARTED: DF**  
 Publisher Sony  
 OPS2 Score 9/10



↑ Tyris can capture beasts and ride around on them. Lucky beasts

that knocked her enemy into the dust, and a fireball spell that killed the rider, but upset the Lynth he was straddling. Hurt beasts too often and they'll start to attack indiscriminately.

Tyris will also have to tackle enemies like witch doctors and the heavily armoured Bitter Knights. Old enough to remember the original game? Secret Level has also revealed that Death Adder, its evil overlord, will be the final boss in this remake.





# PS3 REVIEW

Viking: Battle for Asgard



Release Out now Publisher Sega Developer Creative Assembly Price £49.99  
Players 1 Web [sega-europe.com/viking/en](http://sega-europe.com/viking/en) Also try Ninja Gaiden Sigma

## VIKING: BATTLE FOR ASGARD

Plenty of brawn, but unfortunately not so much brains



When you think 'Viking', you think big boats, bigger beards and plenty of pillaging, right? What you don't think of are permanently oiled bodybuilders with a fatal allergy to the sea – chaps like Skarin, the hero of Viking: Battle for Asgard.

He's caught up in a cosmic cat fight. The goddess Freya is fuming because Hel, guardian of the Underworld, is letting her dark soldiers run wild.

Freya packs you off with a shiny amulet called Brisingamen to liberate the land. Any kind of ransacking and looting is out; freeing captured warriors and waging huge battles is in.

You'll only be wandering the magical land of Midgard for minutes before you're set upon by Hel's forces.

Swinging your axe for the first time it becomes horribly apparent that Skarin skipped some classes at Viking school. There are only two attacks, heavy and light, and both feel like heaving a sack of meat through the air.

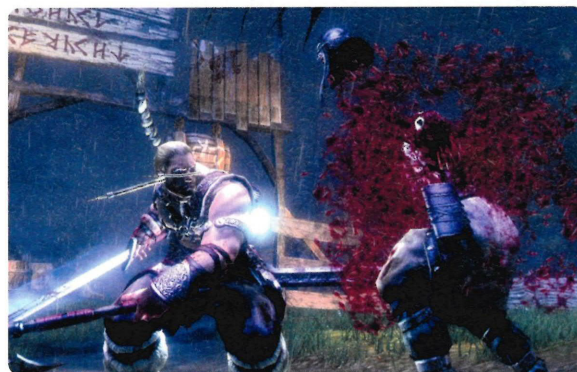
Luckily, the enemies have their own issues to deal with and don't take advantage of your obvious failings.

Being chased? Cross some invisible boundaries and watch your hunters give up and trudge back to their posts.

### Danish blues

Time it perfectly and you can watch them have a nervous breakdown as they're torn between the desire to slaughter you and stay on their marks.

↓ That shiny thing is a powerful magic amulet



Funny, but it hardly fosters a sense of Norse mayhem.

The only good thing to say about the scrapping is the quality of the gore. Plenty of games splash the claret, but slice through a man's torso here and you'll see entrails. Entrails! That's a dedication to the gruesome sadly seen all too rarely these days.

PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK

## VERDICT

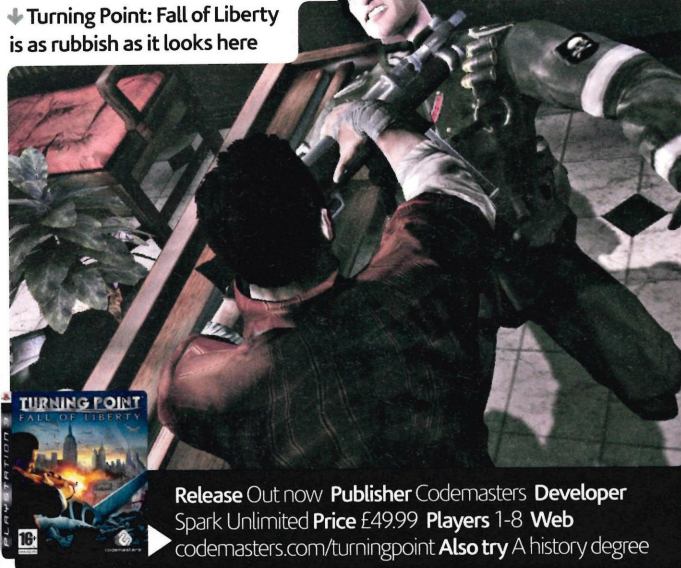
- 😊 Huge world
- 😬 Gory combat
- 😬 Little to do in all that space
- 😬 Combat mechanics are weak

Where you should feel like a Norse action hero, you only feel like a dumb meathead, and no amount of entrails can make up for that

