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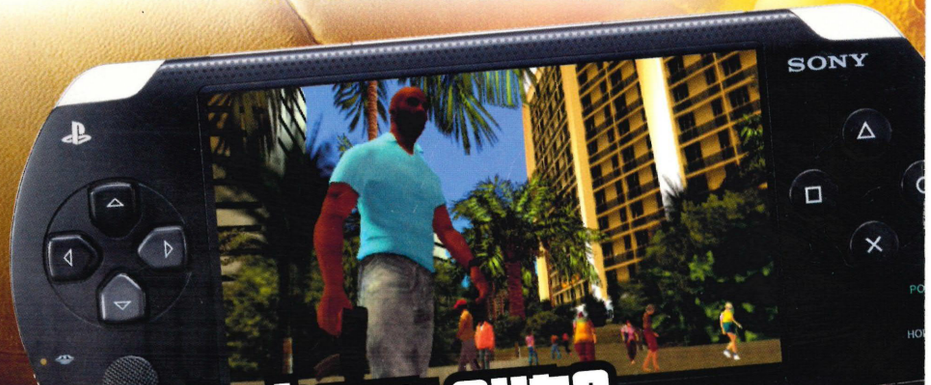
EXCLUSIVE UK REVIEW

PES 6
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER™

FOOTBALL PERFECTION IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND



LATEST HOT GAMES

DEFINITIVE REVIEW
KILLZONE LIBERATION
The Sony shooter played to death!

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RAINBOW SIX VEGAS
The boys are back in action and coming to PSP

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164 PSP GAMES REVIEWED AND PREVIEWED THIS ISSUE

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IF THERE'S ONE game in the office that instigates fierce rivalries between magazine teams, it's the mighty *Pro Evo*. As soon as the latest version arrives in the office fans gather around the TV to see what's new. Imagine the jealousy, then, when we were the only mag in the office – actually make that the country – to get the full review version of *PES 6* on PSP. Yeah, PS2 and Xbox mags could play it on big tellies but none of them could have a sneaky game at their desk while no one was looking. Ah, the wonders of PSP.

Besides our huge review of the footy game of the year, we also look back at the last year of the PSP itself, looking at just why the DS is so much more popular and how people in the industry view Sony's handheld.

Elsewhere we have a ton of previews, most exciting of which is *Rainbow Six Vegas*, and is looking very nice indeed. We also have an exclusive interview with the game's creative director, Daniel Bérubé. If that wasn't enough, we take a look at up-and-coming titles *Silent Hill*, *Family Guy* and *Football Manager 2007*.

Plus, we have all the usual great stuff for you, such as more on *GTA* and the PS3 – although not too much, it's not out until March after all.

Simon Griffin,
Deputy Editor

BIG THIS MONTH

[06] COVER STORY **PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6**
Exclusive review plus a look back at the history of the series.

[32] PREVIEW **RAINBOW SIX VEGAS**
Tom Clancy's finest hit Sin City – first details.

[62] REVIEW **KILLZONE: LIBERATION**
We've been waiting so long for this, was it worth it?

CONTENTS

GO>PLAY ISSUE ELEVEN

IT'S COMING HOME!

[06] PES 6 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER™

Exclusive review of the latest and greatest Pro Evo!

REGULARS

[14] Insider

All the latest from PSP land, including:

- Details on the PS3 delay plus first details on launch games for US and Japan
- Report on all the PSP games shown at this year's Tokyo Game Show
- Ubisoft leak reveals some interesting PSP games in the pipeline

[28] PSPost

More magical musings from all you faithful readers. What a clever bunch you are

[78] Widescreen

The four UMDs that might get released this month are given the once over

[104] Subscribe

Want this amazing mag delivered to your door every month? Check out our fantastic offers

[106] Directory

The definitive verdict on every PSP game

[114] Next month

Find out what the future holds

[83] Solutions

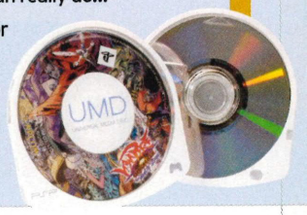
Need help on your PSP games? Then you've come to the right place!

- All the mini-kits and red power bricks found in *Lego Star Wars II: The Original Trilogy*
- Cheats and tips for all the latest games

[95] Connect

The bit in the magazine where we show you what else your PSP can really do...

- Atari Lynx emulator
- Latest homebrew news
- New peripherals tested



This month's games

REVIEWS

[62] KILLZONE: LIBERATION

[64] MOTOGP

[66] FIFA 07

Reviews

[62] KILLZONE: LIBERATION
We put Sony's superb shooter through its paces to bring you the definitive verdict

[77] Bubble Bobble Evolution
[66] FIFA 07
[72] Ford Street Racing - L.A. Duel
[74] KAZooK
[64] MotoGP
[76] Passport To... London
[68] ProStroke Golf: World Tour 2007
[70] Tiger Woods PGA Tour 07

Previews

[32] RAINBOW SIX VEGAS
The Tom Clancy fan-favourite makes it to PSP and is looking awesome

[42] Avatar: The Last Airbender
[43] Battlezone
[44] Bliss Island
[35] Bomberman
[49] Capcom Classics Collection: Reloaded
[34] Coded Arms: Contagion
[51] Dave Mirra BMX Challenge
[45] Death Jr. 2: Root Of Evil
[48] Dungeons & Dragons Tactics
[37] Earthworm Jim
[40] Family Guy
[38] Football Manager 2007
[45] Hard Rock Casino
[41] Jeanne D'Arc
[42] Marvel: Ultimate Alliance
[50] NBA '07
[47] Online Chess Kingdoms
[50] Scooby-Doo! Who's Watching Who?
[36] Silent Hill Origins
[47] Steel Horizon
[46] Ys: The Ark Of Napishtim

FEATURE

PSP - ONE YEAR ON

We look at what the first year of the PSP's life has been like

[52]

COMING SOON

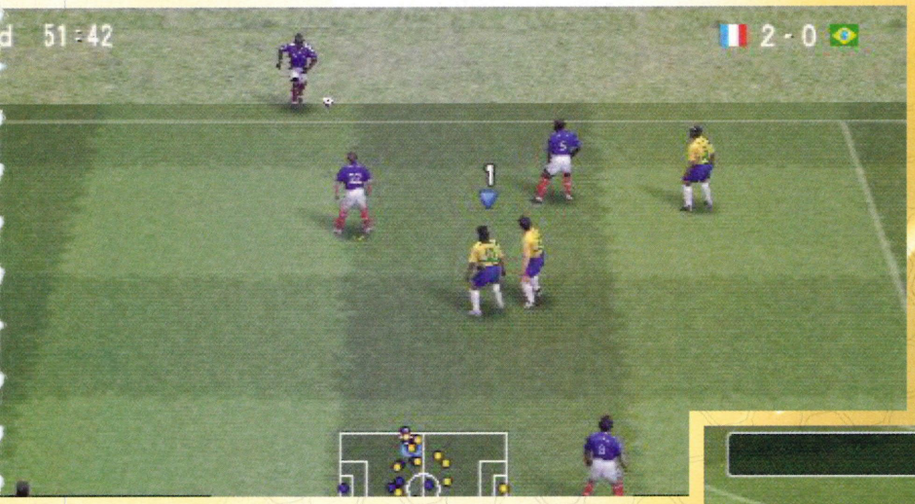
[32] RAINBOW SIX VEGAS

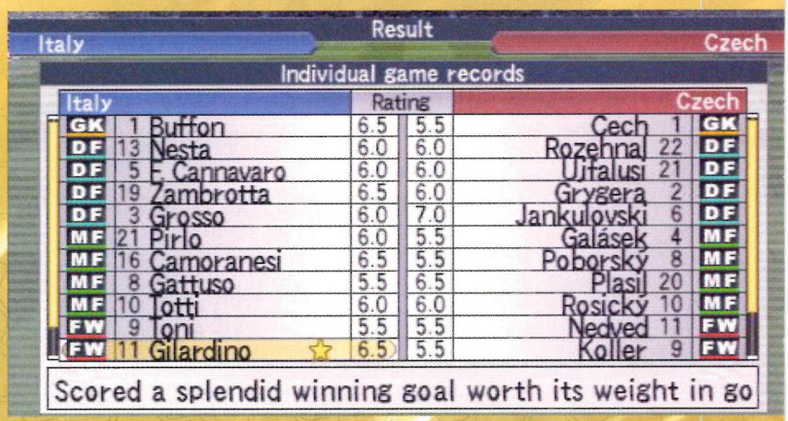
[36] SILENT HILL ORIGINS

PES 6

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER™

Can Konami make up for last year's own goal?





THE Big QUESTIONS

Another update, does it really offer anything new? Compared to last year's PSP effort this is overflowing with new stuff, including the Master League and brand new teams. So, the short answer would be – yes, stop asking stupid questions.

The camera on *PES 5* was a bit rubbish, have things improved? Absolutely. The default camera is much tighter on the action now, although far enough away that you can see what's ahead. A rather happy medium you might say.

OUT: 3 NOV

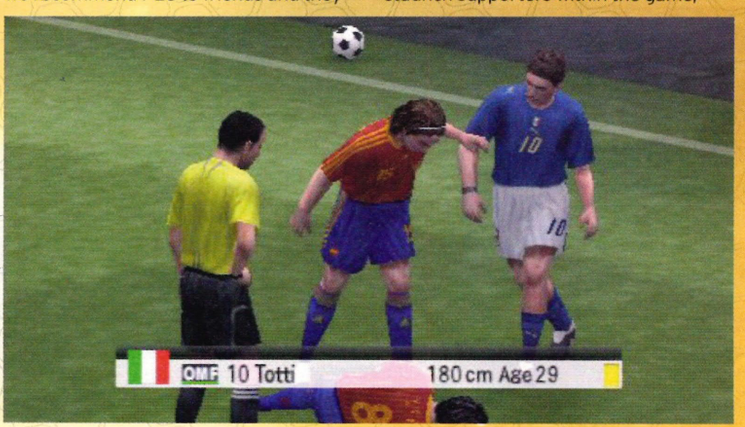
Publisher **Konami** / Developer **In-house** / Price **£34.99** / Players **1-8** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN Multi-player**

Even though *PES 5* is consistently riding high in the PSP charts and has done since release, it doesn't mean it's that good. In fact it was actually something of a disappointment, especially to long-term *PES* fans. The drop in price to £19.99 may well have helped it stay in the top ten, but it has also been aided by the fact that even though it's weak by *PES* standards, it still wipes the floor with the competition.

World Tour Soccer is fun for a while but is ultimately unfulfilling, while *FIFA* – which is on its third iteration after just a year – is filled with the trademark EA style but just lacks the soul that *PES* captures so well. It saddens us when we recommend *PES* to friends and they reply "*Pro Evolution* what?" and follow it up with "It hasn't got the official kits has it?". The inevitable negative response to that question sees their eyes glaze over with disinterest as we go on to explain just how great *Pro Evo* is. Just imagine if Konami somehow wrangled the official licence away from EA – they could take over the world! Even with staunch supporters within the game,

[Imagine if Konami wrangled the official licence away from EA]

Offside rulings are still an annoyingly regular occurrence – it's a funny old game



Things get heated between the players if a dirty foul has been committed

HISTORY OF PES

With Pro Evolution Soccer 6 set to redefine football videogaming not only on PSP, but current and even next-generation home consoles this winter, we thought it high time to take a look back over the last decade of Konami's soccer supremacy. Do join us...

GOAL STORM

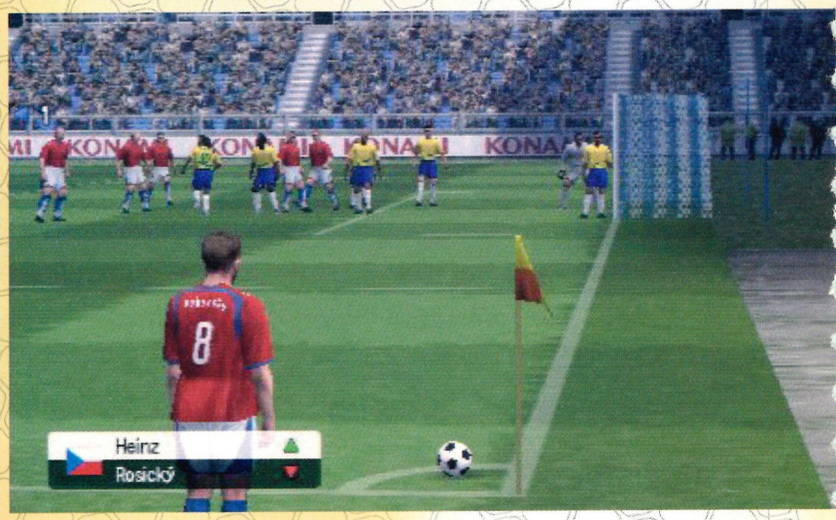
Year Released 1996

Some will have you believe that *PES* has its origins way back in the SNES *International Superstar Soccer* series, but that's a somewhat misguided notion. In fact, for quite some time, Konami developed two separate footballing franchises, *ISS* and *Winning Eleven*, which as you will all know, is known as *PES* in the West. *Goal Storm* was the PAL territories' name for the first *WE* game, and featured rubbish graphics, sub par gameplay and a general air of averageness with every kick of the ball. Quite modest beginnings for one of gaming's greatest success stories...

ISS PRO

Year Released 1997

Here's where the confusion begins. For some unknown reason - probably to do with brand recognition - Konami decided to run with the name *ISS* for the PAL versions of all the PSone *Winning Eleven* games. Regardless, this is the point that football gaming changed forever. Fantastic graphics, player likenesses and an unparalleled understanding of the sport it represented;



such as Thierry Henry and John Terry, the masses still hand over their cash for the latest *FIFA* come release day.

Things are beginning to change though and with every passing year, sales of *Pro Evo* creep closer and closer to those of its EA rival, which is not only great for *PES* fans, but is equally beneficial for those who insist on buying *FIFA*. Just imagine if EA hadn't had any real competition in the genre for the last few years, where would we be then?

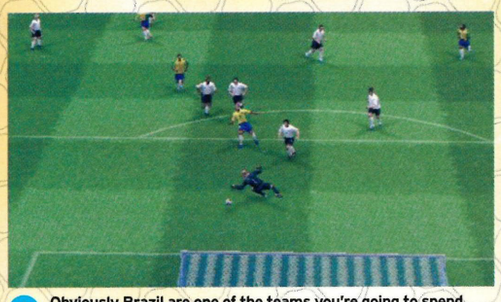
Anyway, after slating last year's *PES 5*, you're probably wondering exactly where we're going with this. It's clear that the PSP version of *PES 5* didn't have a great deal of thought put into it. Konami appeared to have simply taken the PS2 version and stripped it down to its bare essentials. Out went the Master League and with it any longevity. While it's fun to have a blast on a quick game every now and again, the real meat of *Pro Evo* is in the Master League, which sees you starting off with a rubbish roster of players, whichever team you pick. Do well to earn the club money and climb the table and you'll be able to bring in talent, pretty much like every league mode ever. Take this away from *Pro Evo* and you're left with a very limited game. Yes, the Wi-Fi multi-player is great but even that is far from perfect. The controls also take some getting used to with the PSP having two less shoulder buttons and one less analogue stick. *PES* makes use of pretty much the entire PS2 pad so mapping all those controls to the PSP was a difficult task and one that Konami did as well as they could.

[Sales of Pro Evo creep closer and closer to those of its EA rival]

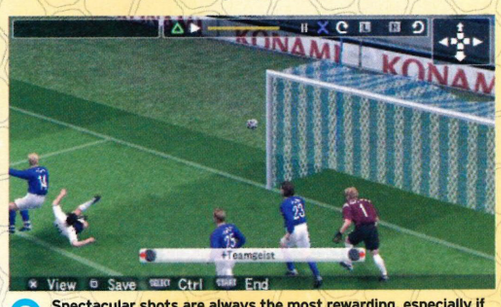
So, how does this year's edition fare? Well, it's infinitely better, you'll be pleased to hear. The Master League is back in all its glory with all the options of its big brother. In fact, it feels pretty much identical to the PS2 version only shrunken rather than cut down to size. Of course the controls remain changed and you lose a couple of things as a result, but nothing that really affects the gameplay greatly.

The way *PES* plays changes slightly every year and we always bemoan having to learn all its little traits and foibles all over again. However, despite our protests it makes it a more rewarding experience and at least

Players quickly get injured if you keep sliding in - in fact we sent Zidane to hospital in our very first match



Obviously Brazil are one of the teams you're going to spend plenty of time with



Spectacular shots are always the most rewarding, especially if you didn't mean to do them

ISS Pro fast became the football connoisseur's game of choice. The through ball, hitherto unseen in a soccer game, was the single greatest innovation the genre has ever seen. It turned digital footy from a fun aside into a serious pastime, allowing for intelligent passing moves, patient build-up play and some fantastic goals.

ISS PRO 98

Year Released 1998

ISS Pro laid the groundwork, but the 1998 version, featuring Fabrizio Ravanelli and Paul Ince on the cover, took the ball and ran with it. Smoother, better-defined players, faster gameplay (with the ability to change direction mid-sprint), countless new animations and, crucially, a differentiation between the left and right

boot – at the time, it was superb. In retrospect, quick players were just too good – the likes of Ronaldo and Owen could practically win games on their own by bursting through flagging defences. Still, the signs were there that Seabass and his development team were getting ever closer to greatness.

ISS PRO EVOLUTION

Year Released 1999

Now you can see where the name *Pro Evolution Soccer* came from! 1999's version did exactly what it said on

Analyse the match once it's over to see where you can improve

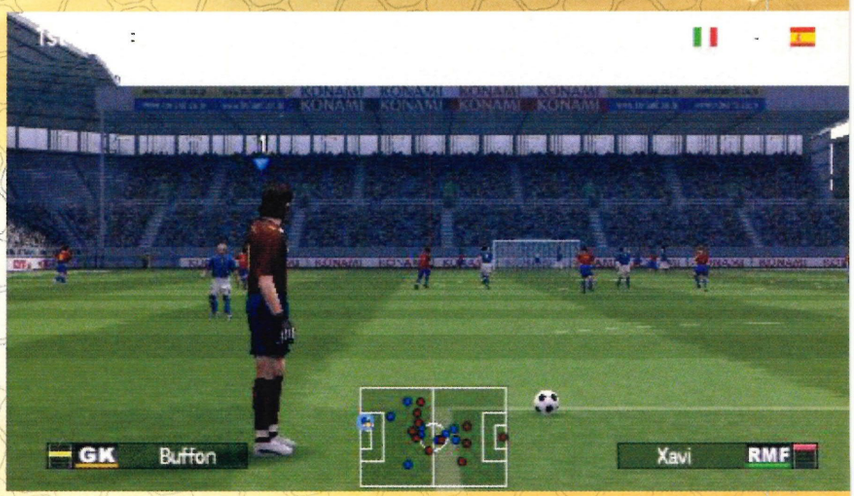
Some of the likenesses are spot on, others not so much

An Italian, getting a yellow card? Never!

puts everyone on equal terms for a short time. This year's *PES* is even closer to the real thing than before with goals being even less frequent. Of course if you want every game to be a goal-fest then you'll be wanting the Hollywood-style gameplay that *FIFA* possesses. However, if you want a game that rewards you – eventually – for determination and skilled play, then *PES 6* is the way to go. Several facets have been changed to aid this realism, most notably the passing and the keepers. The passing is now far less accurate for many players and if you try doing anything too fancy with a player who doesn't have the skills to match what you're trying to attempt, then you will usually come a cropper and the ball will fall to the feet of the opposition. Try the same thing with a player renowned for their passing proficiency and more often than not your move will come to fruition. Understandably this does frustrate to begin with and it is a little unfair on those who may not be football fanatics and don't know every single thing about every single player. Of course, this does add an incentive to learn your favourite team, which some might find appealing.

[The keepers have been improved so that it's much tougher to score]

As we mentioned, the keepers have also been improved so that it's much tougher to score. Most keepers are now more likely to get a fingertip save where before they would have let it hit the back of the net. These improvements don't



the tin - an evolution of everything that had come previously. Better passing, player movement, more teams and the introduction of the life-sapping Master League meant the best *ISS* yet, but unfortunately, the game was still being massively outsold by EA's vastly inferior *FIFA* series.

ISS PRO EVOLUTION 2

Year Released 2000

By this point, the *ISS* series was screaming out for more power. The subtlest changes yet, with only experienced players able to spot the differences between this and the previous effort. The most noticeable change? Far more variety in through ball possibilities, so you could finally play them down the channels and in midfield without them going astray. Yes, that's all.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER

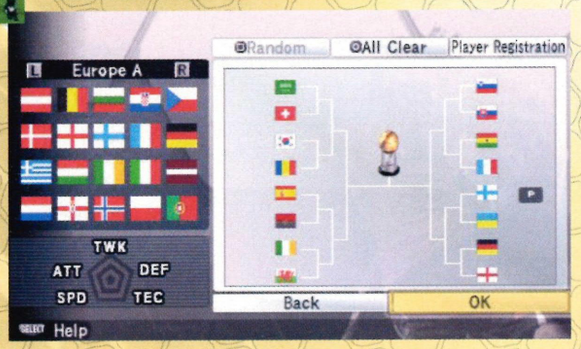
Year Released 2001

With the PS2 came the first *PES* title, and it was slightly underwhelming. Visually sharper than its predecessor, but only slightly, and with a slim amount of gameplay changes, *Pro Evolution Soccer* arrived in the then next-gen with a whimper. Still a fantastic football sim, but not the revolution many were hoping for. Also, it was far, far too hard to score.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2

Year Released 2002

After the concerns of *PES 1*, its sequel arrived and allayed many a football fan's worries. The visuals were now definitely at PS2 standard, with facial expressions, highly detailed character models and far superior animation. Games felt more organic than before - you could quite comfortably recreate the action of a Saturday afternoon Premiership tie, and with more licences and clubs than ever before, that was not such an unfeasible possibility. As ever, *PES* had its niggles - sloppy goals trickling in from the edge of the box in particular, but nevertheless, this was the game of *PES* fans' dreams.



make all the keepers better and they are also now more likely to spill the ball if they don't catch it firmly. This adds a little more realism to proceedings, as no keeper catches every single shot without flinching. If off balance they can now carry the ball out over the line for a corner or, God forbid, a goal. As frustrating as that might be, if it happens to you there's no denying that it spices things up a little.

Another new addition that changes the pace of the game is the option to take a quick free kick by pressing both shoulder buttons. What this kick usually lacks in accuracy it makes up for in the opportunities it presents as the opposing team try to react.

Not everything is a huge improvement though and unfortunately crosses seem to have been tampered with. Well, not the actual crosses but more the reaction of the forwards you are crossing to. If they do manage to get their head on it, the ball will often go wide or sail over the top of the goal as if they have a head shaped like a giant Toblerone. Scoring in general is tougher, as we mentioned, and sometimes it does feel a little too difficult with world-class players putting shots wide over and over again until you begin to despair.

[Scoring in general is tougher and sometimes it does feel too difficult]

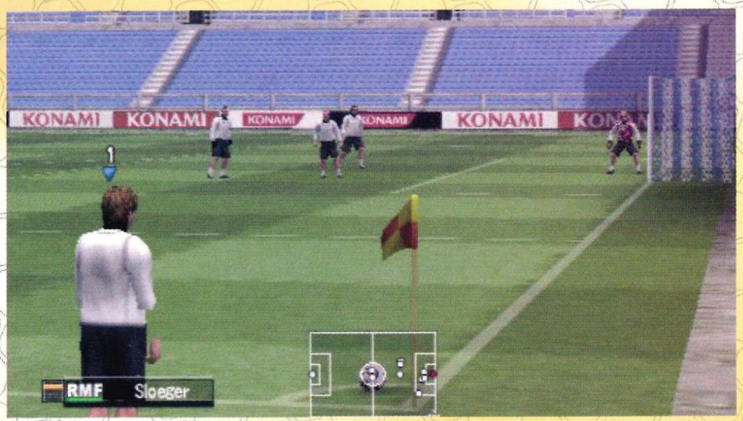
The skill void between teams is much more apparent now too, with the top-tier teams being fantastic and the lower ranks being next to useless - not good if you like to play with random teams in multi-player. With up to eight players in multi-player there are likely to be arguments about what team you'll pick anyway, so it's not a major problem.

Even if you don't have any friends to play with, you are still given plenty of things to do, such as set up a league or play a cup; all the usual *PES* stuff really. The training ground is available so you can hone your skills and, of course, the Edit feature is still present. Therefore, if you have too much time on your hands you can recreate the official kits that Konami did manage to secure.

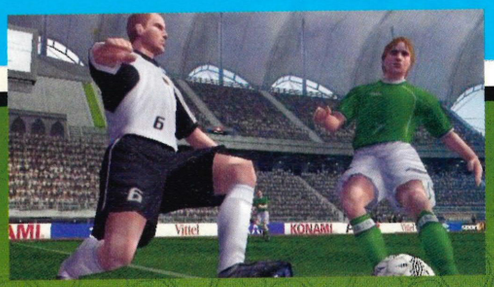
If you plan on taking *PES* on any long journeys - and let's face it who wouldn't - then there's a handy battery life extender. This turns off unnecessary elements such as the music, cheering and other sound effects - handy, eh?

Another feature to survive the transition is the ability to transfer data to and from the PS2 version, so if you're rich and can afford to buy the game for both consoles you'll never have to leave

The penalties are still annoying and that is one area where *FIFA* is better



The training ground helps to perfect the now much trickier corners



PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 3

Year Released 2003

A smooth evolution once again, fixing *PES 2*'s niggles and improving the overall game to enhance the immersion of playing in a football match. The pace of the game was slightly slower than before, allowing for a more measured approach to football – concentrating on your Master League at home again. PES Points also make a return and allow you to buy all sorts of cool stuff from the in-game shop, such as players, classic teams, ball types and more in order to spice up your football experience.

Despite the usual teething problems with the alterations to the gameplay, this is a massive improvement over last year's effort. Having spent some time tailoring *PES* to the PSP rather than just giving us a cut-down version, Konami has crafted the most well-rounded football game to grace Sony's handheld yet. Yes, *FIFA* isn't bad but this just runs rings around it. Forget about official licences and kits and concentrate on the gameplay – this has it by the bucketload. If you own a PSP and you like football there really is no reason to leave *PES 6* on the sidelines. ■ **Simon Griffin**

The best footy game on PSP! Stop reading and get buying. **91%**

If you're only a little bit dirty the ref will use the touchy-feely approach

a strong passing game and patient build-up play. Also, by putting Italian terror-ref Pierluigi Collina on the cover, Konami really breached the mass-market with *PES 3*.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4

Year Released 2004

Appearing on Xbox for the first time, *Pro Evolution Soccer 4* also took its very first steps online. However, the game was not without its problems. Although it was still by far the best simulation on the market, buggy goalkeepers and crippling online lag made it a somewhat disappointing package. Also, the game was beginning to creep into *FIFA* territory, with beachball physics, sweet spot goals and high-scoring matches. It didn't stop us playing it for an unhealthy amount of hours of course, but it was worrying all the same.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5

Year Released 2005

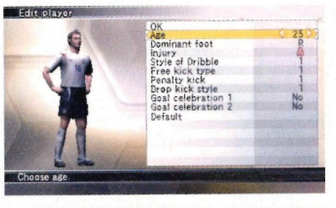
The most recent *Pro Evo* has split opinion across the board. Some hate its slow pace, fussy referees and overly strong defenders, while others claim it's a reclamation of everything that made *PES* so good in the first place – you have to earn each and every chance. Thankfully, the online element was an undisputable improvement over *4*, with co-op compatibility and a largely lag-free service. Also, *PES* made its debut on PSP with this iteration, further proving that the series is going to take over the world. Who are we to argue?

One step closer to FIFA

Even more official licences this year

The roster of teams with their official kits in *PES* is bolstered every year and *PES 6* is no different. While sadly Chelsea no longer have their official kit, Manchester United have replaced them alongside Arsenal as the two officially licensed English teams in *PES*. The French Championnat league has also been added along with other European teams including Bayern Munich, Sporting Lisbon, Benfica, Olympiacos and Piraeus. A selection of international sides have also been given the official makeover with England, Argentina, Spain, Sweden, Czech Republic, France, Italy and Australia all sporting the proper kits.

So the next time someone moans that *PES* doesn't have official kits, give 'em a good talking to.

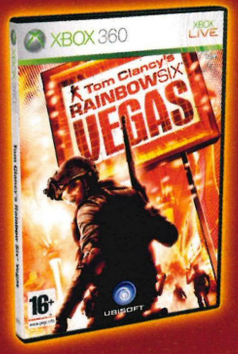


VEGAS NEEDS A SAVIOUR

Las Vegas used to be America's playground.
Now it's a battleground.

Manoeuvre through multiple-path Vegas environments utilising high-tech equipment.

Play in multiplayer mode with your friends, and create an online persona that evolves as you play.



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EUROPE HIT BY PS3 DELAY

Sony puts back launch until March 2007

As you all surely know by now, the European release date for PlayStation3 has be delayed until March next year. The set back is down to "the delay in mass production schedule of the blue laser diode within the Sony Group", which has reportedly slowed the manufacturing process. Seeing as the blue laser diode is a key part of the Blu-ray drive, it won't get far without it. Japan and the US will still get their hands on the console in November but in vastly reduced numbers. Only 2 million units will ship to both territories by the end of 2006, which is half Sony's original forecast. Things look even bleaker for the launch with 400,000 consoles available on day one in the US and a measly 100,000 in Japan, which considering the size and demand in both those markets is very small. Sony still plans to have 6 million units shipped by the end of the 2007 financial year. Obviously, those reduced numbers on launch day severely lower the chances of being able to get an import machine. No doubt eBay sellers will have a few for sale but at astronomical prices. Sony has also said that it has plans in place to stop customers importing the console from the US and Japan, but is yet to reveal what those measures are as of yet.

Europe isn't the only area to suffer the delay; Russia, the Middle East, Africa and Australasia will also have to wait until March. Rumours are now rife within the industry that PS3 might not even make it to the shelves in March, but Sony is sticking firm to that date for now. Don't hold your breath now.

In an effort to further annoy us here at **Go>Play**, Sony announced this huge news the day after our last issue went to press. Coincidence? We think not. ■

BRICKING IT

New Lego title rumoured

Where does he get those wonderful toys?

Not content with giving us two cracking *Lego Star Wars* games, Traveller's Tales is now looking to another licensed Lego toy for its next release. The Batman Lego line hasn't been around for long, but the game already looks to be in the early stages of development. Release date, formats and publisher are yet to be announced, but we reckon it's at least a year away if not more. In fact, it could well be released to coincide with the sequel to *Batman Begins*, *The Dark Knight*, although that won't hit cinemas until 2008 so hopefully we won't have to wait that long. A PSP version is a strong possibility after *Lego Star Wars II* was released on the handheld, so fingers crossed. Plot details are non-existent at the moment, but no doubt it will see Batman's rogues gallery trying to destroy Gotham in some dastardly way. There are plenty of characters who have had the Lego treatment so far including Batman himself, his trusty sidekick Robin and faithful butler Alfred. Catwoman, The Joker, Two-Face, Killer Croc, the Penguin and Mr Freeze have all shown up in Lego playsets too, so they're all likely to show their villainous mugs. We're excited already! ■

DOWNLOAD SERVICE NEARLY HERE

PSone games and movies on your PSP

Izumi Kawanishi, the head of platform development at Sony in Japan, has stated that the long-awaited PSP download service will launch with PS3 in November. The service, which will operate through Wi-Fi-enabled PCs as well as PS3s, will offer both original PlayStation games and movies for download onto PSP. PSone games apparently run without a hitch via an emulator, but the list of games available is still to be announced along with the price for the service. It will probably be along the lines of the Xbox Live Arcade service that Microsoft operates.

Whether the delay of PS3 in Europe means we'll have to wait for the service is still to be confirmed, but we think that's a pretty safe bet. ■

We'll soon be playing *Gran Turismo* on the PSP but not from a UMD

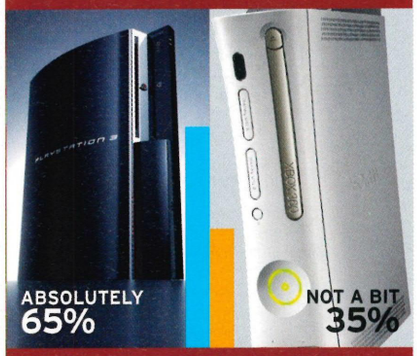
STATISTICALLY SPEAKING

Every month we'll be posting polls on our forum for you to vote in (play-mag.co.uk/forum Internet fans!)

DO YOU RUN HOME-BREW ON YOUR PSP?

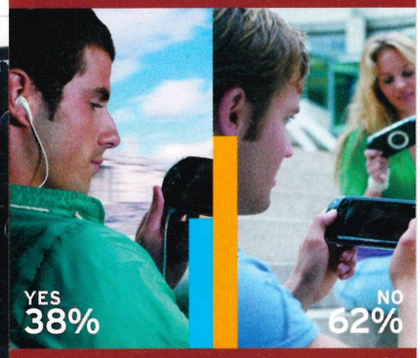
It seems that most PSP owners would rather just play the games that are available to them than download new ones.

ARE YOU BOTHERED BY THE PS3 DELAY?



The majority are annoyed but not as many as we expected. It seems Sony's constant mistreatment of Europe is having an effect.

DO YOU USE YOUR PSP AS AN MP3 PLAYER?



The chunkiness and smaller storage space of the PSP makes it the second choice as an MP3 player after the iPod.

PS3 SPY

With so many PS3 games in the pipeline, we take a look at which ones are worth keeping an eye on...

Colin McRae: DIRT

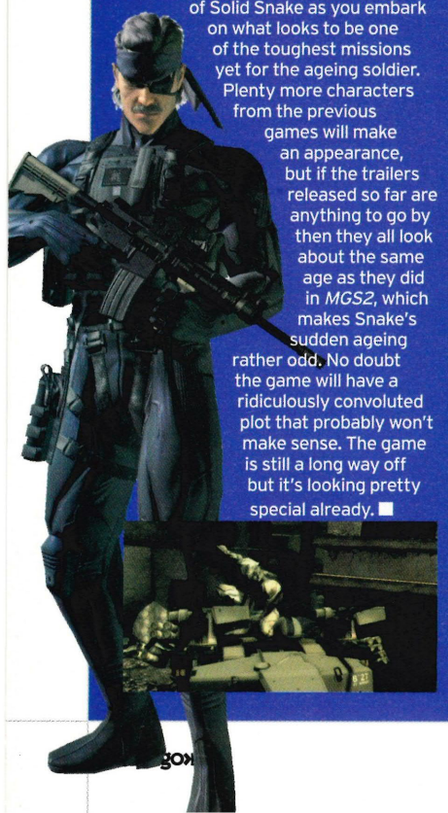
Publisher: Codemasters
Release: TBA 2007

The mighty McRae is back and looks to deliver the most varied and realistic off-road experience ever. The traditional rallying is still in there but is now joined by a multitude of new features and vehicles. Hill Climb events have been included along with the famous 12-mile Pikes Peak International track contained within the Rocky Mountains. Multiple cars will appear on the track now too, which will not only give the single-player experience a new angle but also give great scope for multi-player. To satisfy anyone looking for some multi-player fun there are Rally Raid competitions that see you racing across the desert in Dakar-style trucks and super-powered 4x4s. There's also a new physics system and damage engine that will make every crash and bump look and feel as real as possible. ■

Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns Of The Patriots

Publisher: Konami
Release: Q4 2007

Set after the events of *Metal Gear Solid 2*, you're once again in the shoes of Solid Snake as you embark on what looks to be one of the toughest missions yet for the ageing soldier. Plenty more characters from the previous games will make an appearance, but if the trailers released so far are anything to go by then they all look about the same age as they did in *MGS2*, which makes Snake's sudden ageing rather odd. No doubt the game will have a ridiculously convoluted plot that probably won't make sense. The game is still a long way off but it's looking pretty special already. ■



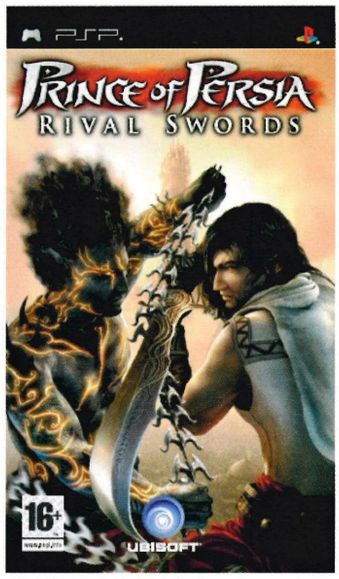
The Prince returns

POP gets another PSP outing

Ubisoft recently announced the return of the *Prince Of Persia* franchise to the PSP with *Rival Swords*. Based around the popular *The Two Thrones*, the story sees the Prince making his return home to Babylon with Kaleena, the Empress Of Time. When he gets there he finds the kingdom ravaged by war and discovers a plot to murder Kaleena. When she is killed the Sands Of Time are released and strike the Prince, tainting him and giving rise to a Dark Prince, who gradually tries to possess him.

Expect all the usual swordplay and platform action along with new multi-player features that take the form of races between the Prince and the Dark Prince. Each racecourse has a number of obstacles and traps that you can activate to slow your opponent's progress. Carried across from *The Two Thrones* is the challenge of mastering in two different characters along with the free-form fighting system that lets you kill enemies in a variety of ways. The popular chariot combat levels will now be playable whenever you like, as you will be able to select them from the main menu.

Prince Of Persia: Revelations – while good – was plagued by a number of bugs, so hopefully *Rival Swords* will provide a much more satisfactory experience. We should find out when the game is released around Christmas 2006. ■



NEXT-GEN GRAN TURISMO

Sony to launch teaser for long-awaited sequel

As if to add insult to injury to those of us outside of the US and Japan, Sony has announced plans to launch a *Gran Turismo* title on PS3 before the end of the year. This won't be *Gran Turismo 5* but instead will be two different versions, one a multi-player game based on the *GT 4 HD* footage that was seen at E3, dubbed *GT HD Classic* and a second title that is a taster of what we can expect from *GT 5* on its eventual release in 2008, called *GT HD Premium*.

The *Classic* title will have almost no content and will require PlayStation3 owners to download more cars and tracks at a cost of 50 to 100 yen per car and 200 to 500 yen per track.

The *Premium* title will have two tracks and around 30 cars with another 30 being available to buy and download online. Currently only planned for release in Japan Sony is yet to comment on whether the US or Europe will see either title. To us it smacks of the same sort of money-spinning marketing that gave us *Gran Turismo 4: Prologue* on the PS2, which was simply a taster of the eagerly anticipated full game.

Despite all this *GT* talk absolutely nothing was mentioned about the PSP version of *Gran Turismo*, which seems to have dropped off the radar. ■

GT Mobile – just where the hell is it?

STEP BACK IN TIME

RETRO ROSTER REVEALED

Sega spills the beans on forthcoming Mega Drive Collection

In our preview of Sega's *Mega Drive Collection* last month we told you what games had been confirmed for the title and which ones we hoped would make an appearance. Sega has finally given us the full list and it's looking pretty special. The games included are as follows...