# 6



↓ Turning Point: Fall of Liberty is as rubbish as it looks here



**Release** Out now **Publisher** Codemasters **Developer** Spark Unlimited **Price** £49.99 **Players** 1-8 **Web** [codemasters.com/turningpoint](http://codemasters.com/turningpoint) **Also try** A history degree

# DARK SECTOR

Takes a stab at greatness



**Release** Out now **Publisher** D3 **Developer** Digital Extremes **Price** £49.99 **Players** 1-10 **Web** [darksector.com](http://darksector.com) **Also try** Half-Life 2: The Orange Box

## TURNING POINT

Fall of Liberty is like the past 10 years of shooters never happened

The nicest thing you can say about Turning Point is that all its faults cancel each other out. If you fixed one of its problems, it'd be either totally impossible or a pushover.

Instead, it stays competitive like a school sports day – it works because everyone's equally bumbling and rubbish.

Case in point: the guns are useless. The game's set in an alternate 1953 where Germany won the war, so it includes an array of posh Nazi uber-tech.

But when it comes to aiming any of its supposedly advanced guns, you've got as much control as a small child with a firehose.

There's a precision aiming option, but that obscures literally a third of the screen – including whatever you're aiming at – with an enormous metal gunsight.

Mind you, it doesn't matter too much, because the Nazis themselves are such idiots that if you train your fire on a patch of air that they're running towards,

they'll wander through the bullets like a suicidal conga line.

They don't seem to care when you throw grenades at them either, but then the potato mashers you're armed with won't even scratch a wooden table.

### Home of the brave

The Americans are equally stupid: they regularly run straight into heavy fire or into explosions.

Yet they love ordering you about. When they're not telling you to singlehandedly take down tanks or brave an alley of snipers, they're bossing you around levels that loop back on themselves like a theme park queue.

Textures, objects, even entire chunks of scenery are reused, giving you a weird feeling of déjà vu as you bumble past the same half-destroyed boxcar for the second time in two minutes.

Sure, the game is aimed at casual players, but that's not a convincing excuse. Genre-king Call Of Duty is one of the most mainstream games on PS3.



↑ Rubbish AI means everyone runs around like headless chickens

PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK  
**VERDICT**

Why would you play this when you have the Olympics of shooters on hand in CoD?

**3**

Dark Sector gets off to a shaky start. The opening stage features the kind of duck-and-cover gunplay that's by now grindingly familiar (Rainbow Six Vegas, Uncharted: Drake's Fortune, blah blah blah).

It gives no indication of the rank weirdness to follow. But keep the faith, fans of mutant gore, it goes on to impress.

You play as a CIA agent with a mutant arm that grows a glaive (a vicious throwing weapon).

And the game's middle section hits an impressive rhythm,

flowing from gunfight to puzzle to new power to stunning locale to new enemies and back again.

But then it dives headfirst into what feels like room after room of busywork battles against the same groups of mutants.

PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK  
**VERDICT**

Worth weathering the doldrums for the good bits, but don't rush through or you'll miss them

**7**

## PlayStation® Official Magazine - UK



### PREVIEWS

Hawx  
Street Fighter IV  
Dead Space  
Star Wars: Force Unleashed  
Haze  
Golden Axe

### REVIEWS

Grand Theft Auto IV  
GT5 Prologue  
Viking: Battle for Asgard  
Sega Superstars Tennis  
Dark Sector  
Turning Point

### FEATURES

Mirror's Edge  
How Blu-Ray Won

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AND MUCH MORE!

**ON SALE NOW!**



# PSP IN OPS2



Your quick guide to the best new games for your handheld friend



↑ It wouldn't be Final Fantasy without Summons such as Bahamut here



↑ One of the first bosses you'll face

→ Crisis Core is a prequel to FFXII so Sephiroth is still a goodie



## CORE BLIMEY!

Final Fantasy VII: Crisis Core is shaping up to be a classic FF eye-popper

PUB Square-Enix DEV Square-Enix ETA May WEB crisiscore.com

**Fact:** Final Fantasy VII is the most influential roleplaying game ever. People still talk about its excellent story, its strong characters, its emotional ups and downs.

Crisis Core acts as a prequel to FFXII. It focuses on the life of Zack: a member of evil mega-corporation Shinra's elite military. Zack, although not a playable character in FFXII, played a large role in it.

Plenty of other familiar faces will be making a return, too, such as Cloud, Sephiroth and Aeris. And newer members of the Final Fantasy family are also making a comeback, too, such as Vincent Valentine, Weiss and Nero from Dirge Of Cerberus.



↑ This game focuses on Shinra and this is its Blade Runner-esque headquarters

Crisis Core will feature real-time battles, using a new system called 'Digital Mind Wave'. The battle screen has three reels in the upper left-hand corner that rotate as long as the player has enough SP. If all three reels align with the same symbol, Zack will gain whatever action it depicts.

Meanwhile, magic can be cast and Summons can be, er, summoned using a command bar. While the detailed mechanics of the fighting system have yet to be unveiled, it's clear that Crisis Core plays more like Final Fantasy XII than the series' turn-based norm.

The Materia system is back. Materia are stones imbued with various powers so that when equipped, they provide the character with spells such as Blizzard or Fire, or special moves such as Steal.

### A cut above

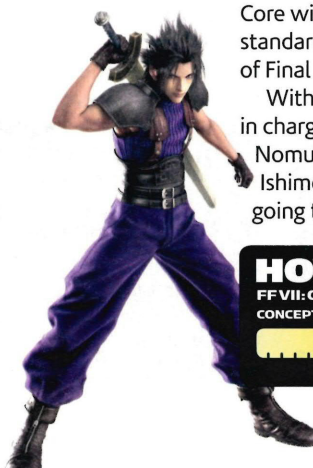
Crisis Core not only features top-notch in-game graphics, but blistering CG cutscenes in 16:9 widescreen. It's surprisingly difficult to tell cutscenes from actual gameplay.

Crisis Core is also fully voice-acted, and given the standards set by FFXII,



↓ This is the game in which Aeris becomes a Flower Girl

↓ You play as Zack, Cloud's pal in FFXII



we can expect it to be perfectly delivered. In fact, we're sure Crisis Core will meet exceptionally high standards, given that the Godfathers of Final Fantasy are all involved.

With FFXII director Yoshinori Kitase in charge of production, Tetsuya Nomura as designer and Takeharu Ishimoto composing, Crisis Core is going to be an absolute stunner.

### HOW COMPLETE?





# DASH IN HAND

Fortune favours the **Boulder Dash Rocks!**



PUB EA DEV 10tacle Studios ETA April WEB [boulder-dash-rocks.com](http://boulder-dash-rocks.com)

**A** Happy-go-lucky diamond prospector Rockford is back. This time he's up against the evil Von Tentacle, who's trying to steal his beau's heart with the lure of diamonds. And that's the cue for a host of brain-teasing adventures in what promises to be a tantalising mind-muddler.

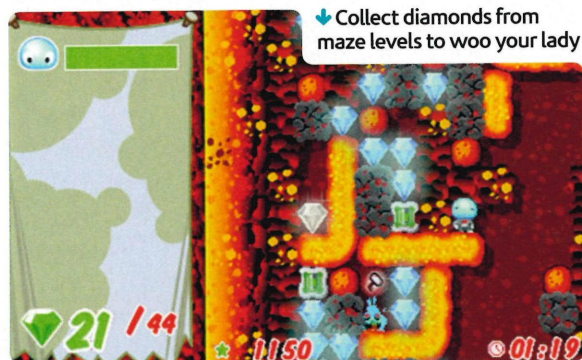
Levels are designed as mazes, with strategically placed sparkly diamonds hidden behind unbalanced boulders and near patrolling monsters.

## The Rockford Files

There are destructible environments that Rockford can plough through, but



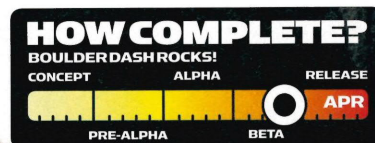
↑ Unlike real diamonds, these sparklers don't cause civil wars in Africa. Hooray!



be careful – freshly cropped shrubbery can cause a landslide.

And monsters, such as the fantastically silly Evil Lettuces, can be slain by dropping rocks on their heads, or with a quick ray gun blast.

Multiplayer is also present, as well as a time attack mode. Add in a massive 130 levels, and Boulder Dash is ready to rock.



## PSP TOP 5 CHARTS

Big sales on a little console! The biggest right now are...



**01**

**PES 2008**

Publisher Konami  
OPS2 score 8/10



**02**

**FIFA 08**

Publisher EA  
OPS2 score 8/10



**03**

**THE SIMPSONS GAME**

Publisher EA  
OPS2 score 8/10



**04**

**NEED FOR SPEED: PROSTREET**

Publisher EA  
Score Not reviewed



**05**

**MEDAL OF HONOR: HEROES 2**

Publisher EA  
OPS2 Score 7/10

# SOME BIKE IT HOT

**SBK-08 Superbike World Championship** has the thrills and the spills you need for the new season

PUB Black Bean DEV Milestone ETA May WEB [blackbeangames.com](http://blackbeangames.com)

**X** World Superbikes had its heyday in the 1990s and is still emerging from the ensuing slump. To aid this, it's stayed pretty much the same every year, making it tough for Milestone to do anything new with the game.



The most obvious changes are the riders and teams, of course. But unfortunately, what you can't see here is the authentic lineup of 2008 tracks.