- Alex Kidd In The Enchanted Castle
- Altered Beast
- Bonanza Bros.
- Columns
- Comix Zone
- Decap Attack Starring Chuck D. Head
- Ecco The Dolphin
- Ecco II: The Tides Of Time
- Ecco Jr.
- Flicky
- Gain Ground
- Golden Axe I
- Golden Axe II
- Golden Axe III
- Kid Chameleon
- Phantasy Star II
- Phantasy Star III: Generations Of Doom
- Phantasy Star IV: End Of The Millennium
- Ristar
- Shinobi III: Return Of The Ninja Master
- Sonic The Hedgehog
- Sonic The Hedgehog 2
- Super Thunder Blade
- Sword Of Vermilion
- Vectorman
- Vectorman 2
- Virtua Fighter 2

We're pleased to see that *Ecco* gets a look in, as does *Virtua Fighter 2* and there doesn't seem to be much in the way of filler. We are a little disappointed, however, that *Streets Of Rage* and *Virtua Racing* haven't been included, but perhaps they're being saved for a potential sequel. Even without those titles this looks like one of the best retro compilations on the PSP so far. ■

UBISOFT LEAK SHOWS PROMISE FOR PSP

Assets for unannounced games find their way onto the Internet

An unknown party leaked images and assets for forthcoming Ubisoft games onto the Internet last month. They were quickly removed but a couple of interesting titles appear to be coming to the PSP in the form of *Far Cry* and *Rocky*. *Far Cry* is the successful PC and Xbox first-person shooter that sees you battling against mercenaries on a lush tropical island. *Rocky* is pretty self-explanatory and will presumably take the form of a boxing sim. What we don't know is whether this will be a rehash of previous *Rocky* titles or a new game based on the forthcoming film sequel, *Rocky Balboa*. ■

PS2 SPY

There's life in the old girl yet, so we examine which games are worth a look on the ageing system

Brian Lara International Cricket 2007

Publisher: Codemasters
Release: March 2007

Launching to coincide with the ICC Cricket World Cup 2007, this latest entry into the popular *Brian Lara* series will expand the already solid gameplay to deliver an even more comprehensive simulation. Official ICC content will be included featuring players such as Andrew Flintoff, Ricky Ponting, Mahendra Dhoni, Muttiah Muralitharan and not forgetting the legendary Brian Lara, who recently became the leading Test run scorer of all time. The batting will be improved over the last game with the addition of subtle edges, sweepshots and the ability to 'dance down wicket' as well as smash the ball over the boundary. This should deliver a top-drawer cricket experience.

Ghost Rider

Publisher: 2K Games
Release: February 2007

A comic book movie pretty much guarantees a videogame tie-in and here it is. The movie looks pretty cool so far and the videogame might just follow suit. The advantage this has over other tie-ins is that the action takes place both on foot and on the Hell Cycle, which could offer up some *Road Rash*-style action. The chains that the Ghost Rider carries around could also give us some *God Of War*-style gameplay, which is certainly a very exciting prospect. Hopefully we won't have to play any sections as Johnny Blaze, unless they involve some awesome daredevil stunts. We will be taking a look at the PSP version soon so keep 'em peeled.

Johnny knew putting on hairspray while smoking was a bad idea

OUR MAN ON THE CLAPHAM OMNIBUS

FORUM-ING YOUR OWN OPINIONS

The perils and pitfalls of conversing with total strangers about things they don't understand

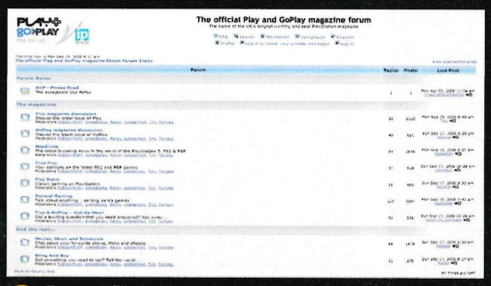
I hate this crap! Apologies for the rudey-swears, but after last month's non-aggressive offensive, I managed to calm myself down a little bit. It took lots of incense, some Gregorian chanting and literally buckets of ice cream to pacify my violent side, but I was at peace with myself for a good few days until I discovered the horrors of forum life – I've just come off a PSP and am about ready to launch myself out of the window. I'm now strangely addicted despite the fact that I, without exception, hate everybody on my forum. It's like some kind of drug – you're hitting up more than once an hour, and in the unlikely event of no one posting within that hour, the withdrawal hits you and off you go sliding into a post-rank building frenzy, assaulting every thread with your opinion.

So how does a sensible person get into this then? Forums are for tetchy losers, know-it-alls and spotty teens hoping to find love, right? That's what I always thought, but there seem to be a fair few folk out there just like me – those that experimented, but just can't seem to let go. Much like everything bad in my life, I have my girlfriend to blame for this new frustration, as she suggested that a possible cause of my occasional antisocial outbursts might be an almost complete lack of human contact. The possibility of getting to know people without the discomfort of face-to-face contact. Within minutes I was a tight ball of frustration, rocking in my enormously expensive leather chair, attempting to hold back the rage. Most folk will shy away from this kind of self punishment, but there are a few amongst us that seem to adore it. Perhaps it's just the knowledge that you've always got a place to go when you want a good argument, but somehow, deep down, that doesn't cover it. I have a sneaking feeling that the draw of forums is more about a self-satisfied, profound feeling that I am actually a whole lot better than everyone else. Well, let's face it, I am. Strangely however, few folk ever agree with me.

Granted, forums on the PSP aren't particularly easy on the old thumbs, but using the PSP rather than a traditional keyboard has steered me away from trouble on more than one occasion thanks to the effort needed to type anything past 'Hi' or 'bugger off nOOb' – more often than not I just can't be bothered. The worst thing for me, however, is that being right is such hard work. Speak to someone in a pub, over the phone or even on messenger, and consensus is pretty much guaranteed – people don't tend to argue that much in normal everyday life. After all, the idea of confrontation isn't something us Brits like, is it? However, put two like-minded people on a forum and give them a couple of days and you'll find that confrontation of the most severe yet trivial type is almost a certainty. Jumping on a forum is like walking a mined tightrope strung over a piranha-infested snake pit with spikes – the slightest miscalculation and wham, you're in a world of hurt.

No one is ever wrong. To show ignorance about any subject is, of course, a sign of weakness. No one ever asks your opinion for any other reason than to tear you apart, and no one really likes anyone else. Why bother? Why indeed. All I succeed in doing is winding myself up and giving bored teenagers the chance to have a pop at a fully grown man without fear of retribution. At least I'm talking to new people though, and that's got to be a good thing, even if the conversations rarely deviate from arguments about which is better – the DS or PSP. Every time I get off one, I find my shoulders bunched, my knuckles white and my brow furrowed, yet I can't stop. When the aggression subsides I'm left empty but exhilarated, and wanting nothing more than to get back on. I've got another obsession, and one that could see me to the grave. Forums anonymous anyone? ■

> [I find my **shoulders bunched**, my knuckles white and my brow furrowed, **yet I can't stop**]



Forums – filled with people just spoiling for a fight, in the virtual sense of course. Apart from the **Go>Play** forum, that is

FIVE ST★R

Each month, someone picks their five fave PSP games

Ryan King
Community Editor (X360)

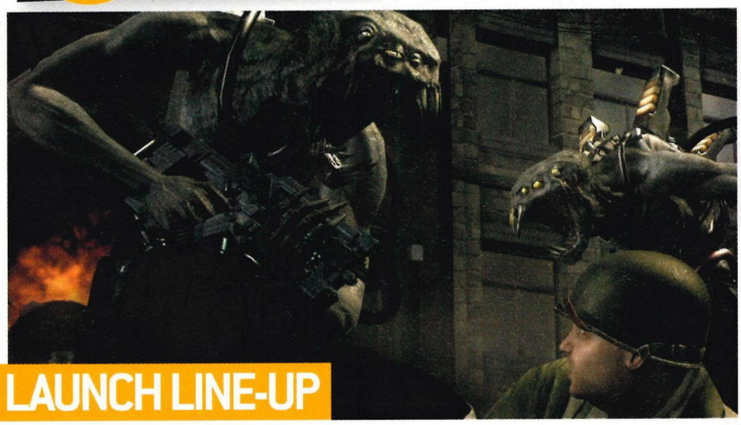
WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2006
It might just be a load of sweaty men running around in their pants but I love it.

TEKKEN: DARK RESURRECTION
This is the best game on PSP by far. In fact, it's the best beat-'em-up on any handheld.

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3 MAX
I adore *Street Fighter* so I forgive this game its annoying control issues.

TENCHU: TIME OF THE ASSASSINS
Horrible game but that flying dog made me laugh so hard a little bit of wee came out.

LEGO STAR WARS II: THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY
Lego and *Star Wars* in a beautiful union that makes me go all warm inside.



LAUNCH LINE-UP

Launch games announced

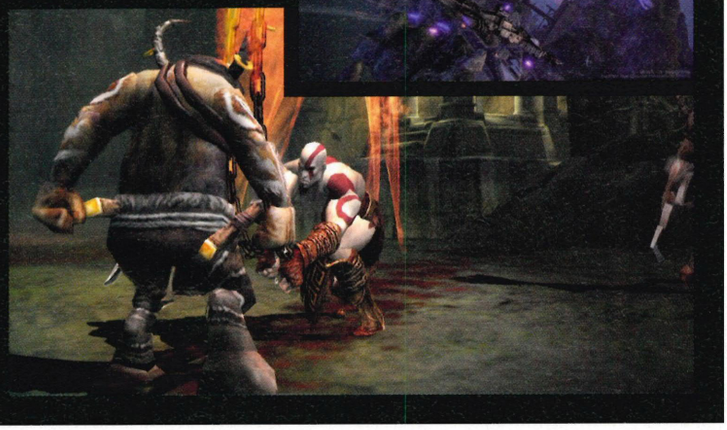
First details of Japanese PS3 launch titles emerge

The first games to appear on Sony's new console when it's launched in Japan later this year are starting to be revealed. Six have been confirmed so far, including *Resistance: Fall Of Man*, *Ridge Racer 7* (you can't have a PlayStation launch without a *Ridge* title), *Sega Golf Club*, *Mobile Suit Gundam: Target In Sight*, *Genji: Days Of The Blade* and *Mah-jong Fight Club Online* (although we thought that last one was just on PSP). Not a great deal to get excited about there, but there are sure to be more titles confirmed over the next few weeks. The US has also had some titles confirmed for launch in the shape of *Call Of Duty 3*, *Blazing Angels: Squadrons Of WWII*, *Marvel: Ultimate Alliance*, *Full Auto 2: Battlelines*, *Sonic The Hedgehog*, *Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom* and *Tony Hawk's Project 8*. A few too many sequels there for our liking but that's not the final rundown so expect a few more original titles to bolster the list. Software pricing has also been announced for the US with first-party titles coming in at $49.99 (around £26) and third-party at $59.99 (around £32). Unsurprisingly, nothing has been announced for the UK launch yet, but the games will more than likely be similar to those in the US. ■

Incognito Entertainment shelves PSP project

Warhawk on PS3 takes priority for developer

The strains of trying to produce two titles at once have taken their toll on developer Incognito Entertainment. Currently working on both *Warhawk* for PS3 and a top-secret project for PSP, codenamed 'HL', it became impossible to give both games the full attention they deserved. The PSP title, crafted by *God Of War* designer David Jaffe will hopefully be continued at a later date, although nothing is definite at the moment. We were hoping that the game might have been a PSP version of *God Of War*, but perhaps we'll never find out. Jaffe is currently finishing a title for Sony that is yet to be announced so perhaps that is *God Of War* PSP. It's due to be released this winter so hopefully we won't have long to wait until we find out. ■

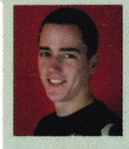


THE HOURS WHAT'S BEEN EATING OUR LIVES, AND FOR HOW LONG

SIMON

RIDGE RACER 2
"Plays like a dream but I couldn't shake off that feeling of déjà vu while I was bombing round the tracks. It's just all a little too familiar." 05 hrs

DIETING
"Being on a diet sucks big time. Everything tastes rubbish and I can't gorge myself on pizza. The beer has taken a back seat too. Bah!" 36 Hrs



ANDY

ACE COMBAT X: SKIES OF DECEPTION
"This was far better than I though it would be. Flying around blowing crap up just can't be beaten in my opinion." 02 hrs

HELPING FRIENDS MOVE
"I'm all for helping out a friend but why do they have so much stuff? And why is it all so heavy?" 10 hrs

HENRIE

LEGO STAR WARS II
"You can read my fantastic guide in this very issue. It's really, really good, honestly. You won't find a better one anywhere!" 12 hrs

MOVING HOUSE
"I love boring everyone in the office by going on and on about my new house. No one cares; I don't know why I bother really." 06 hrs

DAVE

FIFA 07
"Yeah, it's not bad but I still prefer *Pro Evo*. I must say the penalties are far better in *FIFA* though, but that's about it." 08 hrs

FANTASY FOOTBALL
"I'm second from bottom but I joined a week later than everyone else, which in my eyes, makes me better than them somehow." 05 Days

TOKYO GAME SHOW 2006

The PSP is playing second fiddle to Nintendo's DS in Japan, but Japanese developer support for the PSP remains as strong as ever. At this year's Tokyo Game Show the PSP had a large area of Sony's own stand, as well as countless demo pods at third parties' booths. The big hitters at Sony were the remake of PSone rhythm-action classic *PaRappa The Rapper*, a fresh version of Sony's popular *Talkman* interpretation software, and an all-new karting game from SCEI called *Ape Escape Racer*.

From what we played of *PaRappa* on the PSP, it seems to be a perfect port of the PSone original, with all the vocals and tunes intact, but sadly there were no new gameplay features for us to sample. *Ape Escape Racer* was a pleasant surprise, though: the power-ups are imaginatively designed (we were slowed down by a disco ball and multicoloured confetti) and you can also alter the form of your kart mid-race, Inspector Gadget-style. Racer looks lovely, too, and it captures the charm and humour of Sony's *Ape Escape* world. The Wi-Fi multi-player should prove to be great fun. We'll have more on *Ape Escape Racer* when it's released in Japan this December. ■

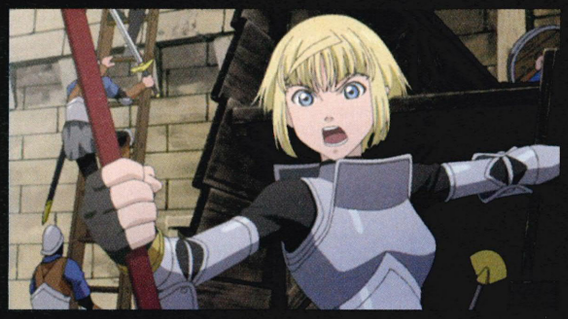
Karts and apes together? It can only end in tears, obviously

PaRappa The Rappa – annoying everyone since 1997

Games, games, games

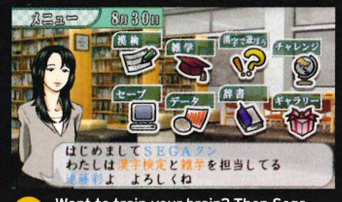
We had plenty of fun with the less well-known PSP games on show. Sega's *Kanji Trainer Portable* is a nifty memory aid for anyone who wants to learn or improve their knowledge of Chinese characters. It works as a quick-fire quiz; perfect for train journeys. Sega also had *Audio Visual Crossword* – a huge compendium of word games – and the bizarre brain training of *A-ha! Experience For Everybody!* These titles will undoubtedly be popular in Japan, but they're unlikely to be released in the UK.

Also encouraging for the Japanese market was the number of PSP role-playing games at TGS. Sony's *Kingdom Of Paradise 2* is the sequel to its innovative RPG of last year (in which you could create your own weapons), and it features a branching, player-defined story and co-operative multi-player. Level 5's *Jeanne D'Arc* was especially popular with the public at TGS. It presents a fictional alternative to history and turns medieval France into a strategic battleground painted with lovely visuals. No doubt it'll be another hit for the *Dark Cloud* and *Dragon Quest VIII* developer when it hits Japan in late November. ■

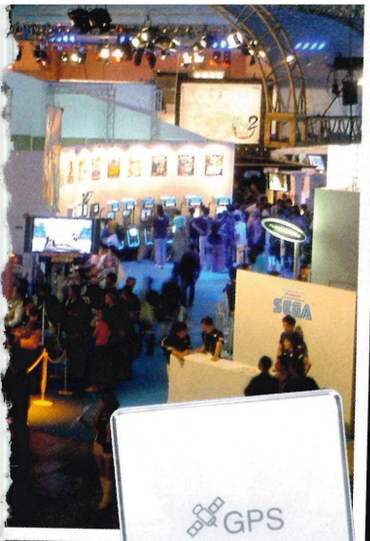


Is it really worth playing an entire RPG when you know that the main character burns at the stake?

It's a puzzle game with food or something. Don't expect it in the UK



Want to train your brain? Then Sega has the answer!



GPS future?

New gadgets such as the Global Positioning System hardware and PSP camera were on display inside glass cases at Sony's booth. *Everybody's Golf Course*, the latest title in Clap Hanz's excellent series, makes use of the GPS to enable Japanese users to locate real-life courses around Japan (from local minor courses to major pro venues) and then practise, virtually on the PSP, at an accurately modelled version of any of these courses. The idea is that players can develop course strategies while away from their local club, and then put those new approaches into effect in real life next time they visit. *Everybody's Golf Course* launches in Japan some time next year.

It didn't look anywhere near as enjoyable as *Everybody's Golf Course*, but we also saw dedicated GPS navigation software from Edia, which provides you with an on-screen map of your surroundings, wherever you happen to be in Japan. So Japanese PSP owners will never be lost again. There's no word as yet on an international release, but collaboration with the Ordnance Survey, for example, could make it a reality in the UK. Exciting stuff, we're sure you'd agree. Well, for geography fans anyway. ■

Everybody's Golf on your local course – sounds like fun to us

Never get lost again with your PSP at your side

The GPS golf system in full swing, y'know, so to speak

PSP's mascot

After the success of its *Metal Gear Acid* PSP titles, Konami seems to have decided to make Snake the unofficial mascot of the format. At the Tokyo Game Show we had two new *Metal Gear* titles to get excited about – *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel* and *Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops. Digital Graphic Novel* is one of the most beautiful PSP games to date; its comic book style really blew us away. The gameplay is not particularly complex – it plays a little bit like *Broken Sword* and the like, where simply selecting appropriate items is key – but *Metal Gear* fans will have plenty of material to pore over.

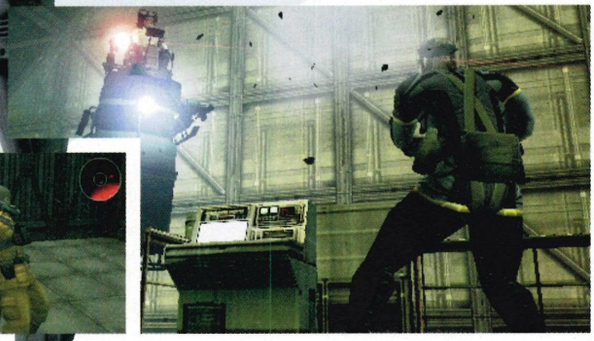
For a more traditional *Metal Gear* fix, *Portable Ops* is the perfect solution. It's not merely a scaled-down version of PS/PS2 *MGS*, though. Instead, *Portable Ops* plays a bit more like *Rainbow Six*, with units and comrades to control as you try to stop Metal Gear from being unleashed by a rebel unit in South America. There's the promise of online multi-player battles between units, although Konami didn't have this in place for TGS. From what we saw of the single-player, *Portable Ops* will be a fine addition to the series, and is likely to be Snake's most successful PSP outing yet. ■

PS3 Attacks Tokyo

The PSP had about a fifth of Sony's stand to itself – but, of course, it was the PlayStation3 that dominated not only Sony's showing at TGS, but the Tokyo Game Show itself. There were 200 playable PS3 consoles on the show floor and there were constant queues at every last one of them. Many of the games on show were running at full 1080p on Sony Bravia screens, and the likes of *Ridge Racer 7* and *Virtua Tennis 3* were also managing to output at a constant 60fps. To say that they looked nice would be like saying that Scarlett Johansson "isn't bad". The great thing was, those games – along with *Devil May Cry 4*, *Flow*, *Everybody's Golf 5*, *Lair* and our own Game of the Show, *Virtua Fighter 5* – played superbly well. We're as relieved as you are – PS3 has the games! ■

This is as close as you're going to get until March

MGS Portable Ops is looking rather special, oh yes



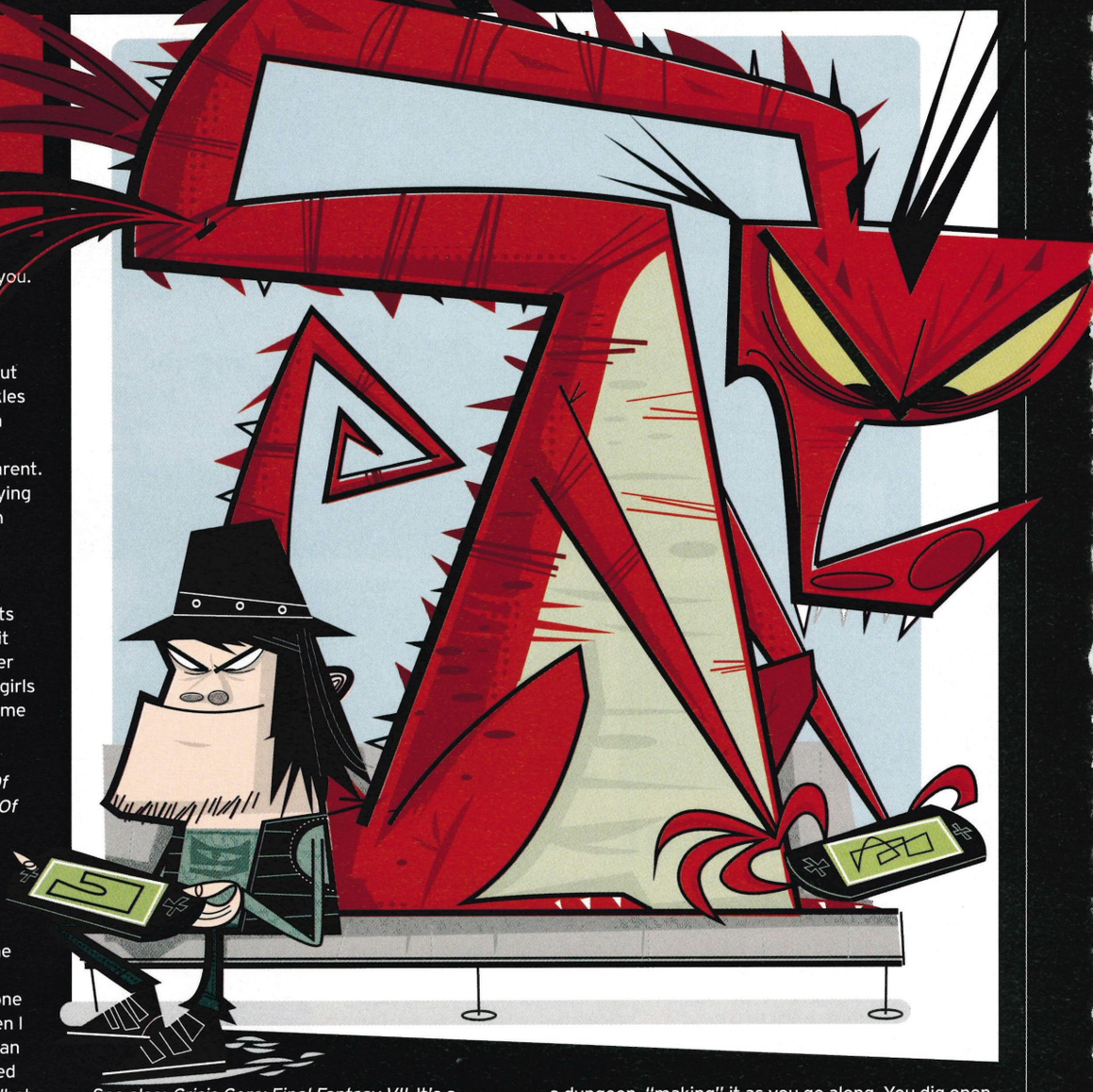
Going home

With the show over and the posters pulled down, it was time for us to head home. In retrospect, the PSP didn't make as great an impact as it did with its TGS debut last year. But it did consolidate. It's clear from the popularity of PSP titles at TGS 2006 that Sony's handheld has a great future in Japan, and its position will only strengthen once the PS3 is released later this year. ■

TAKERU AMAZAWA'S TOKYO TITTLE TATTLE

POTENTIALLY UNTAPPED

An insight into the world of Japanese PSP-ing by our man in Tokyo - Takeru Amazawa



I'm going to admit a dirty little secret to you. Don't tell anyone about this, okay? Here it is: I'm getting tired of carrying my PSP around. There, I said it. It's too heavy. It's too bulky. I feel too self-conscious about protecting it. The screen has so many little speckles of grit on it that when the screen goes dark when something is loading, I can't help feeling that I'm mistreating the device terribly. I feel like a bad parent.

Forgive me, dear reader, for I have begun carrying my DS Lite everywhere. It has *Final Fantasy III* on it, and that's a hell of a game to play on the train. You don't even need to press any buttons. Just point the stylus where you want the character to go. Tap enemies during battle. Tap treasure chests to open them. It runs fast, it looks colourful, and it never, ever loads. There are cute little multi-player "communication" modes that I can play with the girls at work. It's a remake of a game I played a long time ago, and it's fresh and new and creative.

And what's the number-one-selling game for PSP right this minute, in Japan? Why, it's *Tales Of Phantasia: Full Voice Edition*. Basically, it's *Tales Of Phantasia*, an old RPG from the Super Famicom era - re-released once already on Game Boy Advance - now on PSP, with full voices. Voices that cause the UMD to stop and then spin loudly for a few seconds before playing. You can hear the UMD spinning over the volume of the headphones and the rattling of the train rails.

So deep is my discontent for the PSP headphone volume that I nearly hung my head and wept when I learned of *Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops*. How can I enjoy a *Metal Gear Solid* game with well-recorded voice acting, if I can't hear the damned voices? What am I going to do? Just buy the game and then play it in my room with all the lights turned off, like most PSP players do, anyway?

I had a chance to play the game at Tokyo Game Show last week, and couldn't hear a thing on the show floor. I wish I could have downloaded a demo of it to a Memory Stick and taken it home. I couldn't do this, however, even though Nintendo's much "weaker" DS had plenty of downloadable demos available.

It strikes me that very few Japanese developers are actually taking advantage of the PSP's untapped potential, and are tapping the currently tapped potentials too hard. Either that, or they're just being pretty lazy and remaking old games. Or they're just putting a 'side-story'-style throwaway game on the PSP in hopes of selling it to fans of the series it belongs to. In the end, they're just disappointing the fans, because they're trusting unproven developers with the games while the big shots concentrate on the home consoles.

For example: *Devil May Cry*. Do you really think Capcom is going to use its best crews to make a miniature *Devil May Cry* game?

See also: *Crisis Core: Final Fantasy VII*. It's a game set in the *Final Fantasy VII* world. The player will play as Zack, a minor character who was buried deep in the backstory of the original game. If you ask me, that's where Zack belongs. Why give him his own game? To satisfy fans, of course. What's it about? At the Tokyo Game Show, a genre hadn't even been confirmed. All we know is: "It's coming out for the PSP. Soon." In other words, it's a game of assumptions, for example: people will buy it in droves.

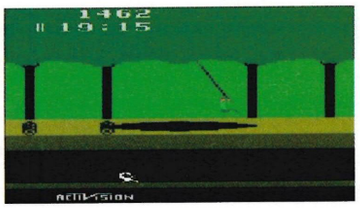
> **Very few** Japanese developers are taking advantage of the **PSP's untapped potential**

The only developer who seems to be actually using the PSP for what it is, is Taito. First, it made *Exit*, which Square Enix president Yoichi Wada called, "The exact type of game PSP needs". Now, the developer's new game, *Chronicles Of Dungeon Maker*, has been the first PSP game to score a 10 from Japan's most-honoured videogames magazine, *Famitsu*.

Chronicles Of Dungeon Maker is a one-player RPG, and an original series. In it, you move forward through a dungeon, "making" it as you go along. You dig open rooms and you populate them with traps and item boxes. Depending on the items placed in the room, different monsters will show up. The game uses a day/night cycle; you leave the dungeon at night, go back to town, rest up, and head back the next day. Every morning, the dungeon is a little different.

You have to fight your way into and then out of the dungeon every day, making the dungeon a place with which you are deeply familiar and that is, by design standards, thoroughly bug-tested. The game saves your dungeon to your Memory Stick, and then you can trade dungeons with your friends.

My dungeon - which I would forge at home, late at night - would probably be pretty deep. Too bad I have no one to share it with. All my friends are waiting for the new *Pokémon* on DS. Which is released, um, tomorrow. The same day as *Dungeon Maker*. So I guess I'll be buying *Pokémon* instead. Hmmm. ■



THOSE WERE THE DAYS

Activision goes retro

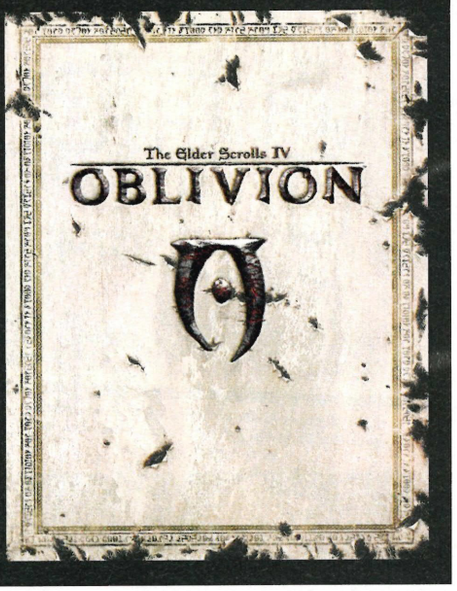
Back catalogue plundered for new compilation

Yet to be announced for a UK release – but out very soon in the US – is *Activision Hits Remixed*. The title brings together over 40 classic games from the days of the Atari 2600, including the likes of *Pitfall*, *Decathlon*, *Kaboom!*, *River Raid*, *Chopper Command*, *Skiing*, *Keystone Kapers*, *Fishing Derby* and *Barnstorming* to name but a few. They might look rather basic but there's some addictive gameplay behind those simplistic visuals. Fingers crossed for a UK release, but at only $19.99 it might be worth importing. ■

PSP heads for Oblivion

Huge RPG destined for PSP

After initial rumours were rubbished, it has now been revealed that the popular Xbox 360 title – *The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion* – is coming not only to PS3 but also to PSP. The PSP version is likely to be very different from its PS3 counterpart and it also has a slightly different name – *The Elder Scrolls Travels: Oblivion*. No details have been revealed yet except that it will be co-published by Ubisoft and should hit shelves some time in the spring of 2007. ■



UK CHARTS

We've been keeping an eye on...

POS	TITLE	PUBLISHER	IN THREE SECONDS
01	TEKKEN: DARK RESURRECTION	SCEE	Top-notch beat-'em-up deservedly gets the top spot and fights off the competition.
02	GANGS OF LONDON	SCEE	The mockney shoot-'em-up climbs high as PSP owners clamour to cause some trouble in London town.
03	TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07	EA	The latest edition of Tiger's pocket-lining collaboration rides predictably high in the charts.
04	CARS	THQ	Kids must have loved that movie, as weeks later the game is still in a respectable position.
05	THE GODFATHER	EA	Being quite different from the console version has clearly had no effect on the Don's appeal.
06	GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES	ROCKSTAR	No surprise to see this still riding high nearly a year after release.
07	STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT II	LUCASARTS	The arrival of the unaltered original trilogy on DVD has reignited interest in the franchise.
08	PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5	KONAMI	Now *PES 6* is here expect this to fall from the charts rather rapidly as its replacement storms the top 10.
09	JUICED: ELIMINATOR	THQ	Little movement for THQ's street-racing game. *Need For Speed Carbon* may have something to say about that.
10	CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2006	EIDOS	Stealing *Football Manager*'s position, *Champ Manager* tries to win back some fans.
11	FIFA STREET 2	EA	No movement for *FIFA Street*, which shows many people are after some quick and simple gameplay on PSP.
12	WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2006	THQ	With a new edition on the way this is likely to fall a few places over the next few weeks.
13	SYPHON FILTER: DARK MIRROR	SCEE	This superb shooter hits the top of the charts briefly only to tumble down again. What an injustice!
14	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	BUENA VISTA	Look, *Pirates* is worse than all the games underneath it. Why won't any of you listen?
15	ULTIMATE GHOSTS 'N GOBLINS	CAPCOM	Cracking retro update debuts high but falls rapidly, which is a damn shame. Perhaps it's just too hard.
16	LEMMINGS	SCEE	Those crazy little critters refuse to dive out of the charts, which proves the popularity of puzzle games.
17	TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 06	EA	Now, how is this fair? A certain Mr Woods has two games in the top 20. Give the rest a chance, Tiger!
18	BURNOUT LEGENDS	EA	Still refusing to crash out of the top 20, EA's mental racer clings on for another month.
19	LOCOROCO	SCEE	Seeing *LocoRoco* this far down the charts saddens us. Sony finally bring out an original game and it's ignored.
20	TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND	EIDOS	Lara clings on with her fingertips to the bottom place. Will she fall? Find out next month.

Tekken: Dark Resurrection
There's no other place this game desrves to be. Quite how Namco did it is beyond us but *Tekken* on PSP is going to take some beating. Bring it on.

Pro Evolution Soccer 5
Always the runt of the litter in terms of versions for other formats, so the latest edition should see this put down once and for all. We'll miss you.

LocoRoco
We despair, we really do. Sony make a truly innovative game, we give it a glowing review and most of you buy something else instead. What do you want from us?

Tiger Woods PGA Tour 07
Reviewed in this very issue after EA took its sweet time sending the game. We reckon it's pretty good but very similar to last year's. Maybe try *ProStroke*.

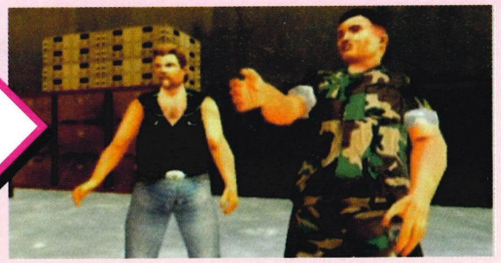
Championship Manager 2006
This isn't a terrible effort but with Sports Interactive doing *Football Manager* for Sega, that series is always going to be a little bit better.

Ultimate Ghosts 'N Goblins
This isn't everyone's cup of tea but if you want some old-school gaming coupled with updated visuals then this is just the ticket. Be warned, it's tough.

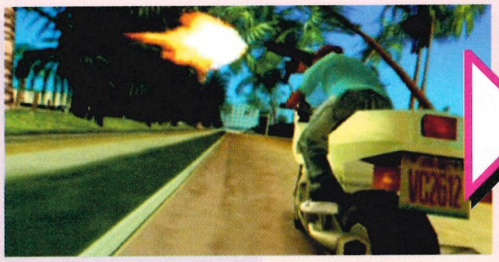
The trailer opens with a shimmering *GTA* logo and the sounds of Foreigner's 'I Want To Know What Love Is'. We're excited already.

If you're desperate to see Vice City Stories in motion then head on over to www.rockstargames.com/vicecitystories where you'll find a short but sweet trailer filled with Vice goodness. For those of you who aren't able to download it – or are just plain lazy – we've taken some choice images for you to peer at...

Vic takes off in a Sea Sparrow and you can make out Leaf Links Golf Club in the background.

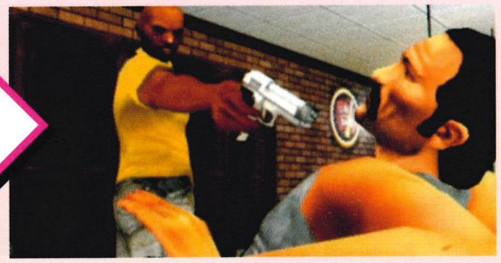


Here, Phil Cassidy and a new character talk to Vic, who calls him "Saint Victor of Vance, the holier than thou killer".

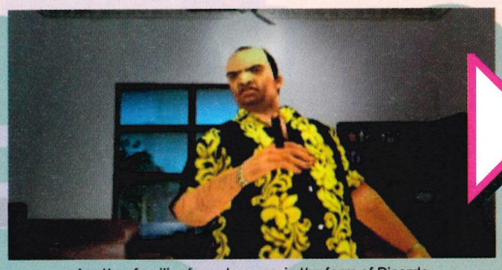


Next we cut to the street and see Vic on a PCJ 600 performing a drive by. We also pass the ever-gorgeous sight of a Banshee.

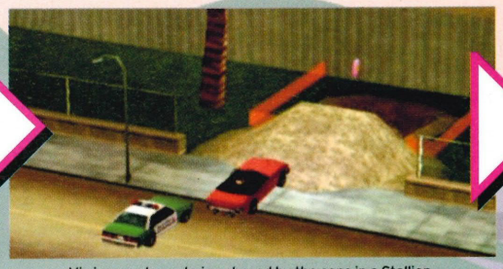
Next up is a mystery woman who looks like she could be a pivotal character, as she pops up again later in the trailer. She tells Vic he deserves good things.



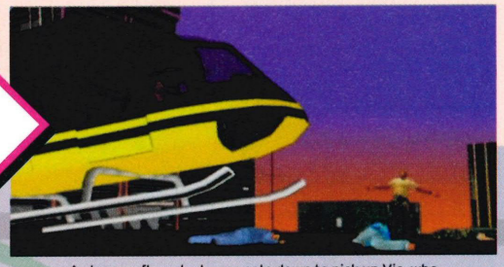
Umberto Robina is next up and Vic looks somewhat annoyed with him judging by the gun shoved in his face and the angry look.



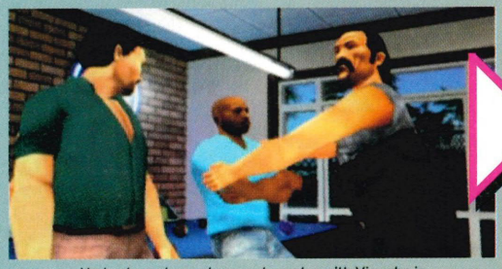
Another familiar face shows up in the form of Ricardo Diaz. Lance helped Tommy take out Diaz in *Vice City* so it will be interesting to see their relationship before that.



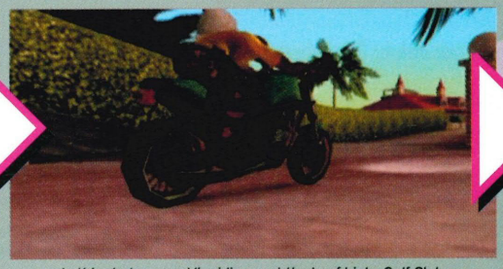
Vic is now shown being chased by the cops in a Stallion. The chase soon leads Vic to a jump, which provides us with a big jump.