SBK-08 features 11 tracks, which is four fewer than the series plans to visit this year, although many tracks that are featured are fantastic. There'll also be new Challenges to go with the

↓ There are 11 real-life tracks to scream around on sweet-handling superbikes



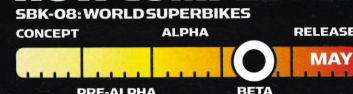
quick race, single weekend or full championship options.

SBK-07 ran at a furious pace, and this sequel also captures brilliantly the shaking, sliding, screaming nature of bikes so powerful they just want to flip you off the back.

Independent rear brakes add a nice extra level of control to racers that are already really sweet-handling, though still rather heavy-steering.

Mind you, what we played was an early, incomplete preview version. Milestone could yet surprise us...

## HOW COMPLETE?

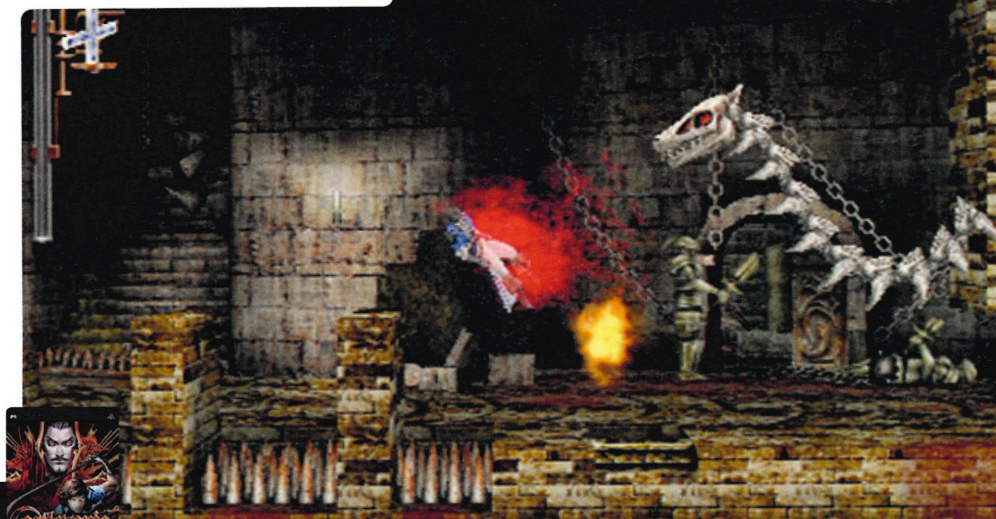




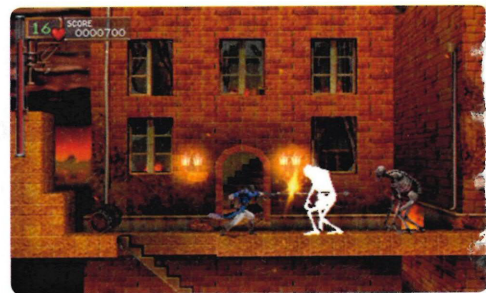
# PSP REVIEW

## Castlevania: The Dracula X Chronicles

↓ The pack comprises this remake of Rondo Of Blood, plus two classic games

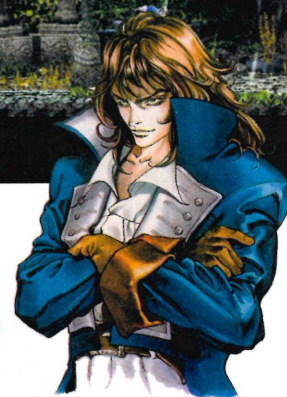


Release Out now Publisher Konami Developer Konami Price £29.99  
Wi-fi Yes Web [tinyurl.com/3ahh85](http://tinyurl.com/3ahh85) Also try Ultimate Ghosts'n'Goblins



# CASTLEVANIA

Dracula X Chronicles proves that great games never truly die



The Dracula X Chronicles is a remake of Rondo of Blood, a Castlevania game originally released on a Japan-only console called the PC Engine in 1993.

For Castlevania fans, Rondo of Blood has long been the rare curio of the classic vampire-bothering series. Nigh-impossible to find, it bridges the gap between the hardcore platforming of the older games and the action-roleplayers that followed on PS2 and Nintendo DS.

Well, incredibly, Konami has not only included the original Rondo of Blood in this release as well as the remake, but also its seminal PS1 sequel Symphony of the Night.

The remake itself, though, is bloody spectacular. Ostensibly released to coincide with the series' 20th anniversary, The Dracula X Chronicles unites yet again the (un)holy trinity of Castlevania lore, the folk who've been responsible for the series' finest moments: series producer Koji



Igarashi, character artist Ayami Kojima and composer Michiru Yamane.