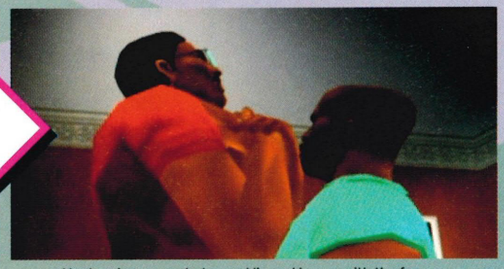
A chopper flown by Lance sets down to pick up Vic, who is surrounded by bodies. Could this indicate the end of a mission perhaps?



Umberto and an unknown character with Vic, who is leaning on a pool table. Umberto says Vic is "a real man with a lot of balls", indicating that they patch things up.



In this shot we see Vic riding past the Leaf Links Golf Club on a new bike that looks like it might be an FCR-900, as seen in *San Andreas*.

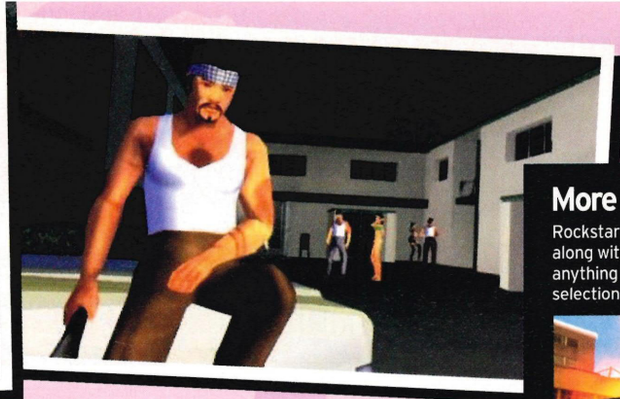


Next up is a scene between Vic and Lance with the former appearing to be very angry with his wayward brother as he enquires: "When will you grow a brain?"

Vic powers through a roadblock in a Cheetah as someone shoots out of the window. The most interesting thing here is the barricade on the bridge in the background.

We're pretty sure this is a new character, who asks Vic whether he is trustworthy. He looks like he could be associated with Pastor Richards.

The final scene shows Vic and Lance shaking hands before Lance says "Yeah, let's pop!" Umberto and two other characters can also be seen in the room.



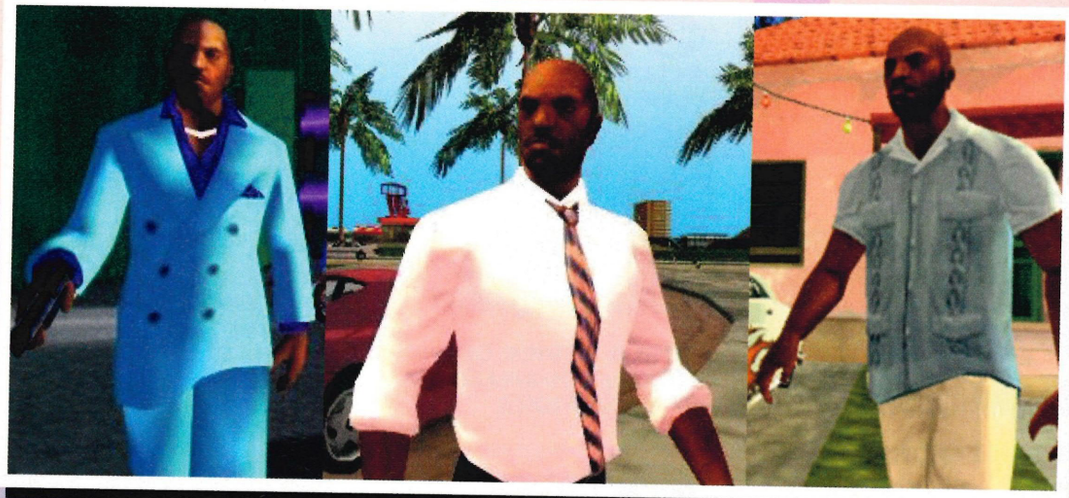
Trailer Park

TWO MORE SMALL trailers for *Vice City Stories* have surfaced on the Internet. One introduces us to Marty J. Williams, a redneck who resides in the new trailer park in Vice City. The trailer shows Marty evading the police in his Bobcat, shouting at his wife, shooting some poor soul and bombing around on a quad bike.

The second clip shows us the army base, where some soldiers are firing their rifles, a Hunter gunship is taking off and a tank is roaming the streets looking for stuff to blow up. With Vic being ex-military, the army is sure to play a big part in *Vice City Stories*, and from what we've seen so far, it looks like you will even get some missions from a solider, although we don't know his name or rank yet.

New Threads

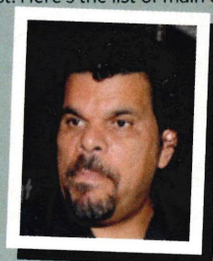
A COUPLE OF screenshots that appeared recently have shown Vic in a couple of different outfits, which obviously suggest you will more than likely unlock different clothes as you progress through the missions, much like in the original *Vice City*.

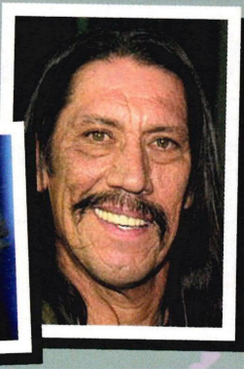


Vocal Talents Revealed

THE MOVIE WEBSITE IMDb.com has come in handy once again, providing us with a cast list for *Vice City Stories*. Nothing has been confirmed by Rockstar and even **IMDb.com** list Ving Rhames as rumoured, so don't take it as the definitive list. Here's the list of main characters so far:

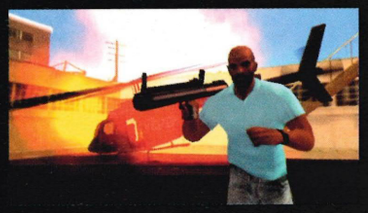
Victor "Vic" Vance - Ving Rhames (rumoured)
Lance Vance - Phillip Michael Thomas
Diego Mendez - Kid Frost
Phil Cassidy - Gary Busey
Ken Rosenberg - William Fichtner
Ricardo Diaz - Luis Guzmán
Umberto Robina - Danny Trejo
Gonzales - Jorge Pupo





More screenshots surface

Rockstar released a load of new screenshots along with the trailer. None of them reveal anything particularly surprising, but here is a selection of our favourites anyway...

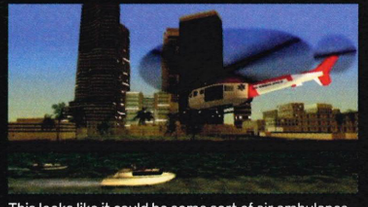


A chopper in flames as Vic legs it with a rocket launcher over his shoulder, proving that *Vice City* is still filled with all the balls-out action we've come to expect from the series.

This is a new character called Brian Forbes, who Rockstar were initially keeping a tight lid on. Be warned, the next sentence contains a plot spoiler! Brian is exposed as an undercover cop after a mission called 'Jump Ship', after which he is kidnapped by Vic and Lance and beaten for information.

Back in the Eighties everyone thought robots were going to take over the world any minute, hence films like *Terminator*, *Short Circuit* and *RoboCop*. The reality was less glamorous and generally involved robots like this attempting to pour drinks without spilling them all over the floor. We suspect this robot will be used as some sort of remote bomb in true *GTA* style.

With Vic being ex-military, soldiers are bound to feature more heavily in this *GTA* than in any before it. There's almost definitely a member of the military who provides you with missions , which will hopefully give you easy access to the Hunter and Rhino.



This looks like it could be some sort of air ambulance. Could this mean we'll be able to do Paramedic missions in the air? It certainly looks like a possibility.

RELEASE LIST

DISAPPOINTING DELAYS HAVE PUT BACK SOME GAMES THIS MONTH BUT THERE'S NO DOUBT WE'LL STILL SEE THEM BEFORE GRAN TURISMO ARRIVES

NOVEMBER

ACE COMBAT X: SKIES OF DECEPTION
SCEE

BATTLEZONE
Atari

BOMBERMAN
Konami

CAPCOM CLASSICS COLLECTION RELOADED
Capcom

CAPCOM PUZZLE WORLD
Capcom

DUNGEON SIEGE: THRONE OF AGONY
2K Games

SIMON'S LOOKING FORWARD TO...
EA REPLAY
■ The games on this retro collection sound great. I used to love *Desert Strike* and *Road Rash* was always good for a laugh. Bring it on!

EA REPLAY
EA

ERAGON
Vivendi

HOT **GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY STORIES**
Rockstar

HOT **KILLZONE: LIBERATION**
SCEE

L.A. RUSH
Midway

MARVEL: ULTIMATE ALLIANCE
Activision

MORTAL KOMBAT UNCHAINED
Midway

MOTOGP
SCEE

HOT **NEED FOR SPEED CARBON**
EA

ONLINE CHESS KINGDOMS
Konami

OPEN SEASON
Ubisoft

PAINKILLER: HELL WARS
DreamCatcher Int.

PLAYWIZE POKER & CASINO
505 Gamestreet

PROSTROKE GOLF - WORLD TOUR 2007
Oxygen

SCOOBY-DOO! WHO'S WATCHING WHO?
THQ

HOT **SONIC RIVALS**
Sega

THRILLVILLE
Atari

HOT **TONY HAWK'S PROJECT 8**
Activision

WINX CLUB: JOIN THE CLUB
Konami

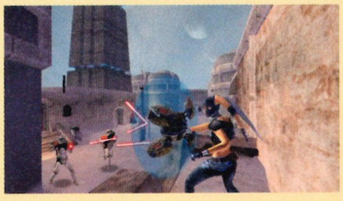
HOT **WWE SMACKDOWN VS. RAW 2007**
THQ

DECEMBER

THE CON
Southpeak

SHREK SMASH AND CRASH RACING
Activision

HOT **STAR WARS: LETHAL ALLIANCE**
Ubisoft



WORLD SERIES OF POKER: TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS
Activision

TOM'S LOOKING FORWARD TO...
WORLD SERIES OF POKER
■ I love to gamble and when it's not real money it's even better. With my poker skills I'd be homeless by now if I played for real.

TBA

300: MARCH TO GLORY
Eidos

ARTHUR AND THE MINIMOYS
Atari

ASTERIX & OBELIX XXL 2: MISSION LAS VEGUM
Atari

ATV OFFROAD FURY PRO
SCEE

AVATAR: THE LAST AIRBENDER
THQ

BLACK & WHITE CREATURES
THQ

BLISS ISLAND
Codemasters

BLITZ: THE LEAGUE
Midway

BROTHERS IN ARMS: D-DAY
Ubisoft

HOT **CALL OF DUTY 3**
Activision

CANNON FODDER
Codemasters

CASH MONEY CHAOS
SOE

CHILI CON CARNAGE
Eidos

CODED ARMS: CONTAGION
Konami

CRASH DUMMY VS. THE EVIL D-TROIT
Schanz

CRISIS CORE: FINAL FANTASY VII
Square Enix

DAVE MIRRA BMX CHALLENGE
Crave

DEAD HEAD FRED
D3Publisher

DEATH, JR. 2: ROOT OF EVIL
Konami

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: TACTICS
Atari

DUNGEON EXPLORER
Hudson Entertainment

EARACHE EXTREME METAL RACING
Metro3D

EARTHWORM JIM
Atari

EVERY EXTENDED EXTRA
Buena Vista Games

FAMILY GUY
Take 2

THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS: TOKYO DRIFT
EA

FOOTBALL MANAGER 2007
Sega

DAVE'S LOOKING FORWARD TO...
FOOTBALL MANAGER 2007
■ Being a football-mad fellow there's nothing I like better than a good management sim, and this should be one of the best. I might burst with excitement!

GENERATION OF CHAOS
Nippon Ichi

GHOST RIDER
2K Games

HOT **GRAN TURISMO 4 MOBILE**
SCEE

GUILTY GEAR JUDGEMENT
THQ

HARD ROCK CASINO
Crave

HELLBOY
Konami

HOT PXL
Atari

JUSTICE LEAGUE HEROES
Eidos

LUMINES II
Buena Vista Games

MARVEL TRADING CARD GAME
Konami

MEDAL OF HONOR: HEROES
EA

METAL GEAR SOLID DIGITAL COMIC
Konami

HOT **METAL GEAR SOLID: PORTABLE OPS**
Konami

METAL SLUG ANTHOLOGY
SNK

MLB '06: THE SHOW
SCEE

HOT **PRINCE OF PERSIA: RIVAL SWORDS**
Ubisoft

ANDY'S LOOKING FORWARD TO...
PRINCE OF PERSIA
■ I was a bit disappointed by the first outing for this series on PSP, so I have high hopes for this one. The multi-player stuff sounds awesome!

PUZZLE CHALLENGE: CROSSWORDS AND MORE!
Crave

HOT **RATCHET & CLANK: SIZE MATTERS**
SCEE

SEGA MEGA DRIVE COLLECTION
Sega

HOT **SILENT HILL ORIGINS**
Konami

SIMS 2 PETS
EA

SOCOM US NAVY SEALS FIRETEAM BRAVO 2
SCEE

SPINOUT
Ghostlight

STACKED WITH DANIEL NEGREANU
Eidos

STAR TREK: TACTICAL ASSAULT
Bethesda Softworks

STEEL HORIZON
Konami

STREET SUPREMACY
Konami

HOT **SUPERMAN RETURNS: THE VIDEOGAME**
EA

TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED
Atari

TOCA RACE DRIVER 3 CHALLENGE
Codemasters

HOT **TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX VEGAS**
Ubisoft

TRAXION
LucasArts

VIRTUA TENNIS 3
Sega

WORLD OF POOL
Ghostlight

WTF
D3Publisher

YS: THE ARK OF NAPISHTIM
Konami

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Konami

PSPOST

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Got an issue concerning the world of PSP gaming? Let us know! We'll even answer your most pressing queries about the PS3 and even the PS2! Even if you just have a funny anecdote that will put a smile on our faces then get writing. You never know, you might just get a Joytech Media Amp...

Back to the future

Why are there so many bloody retro compilations on the PSP? Do game developers have so few new ideas that they have to keep churning out old games all the time? Don't get me wrong I enjoyed playing stuff like *Final Fight*, *Strider* and whatever else, but only when it was the cutting edge of gaming. Now it's all so old hat and simplistic that it

Retro games - some people love them, others not so much

doesn't hold my interest for anything more than a couple of minutes. I hope some publishers are reading this and it makes them think twice before churning out another compilation filled to the brim with old tat.

Barry Holden, Tiverton

Calm down Barry, no one is forcing you to buy these retro compilations, and it's not like the shelves are exactly overloaded with them. While we'll agree that some retro titles are probably best left in the past, it's great when you rediscover an old game that you enjoyed in your youth. If these compilations were being released in favour of new titles then we might see your point, but they're not so stop being such a grouch. The wave of classic gaming doesn't look likely to stop any time soon with EA getting in on the action plus more from Capcom and Taito, sorry.

Price hike

Why the price rise in your fine mag? I didn't notice any mention of it in the last issue and when they told me the price I proceeded with an argument with the newsagent owner. When he showed me the front cover I had to bow my head in defeat and leave with my tail between my legs. When I went home to ask my wife for more money she blew her top, as most women do regarding money. I'm not a wuss, I'm just a dad - dominated and domesticated. Anyway, back to my point. Can we see an improved mag, with extra sections and more in-depth info? Maybe there is something up your sleeve, maybe you are gearing up for the Christmas period and you are going to send all your avid readers a little thank you gift for shelling out our hard-earned cash on your near-perfect PSP bible. Near-perfect in the sense that many gamers like myself have stopped looking at pictures and need more content and information about games in general. Pictures are very fine indeed but we are becoming an information-hungry society and we need more and more. Sorry for complaining but I feel a bit concerned, as when I was a nipper I had a set amount of pocket money and that had to last and there may be some readers out there who are on tight budgets and must sacrifice things, one of which could well be Go>Play.

David Goodfellow, via email

Sorry you got a nasty shock in regards to the price but the magazine has been £3.99 since issue 6, which is a few months ago now. As you can see we've increased the size of the magazine so now there's even more room for the latest PSP news and reviews. We see your point about having less screenshots, but in our experience many people want to see the game

F.A.Q.

Mail to: goplay@imagine-publishing.co.uk

Putting out the fires of those burning PSP questions

› Now the PS3 has been delayed can we expect Sony to reconsider the price of the PSP to make it more competitive at Christmas? I'm not bothered particularly but my brother wants one so we can play some Wi-Fi stuff.

Jack Burton, Tamworth

We wish we could give you some good news Jack, but unfortunately Sony look unlikely to drop the price of the PSP any time soon. If the PS3 delay was the same in all territories then perhaps the price may have to be reconsidered, but as it's just in Europe Sony probably won't drop the price in just one market.

› I noticed some weird things going on in your last issue. I'm talking about the pool cues, balls and little piles of cash that you seem to have deposited on random pages. I don't know if it was a mistake or what, can you shed some light on what exactly you're playing at?

Doug Baker, Thurrock

What you saw, Doug was some advertising for the release of *The Hustle: Detroit Streets* on the PSP. It clearly worked, as it got your attention. Although you obviously didn't know what it was advertising! Look out for the review, it's coming soon!

› Great *GTA* coverage guys, really excited about the Empire Building stuff, it sounds great. That's all I wanted to say really, keep up the good work.

Robert Young, via email

Glad you enjoyed it Robert, we're really looking forward to getting our hands on the finished product and giving you the definitive verdict.

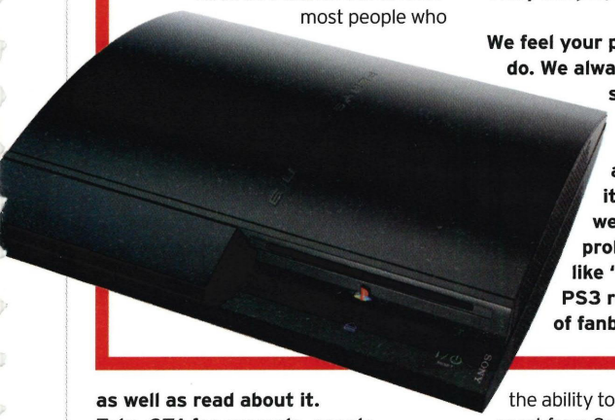
› Can we expect *Devil May Cry* to make the jump to PSP in the future? Dante's antics always deliver the goods and I'd love to take him everywhere I go.

Henry Stewart, via email

STAR LETTER

Keep the faith

I'm really starting to lose faith in Sony. First we get the PSP six months later than the US. Now the so-called worldwide launch has failed. Why does Europe always get such a raw deal? I'm fed up with it! Microsoft didn't exactly do particularly well with the Xbox 360 launch but at least most people who wanted one actually had one within a few weeks of launch. Now loyal PlayStation fans will have to wait four months longer, and that's if the March release even sticks. Give me one good reason why the hell I shouldn't just forget about the PS3 and buy an Xbox 360 instead?
Terry Harper, Birmingham



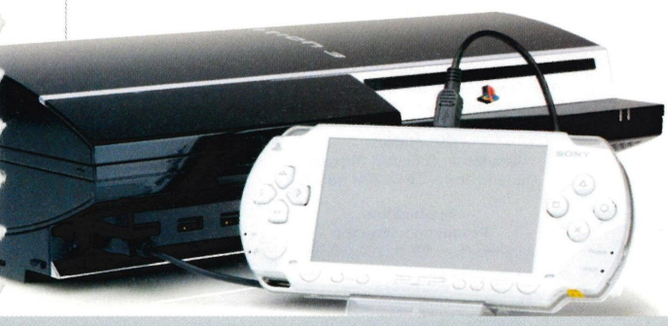
We feel your pain Terry, we really do. We always had a sneaking suspicion that Sony's launch plans were a little too ambitious and unfortunately it seems as if they were. While we should probably say something like "X brick 360 suxxx! PS3 rulezzzz!" that sort of fanboy drivel gets on our nerves. The 360 is a good games console and with the HD-DVD drive on sale in the next month you'll be able to pick up the console and the drive for considerably less than the PS3. Many people will probably do that too, which might make Sony sit up and take notice. However, in comparison to Japan and the US, Europe is a small market, which is why we are consistently left behind. One advantage of the delay is that any bugs the console has after launch should be ironed out by the time it actually hits our European shores.

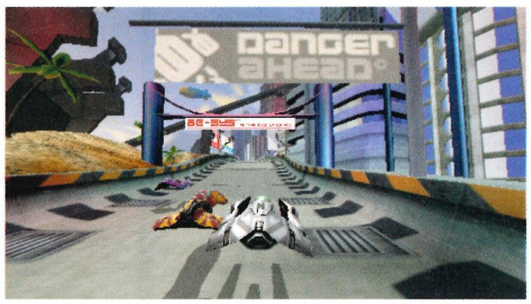
as well as read about it. Take *GTA* for example, people obviously want to read about it but the desire for brand new screenshots is far greater. Anyway, we hope you enjoy the new size issue.

Content conundrums

Just what has happened to the promise of downloadable extra content for PSP games? Most developers seem to be ignoring the ability to do this with the PSP apart from Sony, obviously who has provided a decent about of support for its games. Why has no one else bothered to provide us with anything? There's no shortage of developers churning out extra content for Xbox 360 games so why do we get short-changed?
Harry Boyd, Oxford

We agree, the amount of downloadable content for PSP games has been disappointing so far and, as you say, Sony has been the biggest supporter. Hopefully once the PS3 sees the light of day we might see downloadable content via the console or extra stuff contained within PS3 games that you will then be able to transfer to the PSP version. No one knows exactly what the future holds, but we'd certainly like to see more after-sales support for PSP games.





Well, we certainly wouldn't rule out a *Devil May Cry* game on PSP at some point in the future, although we must admit that Capcom is yet to actually announce anything in connection with this. However, Dante can be found in *Viewtiful Joe: Red Hot Rumble* if you're really desperate to have him feature on your favourite handheld.

› I saw my mate playing *Point Blank* on his DS the other day. I remember playing this on my original PSone years ago, but unfortunately I got rid of it. Is there any change we will se a PSP version? Obviously the GunCon won't work but I don't mind using the stick to move the cursor around the screen, at least it will be better than using that stupid pen like the DS, which just makes it way too easy.
Ronald Davis, Portsmouth
We remember the fun to be had with *Point Blank* too, but sadly it doesn't look like there will be a version coming to the PSP. However, once the PSone download service starts it might just be one of the games that you will be able to get. So keep your fingers crossed for that!

› I read your news piece on the GPS adaptor for the PSP with much interest last month. I travel a great deal in my car and have been tempted to buy some sort of Sat Nav device. The only problem is the price, if you want a good one you're looking at around £200 at least. Will Sony's new add-on be able to solve my problems?
Paul Johnson, via email
It looks like the GPS add-on will function just as you hope, Paul. The unit was shown in action at the Tokyo Game Show and certainly looks like a handy piece of kit.

HOT TOPIC

The forumites sound off...

Lego Star Wars II
Posted Mon 11 Sep, 2006 10:52 pm
Akuma
I've got this on 360 and it's so much fun, one of the best games I've played in ages. But you've gotta do the co-op to get the most out of it. Has anyone got it on PS or anything? What do you think?

Posted Mon 11 Sep, 2006 5:19 pm
Karan
Haven't got it, I really don't like Lego games...

Posted Mon 11 Sep, 2006 7:10 pm
Shadow
I loved the first one. I think the new one only came out today on PS2, I wants it.

Posted Mon 11 Sep, 2006 7:25 pm
game_maester564
I went to my local Asda on Saturday and they already had it in store for £30

Posted Mon 11 Sep, 2006 8:27 pm
Kevin mc Cormack
I would feel childish going into a shop and asking for *Lego Star Wars II* the game. But I was playing it today in a shop and from what I saw it's pretty much the same as the first. Looks good.

Posted Mon 11 Sep, 2006 8:36 pm
Akuma
It's childish to say that you would feel childish buying *Lego Star Wars*, a good game is a good game... get my drift.

Legal minefield

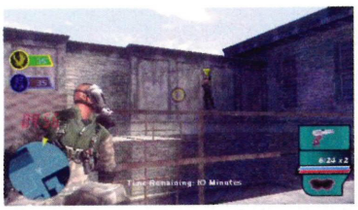
I am writing in about this site I was looking at on the net last week. It's called **all4psp.com** and when you start looking around it says you can download PSP games, which can be saved directly to the Memory Stick. The same goes for movies, music and loads of other stuff. Apparently all you have to do is sign up, which costs sod all, and then everything is free to download. My point is, surely a site such as this is going to be dodgy but when I looked at it in detail it says it is all legal. So, I was wondering if you guys could take a look and possibly print a small review of this site in your fine magazine, as I would appreciate your opinion and I'm sure others would too.
Mark Stephens, via email

It all sounds wonderful doesn't it Mark? However, if sites like these – and there are a number of them – were really legal we'd all be using them and they'd advertise all over the place. We attempted to get a comment from the website but strangely the 'Contact' link was broken. Just because it claims to be legal does not mean that it is and the fact that it advises users to download PeerGuardian, which is a program designed to block access to the authorities tracking your activities while filesharing, says it all really. PeerGuardian also blocks things such as Spyware but even the simplest virus protection software does that, so it's clear why all4psp are keen for you to use it. If something looks too good to be true then that's usually because it is, Mark. Don't get sucked in by the promise of free games, its all piracy as far as we can tell.

Multi-player mayhem

I hope you can help! Me and my mates are looking for some top multi-player games to play on our PSPs. Ones with Game Share would be great, so only one of us has to buy a copy of the game. But if the game is good enough we don't mind buying a copy each. What can you recommend to us?
James Dillon, Bracknell

Well there are certainly plenty of games to choose from, but as you don't say how many mates you plan on playing with or what sort of game you like, we don't know if these will be your cup of tea. We'll presume that you're looking for games with four players, which takes *Tekken* out of the picture, although that's well worth picking up if you just fancy some two-player action. If you don't already have it then *GTA: Liberty City Stories* has some great multi-player modes in it, providing you're old enough of course. *Syphon Filter: Dark Mirror* has some of the best multi-player on PSP so that's well worth trying out. *Ridge Racer* is great if you want some high-speed racing and *Worms* is fun if you want something simple but addictive. Hopefully there's something there that will take your fancy, enjoy!



Syphon Filter – multi-player heaven in the palm of your hour

go>PLAY

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PlayStation®2

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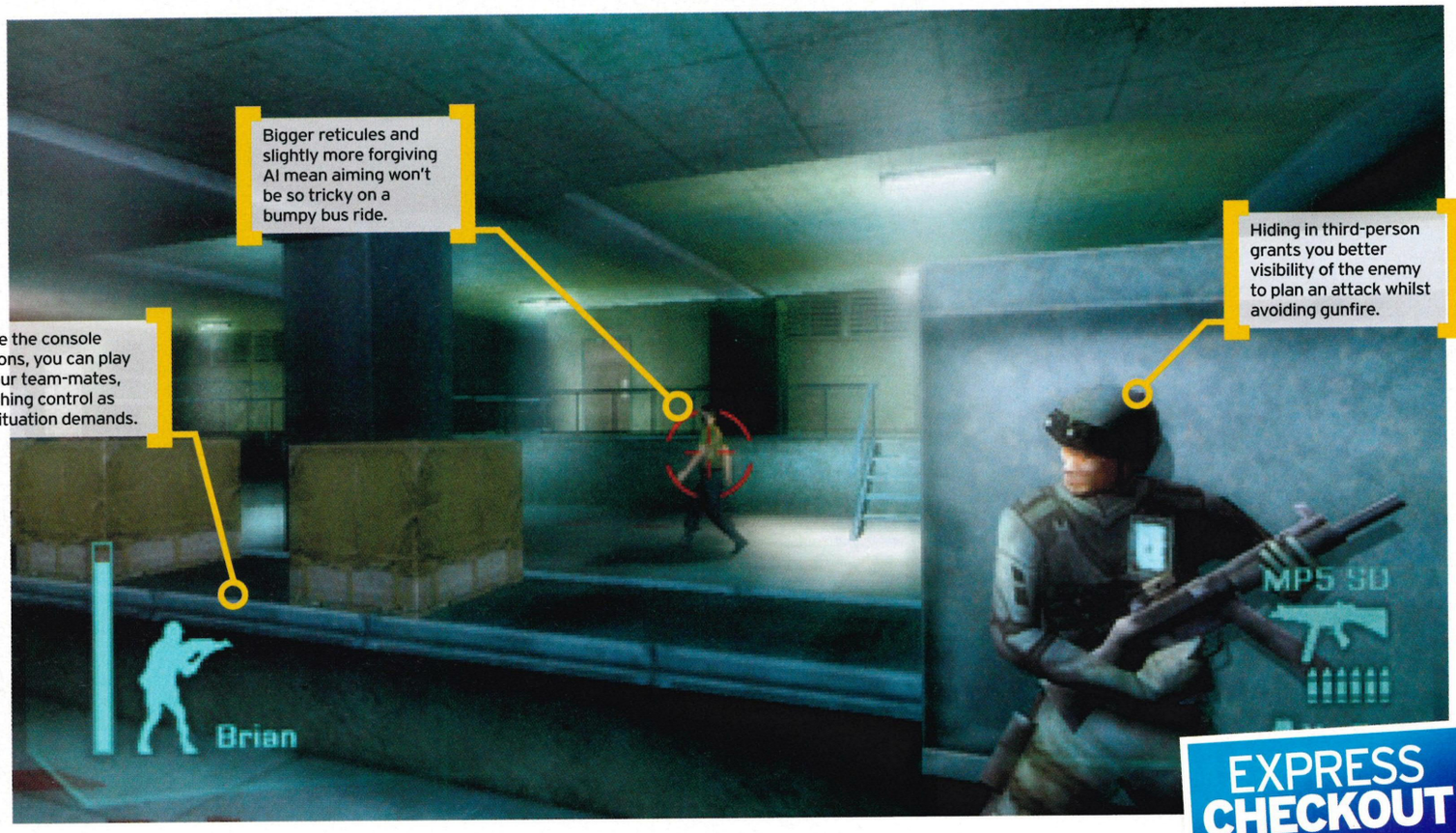


EXPRESS CHECKOUT
- New missions + story
- Six-player Wi-Fi mode
- Online multi-player
- Classic Rainbow Six maps
- New "Tag Team" option

Will Ubisoft's handheld gamble pay off?

RAINBOW SIX VEGAS

OUT: Q4 '06

Publisher **Ubisoft** / Developer **Ubisoft Québec** / Players **1-6**

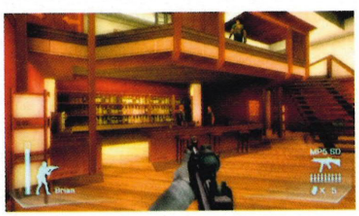
WHAT IS IT?
A next-gen, team-based first-person shooter, boiled down and remixed for the handheld PlayStation. Exclusive levels, characters and story make this an ideal companion to its bigger brothers on PS3 and 360.

For a Sony console it really is surprising how few first-person shooters are actually available for the PSP. So far, we've had *Coded Arms*, which was okay but not really up to the standard you would expect in this day and age. We've also got *Brothers In Arms* on the way and, well, that's about it really. The PSP has been out and about for well over a year now, so we have to beg the question, why have we seen so few FPS games? The hardware is certainly powerful enough (the DS and GBA have more FPS games, for Christ's sake) so we have to guess that the controls are to blame. Most PlayStation gamers are used to playing with two analogue sticks, which is, admittedly, very hard to compensate for on the single-stick PSP. Ubisoft Québec, a new handheld-focused arm of the French publisher, seems to have the problem figured out though.

[Unique gameplay, exclusive levels as well as different characters]

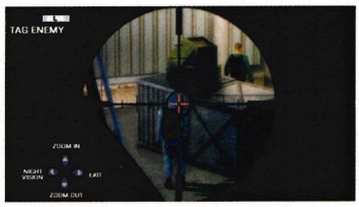
The developer's main method of control places movement on the analogue stick and the ability to look using the four face buttons, with fire set to the shoulder buttons. And we're happy to report that, in the time we spent with the game, the controls worked perfectly and we didn't miss that second analogue stick for a second.

Console-owning readers who are planning to pick up the PS3 or 360 versions may well be thinking at this point: 'That's all well and good but why should I own two versions of the same game?'. Well, dear reader, the answer is simple. This is no cut down, massively compromised or, ultimately, pointless port of the console version. It is an original game in its own right, featuring unique gameplay, exclusive levels as well as different characters. Ubisoft is positioning the game as a companion piece to the bigger versions, with gameplay that's tailored towards the sensibilities of a handheld gamer... and we couldn't be happier about it.



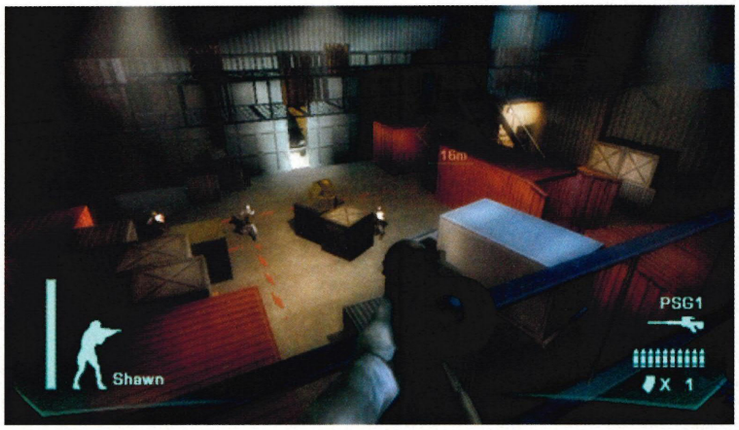
Vegas is one of the best-looking 3D games we've seen on the PSP

As the main Rainbow Six team works to save Dante's Casino from a powerful terrorist threat, the two main characters of the PSP version have their own problems to worry about. Working at the same time as the main team, they



Tag enemies in order to track them and mark 'em for the kill

Hiding like a coward can be just as important as shooting



must track down and counteract a second terrorist squad in several areas of Las Vegas that do not appear in the main game, including a private airport, a ranch and a water plant. Operative number one is Brian Armstrong: a field agent and assault expert who prefers to work at low levels, taking out enemies in close-quarter battles. Operative number two, on the other hand – Shawn Rivers – specialises in long-range weapons and will ordinarily be used to snipe terrorists from above. Two characters might not seem like a lot in the world of Rainbow Six, but for a handheld game it is plenty. Having just a couple of characters reduces the number of complicated manoeuvres and allows players to get to the action much quicker – which is, of course, ideal for the shorter bursts of gaming that PSP owners enjoy.

That's not to say that the game has been dumbed down though. Although enemy AI and overall difficulty is lower than on the consoles (to compensate for the differences in the way handhelds are played) the Rainbow team still have the same stealth abilities that you would expect. New items like the Snake Cam can be used to observe enemies so you can tag them for a kill before you've entered a room, whilst the Rainbow operatives are still able to take cover (in third person) in order to protect themselves during a heated battle and plan the best method of resistance.

For long-time PSP owners, it's *Rainbow Six*'s online multi-player mode that will be of most interest though. Up to six players can compete in both Survival and Team Survival modes on new levels and even classic Rainbow Six maps. We've played the ad-hoc multi-player mode and if the online equivalent plays as well, then *Rainbow Six Vegas* is sure to be a treat for online-enabled PSP gamers. All will be revealed towards the end of the year. ■ **Ashley Day**

WE SAY **We love the way this has been tailored towards the PSP's strengths and we could sure use another first person shooter. Bring it on.**

We wouldn't recommend using a sniper rifle in this situation, really

Go>Play Interview

We chat to creative director Daniel Bérubé...

Go>Play: How does *Rainbow Six Vegas* differ from the home console versions?
Daniel Bérubé: Xbox players play at home on their couch but PSP owners move around more so we've created a game that is more suited to the console. Instead of taking one and a half hours, a single level will take around 15 to 20 minutes. We're aware that PSP players will play on the bus, for example, while the bus is moving and they're being shook around, so that's why the controls are more forgiving and the AI less strict. Our gameplay is not one-shot-one-kill.

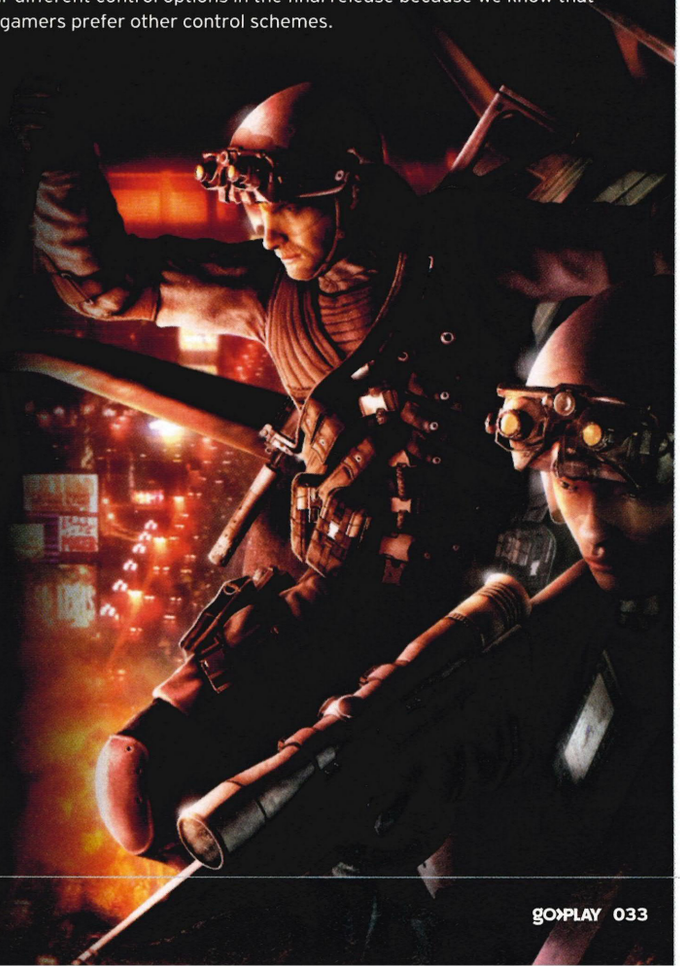
GP: Is it difficult to replicate the scale of Vegas on the small screen?
DB: That was one of our biggest challenges and in some areas we've succeeded by making medium-range levels that suggest a wider Vegas around them.

GP: We haven't seen an actual casino level in the game. Will one appear in the final version?
DB: The casino is only available in multi-player as it is more suited to that mode. The single-player will feature different areas that can be designed for more interesting gameplay.

GP: What was most challenging about bringing *Rainbow Six* to the PSP?
DB: The controls were a big challenge and we also found it difficult to make the graphics as close to console-quality as possible. We think we got them just right though and are very proud.

GP: Will the game follow the console versions and completely do away with cut-scenes?
DB: There are some text briefings before missions but we have tried to relay as much of the story during gameplay as we possibly can.

GP: We like *Rainbow Six*'s controls. How did you decide to use that set-up?
DB: We think these are the best FPS controls on the PSP but there will actually be four different control options in the final release because we know that some gamers prefer other control schemes.



These are some of the trickier enemies, and they aren't terribly partial to dying

See that little speck in the background? He probably won't be there much longer

To arms, men, to arms...

CODED ARMS: CONTAGION

OUT: MARCH '07

Publisher **Konami** / Developer **In-house** / Players **1-8**

WHAT IS IT?

The PSP's first shooter makes a comeback with an instalment that promises to solve all those nagging problems.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- All-new storyline
- Massive multi-player options
- Unlock Achievements and extras to use online
- Interior and exterior environments

As PSP owners, sometimes jealousy gets the better of us and we begin looking to other outlets for satisfaction. We won't pretend we don't ogle trailers of upcoming PS3 titles with the kind of covetousness usually directed toward 20-something receptionists by 50-something middle managers. Often we feel hard done by publishers that churn out lazy ports of weak PS2 titles in the hope that a less comprehensive line up on PSP will make their wares more appealing to us handheld gamers. Some of us even have Xbox 360s. Shocking. When you get to see titles running on PS3 followed by a PSP demo, then it's often forgivable to feel a little sad. However, with *Coded Arms* we're feeling distinctly more upbeat about portable gaming than we might otherwise be, as the handheld version is raining all over its bigger cousin's parade.

Looking back at the excitement of PSP's launch, Konami did something very brave: it tried a first-person shooter on an underdeveloped platform with obvious limitations for that particular genre type. We say brave, but what we really mean is stupid. It didn't work. The first iteration, *Coded Arms*, was undoubtedly a title of considerable quality, with an original story, superb graphics and varied gameplay. Sadly however, it just couldn't get over the control issues that plagued not only FPSs, but also beat-'em-ups. *Coded Arms: Contagion* promises to rectify all those problems, and with the benefit of over a year's worth of tweaking time, the follow-up to what is still - despite those control issues - the PSP's flagship first-person shooter is sure to only improve on the series so far.

The handheld version is raining all over its bigger cousin's parade

Thrust back into AIDA - the virtual reality training program from the first game - you, as an unsupported security operative, are sent into the ether of whatever bastard child of the Internet this vision of the near future presents in order to dispatch a rather tetchy group of cyber terrorists. Far from being your average bunch of disaffected tree-huggers however, this lot are after classified military secrets that would, no doubt, put the entire world in jeopardy. Very important then. It's not just a question of blowing these cyber punks to tiny little cyber pieces though, as there's the added bonus of having to hack your way into and out of situations. In true FPS-sequel fashion, there's the regulation increase in the array of weapons available to you, as well as the greater variety of bad guys to tear apart.

The multi-player aspect - something the first in the series excelled at - hasn't been ignored either. The expansion of an already comprehensive assortment of modes, including team play in numerous different game types makes the most of the game's pace and beautifully crafted level maps. We're still slightly wary of *Coded Arms: Contagion* however, and regardless of the promises made by Konami, we would rather reserve judgement until we get our hands on some playable code. ■ **Tom Leclerc**

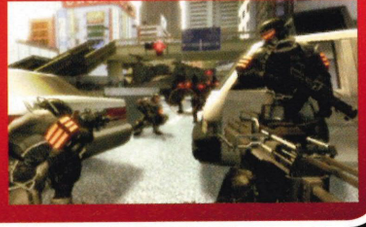
WE SAY **It certainly whets our appetite in terms of looks, action and story, but will *Contagion* manage to get over the control issues?**

We're not exactly sure what this gun does, but by the looks of it, it fires airport-sized Toblerones

PS3 catches the bug

Coded Arms on PS3 doesn't excite

The story behind *Coded Arms* is not a particularly innovative one, but the dark atmosphere and superb enemies of the first title made a game worthy of porting onto other systems. The PS3 has seen the benefit of this franchise jump, but despite some lovely FMV, the in-game footage doesn't seem to be the kind of thing we're after in next-generation gaming.



50 Of The Best

The poor sod must be getting tired out by now

To the best of our knowledge, Bomberman has featured in 50 titles across pretty much every platform known to man. The best *Bomberman* we've played recently is *Bomberman Generations*, while the worst would have to be the abysmal *Bomberman Hardball*. Get a copy of the former and burn anyone you find who possesses the latter.

Tick, tick, tick, bomb...

BOMBERMAN

OUT: NOV '06

Publisher **Konami** / Developer **In-house** / Players **1-4**

WHAT IS IT?

***Bomberman*. What more do we need to say? There are bombs and there are little men. The little men try to bomb everyone else. The winner is the one who isn't dead.**

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- Classic mode includes old-school gameplay
- 100 levels of single-player
- Game-swap functionality for up to four players
- Stock system to allow strategic use of items
- It's Bomberman!

There's only one type of person in this world that doesn't like *Bomberman*. The uber-casual gamer loves it for its effortlessness and seeming simplicity; the hardcore contingent adore it for the purity of play it delivers; and pretty much everyone else in the world given five minutes with a pad in their hand would have to admit that it's one of the best concepts ever conceived in videogaming history.

Then you get people like us - people who just aren't very good at it regardless of how hard they try. It looks like we'll be getting a heck of a lot more practice with it soon though, as along with an Xbox 360 version, PSP is set to get its very own dose of the explosives-toting cutey pie.

Now, if you've seen the upcoming *Bomberman* title for the Xbox 360 - *Bomberman Act: Zero* - you'll more than likely be horrified at the treatment that Konami has lazily slapped on this revered classic. You can rest assured though, because no such horror has befallen the PSP iteration, and from an aesthetic - and indeed gameplay point of view - all the bits and bobs we expect of a *Bomberman* title are here in abundance. Cutesy characters, the original multi-player mode, along with all the tension and seething frustration that *Bomberman* imbues you with are present, correct and very much at the forefront of the experience, just as they jolly well should be.

> **[It's one of the best concepts ever conceived in videogaming history]**

To create more of an experience for the lone player, as has happened with numerous recent versions, a single-player mode has been added on, and while it's admirable that Konami is attempting to add value to the franchise, we can't see many gamers buying it to chug through a hundred levels of puzzle-bombing. Thankfully though, that value extends into the multi-player with a handy disc-swapping system that allows up to four players to play using only the one UMD. Exactly how this stands up in practice is a question we'd like to answer, as this system has let us down in the past with some decidedly irksome slowdown issues.

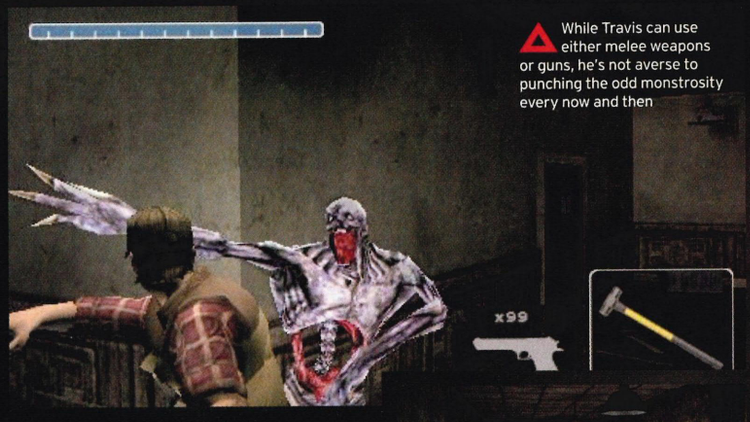
Of course, the story doesn't come into it much, but for those interested in the always-bizarre premises of the big-headed bomber, there's been an invasion of sorts: a dark shadow has descended on his planet, threatening to send the entire world into chaos. As you'd expect it falls to our diminutive hero to embark on an epic quest to rid the universe of this terror. Rubbish as always, but we can pretty much guarantee that'll be the only rubbish thing about *Bomberman*'s first outing on the PSP. ■ **Tom Leclerc**

WE SAY **There's no way Konami can screw this one up. Handheld *Bomberman* is the kind of thing we've been looking forward to for so long.**

The single-player mode features a massive array of power-ups that you can store for later use

We've never been too sure about a single-player mode. Multi-player is where it's at

Who said this game wouldn't look atmospheric on a small screen? Hang your head in shame loser



While Travis can use either melee weapons or guns, he's not averse to punching the odd monstrosity every now and then

Silent and most likely, very violent

SILENT HILL ORIGINS

OUT: MAR '07

Publisher **Konami** / Developer **In-house** / Players **1**

WHAT IS IT?

Konami's sick-and-twisted franchise heads to Sony's portable console and promises to reveal some of the secrets behind the doomed town and its inhabitants. We can't wait.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- A total of three devastating melee weapons
- Brand new camera view
- Explore old as well as new *Silent Hill* locations
- Over 15 minutes of cut-scenes
- Three new firearms to use

It wouldn't be a *Silent Hill* game if you didn't get to run through slummy locations

We've played some gut-wrenchingly twisted games in our past, but few can compare to the sheer psychological horror thrown at you in *Silent Hill*. Originally spawned on the PSone, Konami's series has become infamous for pulling no punches on its subject matter (both child abuse and suicide feature in *Silent Hill 2*) and its oppressive-looking visuals.

[Few games compare to the sheer psychological horror thrown at you]

Of course, *Silent Hill* is just one of the many survival horror franchises that have appeared on various Sony consoles over the years, yet despite this, it's still managed to eke out an existence by often choosing to tread where other franchises fear to step. And it appears that Konami is making another brave move by taking the franchise to the handheld market.

Set as always in the mysterious town of *Silent Hill*, *Origins* introduces a brand new character – truck driver Travis O'Grady (who has more emotional baggage than Gatwick Airport) – and promises to reveal a hell of a lot more about the history behind the doomed town and how it came to be. Don't expect a torrent of revelations though, as Konami has already told us that while it does intend to reveal the origins of certain characters and events that featured in the original (and subsequent games) it's going to hold some answers back. Think of it as a series of *Lost*, where a few questions are answered, but just as many new ones are left hanging.

As well as expanding *Silent Hill*'s already impressive narrative, Konami is also planning to bring plenty of new play mechanics to the eight-year-old franchise, with the most noticeable being the new *Resident Evil 4*-style camera. Not only does it make perfect use of the PSP's 16:9 screen, it also enables Travis to have much better control when it comes to attacking. The heroes of *Silent Hill* have always been ordinary Joes in the combat stakes (one of the reasons why the series appeals so much) so it's going to be interesting to see how the new viewpoint affects Travis' abilities – especially as the early videos now suggest that this latest adventure will be far more action orientated.

Luckily, you're more than equipped to deal with the extended bouts of fisticuffs, as Konami has supplied you with three meaty melee weapons with which to do damage –a shovel, tire iron and a hefty sledgehammer – that are perfect for bashing undead skulls. Throw in mechanics such as the ability to barricade doors and scatter objects around to delay enemies, plus something that Konami calls "cineractive" and it quickly becomes obvious that Konami is leaving nothing to chance.

While some have questioned Konami's decision to place a title that relies so heavily on atmosphere on a handheld system, early play suggests that (bar some stodgy controls) the next *Silent Hill* could well be the scariest and one of the most enjoyable yet. Taking that 9:30 commute to Waterloo may never be the same again... ■

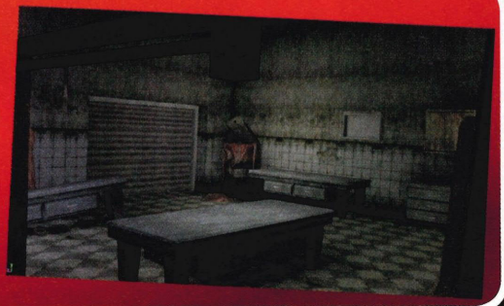
Darran Jones

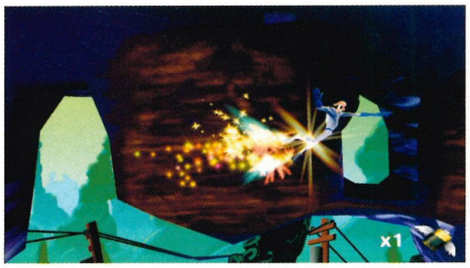
WE SAY **Despite its new portable home, *Silent Hill Origins* is already showing plenty of promise. Let's hope the move towards action doesn't impact on the franchise's strengths though.**

Stay awhile, stay forever

Exploring the new and old of Silent Park

It's a well-known saying that "familiarity breeds contempt", but for us, this never seems to happen whenever we return to the murky world of *Silent Hill*. Being able to explore the eerie, often sickening locations never fazes us (although Channel 4's Kim and Aggie would probably have heart attacks) and exploring the blood-stained corridors and dank, dreary locales is all part of the game's charm. Konami obviously realises this as well, as a third of the locations featured will have appeared in past games. Let's just hope the scary ass school doesn't make the cut...





You may think that chemical fertiliser is the earthworm's biggest threat, but it's actually the vindaloo

Once upon a time

The story so far

Starting life as an ordinary earthworm, Jim's life changed completely one day when an ultra-high-tech-indestructible-super-space-cybersuit fell on the poor insect. With the suit belonging to the evil Queen Pulsating, Bloated, Festering, Sweaty, Pus-filled, Malformed, Slug-for-a-Butt, Jim immediately finds himself a point of interest for her minions and sets out to save the evil Queen's sister from her clutches. Just how crazy will this version get?

Worming his way onto PSP... it's Jim

EARTHWORM JIM

OUT: TBA '07

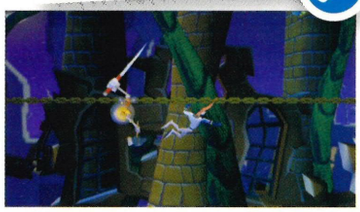
Publisher **Atari** / Developer **In-house** / Players **1-2**

WHAT IS IT?

Our old mate Jim is back, with plenty of hilarity, puzzling and combat that's sure to please old and new fans alike.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- His first adventure for years
- That classic *Earthworm Jim* art style
- More upgrades and power-ups than ever
- The ability to replay levels for high score
- Multi-player modes



It's unusual for a hugely popular game not to be franchised, sequelled, prequelled and squeezed for all it's worth and churned out on a yearly basis. Rather like an ageing prizefighter, these titles invariably maintain a stubborn insistence that simply because they were once the best, they're still – regardless of condition – worthy of note. All too often they're not however, and those titles we loved so fondly when they first came to town, are now left propped against a bar dribbling into their whisky, telling anyone with the patience to listen about just how quick on the draw they used to be.

Earthworm Jim is one game that, but for the grace of God, could have ended up in a metaphorical saloon doing metaphorical tricks for a metaphorical dime. Thankfully it has not. This is one that has had the benefit of a good long time left fallow, giving us here at **Go>Play** a slightly more elevated sense of expectation than you might expect from a title that debuted such a long time ago.

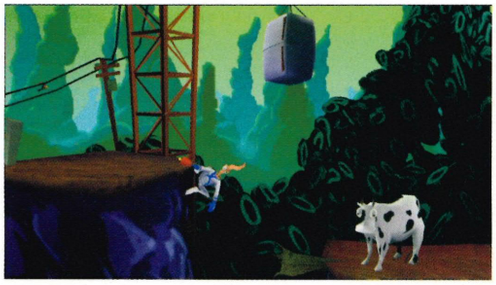
For anyone too lacking in years to remember the original, *Earthworm Jim* is one of the most genuinely hilarious videogames ever created, and one full of that kind of surreal humour so noticeably absent from the industry. So what can we expect from this long-awaited return of such a beloved hero? Well, strapping on his indestructible super-space cybersuit, Jim is set to embark on a farcical side-scrolling adventure that, from the sounds of it, looks to deliver some of the most unusual moments in gaming history.

> **[Earthworm Jim is one of the most hilarious videogames ever created]**

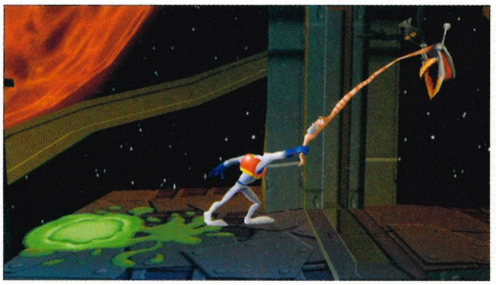
Expect the development of Jim's relationship with the nefarious Queen, as well as the continuation of his association with the damsel in distress, Princess What's-Her-Name and the cute but volatile Peter Puppy. There'll be plenty of pee-your-pants mirth and bizarre but engaging puzzling, outrageous combat involving Jim's suit and a range of comedy methods of dispatching his foes. New to this chapter of Jim's adventures is his ability to go into overdrive, increasing his arsenal of manoeuvres and an augmented suit that allows for an increase in his outfit's power. Probably the biggest inclusions since the good old days of the Mega Drive, are the multi-player and challenge modes, making it the perfect choice for us PSP lovers. There is also the added bonus of being able to go back and replay levels for a better score and in-game prizes.

Of course, Jim's trademark art style is here in abundance, along with his unique sense of humour, and we'd have to say that given the state of videogaming at the moment – rather than sit through the past exploits of some weathered has-been – we'd prefer to tag along with Earthworm Jim and experience more of his crazy adventures. ■ **Tom Leclerc**

WE SAY **You can't really argue with *Earthworm Jim* on any format. The hilarious comedy and old-school gameplay is bound to appeal to all types of gamer.**



Guess what happens next. One of the most memorable moments in videogame history. Almost!



The classic Earthworm Jim whip, using his own body. Yeurk!

So how does that work then? A worm. Doing the splits

Finding just the right player for your squad is easier than ever

The ol' Yak does it again and equalises for Middlesbrough. Good on him

FOOTBALL MANAGER 2007

Sports Interactive's finest makes its yearly comeback

OUT: Q4 '06

Publisher **Sega** / Developer **Sports Interactive** / Players **1**

WHAT IS IT?

You know what you're getting here. A fully updated version of *FM 2006*, complete with full international management.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- It's got far too many players to count
- The latest in the best ever management series
- Tevez and Mascherano are at West Ham
- It's mush better than *Championship Manager*
- It's a whole game made out of words and numbers

No one really expected much from Sega's *Football Manager Handheld* when it arrived earlier this year. After all, football management games on portable consoles traditionally don't work – the genre relies on huge statistical databases and processors capable of crunching Vorderman levels of numbers within seconds – not exactly what the Game Boy Advance was designed for. However, Sports Interactive – being the clever sods that they are – managed to deliver a stripped-down but ultimately sublime version of the world's favourite management game for the PSP, and we quite literally rejoiced.

Yes, you could only run one league at once, and yes, there were far fewer players than in the PC version (but still more than most management games), and yes, it was all too easy to find a glut of Brazilian wonder-kids and build a team full of 17 year olds for your assault on the Champions League, but no one could deny how addictive it was. It has been reported that the designer of our sister mag **games™** has played the game for well over 200 hours since its release. He has a problem, but he's not alone. There's something so immensely compulsive about guiding your team from the lower leagues to European glory. Perhaps it's the way the game tilts things ever so slightly in your favour, or perhaps it's the always-realistic messages you receive from the press and the board, but it cannot be denied that SI has been working with a winning formula for many years now.

For those out of the loop when it comes to management games, the unfamiliar name Sports Interactive is synonymous with the legend that is Miles Jacobsen, the man behind the original Championship Manager series and the reason that *Football Manager* is so good. He's been hurling out the nigh-on perfect management sim for well over a decade now and he and his team are not about to stop any time soon. This is why we can happily announce that *Football Manager 2007* is once again coming to PSP and it's even better than we could have ever hoped.

> **Juventus are no longer in Serie A, the dirty match-fixing scoundrels**

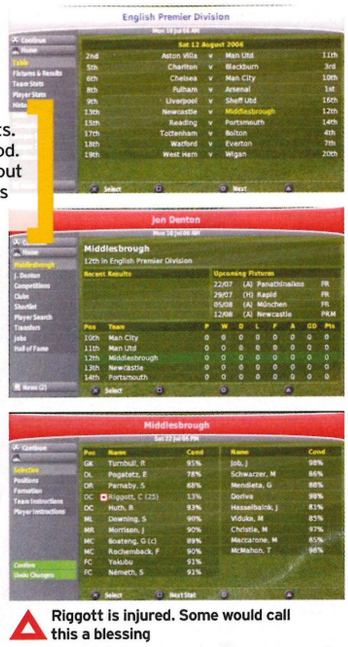
The first, and most obvious change, is the full statistical update. Carrick's at United, Ruud's at Real and Juventus are no longer in Serie A, the dirty match-fixing scoundrels. This change also brings with it a brand new host of magical youngsters to track down and lure into your clutches – much like the now canned Gary Glitter videogame. Already we've spotted Anderson at

The transfer market is far more active than in last year's version

Fog of War

Hiding stats and making you work for success

Something that SI has been determined to include in this year's version of *Football Manager* on PSP is the so-called 'Fog of War'. This hides certain statistics for potential transfer targets and means you'll have to spend time and money scouting players to make sure they're exactly right for your team. It makes the game harder, but in a way we like it like that – last year it was all too easy to stumble across the next Ronaldinho and sign him up for a pound a week. No more.



Riggott is injured. Some would call this a blessing

Porto and Yohan Gourcuff of AC Milan after their sparkling performances in the Champions League recently – no doubt the game will once again uncover the next batch of superstar players as it seems to every single year. As long as they don't turn out like Ibrahima Bakayoko, then we'll all be happy. And so will Everton.

America time. Just another layer of depth on one of the deepest games to hit the shelves.

To capitalise on this furthered sense of depth and immersion, Sports Interactive has added a phenomenal amount of new message types and management/player interaction. For example, you can now offer a player to another club, so you don't have to have an unwanted lad rotting in the reserves for years. Also, instead of having to make a formal bid, you can now place a simple enquiry regarding a prospective transfer target, meaning that if the other club is asking a bit too much, you don't have to waste time and effort – and potentially cash – on making a wild bid. With more interaction between you and your board as well, the sense of actually being in charge will be heightened significantly. Not bad for a little handheld manager sim.

[Cramming in South Americans will **wreak havoc** come Copa America]

In all honesty, just an update would have sufficed, but it's this news that has got us damp with anticipation: This year's version will feature a full international management mode, so you finally have somewhere to go after taking you club team as far as they can go. Also, as international matches will now run side by side with league games, you'll have to pick your squad with far more diligence, as cramming in South Americans will wreak havoc come Copa

Football Manager 2007 is already fantastic. A few little glitches still need to be ironed out before its Christmas release, but there's never been a version of the game shipped with bugs, so we have no fear that there will be any problems come release time. This is the game that is sure to eat away more hours than any other and will be responsible for draining your PSP's battery more times in a week than anything else before. We didn't think the original could be bettered, but it seems those chaps at SI have done it. Congratulations boys, you've certainly earned it. ■ **Jon Denton**

WE SAY ***Football Manager 2007*** **is looking absolutely fantastic, and is set to gobble up a large part of our winter upon release.**

The press and ex-pros will now chip in with their two penneth worth

Picking your squad is as easy as pie. And pie, as you know, is pretty damn easy

What the deuce? This is freakin' sweet!

FAMILY GUY

OUT: DEC '06

Publisher **Take 2** / Developer **High Voltage** / Players **1**

WHAT IS IT?

The much-loved cartoon gets turned into a game. Control Peter, Stewie and Brian in all manner of madcap, one-liner filled adventures.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- Loads of in-jokes
- Three different storylines
- Play as Peter, Stewie and Brian
- God makes a cameo
- It's freakin' sweet!

It's testament to the popularity and quality of *Family Guy* that, despite being cancelled twice, it's still going from strength to strength. Now, the Griffin family get the honour of being immortalised in a videogame too.

As you'd expect, the developers have kept it simple with gameplay that is easy to jump straight in to. Revolving around three of the main characters, you get to control Peter, Stewie and Brian in separate storylines that intertwine at various points. Stewie must pit his wits against arch-nemesis Bertram as they each try to take over the world. Armed with a ray gun and a mind-control device, Stewie's sections are basically a platform adventure with plenty of jumping around to reach items. The adventure takes him from the Griffin residence all the way to Peter's testicles (don't ask).

Early in his adventure Stewie knocks the family's satellite dish from the roof, which just so happens to hit Peter on the head. This sends the man of the household a little loopy, and he believes that not only is he in a videogame but also that Mr Belvedere is attempting to take over the world. In an effort to stop him, Peter goes on a rampage that involves beating the crap out of every Quahog resident he encounters. As you might have guessed, Peter's levels take the form of a scrolling beat-'em-up where no one – even your frail old granny – is safe.

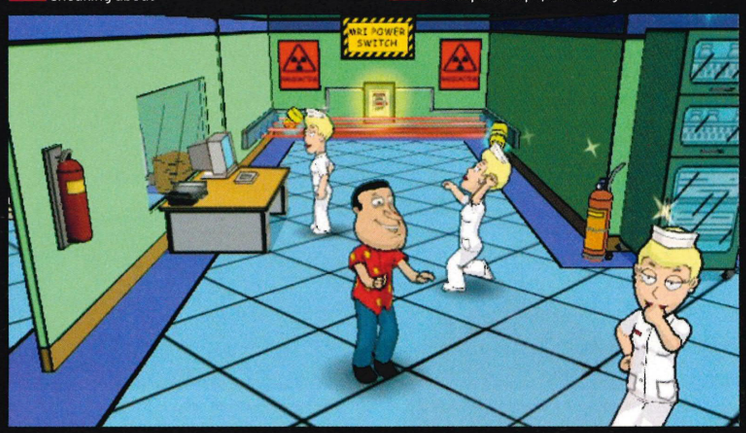
Finally, we come to Brian who is yet again accused of impregnating Seabreeze (the first time was in Season Three's episode 'Screwed The Pooch'. Brian is locked up and must escape in order to prove his innocence. This mainly involves a little bit of stealth on the sophisticated dog's part, but there's no doubt plenty of time for a Martini-break along the way.

What we've seen of *Family Guy* so far reveals a game that stays true to its origins and doesn't hold back on the trademark humour, which is illustrated by the publisher's willingness to allow the game to have a 15 rating. The brief look we did get exposed the gameplay to be a little on the simplistic side, especially in Peter's segments, but there could be hidden depths that we are not yet privy to. Hopes are high for the Griffin family's first videogame outing. Hey, good name. ■ **Simon Griffin**

> The **adventure** takes him **from the Griffin residence** to **Peter's testicles**

Hopefully Brian won't spend the entire game sneaking about

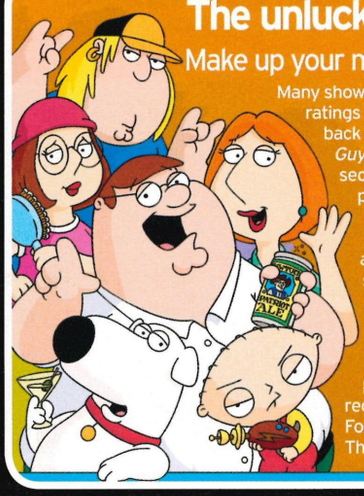
What looks like Peter in drag next to a helicopter. Nope, we don't get it either



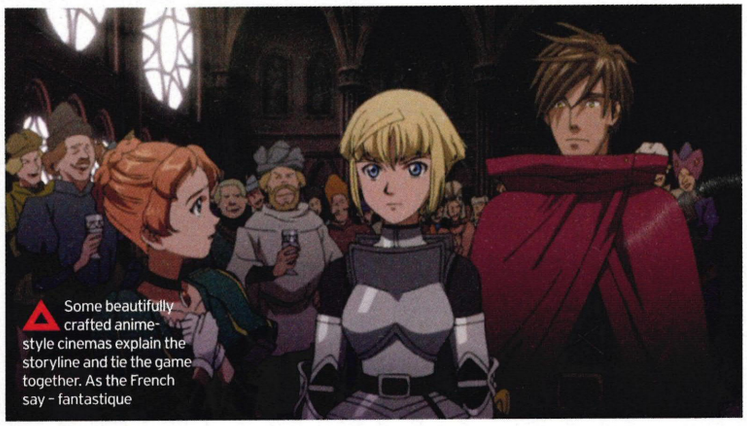
WE SAY **Despite some relatively simplistic gameplay, *Family Guy*'s humour and charm make up for it. Fans of the show will adore this.**

The unluckiest show on Earth?

Make up your mind, Fox!



Many shows get cancelled over in the US. Get poor ratings and that's it, all over. Very few get brought back after suffering such a fate, but *Family Guy* is one of the lucky few. At the end of the second season Fox looked set to pull the plug, so many of the writers jumped ship in search of alternative employment. Much to their annoyance, Fox changed its mind at the last minute and decided to bring the show back for a third season. Once again the suits got nervous and cancelled the show after that season. Furious fans started an online petition that received over 111,000 signatures. With both the petition and the high ratings the show was receiving on Cartoon Network's Adult Swim, Fox decided to bring the show back yet again. Third time lucky, eh?


Some beautifully crafted anime-style cinemas explain the storyline and tie the game together. As the French say - fantastique

JEANNE D'ARC

RPG veteran Level 5, developer of Rogue Galaxy, adapts history to create a potential PSP classic

OUT: 22 NOV (JPN)

Publisher **SCEJ** / Developer **Level 5** / Players **1**

WHAT IS IT?

A Japanese Strategy-RPG that resembles the *Shining Force* series and games by Nippon Ichi, exclusively for the PSP, based on the story of French heroine and Catholic saint Joan of Arc.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- Level 5 is renowned for making great RPGs
- Between 40 and 50 stages
- Battles last between 10 and 30 minutes
- Blends historical fact with invented fiction
- Around 150 characters, including real people

The strategic grid makes it resemble *Disgaea*, but with proper 3D polygonal character models

Level 5 is making an exclusive Strategy-RPG for the PSP. It was behind the excellent *Dragon Quest VIII* and also the astounding, critically acclaimed *Rogue Galaxy*. Knowing this, it's time to get very excited indeed. Admittedly, its earlier PS2 effort - Dark Cloud - received mixed reactions and was certainly no classic, but its aforementioned latter work is nothing short of stunning. With such a pedigree you can almost guarantee *Jeanne D'Arc* will at least be above average, if not the leading genre example on PSP.

Precise details at the time of going to press were mainly available in Japanese, either via Level 5 or printed in Japan's leading games bible Famitsu, but as always, **Go>Play** has gone that extra mile to translate everything.

Akihiro Hino, president of Level 5, openly admitted that after seeing the PSP he was determined to develop a Strategy-RPG for it. Until this point none of the company's titles had starred a female character, and so, coupled with an obviously suitable medieval setting, they eventually decided on working with and embellishing the historical account of Joan of Arc (a French warrior-babe, burned alive by the British).

This could be perceived as highly risky and possibly alienating, especially for those concerned with the increasingly Western-centric nature of the entire industry; more so considering Level 5's past games (which used original IP) have proven so enthralling. But as Hino-san explained, while initially strictly following history, the game quickly ended up incorporating fiction.

> **Jeanne D'Arc has unique elements to distinguish it from other S-RPGs**

As you'd expect from such visionaries, *Jeanne D'Arc* has unique elements to distinguish it from countless other S-RPGs. Two well-explained workings are the potentially revolutionary Burning Site and Connection Guard techniques. With Connection Guard, if characters on the playing grid stand in a particular fixed formation, they become shrouded in light and have their defences increased. This is directly proportionate to the number standing in formation, making it possible for even low-level characters to challenge almighty bosses - providing you have the right arrangement that is.

Sadly, the problem facing Level 5's latest opus isn't anything inherently to do with gameplay, rather that *Makai Senki Disgaea Portable* - a PSP port of the PS2's insanely popular and admittedly fantastic Strategy-RPG, *Disgaea: Hour Of Darkness* - has been slated for a 30 November release in Japan, roughly one week after *Jeanne D'Arc*. It's happened before in Japan with similar games coming out at similar times (notably Level 5's vastly superior *Rogue Galaxy* being overshadowed by *Kingdom Hearts 2*), and this could prove to be such stiff competition that *Jeanne D'Arc* sinks without trace nor English release. It would seem Level 5 simply cannot win no matter how strenuously it tries. Let's hope that if this PSP title meets our - and fellow aficionados' - high expectations, the masses will see sense and make it their chosen purchase. (Strategy playing) man cannot live on Nippon Ichi alone! ■ **John Szczepaniak**

Cleverly, objects such as trees become transparent so as not to hinder things

WE SAY **Level 5 again looks set to impress with this colourful and inventive RPG featuring a clever storyline. Although being strategy-based, as opposed to a vanilla RPG, may limit its audience.**

Burning Site hails distinctive gameplay

How can we sleep when our beds are burning?

Radically altering the strategic mechanics of *Jeanne D'Arc* is a system called Burning Site. The idea is simple: attacking an enemy releases energy and the adjacent square in that direction then becomes a 'burning site'. This provides a power boost to anyone touching it. Ingeniously, it's possible to create massive chains, which require clever character positioning and result in huge damage. Imagine attacking an enemy, with an ally standing on the adjacent square who immediately receives increased power and then attacks another adjacent enemy, which again has an adjoining ally who receives even greater power! And so on, as the power chain continues. The almost 'leapfrog' nature of this is best compared to *Checkers*, and the ability to annihilate the entire board with good positioning.

It's elemental my dear Watson

AVATAR: THE LAST AIRBENDER

OUT: TBA '07

Publisher **THQ** / Developer **Studio Oz** / Players **1**

WHAT IS IT?

Martial arts combat game based on one of Nickelodeon's hottest new cartoons. Customise your bending powers to master Earth, Air, Water and Fire.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- Customisable bending powers
- Play as four main characters
- Visit familiar environments
- New enemies for the game
- Fans should love it!

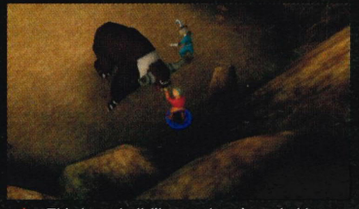
Whenever anyone outside of Japan tries to make an anime-style cartoon the results are often poor and pale in comparison. *Avatar* is one of those rare shows, which despite being made in the US, actually appears Japanese at first glance.

The successful Nickelodeon cartoon is now receiving the treatment that any popular film or TV show gets these days, in the form of a videogame based around it. The premise of *Avatar* sees the world divided into four equal powers, the Water Tribe, Earth Kingdom, Fire Nation and Air Nomads. Each of these nations has a group of gifted people known as Benders, who have the ability to manipulate their native element using martial arts and elemental magic. Everything was hunky dory until the young ruler of the Fire Nation decided to try and conquer the world. The only one who can stop this from happening is the titular Avatar, who is the human incarnation of the Spirit of the World and can master bending each one of the four elements.

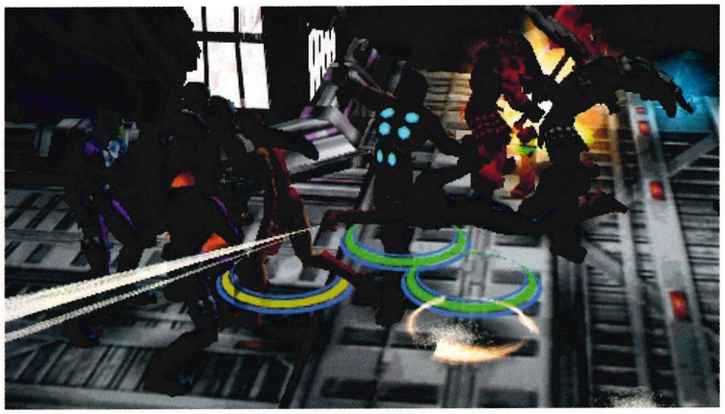
The game lets you control this Avatar, a young boy named Aang. Those of you familiar with the cartoon will know he's often joined by Katara, Sokka and Haru and the game is the same, allowing you to control all four characters at various points through the story. In order to fight the forces of the Fire Nation you'll need to use all your elemental powers, which can be upgraded as you progress. A selection of martial arts moves will also be at your disposal to battle a range of never-before-seen enemies. *Avatar* looks like it should please fans and might just attract new followers. ■ **Simon Griffin**

WE SAY **If the plot can stick close to the show and give us a good mix of magic and hand-to-hand combat then *Avatar* could be a licence worth checking out.**

Some of the powers are looking pretty impressive. Is this wind or water?



This large bull-like creature is probably unfriendly, it's hard to tell from this shot



The mightiest heroes in the universe join forces

MARVEL: ULTIMATE ALLIANCE

OUT: 10 NOV

Publisher **Activision** / Developer **Vicarious Visions** / Players **1-4**

WHAT IS IT?

It's *X-Men Legends* but with brand new gameplay elements and over 140 Marvel characters including 20 playable ones. Show those super villains what for!

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- 140 Marvel characters...
- ...20 of them playable
- Wi-Fi Multi-player modes
- The gigantic Galactus shows up - hooray!
- No Punisher as far as we can tell - boo!

There's the mighty Galactus just waiting to cause our heroes all sorts of problems.

Comic book games haven't exactly had a great ride so far on PSP. *Spider-Man 2* was a cut down version of the fantastic console game and *Marvel Nemesis* was a horrid beat-'em-up. Even *X-Men Legends II* wasn't as great as we'd hoped. Now in hope of improving on that so-so strategy title, Activision are releasing *Marvel: Ultimate Alliance*, which looks very similar to *X-Men Legends* only now it encompasses the entire Marvel universe.

This obviously opens up your options slightly and rather than being tied to one team of superheroes, you get to choose from the cream of the crop of Marvel's roster. Not every single character that's ever graced the pages of a Marvel comic has been included, but there are 140 of them in there, which is more than we can name off the top of our heads. Unfortunately only 20 of them are actually playable, which is disappointing, but we guess programming a range of moves for 140 characters would have been a massive undertaking. The X-Men still feature with fan-favourite Wolverine taking a major role, but you can also expect to see some Avengers in the shape of Captain America, Iron Man and Thor. The Fantastic Four also get in on the action with The Thing under your control and even Spider-Man swings in to assist. The likes of Elektra, Blade, Dr. Strange and Ghost Rider also get a look in as well.

If you've played *X-Men Legends* then you'll be familiar with the style of play, which takes the form of a top-down RPG with real-time combat. If *Ultimate Alliance* can iron out the flaws of *X-Men*, we could have a superb comic book game on our hands. ■ **Simon Griffin**

WE SAY **The range of characters and a story that covers the entire Marvel universe should keep comic book and RPG fans happy.**

Tanks for the memories

BATTLEZONE

OUT: 17 NOV

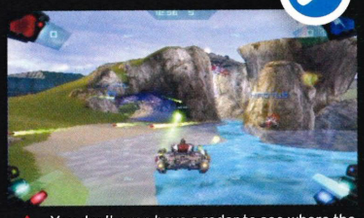
Publisher **Atari** / Developer **Paradigm Entertainment** / Players **1-8**

WHAT IS IT?

A hover-tank-based shooter where you have to kill more tanks than everybody else playing. The tanks are pretty fast though.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- Deathmatch mode
- Capture the flag mode
- A few other modes like those mentioned above
- Downloadable content
- A fair few tanks



You don't even have a radar to see where the enemies are, you just have to keep looking

We like driving games and we also like shooting things. Series such as *Twisted Metal* and its many imitators can hold a special place in our hearts because when they get it right they can be amazing. The latest PSP driving/shooting game is *BattleZone*.

Based on the really old arcade game of the same name, *BattleZone* is set in a futuristic world where hover tanks try to kill each other over and over again. It's a deathmatch, and to get a decent kill count you have to hunt down the tanks in the level and try to keep them in your sights until you've shot them enough to make them explode. Then they respawn and you get to do it again.