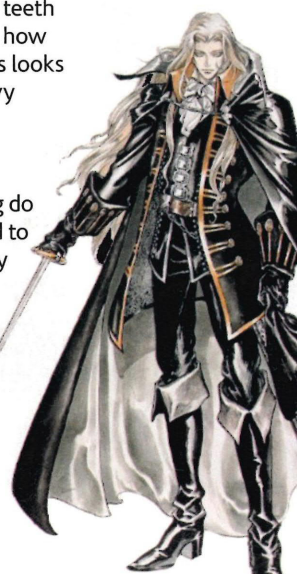
The upshot of this is that the game plays, looks, and sounds absolutely incredible. Really, Nintendo DS owners are going to be spitting teeth when they get an eyeful of just how pretty The Dracula X Chronicles looks compared with their pixel-heavy Castlevania titles.

### Vampyrotechnics

Okay, hit detection and jumping do feel a little bit wonky compared to the solid, sprite-based gameplay of the original. But you merely have to feel these out and adapt.

These are very difficult games in fact. But this is retro gaming territory, a land that has no respect for life.

↑ Some new monsters have been added to the remade Rondo



Happily, in a concession to those players unfamiliar with The Dracula X Chronicle's retro ancestors, you can now save (yes, save!) between levels. So losing those three lives is not the controller-trashing hell it once was.

Purists, fear not, though: the checkpoints at which the game saves are few and far between. You can also replay any level whenever you wish, to explore the multiple paths available to the two playable characters.

If three epic games aren't enough for you, in a neat twist, you can also participate in the game's Boss Rush mode with a friend over ad hoc.

The Dracula X Chronicles is an incredibly good value package for £30: perfect for retro game fans.



PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK

## VERDICT

- ☺ Includes the rare, original SotN
- ☺ The remake rocks
- ☺ Added multiplayer
- ☺ Satisfyingly challenging

Proof that Konami love us, this is a very generous thank you to fans and a great introduction for newcomers

# 9





↓ All the MGS elements are in, but PO+ still disappoints

**Release** Out now **Publisher** Konami **Developer** Kojima Productions **Price** £14.99 **Wi-fi** Yes **Web** tinyurl.com/38tp9f **Also try** SOCOM US Navy Seals Fireteam Bravo 2

## MGS: PORTABLE OPS PLUS

The new Metal Gear Solid is sadly minus the fun

**X** Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops is one of the best long-form action-adventure games on PSP. Now, how do you expand upon that?

Well, MGS: Portable Ops Plus has more maps, more characters, more weapons, more careers for your soldiers, even a discount price. But the emperor – or rather the Snake – has no clothes.

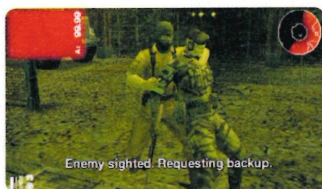
There are two sides to Portable Ops Plus: offline and online. Offline play consists of the deceptively named Infinity Mission, which allows you to hone your online skills in a series of randomly generated missions.

Each mission is a straight A to B stalk, with not a thread of plot connecting these missions.

An MGS game shorn of story and dialogue is a bit like playing chess with rocks and berries instead of ornately carved pieces. The core gameplay is there, yes, but it lacks pizzazz.

### Portable oops!

Multiplayer quickly descends into a frantic melée where skill and tactics mean little.



There's every possibility you could find yourself up against a player who's invested their entire life into buffing their squad, so you face a rival team with better weapons and the stats to fire them with 100% accuracy.

Online roleplaying games have systems in place to stop maximum-level players strolling into town and kicking the faces off newbies. But MGS: PO+ doesn't. Oh, and the fact that you can effectively lose members of your squad permanently during these encounters? A little unfriendly for novice players.

Konami has put a Beginner's Lobby in PO+, but it merely underlines how inhospitable the game is to newcomers.

MGS: PO+ must be played on its own terms; but sadly those terms are unfair, frustrating and time-consuming.

PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK  
**VERDICT**

Disappointing. Should have been a download – as it is, it simply gets us down

**5**

## FORD RACING

Go Off Road for some ford-by-four action



**Release** Out now **Publisher** Xplosiv **Developer** Razorworks **Price** £19.99 **Wi-fi** Yes **Web** icewaterdesert.com **Also try** MX Vs ATV Untamed



Many of us quite fancy the idea of hooning around in a Mk1 'bubble arch'

Escort and whale-tailed Sierra Cosworth. But few have fantasies about tearing up mud tracks in a 4x4. And this is Ford Racing Off Road's main problem.

The trails and courses are challenging. The 4x4s have entertaining, well-weighted handling. The career mode has plenty of content.

But it feels like Off Road has been created by taking the path of least resistance.