In single-player you can try out all sorts of different tanks and weapons. The tanks are split between different countries that have somehow managed to survive in this post-apocalyptic future and each one has a special weapon. The tanks from the USA use a powerful but difficult-to-aim blast of energy, while the ones from the UK get to use a stealth mode where the tank turns almost invisible, perfect for launching a surprise attack. Each tank has selectable weapons as well. Not doing too well with the rail gun? Then switch it for swarm missiles, which can lock on to enemies and chase them down until they explode with some really nice effects.

Dotted about the battlefield are health and armour pick-ups and it's essential that you get to these before the other players, otherwise it's goodbye to you and your precious tanks. Also on the field are cannon turrets that you can activate by rolling over a pad; you can use these to chip away at the energy bar of your enemies so you can score another kill. Don't sit too close to the turrets though, as after a time they become freely available for use by other players and you could be sitting on a potential death trap.

> **A futuristic world where hover tanks try to kill each other**

The online support for *BattleZone* sounds rather impressive with lots of downloadable content such as more weapons, more tanks and more levels. There will even be a leaderboard and so, while it's not as impressive as something you'd see on Xbox Live, you can still lord it over your friends and prove to everyone that you are the best at a niche PlayStation Portable game. As well as that there will be an online level editor mode so you can design your own maps, and we seriously recommend that you try to give yourself the home advantage – you're definitely going to need it.

So far *BattleZone* is looking like it could be pretty good fun, although we had a few problems with the speed the tanks propel themselves at. It's certainly very difficult to get an accurate shot in when everything is flying past at a great rate of knots. ■ **Tim Empey**

WE SAY **If it manages to retain some of the retro glory of the original game then it might actually be quite a blast!**

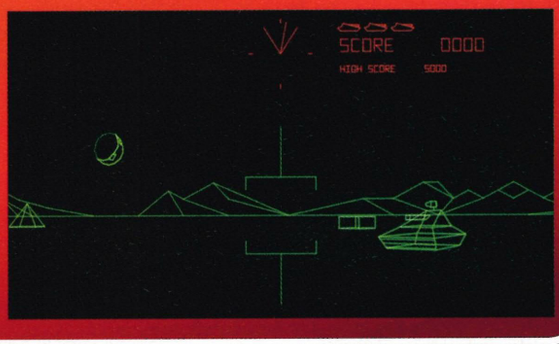
They're ganging up on you. It won't be long before you're at the respawn screen

Smoke, green rockets and all the screen filigree make it hard to see what's happening

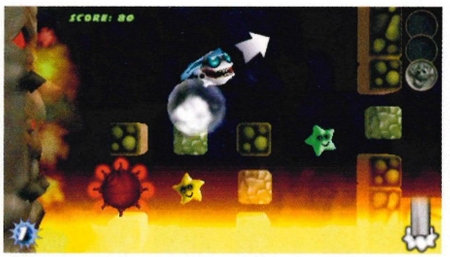
Back in the day...

It's a retro remake of an Atari classic

Does this screen look familiar? If it does, congratulations you're old, or you've recently watched the film *Tron*. This version of *BattleZone* appeared in arcades in the early-Eighties and was actually quite a popular game, possibly due to the periscope used to view the screen, and its innovative controls and vector graphics. The object of the game was to take your tank out on the field and destroy other tanks... and the odd flying saucer. Fortunately, everything moved at a much slower pace than in the PSP remake and so was easier to play and rack up some decent scores. There have been several remakes of the game released over the years, but none of them really stood up to the arcade experience.



Make Hoshi blow the pink ball of fluff around the course and hit the flowers for more points, aww



The levels get filled with even more obstacles and dangers the further you progress

I'm forever blowing... things

BLISS ISLAND

OUT: DEC '06

Publisher **Codemasters** / Developer **Pompom Software** / Players **1-4**

WHAT IS IT?

Cutesy, innocent-looking game where you blow fluffy things until it becomes increasingly difficult and what was once cute makes you enraged.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- Started out simply as a free Internet game
- Which isn't that bad, especially when you think of *Alien Hominid*
- But that was about shooting baddies of course
- And this is about blowing things round the screen
- Hmm... dunno. Might be good if it's cheap

The pink ball has turned into an orange ball! That makes it cuter by about 30 per cent

You'll have to speak up, he's a little death

DEATH JR. 2: ROOT OF EVIL

OUT: TBA '07

Publisher **Konami** / Developer **Backbone Entertainment** / Players **1-2**

WHAT IS IT?

Follow the adventures of the diminutive Death and his girl Pandora as they swing scythes, double jump and battle mutant hamsters in an attempt to save the world from evil.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- New playable character
- Full two-player co-op mode
- Upgradable weapons system
- Dozens of new enemies
- Level-up with the help of extra combat combos

Though the first game featured only DJ as a playable character, the sequel sees Pandora promoted to the playable ranks, but you won't be switching between the two during the game. Instead you'll start the level as either one or the other, taking advantage of their individual skills in order to progress. The extra character however, means the game boasts a full co-op mode for two players.

With both characters featuring a good range of unique attacks and weapons, it's good to see the imaginative bunch over at Backbone have also provided plenty of twisted enemies for you to hack your way through. These include an army of evil toys, robotic llamas and suicidal hamsters, all lurking within the numerous open-ended levels.

Manage to survive the strange onslaught facing you and you're rewarded with new combo moves and weapon upgrades, giving you a much better chance at taking down your evil nemesis. These new elements are making *Death Jr. 2* look like a much more involving adventure than its predecessor, which - whilst very charming - had its fair share of foibles. Thankfully many of these problems appear to have been ironed out in *Root Of Evil*, with the reworked camera, clever level design and sharp visual tweaks adding up to make a game that's 'dead' impressive. ■ **Keith Hennessey**

Death is nothing to be afraid of, unless of course you're an evil spirit plotting to take over the world that is and then your future is looking 'a little grim'. Why? Well those of you who played the first game will know that in an effort to save his Goth-rocking friend Pandora, Death Jr. accidentally released an evil spirit into the world. So whilst the good news is that he's got his gal back, DJ now has an even bigger problem to deal with.

WE SAY ***Death Jr*'s combination of combat, platforming and humour worked well first time around, but after additional refinement, *Root Of Evil* could well be the PSP adventure game to die for.**

Gambling is a mug's game

HARD ROCK CASINO

OUT: MAR '07

Publisher **Crave Entertainment** / Developer **In-house** / Players **1-8**

WHAT IS IT?

Play 20 different casino games without losing any of your real-life money, then take it online to play against some friends.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- Four themed casinos
- More than 20 different casino games
- Create your own gambler
- You can even bet on sports
- Three different tournaments to compete in

Like a bit of a flutter do you? Think you've got a winning system, can break the bank, bluff your way to victory and love shrimp cocktail? Then you're going to really enjoy putting bets on the various games in the Hard Rock Casino.

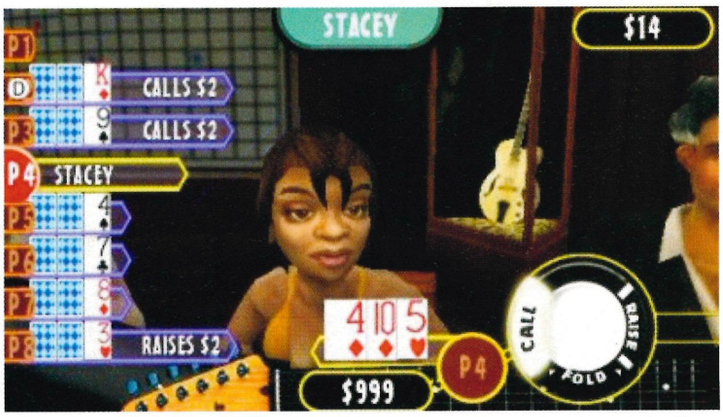
The Hard Rock Casinos are based on the Hard Rock Cafes, which are famous for the music and movie tat that they like to display on the walls of the restaurants. They give it a feeling of some sort of Americana class, maybe. In this game though, you get to mooch around four different themed casinos and place bets on over 20 different casino games including Black Jack, Roulette, Craps, Pai Gow, Let It Ride, Texas Hold 'em and there are a smattering of one armed bandits just ready to steal your virtual cash.

Thankfully though, even gambling noobs can play and take advantage of the tutorials in order to not get kicked out of the casino for not spending enough cash.

This is all set against the music and film-themed casinos, which explains why one of these screenshots has a guitar at the bottom of it.

The real draw though is being able to play against people online. If you ever experienced the poker and other Xbox 360 Live games, then you know how much fun it can be to beat all your friends and take their money after you've bluffed your way to the top with a pair of twos. Look out for this soon. ■ **Tim Empey**

WE SAY **With a bit more variety than the usual poker games, *Hard Rock Casino* will have you gambling away all your chips in style.**



It seems Stacey has turned to gambling to try and get her off the streets and to make her life more worth while

Where would japanese RPGs be without sealed caverns and oversized pointy ears?

An RPG that will have you sneezing at the counter of your local game shop

YS: THE ARK OF NAPISHTIM

OUT: NOW

Publisher **Konami** / Developer **In-house** / Players **1**

WHAT IS IT?

It's an old-school hack-'n'-slash RPG that should please fans of *Alundra* and even *Zelda*.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- It's the sixth game in the series, hurrah!
- The first *Ys* game was released in 1987
- It's the first *Ys* on the PSP
- Elemental attacks on foes
- Hack-'n'-slash gameplay

Ys is a game you can only pronounce if you make a face akin to a very ancient tortoise. Go on, try it: "Ys", "Yssssssssss". See? It's not pretty. We wouldn't recommend pronouncing its sub title "The Ark Of Napishtim" either until you've had plenty to drink.

It's likely that you might not have even heard of, let alone care about the unpronounceable series. So, for those who don't know, it's an epic RPG saga that has previously appeared on just about every single system known to man, from its hazy beginnings on the NES right up to the snazzy 3D-ness of the PS2. It's an action RPG, which should suit PSP players down to the ground.

You play Adol, a ginger sword swisher who's brought back to life by two priestesses from a beast race (we never said the plot was going to make the slightest bit of sense, it is an RPG after all). All the attacks he makes are elemental - lightning, wind and fire, depending on which weapon is equipped. It isn't all hack 'n' slash - there's a certain amount of strategy involved in knowing and remembering which enemies are susceptible to what too. There are also sparkly-looking magic combinations and a plot that doesn't require a notebook, a copy of *A Brief History Of Time* and a degree in Japanese folklore to follow.

[A direct port of the PS2 game with nine added mini-games]

This version is a direct port of the PS2 game with nine added mini-games that'll help you unlock extras in the main game - perfect for short sharp doses of handheld bliss. Mostly it's a pretty-looking affair, with large Manga-style characters babbling away at you while you hack through the simple storyline, waiting for the next boss or town to explore. In order to fit it all onto the PSP, the voices have had to be taken out, but sadly, this hasn't affected the long load times, which are rumoured to have been increased, bizzarely. Great, just what PSP owners need, even more loading times. Hopefully this will all be sorted by the time it hits Europe. We were still waiting for a review copy when this was written so hopefully we'll be able to give you the full lowdown next month. ■

Henrietta Rowlatt

WE SAY **By the time of release, the death-inducing loading times will be reduced. Other than that it's looking like a healthy, but niche interest conversion.**

Yarr! Pirates, officially the coolest bunch on the planet. You ain't nobody unless you've got a wooden leg, an eye patch and an annoying talking bird on your shoulder.

City of the Ancients

It's nearly double the age of the PlayStation

The series is nearly 20 years old. It all began back in 1987 with *Ys I: Ancient Ys Vanished* on the NEC PC-8801 (catchy name eh?). All seven games in the series have been set in the same land and feature the same core characters, unlike *Final Fantasy* where the storyline and main character (except for some familiar names cropping up in minor characters) are always different. The locations are mainly based on European countries such as Germany, Greece and even Britain in the form of Britai. It took quite a while for the any of the *Ys* games to be translated into English, let alone make it to Europe. In fact the PS2 version of *Ys: The Art Of Napishtim* was the first to be released here, so consider yourselves lucky to get a handheld version. Just pray you don't have to wait another 20 years or so for it to load.

We'll fight them on the beaches and on our PSPs

STEEL HORIZON

OUT: TBA '07

Publisher **Konami** / Developer **In-house** / Players **1-2**

WHAT IS IT?

Use some strategy and lots of missiles and bombs in order to take out the enemy in fictional scenarios based on real World War II missions.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- 20 missions
- 10 bonus missions
- Invigorating story
- Multi-player modes
- Awesome cut-scenes

Ever wondered what it would be like to command a fleet of battleships and destroyers during the Second World War? Well soon you will be able to do just that when *Steel Horizon* runs aground on your PSP next year.

You play the part of an American captain of one of three top-secret Navy vessels. At the start you will be heavily under attack from the enemy and it will be a struggle to survive, but play it strategically and the tide will soon turn in your favour and it'll be up to you to destroy the enemy and sink their plans for world domination. It's a real get-the-girl, kill-the-baddie and save-the-entire-planet situation, which you can enjoy from the comfort of home, though there probably aren't many girls to get.

There will be various types of ships at your disposal, including aircraft carriers, battleships and submarines, each with their own advantages and disadvantages and it'll be up to you to use them wisely in order to achieve military superiority.

It's not just AI-controlled ships you have to worry about though, as you can go up against a friend and pummel them straight down to the bottom of the ocean when you play the wireless multi-player modes.

With an intuitive interface, some lovely 3D cut-scenes and a mix of real-time and turn-based elements, *Steel Horizon* could turn out to be very interesting indeed. Get ready to launch the depth charge! ■ **Tim Empey**

WE SAY **We like the look of this, the mix of strategy and interactive elements could make it the strategy war title we've been waiting for**

That aeroplane is doomed, there's no way it can take out all those gun turrets

There, told you so, it's well doomed now, but luckily the pilot has ejected

Knight to King's pawn four, mate

ONLINE CHESS KINGDOMS

OUT: NOV '06

Publisher **Konami** / Developer **In-house** / Players **1-2**

WHAT IS IT?

It's chess. You know that game that's all about strategy and outthinking your opponents? It's that, but you can play against people online.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- Play against a friend online
- 3D option to make the game come alive
- Five different clans
- It helps you think
- Gory animations

One of the oldest games in the world is being brought right into the future with this release. Hopefully everyone knows how to play chess, how to outthink and plan ahead to tackle their opponent's every move – and not leave the Queen open to be taken out by a measly pawn.

If anyone can remember *Battle Chess* on the Commodore Amiga then you might know what to expect here. Instead of just having a traditional board and moving some icons about, here you have characters and even a back-story. It's set in an ancient world where five factions are trying to take over the world, by playing chess. Each of these factions are represented by a different race of beings so you have magicians, an aquatic race, cybernetic beings, forest spirits and servants of chaos, so it should bring a bit of excitement when you see an android bishop attacking a frog-like knight. The aforementioned *Battle Chess* did the same thing but suffered from dreadful loading times; this won't be the case here so you'll be able to take on anyone with a PSP in an online tournament. Once you've got used to your friend's style of play you can then challenge yourself against other unknown players, maybe even Garry Kasparov. He loves playing on the PSP, it's true! (Okay, maybe not.)

Online Chess Kingdoms is just the sort of game to get you thinking rather than just blasting away or racing cars, and that is what us cerebral lot love. ■ **Tim Empey**

WE SAY **Chess is an awesome tactical game, and now with some cool death animations and online play it's more fun and even easier to get a decent game in.**

Part of the interest comes from just watching the different attacks form the different pieces

The world's most famous RPG goes portable

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: TACTICS

OUT: NOV '06

Publisher **Atari** / Developer **Kuju** / Players **1-6**

WHAT IS IT?

Kuju gets down and dirty with one of the most respected and revered RPGs of all time, and before all you Square fanboys start frothing at the mouth, it's not *Final Fantasy*.

There's an amazing array of monsters to battle, which are all beautifully animated

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- 200 different spells to use
- First *Dungeons & Dragons* game to feature psionics
- 230 weapons to wield
- Exciting deathmatch modes
- Up to six heroes can play

One of the most important RPGs ever created is on its way to Sony's PSP and it doesn't feature a single spiky-haired, gender-confused Japanese oik. It's 32 years old, features whatever plot you fancy creating and has been successfully (and not so successfully) ported to no end of computers and consoles. It's Wizard of the Coast's *Dungeons & Dragons* and it's hitting the PSP very, very soon.

Of course, even the more oblivious (or downright ignorant) gamers will be aware of the name and its rich legacy, even if they've never put pen to paper and created a dual-scimitar-wielding Drow Ranger. Hell, if you've owned a PS2 you may have even played *Baldur's Gate* and its excellent sequel. Rather than try and explain the complicated rules that have now been revised (officially at least) over 3.5 times, let's concentrate on what you can expect from Kuju's offering.

Not only has the developer managed to cram all 318 pages of rules into *Tactic*'s UMD, but it has also found room for more than 200 spells, over 230 weapons and more monsters than you can shake a +7 Sword of Wounding at – and no doubt a kitchen sink as well. Oh, and if you've gazed over the screenshots you'll also realise that *Tactics* features dragons; lots of dragons. Of course, anyone who's already played either of the PSP's *Untold Legends* games will probably be expecting more of the same, but this is no *Baldur's Gate* wannabe.

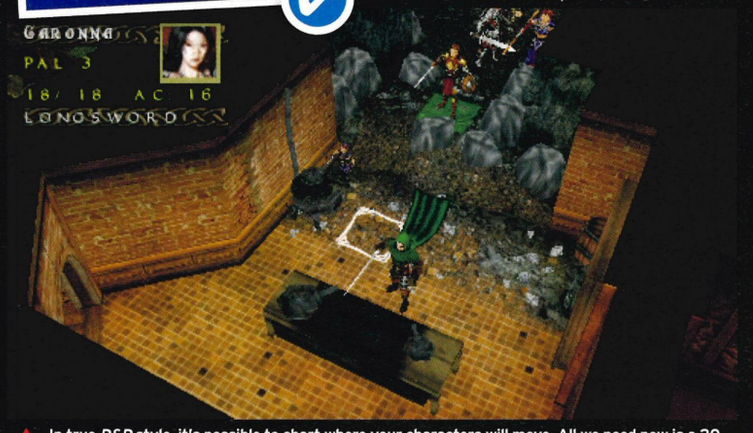
The tactics in the title should be the giveaway, but even we have to commend Kuju's attention to detail. Despite being a typical SRPG, Kuju has gone that extra mile to ensure that anyone who has played the pen-and-paper version will feel right at home, including everything from attacks of opportunity (a free hit on anyone that enters your immediate vicinity) to feats (unique powers to individually enhance your character). While here at **Go>Play** we are greatly looking forward to this grass-roots gameplay, it will be interesting to see if the general public takes to it in the same way. Still, even if you're not too convinced with the game's core game mechanics, we can see quite a few people being drawn into *Tactics*' world on the strength of its visuals alone.

> **Anyone who loves a good RPG should keep an eye on Tactics...**

Although it doesn't appear to be set in a traditional *D&D* world like the Forgotten Realms or Dragonlance campaign settings, Kuju's world looks like the perfect place to adventure (up to six would-be heroes can take part). Dungeons will reflect all manner of impressive lighting effects, while the many monsters you battle are beautifully animated and full of life. Then, of course, you have the majestic dragons; these huge serpentine reptiles are a joy to behold and if Kuju can capture even a tenth of their pen-and-paper malignance, gamers will have a serious fight on their hands.

It may not be the next *Metal Gear* or *Ridge Racer*, but anyone who loves RPGs should keep an eye on *Tactics* – even if it doesn't feature an angst-ridden Japanese teenager... ■ **Darran Jones**

WE SAY **It definitely looks beautiful and is easily one of the most complex versions of *Dungeons & Dragons* that we've seen, but will that sway the game-buying public?**



In true *D&D* style, it's possible to chart where your characters will move. All we need now is a 20-sided dice and a bumper bottle of coke

Thar be dragons

Know your scaly foe

Dragons are easily one of *D&D*'s most dangerous foes (the game's not called *Dungeons & Beholders* you know) and come in a variety of shapes and forms. Red and Gold dragons are generally the most dangerous opponents you can face, but the race itself is extremely diverse and populates every known region of the fantasy worlds they reside in. All dragons are able to breathe a variety of deadly substances (from fire to chlorine), many are adept spell casters, and each and every one is utterly formidable in combat. If you are going to go up against one of these reptilian foes, make sure you've got a well-prepared party... and maybe the odd sword of dragon slaying...

CAPCOM CLASSICS COLLECTION: RELOADED

How many games does it take to make a classic compilation?

OUT: NOV '06

Publisher **Capcom** / Developer **Digital Eclipse** / Players **1-2**

WHAT IS IT?

Capcom's back again with a second compilation that's jam-packed with retro gaming goodness. Everything from *Street Fighter II* to *Commando* has been included, with coding once again being handled by Digital Eclipse.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- 19 classic games
- First ever console outing for *Eco Fighters*
- Three *Street Fighter II* variations – yes, three!
- Wireless multi-player included
- May upset owners of the PlayStation2 version

Capcom is certainly giving the retro community a lot of loving at the moment. Its recent *Classics Collection: Remixed* was an utterly superb compilation that was overloaded with treasures, while *Power Stone Collection* and *Ultimate Ghouls 'N Ghosts* have both proved that Capcom isn't afraid to breathe new life into classic franchises. Now it's back again with another collection of arcade hits – a collection that's already looking like a must-buy purchase (providing of course that you like the irony of playing old games on your new console).

One thing to bear in mind with *Reloaded* is that it's going to seem mighty familiar to anyone that bought *Capcom Classics Collection* for the PS2; mainly because, bar a few titles, it's a near-identical package. Still, that's not to say *Reloaded* isn't worthy of your time. After all, the *Classics Collection* had a staggering amount of solid franchises on it ranging from *Ghosts 'N Goblins* to *Street Fighter II*, and practically every big name has been shrunken onto the UMD format. We've already managed to have a tinker with the Japanese release, and while it's not quite as good as *Remixed* in terms of presentation – it's missing many of the screen modes – Capcom has once again failed to disappoint with its selection of games.

Unlike Xplosiv's recent *Taito* compilation, Capcom realises that the key to success is to stuff your disc with as many classics as possible. Therefore you have the likes of *1942*, *Ghosts 'N Goblins*, *Mercs*, *Commando* and of course, *Street Fighter II* in three different guises. The conversions themselves appear to be up to Digital Eclipse's usual high standards and are identical to those seen on the original PlayStation2 pack. Plus there are plenty of extras to unlock along the way.

> **Capcom realises the key to success is as many classics as possible...**

Obviously realising that the average consumer may not be too impressed with an identical compilation (albeit in UMD form) Capcom has included three new titles – one of which has never appeared outside of the arcades. *The King Of Dragons* and *Knights Of The Round* are two rather impressive scrolling fighters in the mould of Capcom's classic *Final Fight*. *The King Of Dragons* features a fantasy bent (orcs, elves and goblins) while *Knights Of The Round* is obviously based on the legends of Sir Arthur. While both titles are solid brawlers, like many of the other included games they're a little too similar to each other (do we really need three *Street Fighter*s for example?). *Eco Fighters* on the other hand is far more impressive and is a fairly obscure cute-'em-up with an ecological theme. While it's disappointing that *Three Wonders* hasn't made the cut, the three new games are perfect substitutes.

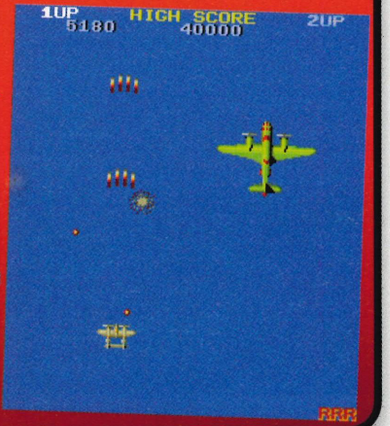
In fact, our only real issue with *Reloaded* is that Capcom has been a little TOO predictable with its choices, with far too many of the games all playing identically to one another (*Mercs*, *Commando* and *Gun Smoke* for example). Oh, and then there's the concern that the wireless play problems that plagued *Remixed* will also return, but fingers crossed they don't. *Reloaded* may feel a little lazy when compared with *Remixed*, but it's still looking much stronger than many of the other compilations available. Only time will tell of course. ■ **Darran Jones**

WE SAY **There are certainly plenty of solid games included here, but we're not quite sure if it's going to have the same appeal as Capcom's excellent *Remixed* collection.**

Three is not the magic number?

Perfect proof that three can definitely be a crowd

One of our biggest concerns is that *Reloaded* features far too many similar titles on it, which could diminish the compilation's appeal somewhat. Don't get us wrong, the majority of the games here are all classics, but surely Capcom could have maybe left a few of the more familiar titles off. For example, *1942*, *1943* and *1943 Kai* are extremely similar to each other. Good games yes, but surely *1943 Kai* would have been ample, especially as its far superior to the other two games? Then you have *Ghosts 'N Goblins*, *Ghouls 'N Ghosts* and *Super Ghouls 'N Ghosts*, with the latter being the standout title. Maybe we've just been a little too spoilt, but after the staggering variety seen in *Remixed*, *Reloaded*'s content just doesn't impress in the same way.



Who needs three versions of *Street Fighter II* when you've already got *Turbo*?

The superb shooter finally gets a console release. God bless you Capcom

Look! Under the mask it's another kids cash-in!

SCOOBY-DOO! WHO'S WATCHING WHO?

OUT: 10 NOV

Publisher **THQ** / Developer **In-house** / Players **1**

WHAT IS IT?
It's a kids' adventure squished into the PSP, but featuring everyone's favourite greedy hound, Scooby-Doo.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT
- Drive the Mystery Machine for the first time
- Features the original cast from the TV series
- Puzzles! Driving! Platform! Help Scoobs!
- Race against monsters...
- No Scrappy-Doo! Yay!

Scooby Scooby-Doo, where are you? Probably down Alcoholics Anonymous after playing previous polygonal versions of his good self. You sometimes wonder whether stuff made in the Seventies should be left in the Seventies. Even the press release begs the question "Are their "old-fashioned" methods up to the challenge?". *Scooby-Doo! Who's Watching Who?* is bound to excite anything under the mental age of eight (oh the jokes that could have been...) but to everyone else, this will pass by in the wind.

Okay, so what's going to happen in the game then kids? Well apparently you'll be utilising those previously mentioned "old fashioned methods" to solve crimes committed by mysterious ghosts and spooks. So that's taking glow-in-the-dark masks off the faces of badly disguised butlers then? But wait! You'll be challenging rivals GSI - Ghost Scene Investigators - to see who is able to catch the crooks first... what a hoot! Apparently this is the first time anyone has been able to control the Mystery Machine. To tell you the truth we're not exactly excited about this. The Mystery Machine isn't exactly a Ferrari, it's more like a transit van that's been painted by hippies. As for the original voices, there might be some fun in hearing Scooby's snigger in your pocket, but there doesn't seem to be much more concrete information other than this.

Overall then, it looks like we're going to need more evidence that this will be a quality Scooby adventure before we break out the Scooby Snacks in celebration. ■ **Henrietta Rowlatt**

WE SAY **With scant information, we can't really tell how good this'll be. It apparently includes "puzzle, driving and platform", which could mean anything. We reckon it'll be pretty similar to the last few PS2 games.**

Get chased by a man in a shark suit, could it be a real shark? No... probably

Land Of Hoop And Glory

NBA '07

OUT: 27 OCT

Publisher **SCEE** / Developer **In-house** / Players **1-2**

WHAT IS IT?
Take control of your team in the latest and potentially greatest basketball game for the PSP. Dunks, dribbles and drama - *NBA '07* has got the lot.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT
- New Conquest mode
- 41 authentic NBA teams
- Unlockable classic teams
- Range of carnival-style mini-games
- Schoolyard sub-games

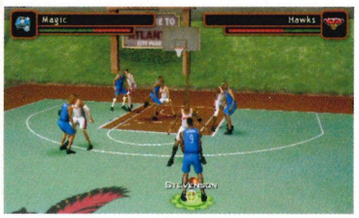
Before simply copy and pasting last year's preview of *NBA '06* onto the page, changing a numeral and re-jigging the screenshots, we thought it wise to pick up our PSP and take a look at how much (or little) has actually changed. Good job too, as it turns out the development team has been hard at work ensuring this year's iteration has more modes, mini-games and, most importantly, realism than any of its predecessors. Good news for ballers, bad news for us because it means that the *'06* preview has to be moved straight to the trash and we have to do some real work.

Perhaps the biggest change this year is the introduction of the new Conquest mode, which allows players to compete for regional supremacy by challenging NBA squads across the country. First we capture America, then we move on to the rest of the world. However, those not looking to get too involved in the politics of team management or world domination can opt for the Pick Up mode that gives you the chance to choose from ten different All-Stars and have a quick a playground-style showdown.

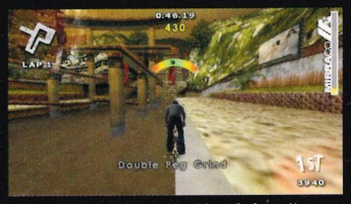
Known best for it's fast pace and high scoring matches, over the past year, developers have spent time on NBA's defensive elements with a new rebound hotspot mechanic and sharper AI making for a more aggressive ball game. At its core though, the PSP is about gaming on the go and Sony hasn't forgotten that, offering a range of mini-games like rhythm-based dunk contests, dodgeball and some excellent carnival-style hijinks. With a fully fleshed-out Season mode sitting alongside these new additions, there's no good reason why the hardcore (or should that be hard court?) fans should miss out on this. ■ **Keith Hennessey**

WE SAY **It's that time of year when the inevitable sports updates roll off the production line, but instead of churning out the same game with added sweat there are some exciting updates here.**

We only hope you can smash the glass with a rim rocking slam dunk



You might not get any candyfloss but at least these games are free

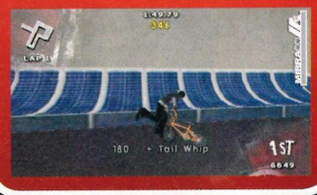


No ancient monument is safe from the grinding skills of the Mirra-man

Tricked out

Have you got the skills to pay the bills?

Dubbed 'The Miracle Man' Dave Mirra has fashioned a career and BMX empire by taking tricks to the extreme and pushing what can be done on two wheels to the absolute limit. So in order to be successful in the game, that's exactly what you have to do. Playing as Dave you've got to perform stunts like double-backflips, triple tailwhips and 360 no-handed googlewhacks. Okay we might have made that last one up.



The PSP prepares to get BM-Xtreme

DAVE MIRRA BMX CHALLENGE

OUT: Q4 '06

Publisher **Crave** / Developer **In-house** / Players **1-4**

WHAT IS IT?

Experience the life of a true BMX bandit on his rise to the top. Ride, win and then customise a range of bikes all without the risk of saddle sore. Hooray!

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

- 17 levels to traverse
- 9 different environments
- Good variety of customisable characters
- Hundreds of tricks to perfect
- 9 bikes to earn

Despite Mr Mirra earning himself the reputation as the BMX equivalent of Tony Hawk, he still doesn't get the same sort of exposure as Activision's curb-grinding shred-head. Perhaps that has something to do with the fact that he hasn't appeared in a videogame for almost half a decade. But having bunny-hopped the car crash of a game that was *BMX XXX* at the final hour, that could well be a good thing. Whilst Hawks has been attracted by the bells and whistles of next-gen formats, Mirra is keeping his feet on the ground in a new biking game made exclusively for the PSP.

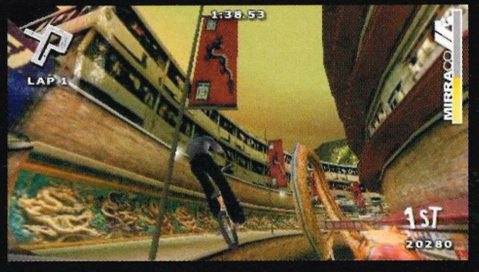
So what has Mirra been doing over the past five years besides endoing his way to countless gold medals and other action accolades? He's been sat behind a PC helping to develop the game ensuring that *BMX Challenge* is all about the mad skills and not about buxom girls on bikes with their 'stunt pegs' on show.

Though there appears to be nothing truly ground-breaking on offer, there is an impressive range of tricks to perform as you ride around each level flinging yourself off a variety of ramps and trying to grind your way along everything from telephone wires to ancient statues. At this point the action is pretty forgiving if you're used to the mechanics of other console extreme sports, but this could change by the time the game is released. Of course, you'll experience your fair share of wipeouts along the way, but to limit the frustration of landing on your face for the 17th time in a row, you don't always have to finish your tricks with a perfect landing. Plus, for those of you who refuse to straighten those wheels after a high-scoring trick combo, the game itself will get you back on track.

> **BMX challenge is all about the mad skills and not buxom babes**

Details of the game's main story mode are thin on the ground, although Crave tells us that it will take the form of a pro tour, starting you out as a snotty-nosed rookie who has to work his way up the ladder. The 17 levels are set over 9 different environments including both urban and suburban each boasting their own location-specific ramps. There's also a full create-a-biker mode, so you can create and then place yourself on the saddle of one of the nine different bikes (wow, a whole nine, save something for the sequel, guys). With the PSP fast becoming the home of extreme-sports, we hope *BMX Challenge* can give a good account of itself and prove that the Mirra-man is every bit at home there as the Birdman. ■ **Keith Hennessey**

WE SAY **After such a long absence from the videogame scene *BMX Challenge* could make or break the *Dave Mirra* franchise.**



Wait a minute, where's his pads and embarrassing skid lid? Shame on you Dave

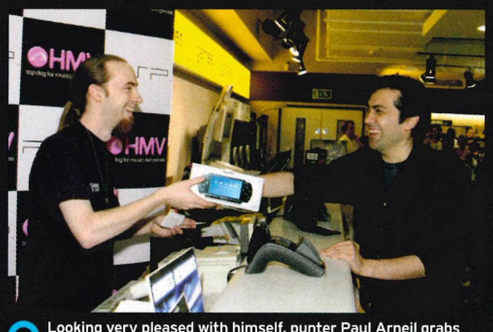
PSP ONE YEAR ON

The PSP has been on sale in the UK for around a year now and is set to entice many more gamers this Christmas. But how has it fared? And just why has controversy not been too far behind? David Crookes finds out...

It might be obvious to all of you but we love the PlayStation Portable. We cradle it like a parent would a child and we dine off its lush graphical abilities in the way a fat man would devour a Chinese takeaway, salivating at the prospect of another bite.

We've felt that way ever since the PSP hit the UK's shelves on 1 September 2005. And we here at **Go>Play** were among the 185,000 happy punters who snapped up PSPs in the first four days of them going on sale.

Our happiness was perhaps only matched by the elated emotions at Sony's HQ in Japan where the suits must surely have been rubbing their hands in glee at the success of their debut in the handheld marketplace. Britain's sales were the icing on the cake. By the time the machine was released here, Sony's gamble in launching the PSP in what had traditionally been a marketplace dominated by Nintendo was already beginning to pay off.



Looking very pleased with himself, punter Paul Arneil grabs himself a PSP at midnight in HMV in London

Nice Figures

It was quite some feat since breaking the market was always going to be hard. The Nintendo DS had been released on 21 November 2004, in America and sold a staggering 700,000 units in the first fortnight. It was then released in Japan on 2 December 2004, selling a 500,000 in the first four days. So by the time the PSP was released in Japan on 12 December, Sony already had its work cut out to make an impression.

Prior to the PSP's launch in Japan, Nintendo president Satoru Iwata, was understandably ecstatic over the huge sales of the DS, and was confident of seeing off Sony's challenge. He told US business commentator Forbes that Sony was concentrating too hard on complex games rather than the simplicity offered by Nintendo, something it believed was necessary to open up new markets.

"PSP has been created with the assumption that the golden success formula is still working. We don't

According to market research firm **Media Create**, 171,963 PSPs were **sold on launch day** in Japan

believe that," Iwata-san said, believing a new, innovative formula was vital.

Yet the PSP did incredibly well. According to market research firm Media Create, 171,963 PSPs were sold on launch day in Japan. When taking into account untracked sales, it appeared all 200,000 units delivered to Japanese retailers were snapped up.

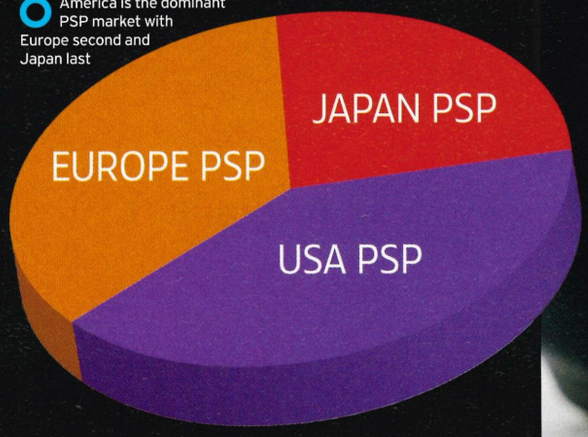
But it was in the UK where things really became interesting for Sony. The Japanese electronics giant predicted big things for Britain. "We think it will be the biggest UK launch in the history of our business across all manufacturers," a spokesman said at the time.

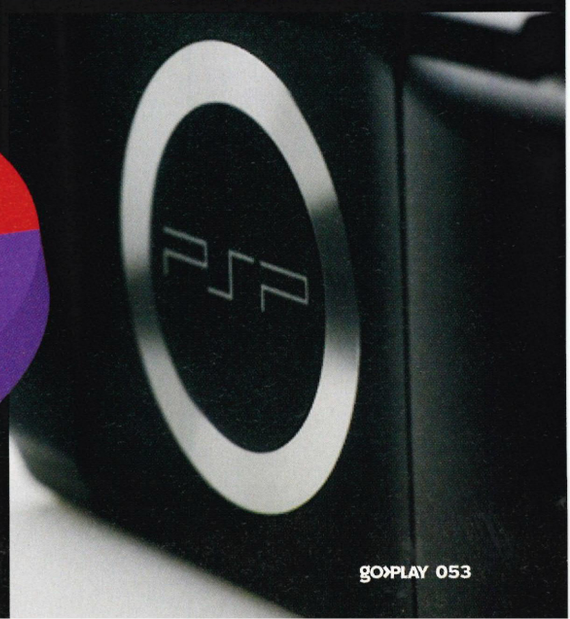
The PSP, by breaking into six-figures in four days (the aforementioned 185,000 - cool, hey?), took its proud place as the fastest-selling games console of all time. By comparison, Nintendo launched its DS here in March 2005 and shifted just 87,000 handhelds in its first week.

Sony played a blinder. Gamers lusted after the PSP's sleek lines and smooth curves and that's why shops flung open their doors at midnight on 1 September. Demand was so great that many stores soon sold out, causing the now tiresomely familiar lack of supply. That, however, only served to increase the hype and desirability of the machine, which was certainly making its mark. Chart-Track reported that nine of the 24 PSP games available at launch made up the Top 10 official UK games chart in the first week with *Ridge Racer* being picked up by one-in-five British PSP owners.

"It was a huge event in the history of video games, and we were very excited about the launch," says Robert Quinn, GAME Sales Director. "We worked round the clock to make sure customers got one as quickly as possible. More than half of our stores opened at midnight - one in almost every major town and city in the UK."