Breathtaking leaps across chasms and death-defying descents could have been included: but they weren't.

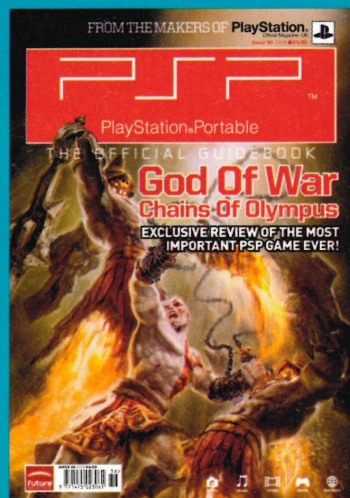
OffRoad gets the basics right, but doesn't try anything more adventurous.

PlayStation 2  
Official Magazine UK

**VERDICT**

Lacks the spark of passion or layer of imagination that would have made it stand out

**6**



### PREVIEWS

Lego Indiana Jones  
Final Fantasy VII: Crisis Core  
Boulder Dash Rocks!  
Harvey Birdman: Attorney At Law  
Lego Batman  
SBK-08 Superbikes

### REVIEWS

God of War: Chains of Olympus  
Flatout Head On  
Final Fantasy II  
Castlevania: Dracula X Chronicles  
Sonic Rivals 2  
MX Vs ATV: Untamed  
Patapon  
Fading Shadows

**ON SALE NOW!**



PLAYSTATION EDUCATION

# #17 HANDS

Get your mitts out – this month we're featuring the finest fingers on PlayStation. So please put your hands together for...



## RAVER GLOVES

As seen on Sonic the Hedgehog, Sonic Riders (2006)  
Handy for Grabbing gold rings; making some noise with the whistle posse.



## THE VARNA DEMON ARM

As seen on Serph, Shin Megami Tensei: Digital Devil Saga 2 (2007)  
Handy for Slashing up demons, especially ones standing behind you.



## THE GOD HAND

As seen on Gene, God Hand (2006)  
Handy for Unleashing special attacks with added invincibility; fouling in football matches.



## ASTANI BATTLE GAUNTLETS

As seen on Vexx, Vexx (2002)  
Handy for Avenging the death of your grandfather; lighting bonfires; carving your name on tree trunks.



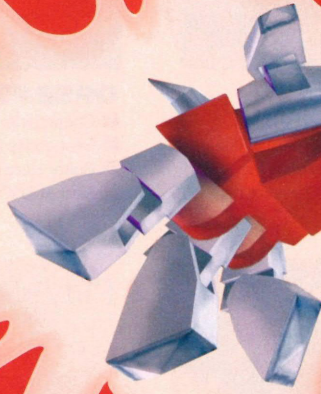
## SNAKE FISTS

As seen on Lei Wulong,  
Tekken 5 (2005)  
Handy for Being the King of The Iron  
Fist; tickling people.



## THE POWER FIST

As seen on Rayman, Rayman 3:  
Hoodlum's Revenge (2003)  
Handy for People with no arms.



## THE NON-SLIP GRIP

As seen on Indiana Jones,  
Lego Indiana Jones (2008)  
Handy for Clamping onto  
any Lego steering wheel  
or accessory; being  
unable to hold  
anything that isn't  
Lego-branded.



## THE INVINCIBLE MANICURE

As seen on Lara Croft, Tomb Raider  
Underworld (2008)  
Handy for Maintaining perfect,  
unchipped nails even when  
climbing stone walls.



## THE PAW OF AWE

As seen on King Kong, Peter  
Jackson's King Kong (2005)  
Handy for Picking up ladies;  
hitting ladies' boyfriends;  
holding onto the Empire  
State Building.



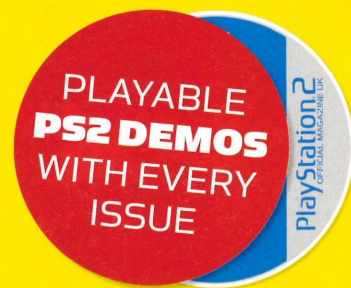
NEXT  
MONTH:  
ROBOTS



PlayStation 2  
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# BACK ISSUES



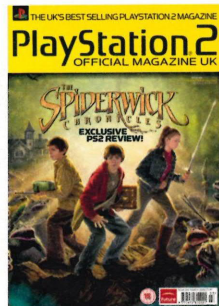
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- Ratchet & Clank
- Off Road
- Odin Sphere
- Fantasy demos special



### OPS2 #96

- Spiderwick Chronicles
- Lego Indy and Batman
- PS1 treasures
- PlayStation heroes demos