America is the dominant PSP market with Europe second and Japan last





As the price of Memory Sticks tumbled, Sony bundled one with a PSP in a new Giga Pack

Japanese gamers queue to get their hands on a PSP on launch day

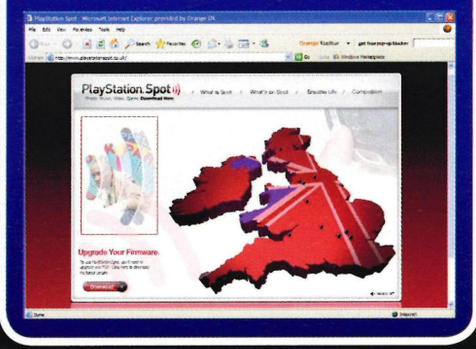
PSP download spots

One of the cool things about owning a PSP is that you can take it out and about. However, over the last year, Sony has worked on ways to make going out even more fun by creating PlayStation Spots across the country.

Located at various locations in some of Britain's major cities including - from the top - Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Milton Keynes, Bristol and Birmingham, they can be found in a variety of stores, such as Virgin, HMV, GAME and GameStation.

Downloads are free, allowing you to try playable game demos and watch trailers or listen to music. Each location has around six to eight different downloads and you just need to watch out for the PlayStation Spot logo. Simple, wireless and costing you nothing.

Anna Macario, Marketing Director for GAME, said: "It offers customers an opportunity to try out games before they buy them and the incentive to keep coming in-store to get the latest content and offers available for download." Go to **www.playstationspot.co.uk** for more details.



"The PSP was billed by magazines and surveys as THE present this Christmas, and the excitement among our customers reached fever pitch as the last few days approached."

Sony's sales over those first four days accounted for around £33 million. It had caught the imagination of the market by creating a machine, which offered games of similar great standards in both graphics and gameplay as the PlayStation2. It then ensured the PSP had even greater appeal by allowing it to play films, music and, eventually, be used to browse the web wirelessly.

Supply & Demand

There were problems with supply - the PSP had been delayed in Europe because Sony had wanted to ensure the maximum number of handhelds for the American launch. But supply issues gradually began to disappear. By September 2005, five million PSPs had been shipped to Japan and the US and Sony expected a million of its handhelds to be sold in Europe before Christmas.

It's always disappointing to be in a territory which always seems to come last (we're now having to wait a few more months for the PlayStation3) but in the case of the PSP it may well have helped since publishers were able to knock out more PSP games in time for the European debut.

But controversy was never too far away. The PSP retailed at £179, which upset many gamers. It received ample coverage in the press with many journalists accusing Sony of ripping off British consumers. The fact that the machine retailed for $249 plus tax in America - equating to £138 - didn't help matters.

> There was the little matter of **missing pixels** on some of the **otherwise impressive** LCD screens

And then there was the little matter of missing pixels on some of the otherwise impressive LCD screens. This "stuck pixel" problem, as Sony called it, had emerged shortly after the American launch of the console and was referred to in the device's accompanying literature in the UK as characteristic of LCD technology.

Still, for £179, it was a problem many did not expect to see. Sony then received some flak from people who had - in an understandable state of impatience - imported PSPs from America or Japan prior to the British launch.

They were upset that they couldn't play British movie UMDs on their machines, although the games ran fine.

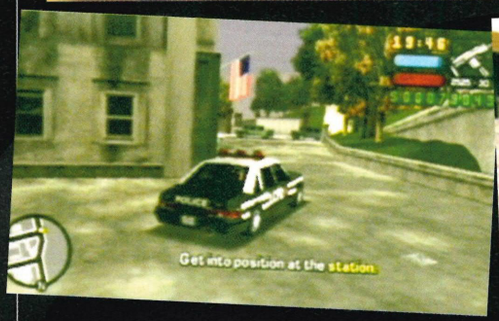
Legal Minefield

The whole business of importing was also mired with legalities - Sony cracked down on the market and sued several importers, saying that they infringed Sony's trademark and that it could not guarantee service.

Sony Computer Entertainment Europe - the European arm of the Japanese giant - ended up in a number of David and Goliath battles, perhaps the most high profile being against Dan Morelle, managing director of import firm ElectricBirdLand, who subsequently lost the right to import. Others, such as gadget site Firebox, simply stopped selling the imported machines.

But mixed messages were being sent out by the industry as a whole. People could buy PSP accessories from high-street retailers such as GAME for a long time

Grand Theft Auto: Liberty Stories provided a sales and profile boost for the PSP



before the console was available on UK shores - surely these were aimed at people with import machines. But under the letter of the law, grey importers must prove they have consent from Sony and it became clear such consent would not be given.

A public statement by Sony said it "would continue to be vigilant and, where necessary, take appropriate action against those unlawfully importing PSPs into Europe". The company refused to make further comment. It stuck in the throats of many hardcore gamers who had for years seen grey imports as standard practice, allowing them to buy machines and games early. It is particularly commonplace in Europe since the continent is often seen lagging behind Japan and America when it comes to launches. Grey importing is likely to happen again with the PS3 and what will Sony's reaction be to that?

Saviour

So who put a smile back on people's faces? Rockstar Games. They released the next instalment of their best-selling and infamous series, *GTA*, creating *Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories*. And it flew from the shelves.

Two things were perfect about *GTA: LCS*. First of all, the game itself: an enormous sprawling, wonderfully drawn and animated city greeted players and drew them in with a wealth of missions. Secondly, the timing of the game was spot on (even though it was delayed for a couple of weeks from its original date of 28 October, 2005). By the time it arrived, supply issues of the PSP were beginning to be rectified, it was released in time for Christmas and it proved to be an effective spoiler for the launch of Nintendo's GameBoy Micro. It also came around the same time as the launch of the £215 PSP Giga Pack.

But the timing was great for another reason altogether too - the standard of the many early launch titles had not been especially wonderful. *Ridge Racer, WipeOut Pure* and *Lumines* were very good but they weren't quite killer apps. *GTA* therefore put some distance between it and them, stood out from the crowd, shot the competition down and completely dominated the charts.

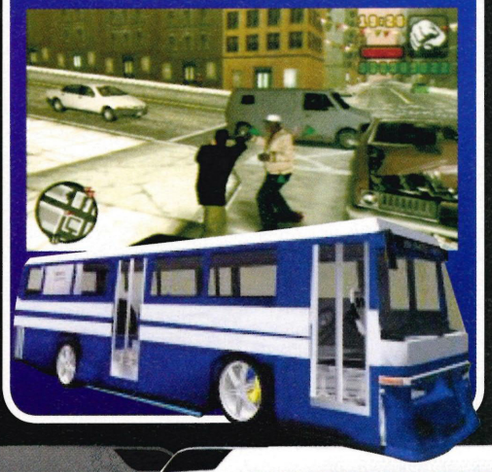
In America, it shifted more than 158,000 copies in the first month of launch according to NPD data, taking it to the top of the portable game charts and making it number three overall for October. In Britain, it soared to

You what?

A Bus driver from Blackburn was so engrossed in *Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories*, he decided to take his PSP to work with him - and played with it while at the wheel.

His terrified passengers weren't too happy as he trundled along, reportedly hearing the screams of characters being butchered as he drove between stops in March 2006.

His bosses fired him after on-board CCTV footage showed he had the handheld device on his knees.



The Programmer

Jon Hare knows a thing or two about games. After all, he did create *Sensible Soccer*, which has been converted to mobile phones but Mr Hare has yet to work on the PSP. Is he shunning our favourite machine?

Go>Play: Do you like the PSP?
Jon Hare: The PSP is one of the most interesting developments to come out of the hardware market in the last few years.

GP: What do you like about it and what has it brought to the industry?
JH: The ability to convert PlayStation and other older formats on to this machine has breathed some new life into the retro market.

GP: Do you think movies have a future on the PSP?
JH: The machine's compact size and large screen makes it an extremely convenient portable movie player.

The Homebrewer

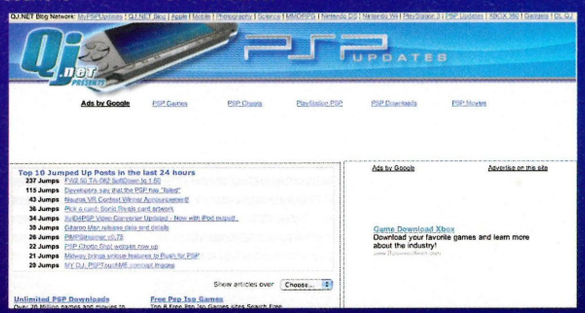
Kyle Mason is a blogger and PSP expert for our good friends over at **QJ.net.** He is also a homebrew enthusiast.

Go>Play: What has the PSP homebrew scene been like over the past year?
Kyle Mason: The PSP homebrew scene is vibrant and ever-growing. Since all currently released firmwares from version 1.0 to 2.80 have had some kind of vulnerability which homebrew coders have found out allowing homebrew to run, the scene has never been so large.

GP: What sort of people are actually involved in the scene?
KM: It is more of a community rather than a group of hackers, which some journalists negligently think. The homebrew scene is filled with people with the same interest - those that are passionate about Sony's console and want to play their own games on it along with UMD games.

GP: Sony has always been worried about piracy. Does homebrew make the PSP vulnerable to piracy?
KM: Despite some of the bad press the homebrew scene has received, in reality the homebrew scene is full of law-abiding citizens. People don't want to run ISO's or illegal copies of copyrighted games, they just want to be able to code their own games and play them in peace.

GP: What are your thoughts on Sony's updating of firmware?
KM: It's a very good idea, expanding the PSPs capabilities far beyond what we originally saw in firmware 1.00. But the blocking of homebrew along with these firmware updates is in fact hindering the PSP. If Sony allowed homebrew, even if it is only user-mode access then homebrewers would rejoice, along with the rise of PSP sales.



number two in the overall charts, a respectable position for a handheld game.

The 2005 Christmas period therefore proved a lucrative one for Sony - and bolstered the coffers of retailers too. With better supplies of the PSP, sales were high and it helped retailer GAME to report a 26.6 per cent rise in like-for-like sales over the six weeks to 7 January, 2006.

"This outstanding Christmas sales performance has helped an otherwise difficult year as the industry transitions to the next technology cycle," said chairman Peter Lewis.

Hacked Off

It didn't take long for the next controversy to arise though. A thriving homebrew scene had emerged for the PSP, created by legions of bedroom programmers and some highly-skilled teams. It had grown since the PSP's launch machine in Japan could run unsigned code (which basically means Sony had not yet introduced a mechanism which checked whether a piece of software running on the machine had been approved) which programmers soon exploited. It was also simple to load programmes into the PSP thanks to the memory stick. Sony, however, feared this could fuel piracy so it began to release firmware updates, which closed any system loopholes and caused homebrew titles to stop working. Hackers, however, saw this as a challenge and found ways around it. In February 2006, hackers cracked the PSP's security and allowed emulators to run on all of machine's firmware versions. Gamers only had to have a copy of *Liberty City Stories* to hand and exploit a save game in order to be able to run a host of emulators ranging from the Spectrum to the Mega Drive.

That prompted Sony to produce a further firmware update and the whole issue remains unresolved. The homebrew scene continues to hit back with new ways of exploiting the machine and Sony then produces an enhanced firmware upgrade to stop them. It has become a game of cat and mouse and has led to some people buying two PSPs - one to play homebrew software and another to play the latest games (the most up-to-date games carry the latest firmware update and cannot work without its installation). As an incentive to upgrade, extra features such as a web browser have been included as part of the new firmware.

"Sadly, Sony will always be one step ahead of us," says Fanjita creator of the *GTA* exploiting eLoader which allows upgraded PSPs to play all sorts of programs.

"I have a dream one day that it will realise that piracy-free homebrew is actually beneficial to the platform but I don't really think it will ever come true. As long as there's a desire to play homebrew on the PSP, I think we'll find a way."

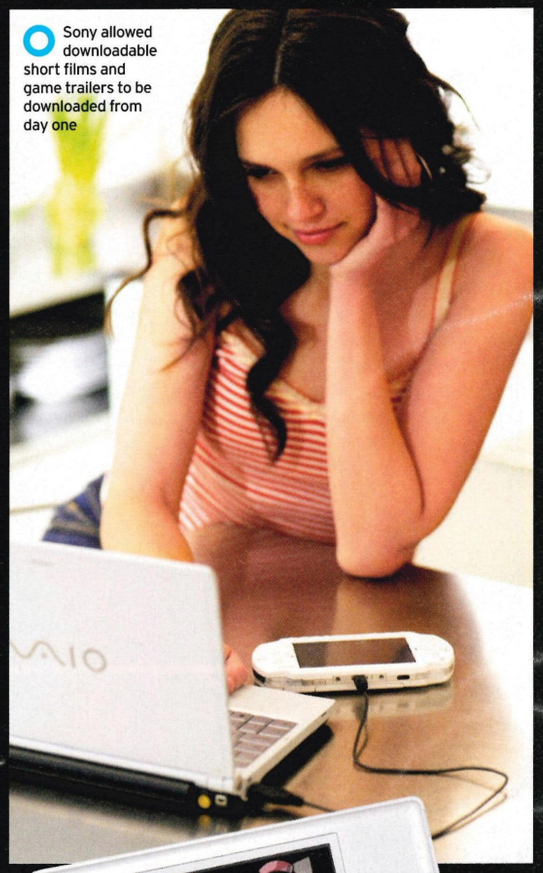
Originality

Attention, however, is never too far away from the mainstream retail titles since a new wave of solid games are being released. We've seen a glut of retro compilations and some revisits from the past - *Ultimate Ghosts 'N Goblins* being a stand-out title. Then there's the familiar (*Tomb Raider: Legend*), to the updated (*OutRun 2006*) and the purely innovative (*LocoRoco*).

The latter category was the one many gamers said they wanted more of. A growing band of critics have hit out at what they see as a lack of innovation in games created for the PSP. Nobody doubts the capabilities of the machine - the PSP is the most advanced handheld ever created. But many say the machine is awash with little more than PlayStation2 conversions, peppered with the odd dash of fresh content.

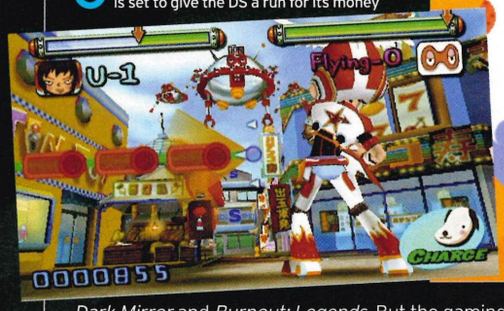
Bloggers have long moaned about this. One wrote: "The PSP is essentially a portable almost-PS2, to the point that if you already have a PS2 there's not a lot on offer that's new - not that that's a bad thing with quality titles such as *GTA: Liberty City Stories*, *Syphon Filter:*

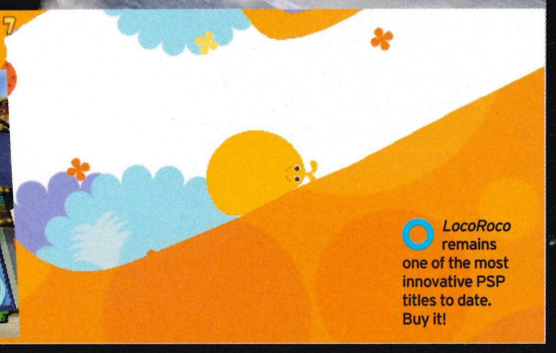
OutRun 2006 Coast To Coast is one of the PSP's best games so far



Sony allowed downloadable short films and game trailers to be downloaded from day one

Gitaroo Man Lives! is coming to the PSP and is set to give the DS a run for its money





LocoRoco remains one of the most innovative PSP titles to date. Buy it!

Dark Mirror and *Burnout: Legends*. But the gaming experience on the DS is unique - there's nothing quite like *Kirby's Magic Paintbrush*, *Nintendogs*, *Trauma Center: Under The Knife*, *Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney*, *Brain Age*, etc. on any other system. There's truly something for everyone."

It is true that the Nintendo DS has been winning over many fans of late. Innovation has become something of a by-word for the PSP's rival and sales are picking up rapidly. Having soared ahead of the PSP in Japan, outselling it by five units to one (sales in Japan between 26 June and 2 July to pick a week at random showed 153,566 DS Lite sales compared to 25,935 PSP), it has also begun to make inroads in America and Britain.

For the very first time, it moved ahead of the PSP, leaving Nintendo jubilant. Nintendo of Europe's European marketing director Laurent Fischer said: "During Nintendo DS Lite launch weekend, retailers across Europe said that they had never seen such a vast array of different people buying the product, everyone from business men to young women to grandfathers"

The DS Lite has been a major success, no matter what gloss is put on it by the Sony spin doctors. This is no bad thing - now the PSP has some serious competition in all territories and with millions of people having bought both handhelds neither market is going to be ignored. Instead both Sony and Nintendo will surely do all they can to keep their machine ahead - it's the closest race in videogaming history.

[The DS Lite has been a major success no matter what gloss is put on it by the Sony spin doctors]

Bitter Rivalry

According to trade mag *MCV*, Nintendo's redesigned DS, the DS Lite, which was launched in Europe on 23 June, 2006 and sold more than 200,000 units in the first ten days, taking European sales to more than five million.

Nintendo is leading with the stats, telling anyone who would hear at the Leipzig games convention that more than five million DS units have been sold in Europe. The most popular game has been *Nintendogs* with three million copies. *Brain Training*, pushed extensively via Chris Tarrant-voiced ads, has sold 600,000.

In Japan, more than 10 million DS consoles have been sold and around seven million have sold in America. It has taken DS global sales to a truly staggering 22 million. The PSP has sold an equally impressive 20 million worldwide.

So why has this happened? Well, the short answer is: the redesigned Lite. It looks far better than the bulky original and has therefore caught the imagination of

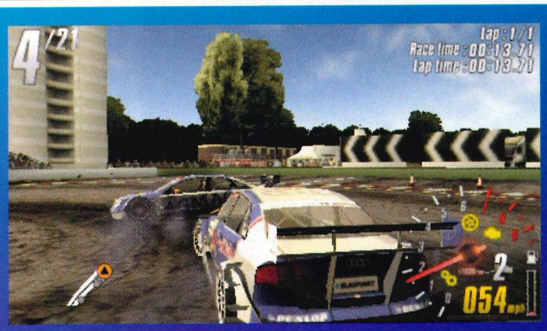
What they say

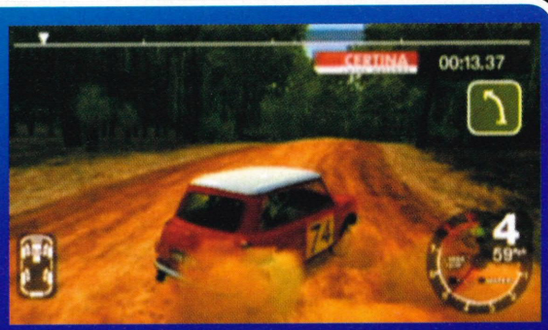
The publisher

Bryan Marshall is Codemasters' Chief Technical Officer. When the Codies worked on the PSP games *TOCA Race Driver 2* and *Colin McRae Plus*, he got his chance to get to grips with the handheld's technology.

Go>Play: So Bryan, have you been impressed by the technological prowess of the PSP?

Bryan Marshall: Obviously, on the technical side, the PSP has a superb screen and a decent amount of processing power and memory. It means games such as *Grand Theft Auto* can be achieved on the platform, which is impressive in itself. Interestingly, the screen quality and video playback capabilities make it the obvious choice for most people for watching movies whilst travelling over say, the iPod video player. The web browser is also a useful utility to have on the move.





GP: So how different is it to the DS?

BM: The technologies and interfaces are very different and that means a different perspective on asset creation and gameplay. Thinking of these as simple 'ports' from one platform to another is not the right way to go. Even the colour schemes and the look and feel of the assets need to be tailored to appeal to the correct user base. Technically, the developer needs to be a lot more ruthless and inventive in managing the memory usage on DS.

GP: Why do you think the UMD failed?

BM: Because no one is going to pay the same amount of money as a DVD for a much more specialised format. We all buy all our favourite movies on DVD and people want to watch films at home as well as travelling. This is possible with the Memory Stick - but the distribution of games on Memory Stick needs to be carefully thought through because of the piracy issues.

GP: Could Sony have built a UMD drive into the PlayStation3?

BM: That's an interesting question. PS3 is all about next-gen and that means HD and Blu-ray. UMD just doesn't fit into that model.

style-conscious consumers, so much so that many people with the old-style DS consigned their machines to the cupboard or put them on eBay and bought a Lite instead. These repeat buyers have really helped to push up sales. The Lite redesign was far more dramatic than the PSP's launch of a white handheld (a pink one is coming soon as well) and, in some respects, was akin to bringing out a new machine, such was the spike in sales. Another important factor is that the DS Lite is also much cheaper than the PSP.

Price Wars

Many feel it is time the PSP's price dropped. Its fall from £179 to £149 on 22 March 2006 was welcome but Sony fans and industry insiders say a further cut is needed prior to this Christmas. EA's vice-president David Gardner says: "I don't think Sony can afford to sit back. I think they still have things they can do with the price and performance of the machine - things that they need to address."

But David Reeves, Sony Computer Entertainment Europe's boss, said this was not going to happen. "There are no current plans to cut the price of PSP before Christmas," he said. "You might see, as you do in the trade, value-adding offerings. In our minds it's doing very well and we're very happy with the performance. I think next year you'll see it go to a much higher level." He told trade mag *MCV* that the high number of PS2 ports at launch caused a lull in terms of original content. "When we launched with PSP we had a good software line-up but a lot of it was similar to the PS2 games. Now what you're seeing with games like *LocoRoco*, the *Passport To...* series and *Talkman*, we're trying to come out with games that are made for PSP."

The PSP is certainly looking to head in a new direction. Sony has long made a name for itself for producing the mass-market appeal PlayStation, built upon a cool brand and great games with lots of innovation, particularly with the PS2 (think *Singstar* and *EyeToy*). And the PSP does have some of this innovation - *Talkman*, for example, as Mr Reeves says, shows that the technology can be pushed.

[According to sources close to Sony, the PSP is to be reworked and will go on sale in March 2007]

A Fresh Start

What the PSP needs now is a shot in the arm. If rumours are to be believed, it looks like it may well get it. According to sources allegedly close to Sony, the PSP is to be reworked and will go on sale in March 2007 in Japan. Sony is keeping tight-lipped about the plans - which say the machine will have 8GB of internal Flash memory, feature a built-in camera and be thinner - but Nintendo has proved with the Lite that reworking a machine can be as good as a fresh launch so Sony will certainly be looking at that option.

The rumours have been fuelled by the failure of the UMD as a movie format (more about that later) and the announcement by Sony that PSone games are going to be made available for the machine. Each game is likely to be 0.5GB in size so large internal memory capacity is essential. It would encourage people to download movies too.

By having a built-in camera, Sony will be able to offer the possibility for more innovative games. Games in the style of the PS2's *EyeToy* would be likely (although the need to keep at least one hand on the PSP may make it difficult to go along the same hand-waving lines as the PlayStation2 version).

GPS functions are also likely to be made available, making the PSP an effective Sat-Nav system for the car. And, of course, it is well documented that the PlayStation3 will utilise the PSP - it has already been demonstrated that the PSP can be used as a rear view mirror for the PS3 version of *Ridge Racer*. The options open for harnessing the power of both the handheld and console in tandem with each other is immense.

But of course, the core of the PSP is games, and it would be easy to blast publishers and developers for not being innovative enough. That, however, would be wrong. The PSP is now starting to freshen up. *LocoRoco* and *Hot PXL* are innovative, helping to turn heads away from the DS. In Japan, triple-A releases such as *SD Gundam G Generation Portable* has knocked DS favourites *Super Mario Bros* and *Brain Training* from the top slot in the charts.

Rockstar is set to wow gamers again with *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories*. *Tekken: Dark Resurrection* is an amazing fight title. We have already mentioned *Talkman*

As a movie format, UMDs - created since DVDs would never have fitted inside a PSP - have failed

Sony has created an add-on camera so expect *EyeToy* style videogames

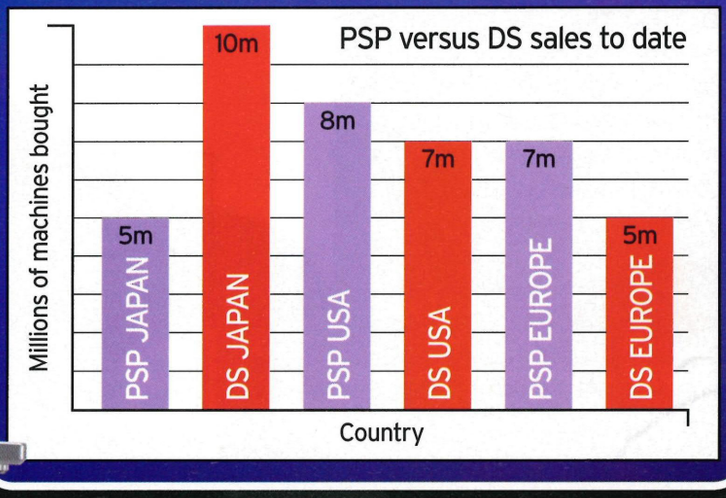
Never get lost again (but perhaps get driven off the edge of a cliff) with this GPS system for PSP

The Stats

The PlayStation Portable is most popular in Europe and America - clearly we know what's what when it comes to premier handheld entertainment.

The Japanese, on the other hand, seem more taken by the Nintendo DS but then Mario's lot have traditionally been popular in the land of the rising sun and it was always going to take a lot to break that particular stranglehold.

What this means is that Europe is the second biggest market for the PSP after our cousins in the good ol' US of A. Which only makes it the more galling that we are not seeing the PS3 on these shores until March 2007. Sony, we're your second biggest lovers!



as an example of recent innovation but *Lonely Planet* is releasing a set of *Passport To...* travel guides that allow PSP owners to take their handhelds abroad to access all manner of information about a host of cities including Rome and Paris.

New Ideas

You just cannot fault Sony for trying, for helping the PSP to find its feet. *LocoRoco* may have sold just 30,000 copies in the UK but it's a step in the right direction. And yes, it does cause some frustration - Will Curley, sales manager of Koei UK, suggests that perhaps *Gitaroo Man Lives!* might fare better on the DS rather than the PSP. "It's a shame that the PSP marketplace is so bad at the moment, where even something like *LocoRoco* is only selling 30,000."

The fact is *Gitaroo Man Lives!* is being released on the PSP - another step to help redefine the PSP as something other than a handheld PS2. But then Sony is entering a market it has had little experience of and one in which Nintendo has excelled for many, many years.

To that end, Sony has worked wonders. The DS had a headstart on the market but the PSP has been doing well. It is succeeding where others have failed. Think Atari Lynx and Sega Game Gear - two wonderful machines by two great manufacturers but both failing to make the impact Sony has made. Worldwide, there is only a million or so units in it - and Sony is best placed, with a revamped machine expected and the launch of the PS3 just around the corner - to soar to dominance. Fine, not everything has worked.

Failed Format

The UMD movie format has been a huge disappointment - not so much because of the quality of the titles, but more due to the pricing. New UMDs were knocked out at £19.99 a pop, which in many cases made them more expensive than the DVD versions.

Only now are they beginning to be discounted to around £6.99. The problem is, the majority of the film studios have given up on the format and the number of new releases has dwindled.

Sony had great hopes for the UMD and rightly so. Each disc holds 1.8GB of data and allows for movies at a resolution of 480x272. In simple terms, more than three hours of quality video can be compressed on to a disc far smaller than a UMD and far cheaper than the alternative method of storage which would have been a solid state format.

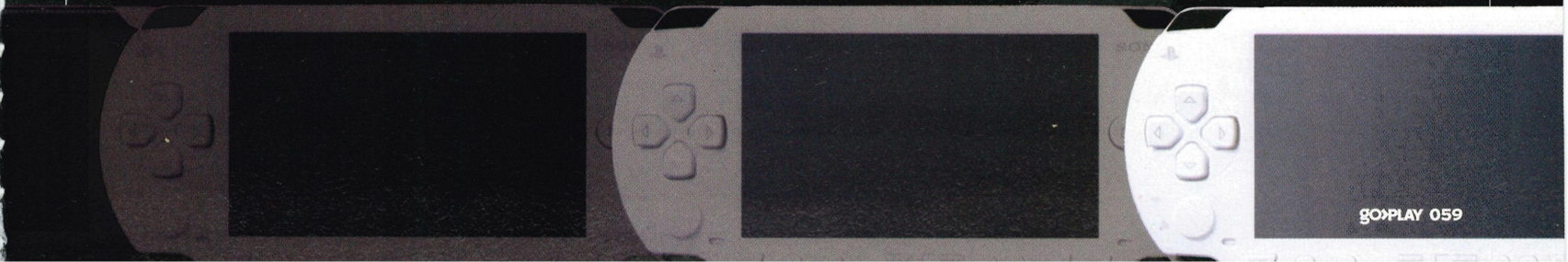
A couple of the earlier films broke the 100,000 sale barrier but then interest dwindled. Everyone knew what the UMD was capable of since PSP owners all got a free *Spider-Man 2* movie with the machine but it just seemed too restrictive.

The Memory Stick did not help matters. A full movie can be copied from a DVD and stored on a 1GB stick and Sony itself has now ensured everyone knows that by releasing sticks with *Hitch*, *SWAT*, *The Grudge* or *XXX2: The Next Level* loaded on to them. It appears Sony has now conceded that the UMD as a movie format is well-and-truly dead.

Yet had a TV-Out socket been included on the PSP - early version of the handheld were said to have had such a feature - then it would have been possible to hook up the unit to a television and watch UMDs on a bigger screen. That could have gone a long way to boosting the popularity of UMDs.

If Sony would have allowed UMDs to be used in computers and made them writeable, they could have widened the support of the new format. Finally, pushing the knife in further, Sony made the UMDs regionalised just like DVDs. It may not have gained worldwide distribution rights from major studios if it hadn't but it didn't help matters at all.

But Sony has the experience to tackle this and all of the other issues. Only a fool would bet against the firm freshening up the PSP in time for an assault on gamers throughout 2007. And with the PS3 just around the corner promising to make good use of the PSP, our money's on our handheld breaking some major new ground. We, for sure, cannot wait for what the future is likely to bring. We just know it's going to be good. ■



REVIEWED

WE PLAY 'EM, WE RATE 'EM, YOU BU

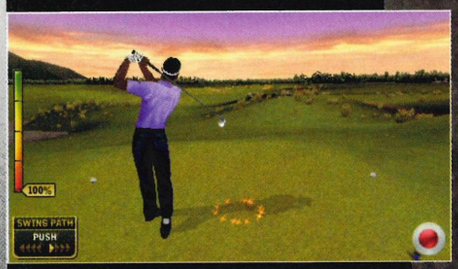
HIGHLIGHTS

"Something that particularly **makes up for** any shortcomings is the **fantastic** multi-player.

Whatever we found in Killzone that wasn't up to scratch is **outshone** by the **addictive gameplay** provided for multiple players. **Page 62.**"

"Manages, **in true EA style**, to do just enough to keep us **happy** until the next one turns up.

EA's sim delivers a **solid performance** but is it enough to **steal the cup** from *Pro Evolution*? Find out on **page 66.**"



"Even with **new content** the gameplay feels a little **too familiar** and with two competitors in the marketplace, Tiger should have **stepped up his game** for this edition.

The **golfing goliath** puts in a good effort but is it **enough to stay on top**? Find out on **page 70**"

1 Simon's hair may look greasy but he actually tames his wild locks with gallons of gel. He sometimes manages to shape it nicely, but not here.

2 This scowl is pretty much Simon's permanent facial expression. Only doughnuts and pizza ever give him cause to change it. One of mild indifference.

3 What's the point in shaving every day when your 5 o'clock shadow looks like this. There's no point, just let that grizzly beard grown, man!

4 This is not an attempt to look cool – although it kind of works – it is instead a means by which Simon can hide his double chin.

5 **Simon firmly believes in sucking in his gut when a photo is taken in an effort to hide his flab. Looks like he forgot all about that rule here, eh?**

6 Jumpers with pockets like this are a firm favourite with Simon. They offer a handy receptacle for sweets and biscuits that can be accessed at a moment's notice.

REVIEWER OF THE MONTH

(As picked by us, out of a coffee mug)

REVIEWER: Simon Griffin

SUBJECT: Hair today, gone tomorrow

CHAMP OR CHUMP?

So, what exactly have the hard-working, hot-to-trot **Go>Play** crew been up to this month? We ask them directly...

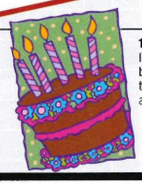
SIMON GRIFFIN

CHAMP

08 September
Had the day off so I took it easy as God intended.

17 September
Went to Portsmouth and took a trip up the Spinnaker Tower.

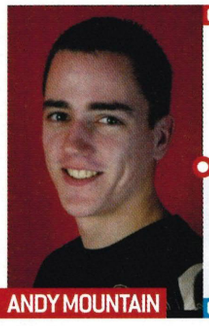
29 September
Went to the pub and got tipsy - it's Friday after all.



10 September
It was my birthday so I took it easy... again.

22 September
My Xbox 360 broke so I had to send it back - balls.

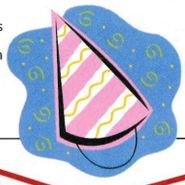
CHUMP



ANDY MOUNTAIN

CHAMP

02 September
My little sister's 18th birthday. Celebrated with a house party, then spent the following day trying to avoid tidying up.



23 September
Went to Poole to celebrate a mate's birthday, by 12.30am the birthday boy was happily asleep on a sofa in the club we were at..

30 September
The month comes to an end on a downer as my car tax is due.

10 September
Helped a friend move out of my house to Westbourne, not surprisingly haven't heard much from her since.

24 September
Another mate's birthday. Had a BBQ at his house then played football and badminton.

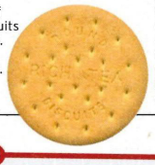
CHUMP

TOM LECLERC

CHAMP

10 September
Joined an art class, after some early promise I realised I'm better off sticking with words to make my point.

15 September
Started up a routine of eating biscuits at 3 o'clock. Now I'm horribly fat.

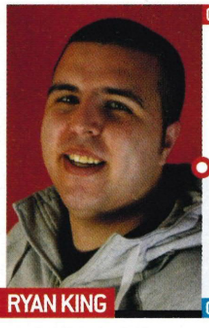


30 September
My birthday. Managed to net a Juicer and a bunch of cash. Got a bit drunk and tried to juice the money, which jammed the juicer. I truly am a drunken idiot.

13 September
My old flatmate moved out, now I live with a metro sexual and can't get to the bathroom in the morning. Haven't washed for weeks.

20 September
Went to Weymouth for the weekend, but couldn't ride the donkeys as I'm a good 11 stone over the maximum weight. Damn those biscuits.

CHUMP



RYAN KING

CHAMP

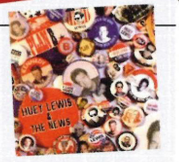
10 September
Watched *King Kong vs. Godzilla*. Utterly brilliant yet, at the same time, utterly rubbish.

27 September
Went to XO6 in Barcelona. It's like Paris with less cheese.

30 September
Got the new Plan B album. It's good. Buy it!

15 September
Got my new HDTV. 32" Sharp Aquos! Yay! No more portable TV nonsense.

17 September
Went to Paris for European *Capcom vs. SNK 2* tournament. Made top 16. I'm awesome.



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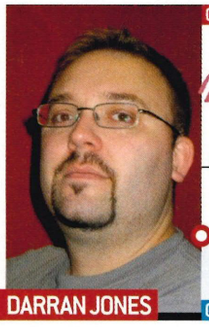


DARRAN JONES

CHAMP

01 September
Lose my brand new phone in London. I wouldn't mind but I'm paying £25 a month for nothing now. Doh!

18 September
Bought season four of the excellent *Scrubs* and watched all 25 episodes in two day's flat.

31 September
Download *Doom* on Xbox Live Arcade and start fragging again like it's 1993.

09 September
Sit down with the family for my wife's infamous roast and amazingly, I don't die.

22 September
Take the piss out of Dave for organising yet another crap *Pro Evo* tournament. Well done!

CHUMP

Reviewed this month

[62] KILLZONE: LIBERATION
One of the most eagerly anticipated titles on PSP is finally here. Has it really been worth waiting for or is it another letdown?

HIGHLIGHTS

[77] Bubble Bobble Evolution
[66] FIFA 07
[72] Ford Street Racing - L.A. Duel
[74] KAZooK
[64] MotoGP
[76] Passport To... London
[68] ProStroke Golf: World Tour 2007
[70] Tiger Woods PGA Tour 07

How we review

The Big Question

Even the fairest-minded reviewer makes assumptions. How good have the developer's other games been? How good are the games this is up against? We outline The Big Questions...

Percentage Score

It's a games mag tradition to score out of 100 per cent, and who are we to break with tradition? Chances are you know how these work, but in case you don't:

Under 30% = atrocious
Under 60% = pretty damn poor
Around 70% = now we're interested
Around 80% = well worth buying
Around 90% = fantastic - sell your gran to get it

Summing-Up Line

The whole game boiled down to 15 or so words.

Disabling a laser trip wire is relatively easy, especially if you have someone covering your back

Freedom is just a shotgun blast away

KILLZONE: LIBERATION

OUT: 3 NOV

Publisher **SCEE** / Developer **Guerrilla** / Price **£34.99** / Players **1-6** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN Multi-player, Downloadable Content, Game Share**

THE Big QUESTIONS

What does this have over the PS2 game then?
Apart from a completely different viewpoint you mean? Well, the game is far more strategic than its big brother, with cover and weapon usage key to success. It gives a whole new slant to the story that you wouldn't get from an FPS.

Will this link up with the PS3 *Killzone*?
Almost certainly not. The release dates of both games are so far apart that it's very unlikely we'll see any sort of connectivity. The stories may well tie together in some way but we'll have to wait and see whether that will be the case.

You've probably made up your mind about whether to buy *Killzone* already, seeing as we've been going on about how awesome it is over the last couple of months. However, those of you new to **Go>Play** might just be wondering what all the fuss is about.

Well, for the uninformed among you, this PSP sequel to the PS2 hit - *Killzone* - picks up a couple of months after the first game ended. The hero of the hour, Templar, is back and ready to kick more Helghast ass. After the ISA victory over the Helghan horde in the PS2 game, the invaders are up to their old tricks again and are attempting to kidnap high-ranking ISA members with a hope of gleaning important information from them to tip the war in their favour. The mastermind behind this plan is the evil General Metrac and he has one thing on his mind - ISA annihilation.

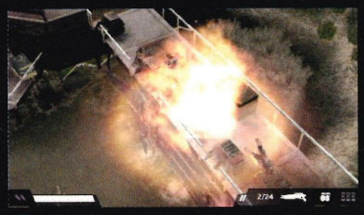
As you can tell, this continuation of the *Killzone* story gives a new viewpoint on the Vektans with the camera adopting an almost overhead position instead of the original first-person view. This new viewpoint completely changes the way you play *Killzone* and whether you've played the first game or not you'll still need to learn this new approach.

> Sony has **done it again** and delivered a top-drawer game

You see, strategy is the key in *Killzone* and simply running in, guns blazing, will find you consigned to a body bag within seconds. Using all the cover available really is the only way to survive, and even though this might sound boring at first, it's actually great fun trading pot shots with your enemies as you both wait for the other to poke their head out. However, even with all this hiding, the chances of getting shot are still pretty high. Even if the Helghast can get a bead on you with their gun sights then they won't shy away from lobbing grenades in your direction or sending in their vicious mutant dogs. If neither of those things get you then the mobile mines will try even harder to relieve you of your mortal coil. In fact, the scurrying little kamikaze robots will become one of your biggest fears and you'll begin to dread the sound of their ominous beeping as they move closer.

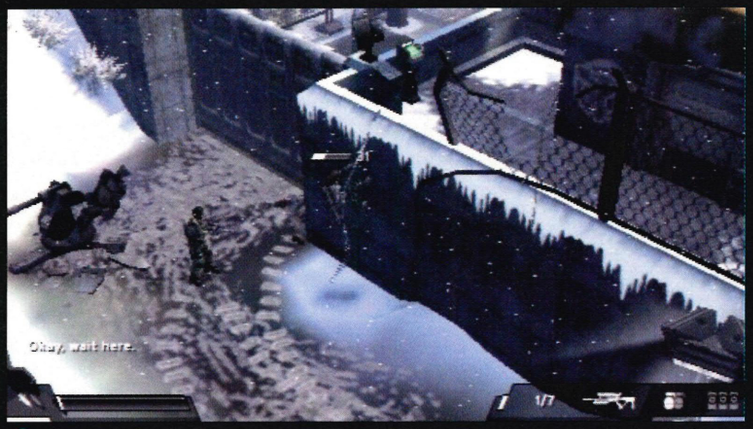
With so many things out to kill you, no amount of cover will stop you biting the big one plenty of times. The difficulty curve is incredibly steep and while the first couple of missions are pretty simple and ease you into proceedings, you'll soon find yourself getting overwhelmed by the Helghast on numerous occasions. If *Killzone* has a flaw, this is certainly it. The utter frustration that sets in when confronted with seemingly insurmountable odds does tarnish the game slightly. However, if you keep plugging away, those tricky sections can eventually be overcome and will let you get on with enjoying the parts that aren't quite as irksome. Things aren't totally stacked against you and not only will

Sometimes the frontal assault is the best option if you have a weapon big enough to take out your enemies quickly

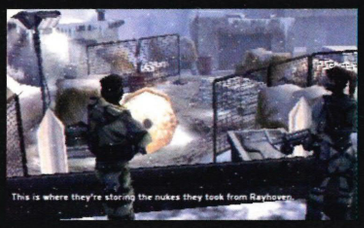


Killzone is filled with loads of big explosions to please pyromaniacs everywhere

The colour of the light emitting from the Helghast helmets denotes their alertness



Your comrades will often surprise you with new abilities such as climbing walls with the aid of a grappling hook – most handy



you sometimes have a comrade to order around – with a pleasingly simple-to-use interface we might add – but tanks and other death-dealing vehicles litter the battlefield just waiting for you to jump behind the controls.

If anything else is slightly annoying, it's the ever-so-slight slowdown that rears its ugly head when the screen gets a mite too busy. It really isn't much of a problem, though, and we only mention it because there's so little to complain about with this game.

Although, while we're in a moaning mood, we'd like to express our disappointment at only being able to carry one gun at a time. It's not that the guns are rubbish or that you can't swap them at most of the supply crates, it's just that too often we found ourselves wanting to use a different gun. No weapon illustrated this more than the sniper rifle, which is great when used in the correct manner. However, at close quarters it leaves you incredibly vulnerable due to its miniscule clip and slow reloading time. You might wonder why we picked that weapon in the first place. Well, if you suddenly encounter a new weapon in a supply crate then chances are you'll want to try it out. We feel the developers must know this though, so to then place you in an area that doesn't suit the weapon directly after just seems cruel.

Anyway, despite a few complaints, none of these problems really mar the *Killzone* experience that much. Something that particularly makes up for any shortcomings is the fantastic multi-player, which is the best we've seen in a shoot-'em-up since *Syphon Filter*. Running around the war-torn landscapes with five mates is an absolute blast and is quite possibly more enjoyable than the single-player experience. Even better, if you don't fancy a deathmatch then you and a mate can join forces on a co-op campaign. This sees you playing all the single-player missions with the added advantage of another gun. Arguments can ensue about which direction to take, as the game won't let you stray too far from each other, but the levels are relatively linear so it's a rare occurrence.

Sony has done it again and delivered a top-drawer game for its handheld. If you're after an original and quality shooter then *Killzone: Liberation* should be at the top of your shopping list. Screw the DS. ■

Simon Griffin

The difficulty in some parts lets down an otherwise fantastic game. **90%**

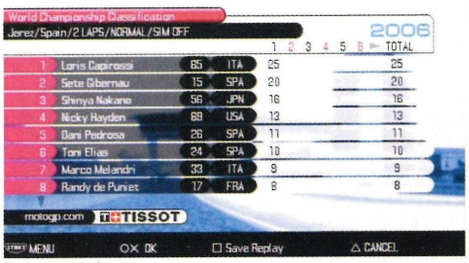
Locked up tight

Killzone rewards your commitment

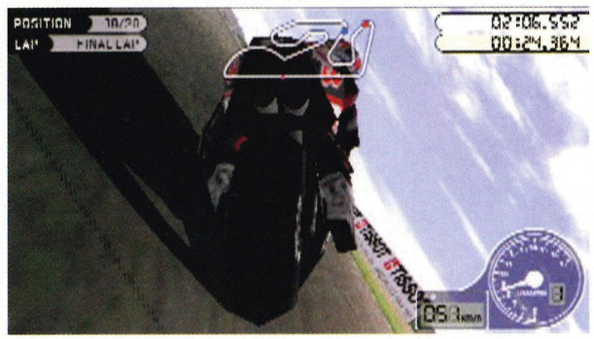
When you first start playing *Killzone: Liberation* you will undoubtedly notice a large amount of padlock icons scattered all over the place. To unlock the various goodies you'll need to not only complete the missions but also find suitcases of Vektan Dollars that are scattered around the place. Each level has a set amount and to unlock some of the goodies you'll need to spend your acquired wealth.

Ordering team-mates around really couldn't be easier

Running around the war-torn landscapes with five mates is a blast



Leaderboards help you keep track of the top riders - Italy and Spain clearly dominate the pack



MOTO GP

MotoGP lets rip with compact crotch rockets for the PSP

OUT: NOW

Publisher **Sony** / Developer **Namco Bandai** / Price **£29.99** / Players **1-8** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN Multi-player**

THE Big QUESTIONS

Just how difficult is *MotoGP*?
There are three difficulty settings: easy, normal, and (surprise, surprise) hard. These affect the riding ability of your competitors and are extremely well balanced, with easy being a cinch for a beginner and hard a definite challenge for the experts out there.

Why should I buy it for my PSP?
Why else did you buy a PSP? To play your favourite games in places you wouldn't be able to take your PS2. Not bored of the *MotoGP* series? Travel a lot? Buy *MotoGP* and kill that commuting time in a far more entertaining way.

Leaning hard into the corner of a long tradition of motorcycle racers comes the highly anticipated *MotoGP* for the PSP. It's the first *MotoGP* game for our Sony's handheld and it has one hell of a legacy to live up to, considering the popularity of the series on the PS2 and other formats. To that end Namco Bandai, the developer for the original games and *MotoGP 4* earlier this year, hasn't changed it much at all. In fact, it's almost a direct port of the PS2's *MotoGP 4*, minus a chunk of content subtracted to cram it into a handy portable size.

Namco Bandai has cut around half the tracks out of *MotoGP* to compensate for the PSP's limitations, leaving us with a mostly European choice of courses. This isn't necessarily good news for PAL regions as some of the most exciting tracks, such the Shanghai course in China, won't feature in the game. But it does mean that you'll be riding on familiar turf like Donington more often, which is good news for patriots and fans of Britain's famous race track. Fortunately, *MotoGP* still includes the full roster of riders that were available from the 2005 season, included two-wheel racing champs like Italian Valentino Rossi and Spaniard Sete Gibernau.

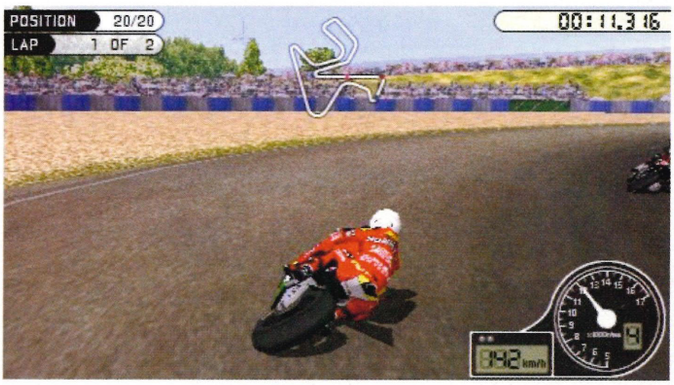
> [Namco Bandai has **cut** around half of the tracks **out** of MotoGP]

Horridly painful crashes are par for the course in *MotoGP*

MotoGP Mode Mania

Five different colours of racing

Over the course of the story mode you're given access to numerous special moves known within the game as blazin' moves. Powering up your blazin' bar and then activating your rage power treats you to a primal scream followed by – should you manage to connect with the move – a rather lengthy string of combination holds, throws, strikes and submission moves. Some of these manoeuvres are truly horrific, involving neck snapping, back breaking and brain haemorrhage to boot. In fact, it's this unashamed brutality that really draws you back again and again.



Come on guys – get serious. We know short cuts are tempting, but this isn't *Mario Kart*

Crowbarring *MotoGP* into the PSP's more limited system resources sees bike and general textures, as well analogue brake controls, take a hit too. But PS2 comparisons aside, it actually looks pretty good on the tiny PSP screen. Even at full throttle with up to 20 other bikers on screen at once, the frame rates hold steady for smooth gameplay. At this point, PS2 owners who have played *MotoGP 4* may dismiss this new PSP version altogether on the grounds that it's just a rehash, and technically a poorer one too. It's a fair point to make, which depends on whether you loved the original enough to take it around with you on the hoof. With its convenient autosave feature and numerous save opportunities, *MotoGP* is certainly the kind of game that you can play in bite-size pieces.

That's not to say *MotoGP* has nothing new to offer the avid PSP racing fan or MotoGP aficionado. It features a brand new one-on-one mode, which allows you to play against the best time of any of the completed tracks and, of course, one-on-one against the rider who qualified with this winning time on the appropriate circuit.

This is one of 50 unlockable rewards, or accomplishments, similar to those found in challenge modes featured in a raft of other games across the board. Each reward can only be unlocked by achieving specific goals, the gradient of difficulty of which increases with the quality of the prize. Completing *MotoGP*'s challenges usually yields extra tracks or bikes, but bigger prizes can include additional rewards such as the one-on-one gameplay mode. It's a commonly used but clever system that adds an additional incentive to winning, makes it that much more exciting to play and keeps the player coming back for 'just one more turn'.

> **[Controls have been made as basic as possible for a racing game]**

However, even before you've unlocked any of the extra bikes and tracks, there's still a vast array to choose from, and all of them can be customised to a certain extent. Tracking, handling, acceleration and brakes can all be tweaked to suit the track and your style of play, as well as your riding form. You won't see much difference in your game by adjusting them if this is your first foray into *MotoGP*, but veterans and masters of the series will find themselves endlessly playing with these settings before a race.

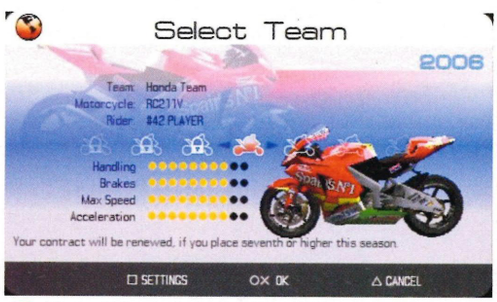
Despite this fairly sophisticated level of detail, *MotoGP* is incredibly accessible. Beginners don't have to touch the intricate working innards of each bike if they don't want to, or the stance of the rider. Default settings can be used and novices won't necessarily be at a disadvantage for using them either. Controls have been made as basic as possible for a racing game: accelerate, brake, left and right. That's it – we're talking *Road Rash* simplicity here folks. You can even use the D-pad rather than analogue thumb control if you want.

The learning curve is steep, but mastering the game is a whole different kettle of fish. It's a matter of timing, taking corners effectively and familiarising yourself with your bike and tracks, as taking your eyes off the road for more than a fraction of a second to look at the map usually ends in tears.

This is a very decent conversion for the PSP, and while it doesn't do anything revolutionary for the *MotoGP* series, it doesn't need to. Any PSP owner who wanted to play a good motorcycle game on their portable will be more than satisfied with the endless hours of entertainment *MotoGP* will provide. ■

Ben Biggs

A very safe, but competent conversion of a PS2 hit. **79%**

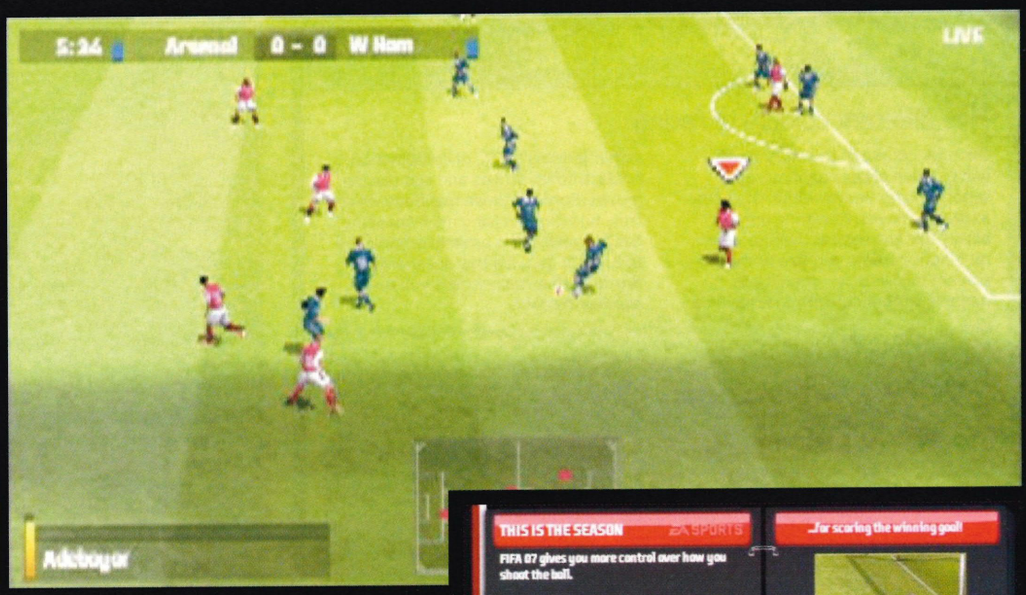


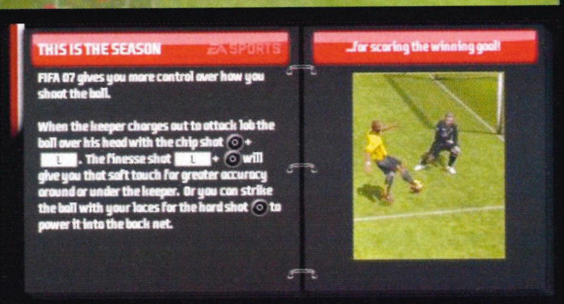
The best bikes featuring four filled stat bars have to be unlocked first

In case you didn't fancy winning another bike, rewards for individuals can be viewed prior to unlocking

Looking behind you is recommended only on the long, straight sections of the course

He is such an ugly man, that Wayne Rooney, although here he looks quite good





FIFA keeps a clean sheet for once

FIFA 07

OUT: NOW

Publisher **EA** / Developer **In-house** / Price **£35.99** / Players **1-2** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN Multi-player**

THE Big QUESTIONS

How many teams has it got?
Pretty much all the football in the whole world, from International teams to second division German sides. The likenesses, given how many teams have been included, are pretty good, and every footballer has their own look.

Has it changed much from the last iteration?
We'd like to say yes but we'd be lying. It hasn't changed. In the slightest. At All. A few of the niggling issues have been sorted out though, and while it's still very much *FIFA*, it is at least progressing the standard football format.

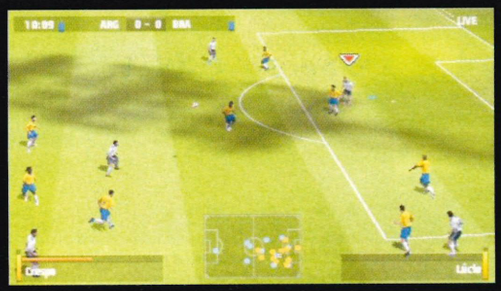
There's a lot of football going on in our office at the moment. If it's not the daily *Pro Evolution* friendlies, it's talk about the upcoming league tournament, and just exactly who's going to be bapping who. If that's not enough there's the whole Fantasy Football league currently taking complete control of our lives. A lone *FIFA* title doesn't really stand much of a chance in amongst this muddle of stubborn soccer machismo. Sure there are those who rate *FIFA* over *Pro Evo*, there are those that appreciate it as an antidote to its competitor's frustrating flaws, and there are those that are casual enough footy fans for *FIFA* to hold a genuine attraction, but for the most part, *FIFA* is ignored as much as it's berated. Something that's perhaps more indicative of the attitude toward EA's long-standing franchise than anything else we could write in our review.

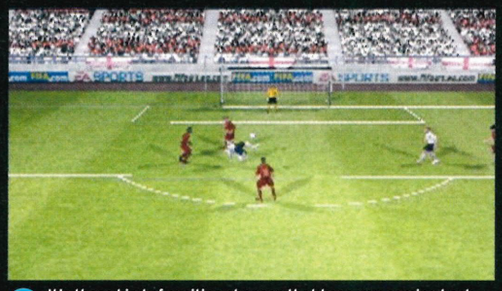
Not to dwell on the past though, and although **Go>Play**'s last foray into the world of *FIFA* - namely our Wi-Fi World Cup - didn't end particularly favourably for this reviewer, the fact is that we did, in amongst the frustration, anger and smacktalk, have a fair deal of fun. Given that this iteration is considerably broader than that version, *FIFA 07* gets things off very much on the right foot, with the customary range of licensed clubs, players and strips. There are enough menus, stats and players to keep the most ardent fans happy, especially after the limited range of options available to those who invested in the last in the series.

> **FIFA 07 requires a little thought as well as expert thumbsmanship**

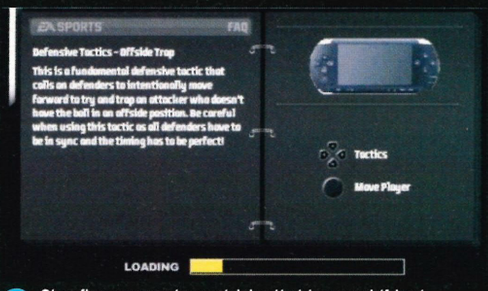
So how does it perform on the pitch? Often the last thing to be considered when looking at the next in a long line of sports titles like *FIFA* or *Pro Evo*, the actual on-field action hasn't seen a complete overhaul, indeed the cynic may be entitled to say that the mechanics have remained almost unchanged since *FIFA World Cup*. Whilst it's certainly a much tidier, and in all, a more enjoyable experience, there's a good deal borrowed from previous games in the series. The only real difference in the gameplay is an increased level of fluidity in the play: lofted through balls, for example, bear fruit more often, and exciting chances are much easier to craft. Okay, it's still the kind of arcade-style footy we've come to expect from the franchise, but in all fairness that's probably quite a good thing on a handheld title.

Still in the series is a bias towards the faster players in the game. Henry, for example, is utterly devastating in almost every situation (as in real life of course), but there's little feeling of skill when you pick the ball up at the halfway line, outrun a couple of defenders and blast one into the back of the net. That is however, a forgivable flaw, given that your opponent's AI rarely makes full use of a pacey player's speed. There has been much made about the gradual

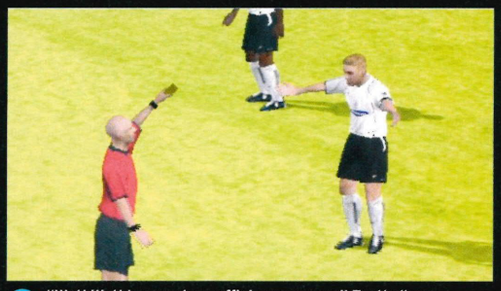




It's these kind of exciting chances that keep you coming back for more



Okay fine, now you try explaining that to your girlfriend



"Wot! Wot! I never dun nuffin', you wanger" Football: a gentleman's game played by animals

improvement in *FIFA*'s AI, and it's clear that effort has been made to decrease the stupidity of the 21 men on the pitch not under your direct control. Players make runs that, while not nearly as devastating as in some previous versions on the home console, create the kind of chances seen on the football pitches across the country every week and actually work towards making this a game that requires a little thought as well as expert thumbsmanship.

So what else is there to tickle the footy fanatic's fancy? A couple of mini-games, namely Juggling and Wall Attack are the kind of things that, were they more numerous, might serve to up the review score a little. Sadly juggling is only faintly more interesting than cleaning your toilet bowl, being a simple matter of pushing up, down, left and right at the right time, and Wall Attack is downright silly, forcing you to kick balls at a wall, Breakout style, for all eternity.

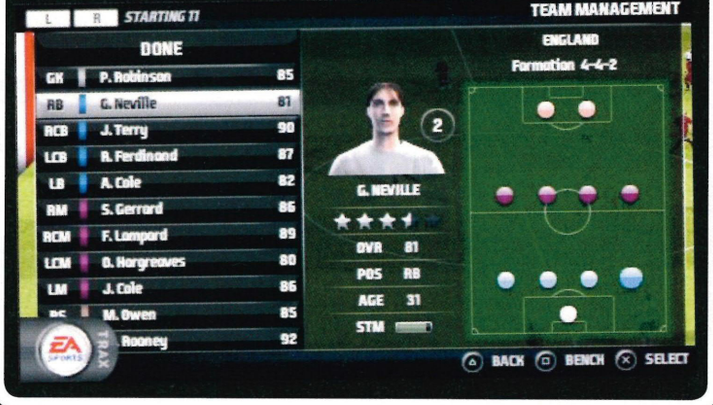
A PS2 link mode is a handy innovation, allowing you to transfer files from your PS2 game to the PSP and continue your season on the move, while the EA Media Centre does something quite unusual in that it lets gamers customise their EA Trax with their own tunes. A comprehensive management mode, challenges and the ever-expanding licensing make *FIFA* the kind of game we like on the PSP. Considerably better than *FIFA World Cup*, and certainly a title with plenty of longevity, *FIFA 07* manages, in true EA style, to do just enough to make us happy until the next one turns up. If we felt a little mean, we could say that it still doesn't capture the beautiful game like *Pro Evo*, but weighing the titles against each other most would agree that this still comes a close second to Konami's franchise. ■ **Tom Leclerc**

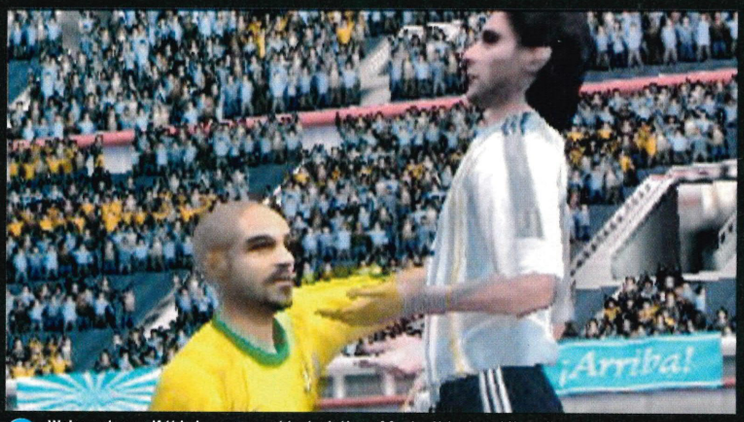
An improvement on the World Cup cash-in, but still not perfect. **81%**

Long-term involvement

How to build a top-notch team

The most involving game mode is the management mode, which gives you access to all manner of management options. Being as comprehensive as you could ever wish for an add-on to a handheld footy title, this is the kind of affair that'll keep you involved for those seriously lengthy journeys. In management mode you're not only put in charge of the full team, but the youth squad, scouting, training, contract renewal and a wealth of financial matters involving more money than you're ever likely to see in real life. The only problem we had with the manager mode was that even after a good few hours touching up your team - and buying players to fill gaps in your squad - the actual performance on the pitch is pretty negligible. Indeed, it seems that the main aim is to keep the shareholders happy; just like real life.





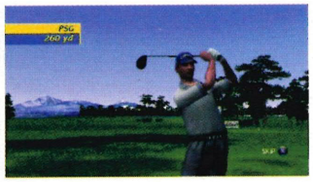
We're not sure if this is a reasonable depiction of footy. It looks a bit, well... raunchy

Oh, how we would have loved to see this in the World Cup

Football clearly sends people mad. Look, he's trying to eat his own arm

Golf's all about wearing two different kinds of slacks!

Nicely on the green. Looking for excitement? You know where to come



"Why does Ian Woosnam hate me so?" Thomas Bjorn in calmer times

No Tigers, but plenty of woods

PROSTROKE GOLF: WORLD TOUR 2007

OUT: 17 NOV

Publisher **Oxygen Interactive** / Developer **Gusto Games** / Price **£34.99** / Players **1-4** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN Multi-player**

THE Big QUESTIONS

It's all a bit pedestrian isn't it. After all, isn't golf just a good walk spoiled?
Well, that's a matter of opinion – one that's unlikely to be changed by a quick blast of *ProStroke Golf*. This is a game for the connoisseur of the greens and fairways.

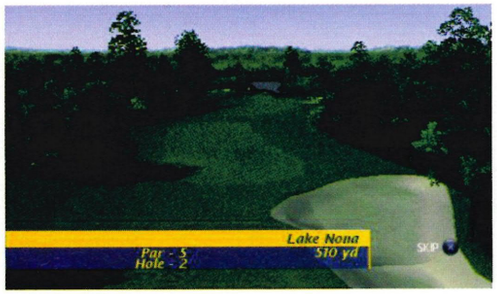
So there's no help at all, then?
Not during matches, no. There's a brief tutorial that shows you the basics of getting the ball to move through the air (and, crucially, stop), then all you're left with is hints and tips while holes load. But it's better that way.

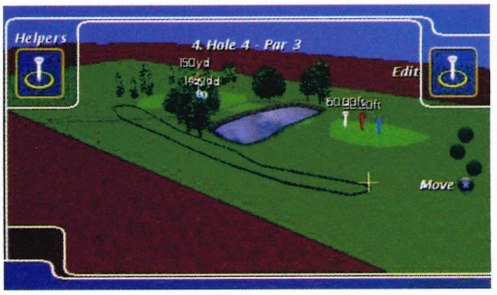
There's something to be said for the fundamentals, you know. For all the razzamatazz of the *Tiger Woods* series, it's painfully clear that almost every amazing shot comes about as a result of either the game giving you a level of control impossible in real life, or simply so much help that a monkey casually scratching an itch with the PSP would find it hard to miss. Take putting spin on the ball, for example – how does the player standing on the tee cause their ball to halt just inches from its landing point simply by squinting at it a bit? Well, in real life they don't, and neither do they on the crisp turf of *ProStroke Golf*, and that's brilliant.

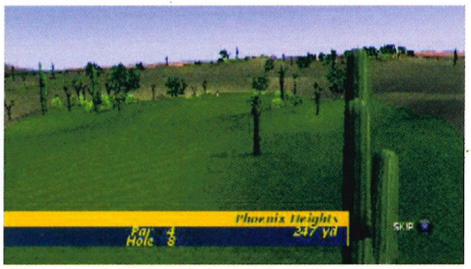
Comparisons have been made labelling the relationship between this and EA's flagship golf outing as identical to that between the two giants of the videogame football market, and it's not hard to see why. One places the ball on the end of an invisible string, wowing players with a level of control that in reality is not there, while the other forces a thorough consideration of all possible outcomes, taking away buttons that perform certain functions in favour of a set of variables that bring about pinpoint accuracy when correctly configured. In short, every stroke brings about a level of satisfaction of which a full round of EA golf can only dream.

> There's no **hand-holding**, due to a meticulously detailed control system

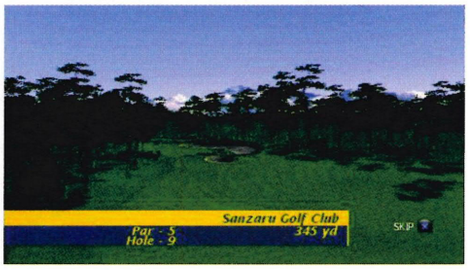
There's no obnoxious hand-holding whatsoever, due to a meticulously detailed control system. Instead of assigning buttons to this and that, the game presents the player with a number of variables. Included among these are the position of the ball towards the front or rear of your player's stance, the position of your player's feet in that stance, what section of the ball's face is to be struck and how open your club's face will be when it does so. Only when these four elements have been considered can you actually choose your club and start to assess how the lie of the land will affect your shot.







Each hole begins with a flythrough allowing you to take in the wonderful scenery. And a few cactus spikes

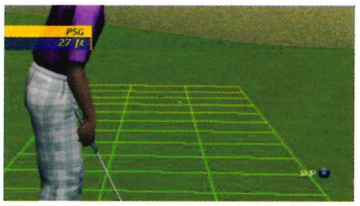


From here, you have hours of intrepid exploration as you learn to place skilful fade shots around troublesome dog-legs rather than trying to change your swing or altering your stance over the ball to compensate for a strong head wind. Short of getting laughed at for a pitiful sense of fashion, there's really little to fault it, as a sim.

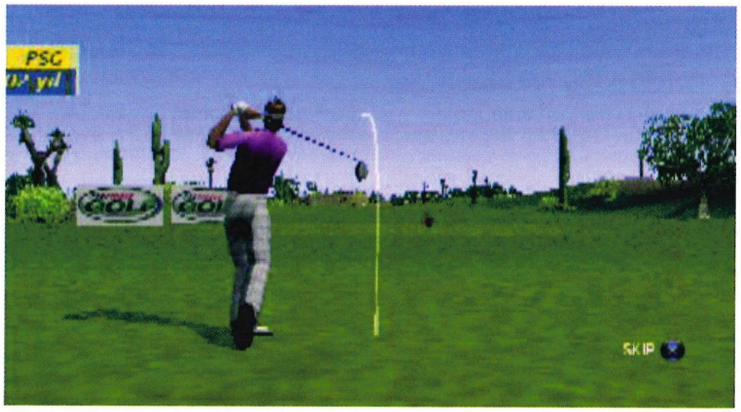
It's a bit of a shame, then, that largely cosmetic complaints crash the party somewhat. Least importantly, leaderboards in tournament play hide themselves away in Pause menu subsections, when they might find a more tension-creating home between holes. Moving up the irritability scale a little, the game's incidental music has a nasty habit of cutting itself off mid-flow, as do the rather sparse ambient sound effects of buzzing insects and the like. Also, as is now *de rigueur* in sports titles, the in-game commentary (provided by Radio 5's Alan Green, Sam Torrence and Ian Baker-Finch) quite regularly makes no sense whatsoever, praising shots sliding beyond the dance floor and saying those that hit the pin and drop didn't. Bizarre. More important still, while the visuals aren't exactly terrible, the lack of any kind of scenery beyond trees, billboards and the occasional buggy gives the colourful courses a sparse feel. Quite often, the line of foliage placed to obscure the meeting place of sky and ground will lumber painfully into view, too. Top of the list though, is the fact that you're expected to sit through the round of your playing partner, each time you venture out with one. Although holding down a face button speeds up proceedings, there are just so many incidental reaction shots to endure. Your typical two-player matchup therefore lasts the best part of an hour (if you're lucky), and with no mid-match saves, that's a custodial crime at the least. This is for the golf fan on the go, after all.

Still, through all this you find yourself constantly willing the experience to improve, rather than first in the queue to shower it in cusses. Although the game's career mode is simplistic in structure, it takes in the sights of 18 grand courses, such as The Belfry. Plus, the fact that 15 real-world professionals – including a slimmed-down Colin Montgomerie – join you, proves that the game is not without its share of razzle-dazzle, albeit from slightly dulled stars. When all's said and done though, one sweet drive beats a thousand smoke-and-mirror illusions. ■ **Dave Shaw**

[One sweet drive beats a thousand smoke-and-mirror illusions]



It doesn't matter how closely you look at it, mate, it's not going to go in



Fore! Stop the aiming marker but millimetres either side of the sweet spot and you're in a whole heap of sandy trouble

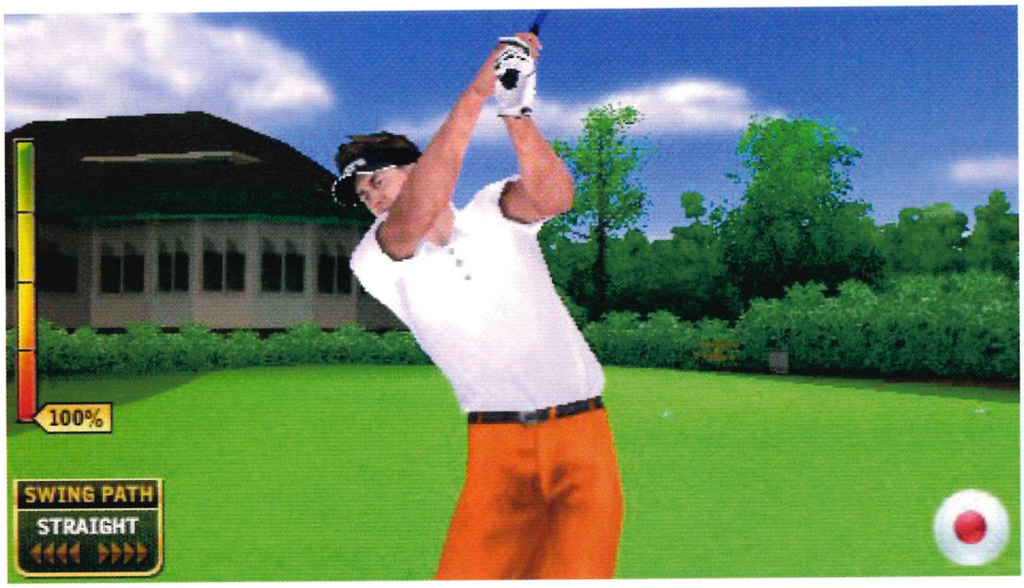
Not an eagle, but a confident birdie **78%**

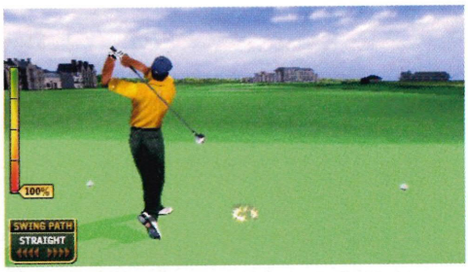
Ground force

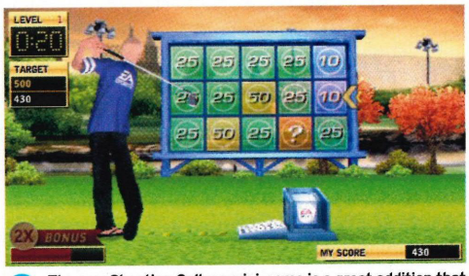
Why Tiger-proof, when you can create your own course?

Quite amazingly (for a handheld title) *ProStroke Golf* features an intuitive course design mode that, while lacking a little in detail, prolongs its shelf life by a factor of two or three. Using efficient tools accessed through the right shoulder button, your first task is to alter the positions of the graded tee-off spots and your pin position. After that, you can carefully draw the outlines of your ideal greens, fairways and water hazards from above, before seeing the game bring them into wonderful, verdant (though slightly grainy) life. Straight after contouring the ground with just a flick of the analogue nub, the finishing touch can be applied in the form of lush greenery, tastefully framed by a meandering path or wild hedgerow. You can almost smell the freshly mown grass. That's really all there is to it, and if at any time you become unsure of how the hole will play out, simply selecting 'play' from the Pause menu permits a quick go before returning to tinker. Regardless of the limited number of scenery objects, this still puts the *Tiger Woods* series' miserly roster of courses to shame – this can only be a good thing.

No golf course's scenery would be complete without a very appealing nineteenth hole!







The new Shooting Gallery mini-game is a great addition that quickly becomes addictive

Mr Woods steps up to the tee once again

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07

OUT: NOW

Publisher **EA** / Developer **In-house** / Price **£34.99** / Players **1-2** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN Multi-player, Wi-Fi Internet Multi-player**

THE Big QUESTIONS

Does it contain EA Trax?
What EA game doesn't? As well as the usual selection of popular tracks and stuff you've never heard of, you also have the option to listen to any MP3s you have stored on your Memory Stick in a custom playlist, which is nice.

Can you still create your own golfer?
Absolutely. The Game Face creator is still present so you can make a golfer who looks just like you. Or you can make one who looks like a complete freak to scare all those proper golfers. The choice is yours.

Yearly updates of sports games are a tricky thing. You want to keep it the same but bring in enough new elements and change it just enough to put a new year at the end of the title. With all the sport licences EA holds and the updates it churns out year after year then, you'd certainly expect the publisher and developer to have this down to a fine art.

However, this new *Tiger Woods* release on PSP is uncannily similar to last year's. The menus all look very familiar, as does the interface out on the course. Obviously you don't want to alienate loyal fans by changing everything, but when all the animations and sound effects are identical, even the most loyal of fans may start to question whether forking out another £35 is really worth it.

Of course, this isn't just last year's *Tiger Woods* game with an '07' slapped on the end, as there are some new arrivals worth noting. The biggest of these is the new Career mode, which sees you moving your way up the rankings by earning points. This certainly adds some longevity to the game and once you get into it, it does prove rewarding. Multi-player options have also been improved with the addition of online play. You're no longer restricted to playing your mates who also own a copy and can put your driving and putting skills up against anyone around the world. As you'd expect, there are also a few new courses in the shape of Bethpage Black, Pinehurst No. 2 and a great fantasy course that's based in Central Park. New York's famous park also houses two mini-games (one new), both of which are enjoyable distractions and will enable you to practise various facets of your golfing.

The actual gameplay has remained relatively untouched and the dodgy analogue swing is still present. While fine on a PS2 pad, the short range of the PSP analogue nub makes an accurate swing tricky, although with practise it does get a lot easier.

> **This new Tiger Woods release is uncannily similar to last year's**

Even with new content the gameplay feels a little too familiar and with two competitors in the marketplace, Tiger really should have stepped up his game for the 2007 edition. ■ **Simon Griffin**

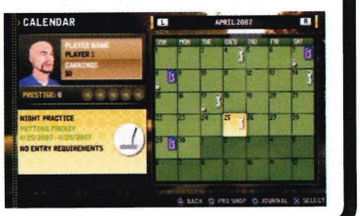
The new stuff is great but it looks and feels like last year's release **81%**

If you don't fancy taking the time to create yourself in-game, you can ask the game to pick random features for you. It's like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're going to get

Making a career out of it

Become the next big thing!