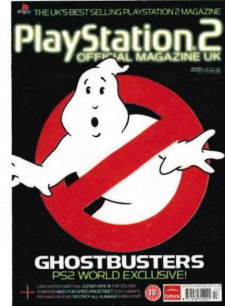
### OPS2 #95

- Ferrari Challenge
- Star Wars: Force Unleashed
- Persona 3 review
- High School Musical demo



### OPS2 #94

- Alone In The Dark
- The art of God of War
- RealPlay reviews
- Asterix Olympics demo



### OPS2 #93

- Ghostbusters
- Best and worst of 2007
- Guitar Hero III review
- Best of 2007 demos



### OPS2 #92

- Sega Superstars Tennis
- Sims 2 Castaway
- Ratchet & Clank weapons
- PES 2008 demo



### OPS2 #91

- Crash of the Titans
- Godzilla: Unleashed
- SmackDown vs Raw
- Stuntman: Ignition demo



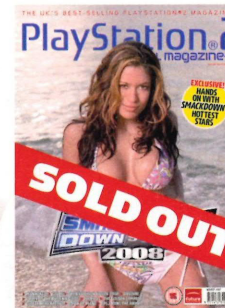
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- The Simpsons
- Mercenaries 2
- 20 years of Metal Gear
- Crash Of The Titans demo



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- Syphon Filter: Dark Mirror
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- Star Wars: Force Unleashed
- Rogue Galaxy demo



### OPS2 #88

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- Guitar Hero: Rocks the 80s
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- 10 playable demos



### OPS2 #87

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- Tomb Raider walkthrough
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### OPS2 #86

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### OPS2 #85

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### OPS2 #84

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- Brian Lara 2007 demo



### OPS2 #83

- God of War II
- Games and films
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- Heatseeker demo



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# PlayStation 2

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22 MAY

## THE HULK SMASHES PS2!

We report on the damage  
in our exclusive review

**PLUS**  
Alone In The Dark reviewed  
Iron Man reviewed  
TNA Impact previewed  
Ghostbusters previewed



### PLAYABLE DEMOS

Black  
Second Sight  
TimeSplitters 2  
Medal Of Honor:  
Frontline  
Rainbow Six 3

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# SPLIT SCREEN

One man, two ladies. Woo them both in **Leisure Suit Larry: Magna Cum Laude**

## METHOD 1 THE COWGIRL

### MISSION START

Loveable loser Larry Loveage, nephew to the infamous casanova Larry Laffer, has just started at college. Ready to disperse some sweet, sweet loving, Larry follows in his uncle's footsteps and wastes no time in heading out to find some honeys for a squeeze. Yes, this game is *that* classy.



✦ After a wander through the hormone-soaked halls of residence, you happen upon Sally Mae, newly arrived from the Wild, Wild West.



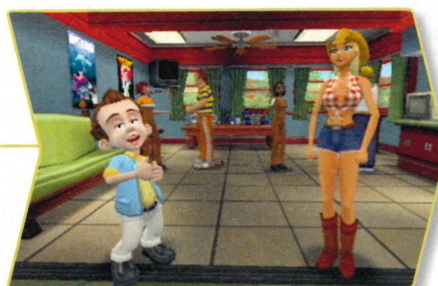
✦ Judging by the size of her Daisy Dukes (her boots!), this cowgirl likes country music. So you fake a phone call, pretending to be a producer.



✦ She falls for the phone lies, so it's time for Sex on the Beach. That's vodka, peach schnapps, orange juice, cranberry and more vodka.



✦ Your mad cocktail-shaking skills are clearly impressing her, given that she's guzzled half of it down. Drink, my pretty, drink...



✦ Now it's time to show her your fancy footwork and prove to this ho that you know how to hoe down.



✦ Tired from all that disco grinding, you chat her up a bit more. If only you weren't so distracted by her brightly coloured shirt.



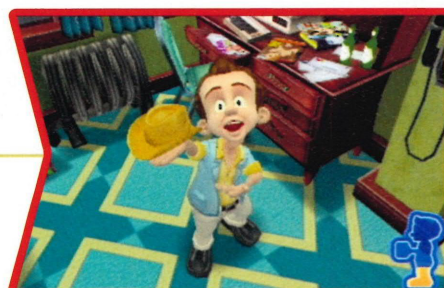
✦ Drinking games are the way to get her to loosen up. We demand a game of Quarters: the more she misses, the drunker she gets. Win!



✦ Wahey! You've got her back to your room and she's misplaced her shirt along the way! Time to whip out your big surprise...



✦ Oh... it turns out she doesn't like naked poetry readings. You should have locked the door, you amateur!



### MISSION COMPLETE

Ah well, never mind. You can't win them every day. And she has left you her rather nice stetson hat as a memento! Besides, there are plenty more cows on the ranch...

**FLIP TO SEE HOW  
LARRY SEDUCES THE  
QUIET GIRL!**



# play

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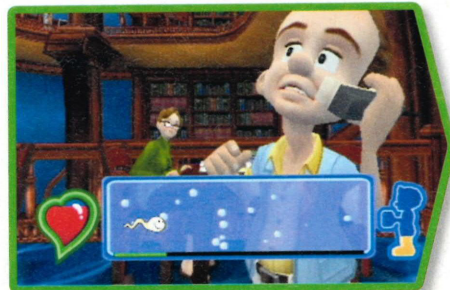
# SPLIT SCREEN

One man, two ladies. Woo them both in **Leisure Suit Larry: Magna Cum Laude**

## METHOD 2 THE QUIET GIRL

### MISSION START

Okay, so your escapades with Sally Mae didn't go according to plan. So get back out there. You head over to the library in the hopes of catching a literary type who won't take much to impress. Target acquired, and one prank phone call leaves the lass, Iona, giggling at your wit.



✦ Oops! Turns out, Iona's uncle is the Dean, and your prank call ended in him losing a £200 bottle of cognac. She begs you to get it back.



✦ You stumble off in hopes of finding that tramp who hangs around the Greek Quad: he always has booze. Wait, there he is!



✦ He has the cognac. But how to get it? Of course! Bust out some awesome dance moves to make him drop the bottle in awe.



✦ Now we have an excuse to get into Iona's room. Ignore the cans of whipped cream and woo her with your feminist poetry.



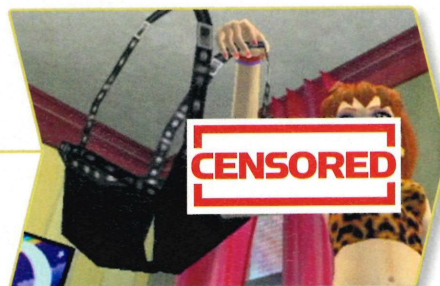
✦ She's still a bit frosty, but if there's one way to get into her woolly sweater, it's by beating her at Quarters. Game on!



✦ Demonstrating that you have a sensitive side, you offer to make over this dumpy dame into a diamond diva, Trinny and Susannah-style.



✦ Success! One sexy makeover later and the mojo's working. Iona's getting a little hot under the collar and asks us if we could...



✦ ...WOAH! What the heck?! It's always the quiet ones that turn out to be freaks. Do not want, do not want, do not want!



✦ Escape plan formulated, we switch off the lights and make our escape. Iona will be too busy to notice thanks to our sly distraction...



### MISSION COMPLETE

Phew, it's a good thing we avoided THAT. We even had time to steal a souvenir. Although, frankly, we might go and burn it. With fire. To cleanse us of the hideous memory.

### MISSION SELECT

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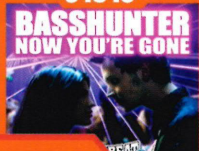
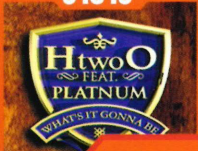
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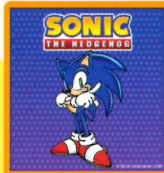
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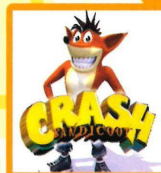
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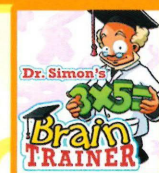
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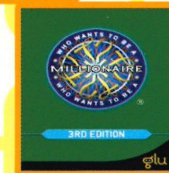
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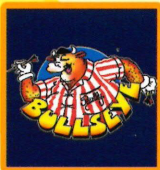
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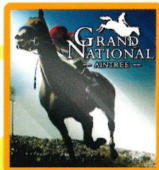
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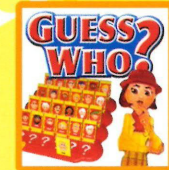
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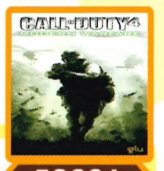
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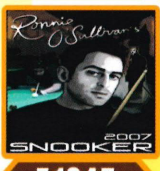
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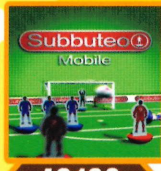
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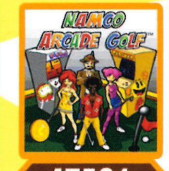
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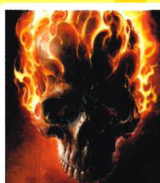
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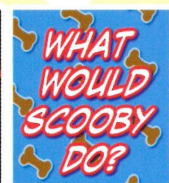
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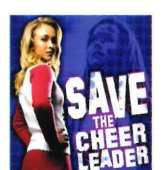
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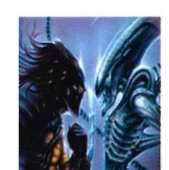
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