The format the new Career mode takes is the FedEx Cup. This sees you accumulating points over a season, which culminates in the top 30 ranked players becoming eligible to play in four playoff tournaments. The player who has the most playoff points after the fourth and final tournament will have the prestigious honour of receiving the FedEx cup and a big pile of cash.
To keep track of your FedEx Cup Points, you have a handy journal that keeps a record of all your results and winnings. If you do well enough in the tournaments you might get challenges from potential sponsors to participate. You might even appear on the cover of the local paper or *ESPN* magazine. You'll never make it onto the cover of **Go>Play** though, no one is that good!



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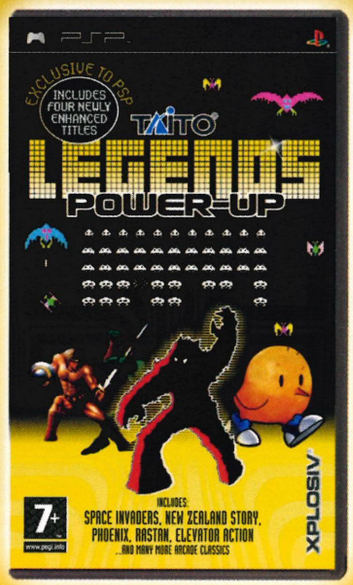

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The game puts on a nice dazzling effect as you exit tunnels. Make sure Gizmo isn't in the passenger seat

When the going gets tough, the tough emit sparks, comically. Graphically, it's solid stuff

Slow and steady wins the race

FORD STREET RACING – LA DUEL

OUT: 27 OCT

Publisher **Xplosiv** / Developer **Razorworks** / Price **£19.99** / Players **1-6** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN Multi-player**

THE Big QUESTIONS

I remember *Ford Street Racing* as a dull, run-of-the-mill racer for PS2, how is this any different?
Part less effective competition, part incremental improvement. It handles plainly enough but the game now features 24 cars as opposed to the last (home console) version's 18, with a track list 13 stronger than before.

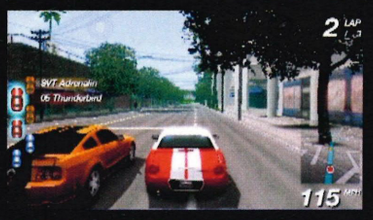
Maybe so, but in all honesty, who really wants to cruise round the streets of downtown Los Angeles in a Fiesta?
Well, it is only 20 quid. Besides, there are a few more exotic entries in the company's catalogue, such as the raging beast that is the Ford GT, and the bulky Mustang. Tasty.

Ford Street Racing – LA Duel is a massive lesson in getting the fundamentals of game design correct. Although its structure exposes it as the budget racer it is, there's a slow-burning quality to its handling that brings about a turn into powersliding gung-ho joy, not unlike redneck classic *FlatOut*, in fact. As you hurtle through the sun-drenched streets, playing chicken with the accelerator, it's easy to forget that the cold, empirical evidence all seems to point towards a thumbs-down verdict. For one, there's a tremendous amount of catch-up evident from the first second of your first race, to the point where three or more cars will hurtle down the finishing straight, door to door, the drivers no doubt discussing their relative shopping lists. Though this has its associated benefits, such as bringing about some rather pretty dents in the bodywork to ogle or causing one or two CPU-exclusive pile-ups, it does lend some races the worst possible aspect of 'realistic' racers – reducing the whole thing into a 'sliding into competitors at the right angle' contest. Also, it grates to shave seconds off the clock with each passing corner, only to clip a lamp post and have the whole field zoom past you, Bowser grinning as he brings up the rear.

> **Bat about the course like Starsky or Hutch, knocking over scenery**

Another concern is the system for purchasing and maintaining your vehicles, which is so unremarkable it might as well not exist. It would have been nice to have been able to tweak body parts, design custom paint-jobs, polish the chrome until you're blinded by it – anything to drown the monotony. Lastly, it takes a fair while for any sense of speed to build up, due to an opening focused on classics such as the Thunderbird. Plus, even when you move onto the meatier machines you gain more in general wobbliness than you do in speed. That is, however, a large part of the charm. Why bother with meticulous simulation when all you really want to do is bat about the course like you're Starsky and/or Hutch, knocking over scenery objects and generally seeing how quickly a car can speed around a city without lifting off the accelerator?

Dedicated followers of the *Ford Racing* series so far will know that its signature feature is the ability to set up simultaneous team races. If that all sounds just a little bit bizarre to you, we've one word to say to you: correct.



Said contests involve one player effectively controlling two cars at the same time, tapping up on the D-pad to flick between one or the other, triggering a cut-scene that thinks it's been lifted straight out of *The Matrix*. Your off-screen car can be given one of two orders – to speed ahead or attempt to block the road – using the two shoulder buttons. The result of all this is certainly tense, as you chug along with half an eye on the team-position indicator, but it does give the impression you haven't really got all that much control over proceedings. The fact that control returns to the second vehicle as the finishing line is crossed means that clawing back a few places in the dying seconds of a race appears a viable tactic.

It certainly seems like the intention of team races was to force players to switch between cars every ten seconds or so, in order that they might remain close enough to each other for clothesline roadblocking manoeuvres to function – that's a bit like buying a PSP then only ever using it as a calculator. At least there are several rule sets on offer to spice things up: the points-based team race, team drop (in which the team with a car in last place is eliminated after each lap), and team one-two (where the goal is to reach first and second positions with your two vehicles) most prominent among them. Unfortunately, alliances cannot be formed between two Wi-Fi human players, although team races can still be staged in the regular way between up to three PSPs (ie with three players). However, the whole mode still feels more of a failed experiment than anything else..

[A cut-scene that thinks it's been lifted straight out of The Matrix]

A large part of the appeal here is undoubtedly the bargain-basement price; more specifically the surprise generated by the game proving enjoyable regardless of it. True, no sane individual (with 35 pounds in their pocket) is going to be satisfied by anything other than the high-octane thrills of *Ridge Racer 2*, but those of us tired of being shouted at about nitrous could do far worse than check out *Ford Street Racing – LA Duel*'s modest, more gentlemanly charm. ■ **Dave Shaw**

Budget, but without all that usually entails **73%**

Two for the price of one

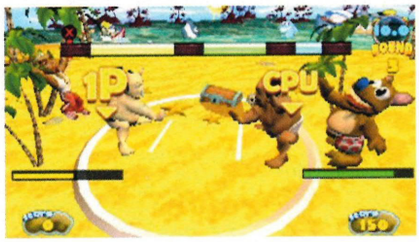
Pretend you're Spider-Man, with your double racing life

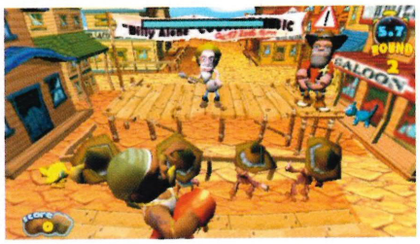
Ford Street Racing – LA Duel's career mode is split straight down the middle, offering a complete set of challenges both when racing as a team and on your own. Each is non-linear and spreads out like the least environmentally friendly tree ever over the map of downtown LA. Cups offer a mixture of race modes, all of which must be completed to advance, covering the good (race), the bad (elimination), and the just plain ugly (time attack). Whoever first thought that one vehicle racing against nobody was a good idea and everybody who's adopted the idea since needs a good smack, preferably in that order. The sentiment rings true even more in a game such as this that, whilst not totally based in fantasy, bends the rules a little to make normal races more competitive. At least things get a little tougher as you progress and in so doing you move through the three classes of vehicle: classic, regular and performance, which include (in that order) the Thunderbird, Mustang and Ford GT in their rosters. Brownie points are earned, too, for the admirable numerical advantage the PSP edition holds over the previous console titles when it comes to the vital statistics of cars and tracks; a relationship that's all too often reversed.

The game caters to many tastes. Those who like their cars blue will not be disappointed

Get your revenge on talentless pop-wannabes with the help of your trusty baseball bat

This is our absolute favourite, and a million times better than *Jaws Unleashed*





KAZooK

Where else can you abduct people, smash guitars up, do away with geeks and eat people?

OUT: NOW

Publisher **Xplosiv** / Developer **Monte Cristo Multimedia** / Price **£19.99** / Players **1-6** / Supports **Wi-Fi LAN Multi-player, Game Share**

THE Big QUESTIONS

Is it better than *Ape Academy*?
Almost, mainly due to how cheap it is. With 30 mini-games for £19.99, we make that 66p a game, which certainly ain't bad. However, it'll take a lot of play time in order to afford all 30. Some are worth it, some aren't – it might be wise to do a nifty memory card take-out trick so you can try before you buy.

Ever had to turn nerds away from your parties?
As videogames are our business, there are plenty of nerds, geeks and downright socially inadequate people around here. During any **Go>Play** party, Simon's always armed with a copy of *A Brief History Of Time* (to sniff them out) and a very large cricket bat. So no, no nerds ever, just cool people in bikinis.

There aren't many things you can buy for 20 squids these days. Maybe a mediocre night out, an album and a half or 200 Chomp bars. Not particularly exciting, or long lasting (depending on how much you like Chomps), but for the same price you can get the brand new *KAZooK* on PSP.

It comprises 30 mini-games, and, at 66p a pop, that isn't bad at all considering they include some of the most bizarre tasks ever devised. For instance, you'll be bashing nerds away from a pool party with a baseball bat and an endless supply of balls, or perhaps censoring rappers on a radio show. It's a lot slower paced than something like *WarioWare*, but the games increase in difficulty the further you progress. Also, the loading times tend to get on your nerves as you flit between games.

However, *KAZooK* does make it up to us in several places – the tourist-munching shark section being just one such instance. Empty-headed sightseers run off jetties either side of the screen while you – a shark – have to leap up and eat them with a grin-inducing 'crunch' sound. Another favourite is the alien abduction game, where you suck passers-by up into a UFO while avoiding the dark-suited FBI types. Fed up of your PS2-owning mates going on about *Guitar Hero*? Then smash up the angst by destroying a virtual axe and swirling around the analogue nub.

> **[Suck passers-by up into a UFO while avoiding dark-suited FBI types]**

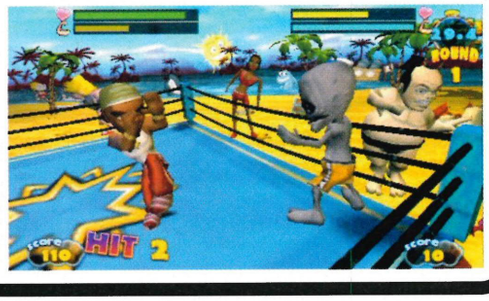
Small problems arise because, in order to play all the games, you'll have to unlock them by earning a shedload of money. Playing the five games unlocked at the start is the only way to accomplish this, and it can get really frustrating. That being said, if you link up with a mate on Game Share, you'll be able to acquire the cash more quickly. Nothing beats the self-satisfaction gained through knocking your mate into a humungous pit of molten lava. And did we mention zombies? There are a stack of zombie games: kill zombies, chainsaw zombies, hide from zombies, samurai sword zombies, run away from zombies. The controls are often rather bizarre to figure out and, unlike other game compilations, we'd recommend actually reading the instructions before pressing start to play. But for £20, you can't go wrong; it's not perfect, but it is certainly damn good value. ■ **Henrietta Rowlatt**

Cheap and cheerful, if you want to boost your game collection by 30 **79%**

The cat from outer space?

Bizarre is KAZooK's middle name...

Several of the games are 'ball based', but there are no balls in this compilation – parrot pucks are used instead. It's exactly as you'd think, they're pucks with parrots on the top. Where these ideas came from, we're not sure. Another game involves bouncing birds onto trampolines on a beach. The boxing game sees you beating up an alien that screams just like a cat fighting in an alleyway in the wee small hours of the night. What *KAZooK* lacks in speedy loading times it makes up for in mental ideas.



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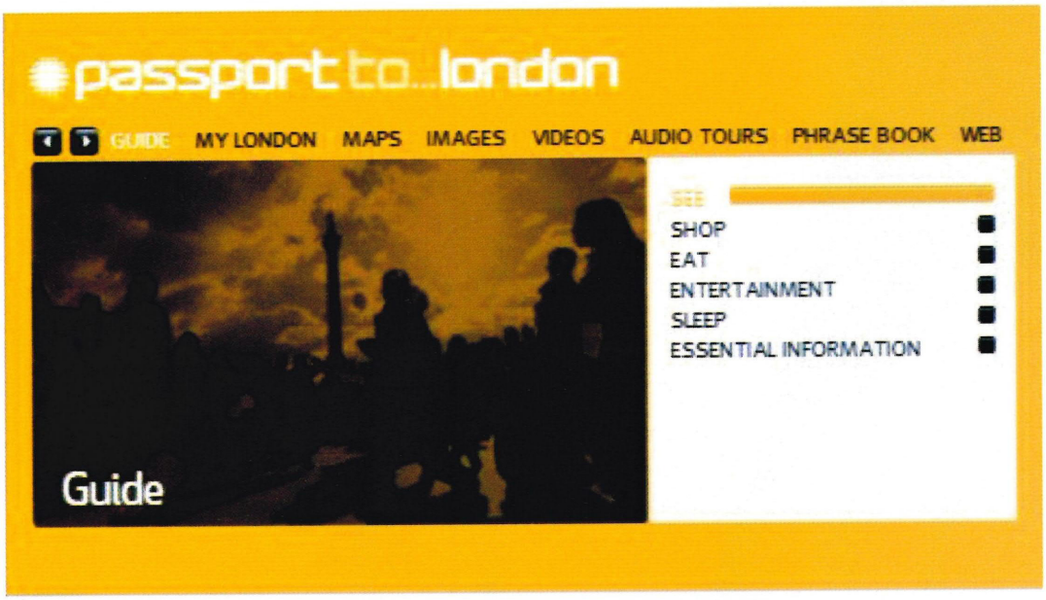
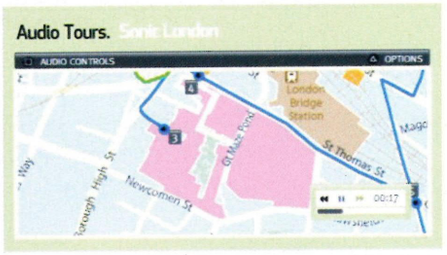
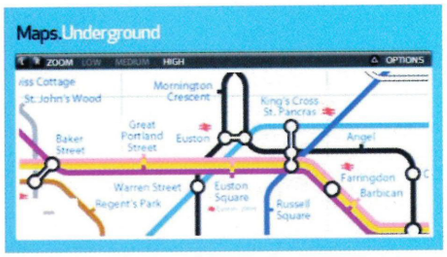




The menu system is quite easy to use, and finding what you're after is rarely a hassle



The Tube map is one of the handier tools available to you, but it can still be bettered by a map

We get around, round, round, round, we get around...

PASSPORT TO... LONDON

OUT: NOW

Publisher **SCEE** / Developer **In-house** / Price **£19.99** / Players **1** / Supports **N/A**

THE Big QUESTIONS

How much does it cover?
There's a fair bit there, but none of it's dealt with in enough detail. All your shopping, eating and sleeping needs are covered reasonably well, though and the audio tours include some more alternative areas of town, which is a welcome addition.

So who would find this useful?
There are very few people that would really need this UMD. The 'phrase book' function could be useful to anyone who doesn't speak any of the native language, so it's mainly for those who have no idea about our capital. Shame on you.

The unmistakable stench of London in the morning – like vomit and greenhouse gases

We know what you're thinking. What's wrong with a good old-fashioned map, right? Well, we'd have to say nothing at all. Spending a couple of quid on a pocket map of inner London or forking out 20 notes on this UMD doesn't seem much of a choice if you're thinking about a little jolly up town. However, with the *Passport To...* series, there's an awful lot more than maps to keep you interested, it's just questionable how worthwhile the entire package is.

Sure, they weigh in at under £20, and you'll probably find them for around the £10-15 mark soon, but here at **Go>Play** we're still not sure whether they're even worth such meagre amounts. So what do you get for your money? How much do they add to your trip to London? The sad truth is that for anyone even slightly familiar with our fair capital, there's little to surprise you, and for any functional use they're utterly useless – an A-to-Z is far more helpful for directions.

What *Passport To... London* does give you however, is an incredibly easy-to-use guide with the possibility of comprehensive updates and downloads in the future. Included in the package is a guide, which covers entertainment, sightseeing, shopping and sleeping – and a similarly laid-out range of images. The maps offered with the package encompass all the major areas of town including the Tube, Central London, Brixton, Earls Court and Islington, but past that its uses become somewhat less, well... useful.

With an audio tour that feels disjointed and covers limited areas of London, a range of videos of other major European cities, plus a limited phrase book, it's difficult to feel pleased with *Passport To... London*; it simply doesn't offer the kind of detail you would want from such a program. More tours, delivered in a more comfortable manner would have helped, as would a more comprehensive map system. There's nothing that can't be done better or easier with a *Rough Guide*, *Lonely Planet* or just a simple map. Should the downloads start coming thick and fast however, there is much more that *Passport To...* can do, it's just we're quite sceptical of how committed Sony is to making this product as thorough as it can. For the minute then, we guess you're right: there's nothing wrong with a good old-fashioned map. ■

Tom Leclerc

> **It doesn't offer the kind of detail you'd want from such a program**

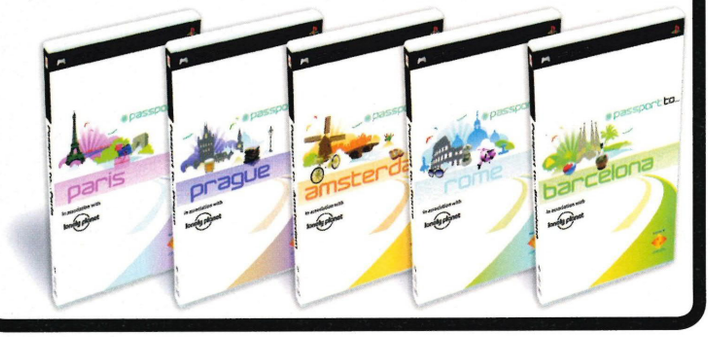
A slightly lacking program surpassed by a good guidebook

65%

Eurotrash

Where else does Sony take you?

The other versions of *Passport To...* are likely to be a little more useful than this one for us Brits. Imagine being stuck in a small mining village in the Czech Republic with little idea of where you are or how you got there. In this instance, given the Czechs' propensity to ignore foreigners, the speaking phrase book could come in particularly handy. With guides to Amsterdam, Barcelona, Paris, Prague and Rome – plus more on the way – this could become a pretty indispensable franchise. If Sony can add more useful content, that is.



Plenty of bubbles and a fair bit of trouble

BUBBLE BOBBLE EVOLUTION

OUT: NOW

Publisher **Rising Star Games** /
Developer **Marvelous Interactive** /
Price **£34.99** / Players **1-2** /
Supports **Wi-Fi LAN Multi-player**

THE Big QUESTIONS

Is the original *Bubble Bobble* included?
Sadly not, which is mainly due to licensing issues. This in itself is a real shame, as *Bubble Bobble* really is brilliant fun and deserves to be experienced by everyone. Still, with the popularity of retro compilations on the PSP, it's bound to turn up sooner or later.

Good bosses?
There's a pleasing array of mayors in *Evolution*, and while they all feature plenty of variety (and are rather cute to boot) they can be a bit of a pain in the bum to kill. Bursting bubbles can be quite tricky, so you'll often find that the boss has moved out of position before you can damage him. What a shame.

Created by Taito all the way back in 1986, *Bubble Bobble* was an amazingly cute platformer that hid some seriously fiendish gameplay under its pleasant exterior. After countless sequels (and a rather naff DS update), it's now Marvelous Interactive's turn to take a stab at the classic game, and while the end result is far from perfect, it's a healthy step in the right direction.

After a touching little intro, Bub and Bob find themselves in dinosaur suits and are placed at the bottom of two opposing towers. While it would be fairly easy to regain their human forms – they are after all just wearing costumes – escaping the towers is a far more difficult proposition, and so the two brothers decide to stay in character and plan their escape...

This of course is easier said than done, mainly because each tower is split into three distinct sections and is swarming with an array of monsters and switches. Fortunately all is not lost though, as the two brothers share a trumpet that bestows them with the power to blow bubbles. These handy bubbles can then be used to activate the game's many switches, encapsulate annoying enemies or carry objects around the stage via handy air currents. It's even possible to jump on said bubbles (à la the original version) which is useful for escaping enemies or getting out of dead ends.

It's all charmingly put together and perfectly captures the spirit of the original game, but in adding so many new components to the original gameplay, Marvelous Interactive has hit a few snags that prevent *Bubble Bobble Evolution* from achieving PSP greatness. While it's often easy to work out what you're required to do to complete a stage, actually achieving it is far trickier. Puzzles start off relatively simply, but soon become extremely convoluted and therefore tedious to play through. Constantly traipsing through the same screens and having to deal with all the re-spawning enemies becomes a real chore, and experienced gamers will simply wonder why the action couldn't have been confined to a single screen. Then there's the fact that boss characters need to be defeated twice (ie with each brother) which does come across as nothing more than a sneaky way of extending *Evolution*'s short lifespan. Throw in the odd unresponsive button, bubbles that can be a nightmare to burst, as well as some lengthy loading times while you're swapping brothers, and it's obvious to see that Bub and Bob still have a bit of a way to go before they fully 'evolve'. ■

Darran Jones

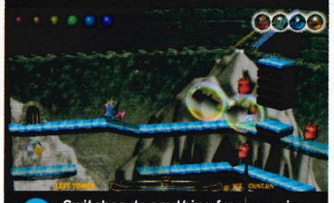
> **It's charmingly put together capturing the spirit of the original**

A brave update that's worth a gamble **70%**

Bubble trouble

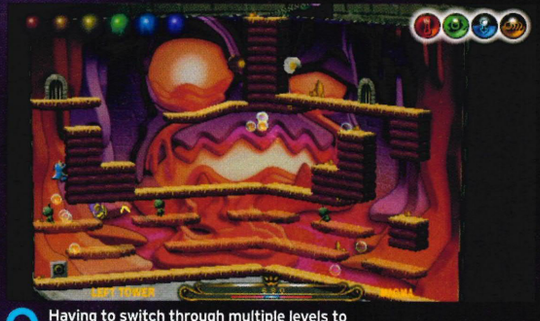
A downright confusing journey

Bubble Bobble has to be one of the most convoluted franchises ever created – mainly because not even its creator seemed to know what was going on with it. But then, this is hardly surprising when you consider that there are now 19 games that make up the *Bubble Bobble* franchise. Here's a particularly annoying example. *Rainbow Islands* is sub-titled *The Story Of Bubble Bobble 2*, but then you have *Bubble Bobble Part 2* on the NES, *Bubble Bobble 2* in the arcades and *Bubble Bobble 2* on the Game Boy, all of which are totally different. It's enough to drive you crazy.

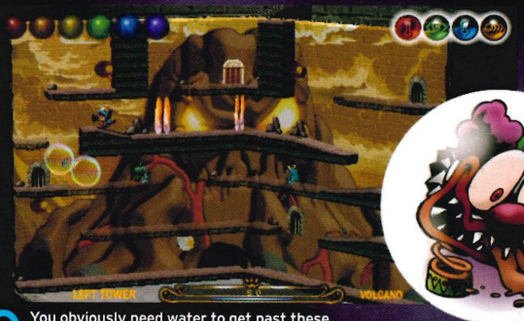


Switches do anything from opening doors to activating objects

If you can't work out what's going on, use the R button to zoom in on the action



Having to switch through multiple levels to solve puzzles is both inventive and a curse



You obviously need water to get past these flames, but how do you do it?

WIDESCREEN

AARON ASADI CHECKS OUT THE MONTH'S HOTTEST UMD MOVIES...

CONTENTS

Your UMD guide at a glance...

★★★★★	Excellent
★★★★	Must Buy
★★★	Average
★★	Fair
★	Don't Bother

UMDs

[78] The Da Vinci Code
[79] Ong Bak
[80] Chopper
[81] Ice Age 2: The Meltdown

THE DA VINCI CODE

When myth and religion meet Ron Howard

OUT: NOW

Director: **Ron Howard** / Starring: **Tom Hanks, Audrey Tautou, Jean Reno** / Price: **£20.99**

★★

You need a good Macguffin." So says George Lucas, king of the universe, or at least that's the case at sci-fi conventions. The Macguffin remark, however, has little to do with George's *Star Wars* franchise, and was in fact a comment he made on films trying to ape, at least in some way, his *Indiana Jones* movies. Apparently *Tomb Raider* lacked one, as did *Temple Of Doom*, but *Raiders* and *Last Crusade* had a good 'un. For those in the dark, a Macguffin is a plot device that motivates the characters and advances the story, but has little other relevance to the plot itself. The Ark in *Raiders* was a great Macguffin, and according to Mr Lucas *The Da Vinci Code* has one that's equally as good.

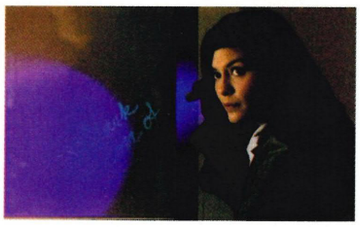
Like *Raiders*' Ark, the Macguffin in *Code* has a religious background, which gives it a bit more weight than something completely without real world relevance, although we'll refrain from saying exactly what it is for fear of spoiling it for you. Not, of course, that there's much chance of you not knowing what it is already, given that the film is based on a book that sold about a zillion copies. Suffice to say it involves the very foundations of Christianity and a Renaissance man and that it was a bit too close to the bone for a bunch a crazies who just won't have anything bad said against JC.

So what does this all mean in movie terms? Well it means that Tom Hanks becomes suspected of a murder in the Louvre and so has to dash across gay Paris solving riddles that will help clear his name and reach the Macguffin, whilst on the run from both the French FBI (headed by - who else - Jean Reno) and the real murderers. He does this with the help of the handsome Audrey Tautou, a small car and a haircut that resembles a mullet with serious denial issues.

If we sound dismissive then good, that's very much our aim, because

Tom watched as his mullet took flight through the skylight, never to return

SHOCK FACT!
Aaron Asadi's nan thought that Tom Hanks' character should have had blond hair!



despite its – at times – engaging mystery *The Da Vinci Code* is nothing more than a run-of-the-mill Hollywood thriller made up of predictable set pieces and clunky dialogue. It's far too episodic for its own good as well, abiding by a hopelessly formulaic structure of 'rush here, solve this, go there, rinse and repeat'. It may have worked well in the book but it's remarkably transparent on film, and hardly aided by the film's ghastly running time that flirts with the three-hour mark.

No doubt, just as both the book and the cinema tickets did, this will sell by the lorry load, but we'd hope that it's not you who adds to its success. It certainly won't be us. ■

SHOCK FACT!
Star of *Ong Bak*, Tony Jaa, can jump really high! This is truly stunning information.

ONG BAK

If this is the future of martial arts movies, then count us out

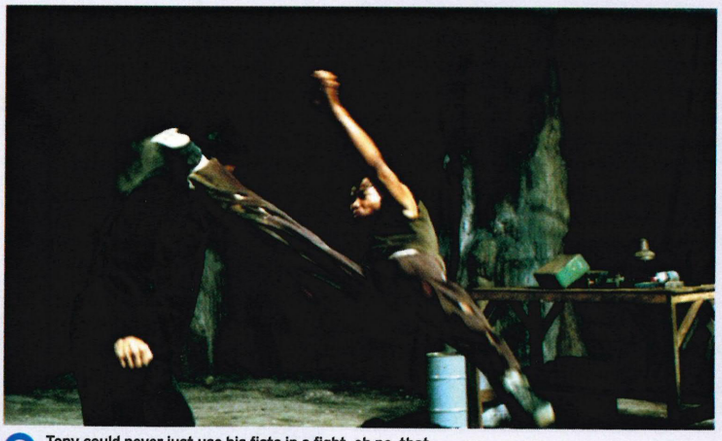
OUT: NOW

Director: **Pachya Pinkaew** / Starring: **Tony Jaa, Pumwaree Yodkamol, Suchao Pongwilai** / Price: **£22.99**

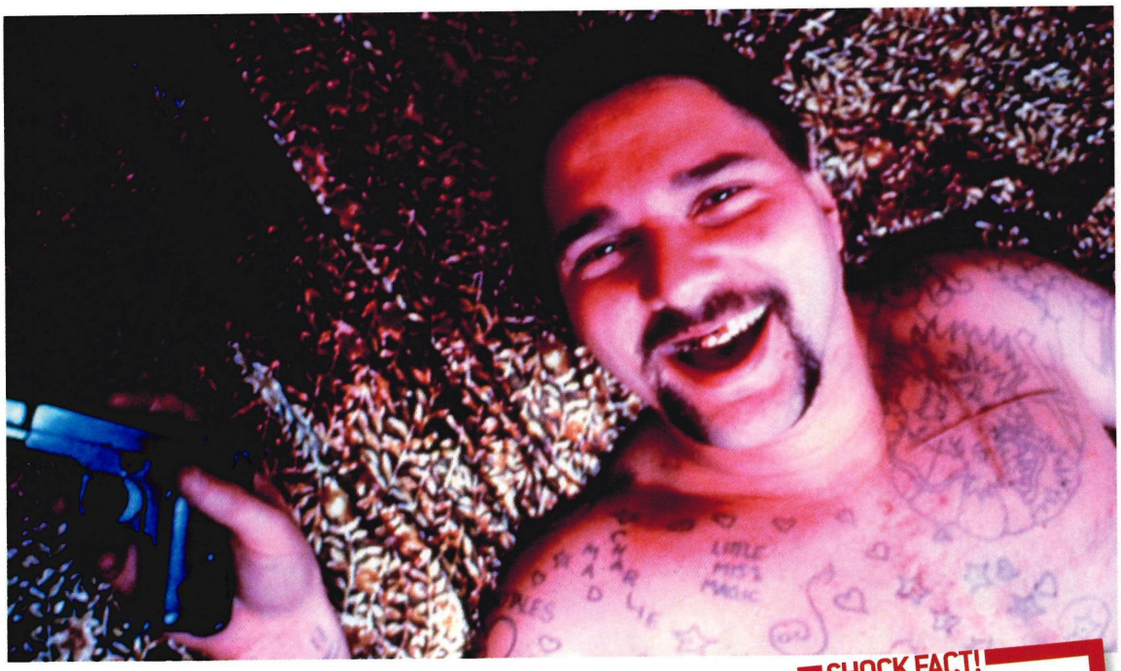
★★

Were we historians we'd no doubt be able to conjure up a decent example of history repeating itself, but we're not, so we can't. Regardless, it's kind of happening again here anyway, with the craze surrounding brutal, mega-real Thai fighter Tony Jaa signalling the end of the stylish likes of *Hero* and *House Of Flying Daggers* just as the arrival of brutal, mega-real Jeet Kune Do creator Bruce Lee did to the all-singing, all-dancing Shaw Brothers pap.

If only it were that simple though. Back in the Sixties and Seventies, it was all about the style of martial arts, Bruce Lee bringing a welcome change to the prancing about of the Wuxia films. Both parties' films, however, were near enough complete crap. Now, whilst Jaa brings a similarly welcome change in martial arts style (though it has to be said, Thai fighting doesn't work half as well on screen as the more fluent kung fu), he is doing so in films that pale in comparison to the often stunning and interesting likes of *Once Upon A Time In China* and *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. He may be able to do his own stunts, and all without wire work, but that alone hardly makes a film watchable. The truth is *Ong Bak*, a film about a young fighter retrieving his village's sacred statue from some violent crooks, is dire stuff comparable only to the sort of nonsense Van Damme used to churn out in the early Nineties. Of course, any film that has a man kick the hell out of bad guys with flaming legs is always going to have some pretty lively moments, but here they are too few and far between. On top of this there's the more fundamental issue that Thai-style fighting is, after the first five minutes, rather tedious to look at. There just aren't that many different ways to shove a knee into a chest or an elbow to the face. Still, let's not go down that road, this is after all a critique of a film and not a martial art. Unlucky, Jaa. ■



Tony could never just use his fists in a fight, oh no, that would be too easy



Home And Away this ain't

CHOPPER

SHOCK FACT!
In preparation for the role Bana lived with the real-life Chopper. Sounds like fun.

OUT: NOW

Director: **Andrew Dominik** / Starring: **Eric Bana, Simon Lyndon, David Field** / Price: **£18.99**

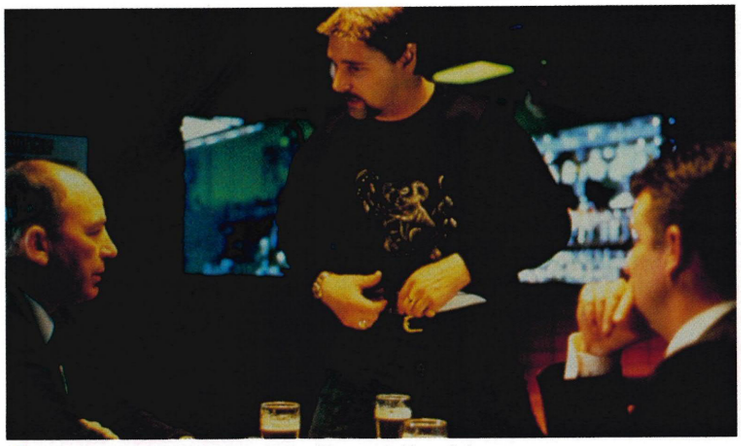
★★★★

Sometimes - not very often - but sometimes, you see a performance that makes you go 'wow'. De Niro's turn as Jake La Motta in *Raging Bull* would be one of those times and Pacino's in *Dog Day Afternoon* another. Eric Bana's performance as Mark 'Chopper' Read - the infamous lunatic Aussie thug - also has a similar effect. It's simply an incredibly powerful show of the former comedian's talents and is strong enough to drag the film from mediocre biopic to impressive crime drama.

Based on the autobiography, *Chopper* tells the tale of one of Australia's most famous criminals, and does so with a breezy efficiency. Starting off in jail and continuing into the ugly underworld of Aussie crime, *Chopper* is refreshing in the way that it's as far from the rags-to-riches prison dramas we're so used to as you can get, with the director instead opting for a grit and realism rarely used to such effect. That said, the story itself offers nothing more memorable than a few hard hitting scenes and at times it seems as though some of the subplots, such as *Chopper*'s romantic interests, are left to rot on the wayside.

As we say, it's abundantly clear - almost from the outset - as to why this film works as well as it does, and that's down to the terrific turn from Eric Bana. His Chopper gives so many scenes such a great feeling of danger and menace that it becomes impossible to imagine how they might have worked with a lesser actor. There's a brilliant scene that sees Chopper having a bubbly conversation with an old cohort soon after his release from jail that illustrates exactly how much *The Hulk* actor brings to the film. Midway through the banter, Chopper starts threatening his pal in a seemingly jovial manner, but because of the maniacal edge to Bana's performance you immediately question his intentions and the scene is suddenly transformed into a real moment of tension. It's perfect stuff and almost entirely due to the screen presence of this versatile actor.

Chopper is by no means perfect, and without its leading man, it would most likely be entirely forgettable, but there's plenty here to keep anyone looking for an antidote to *Neighbours* completely and utterly entertained. ■



When someone asks Chopper whether it's a gun in his pocket or if he's just happy to see them, he always shows them

5 of the best UMDs on the shelves

[1] FIGHT CLUB

Brilliant black comedy that's as cool as hell. Brad Pitt has never been better as the iconic Tyler Durden, and Ed Norton has rightly conceded that he will never star in a better film. Trudat.

[2] ROBOCOP

Excellent sci-fi. Super violent and often misunderstood as nothing more than that, which is a shame. Still, so long as you know that this is Verhoeven's best film and one of the best of the decade as well, that's all you need to know really.

[3] A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

The best comic book movie of all time? Probably. Subdued, measured and powerful, Cronenberg's action thriller/family drama will grip you from start to finish and gives us an excuse to use loads of clichés!

[4] KILL BILL: VOLUME 1

A terrific martial arts movie from start to end/middle. Doing what he does best, Tarantino somehow turns what is essentially terrible cinema into a thing of excellence. Wonderful choreography and a central performance from Uma Thurman that's good enough for three Oscars make this a killer title.

[5] THE SIXTH SENSE

The twist-laden story of a young boy being able to see dead people and reluctantly enlisting the help of a quiet psychiatrist to get him through it, is just one of those films that comes from nowhere and stays a part of movie folklore forever.

Skrat's back – yay! So are the others – boo!

ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN

OUT: NOW

Director: **Carlos Saldanha** / Starring: **Ray Romano, Denis Leary, Seann William Scott** / Price: **£17.99**

★★★

We simply can't remember what the last 2D animation released on the big screen was. We think it might have been that one on the farm, but we're not sure. The last great one was Brad Bird's *Iron Giant*, but since then there's been very little in the way of old-fashioned cartoons doing business at the box office. It's all CG now, and we've not got a problem with that – it is, after all, the medium that brought us the *Toy Story* films – but because it's used so often, it's no longer special.

Skrat gets into more hilarious scrapes, the poor little guy

Now CG cartoons can no longer rely on snazzy effects alone to entertain the kiddies – there has to be a good story and fun characters underneath it all. As we write, *Everybody's Hero* is flopping embarrassingly in the States for this same reason.

So, how does *Ice Age 2: Meltdown* stand up? Well the short answer is that it probably does just enough to avoid being a complete disaster and is certainly an improvement on the first. The main reason it fails to live up to the standards of *Toy Story* and *Nemo* is down to the main characters; they're just not entertaining or interesting enough. Ray Romano's woolly mammoth is every bit as dour and depressing as his famous sitcom character and Denis Leary's sabretooth tiger is so badly conceived it's a wonder how it ever got by the head honchos at Fox. Worst of all is Leguizamo's Sid. How anyone could find this whiny little strip of fur fun we'll never know.

What saves the film is the story. Following on from the first movie, *Ice Age 2* sees the gang try and escape their valley before the big meltdown comes along and ruins everything. Okay, so it's not going to win any awards, but it's clear enough in purpose to serve some sound action sequences, and what's more it gives the film a unique visual style. So it's only ice, but at least it's a look that only this (and it's predecessor) own – a feat that's seemingly hard to accomplish within this CG era.

And then there's Skrat, the most endearing, exciting slapstick cartoon character created since Itchy. His adventures with the elusive acorn are nothing short of marvellous and have a creativity and wit that the rest of the film is severely lacking – it's almost as if the two stories have been written and directed by two entirely different teams. He is a TV series waiting to happen, and what's more it would be one worth watching. He is in fact so great a creation we're going to give this film one whole star more than perhaps we should. ■

All your favourite CGI animals are back along with some new faces – hooray for CGI!

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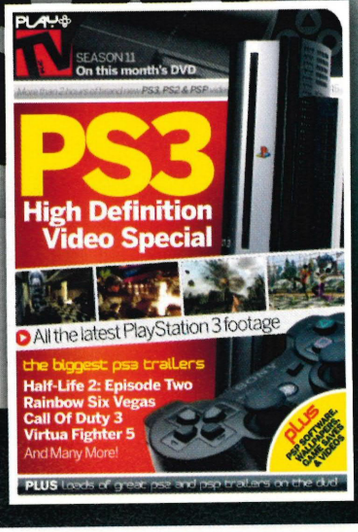

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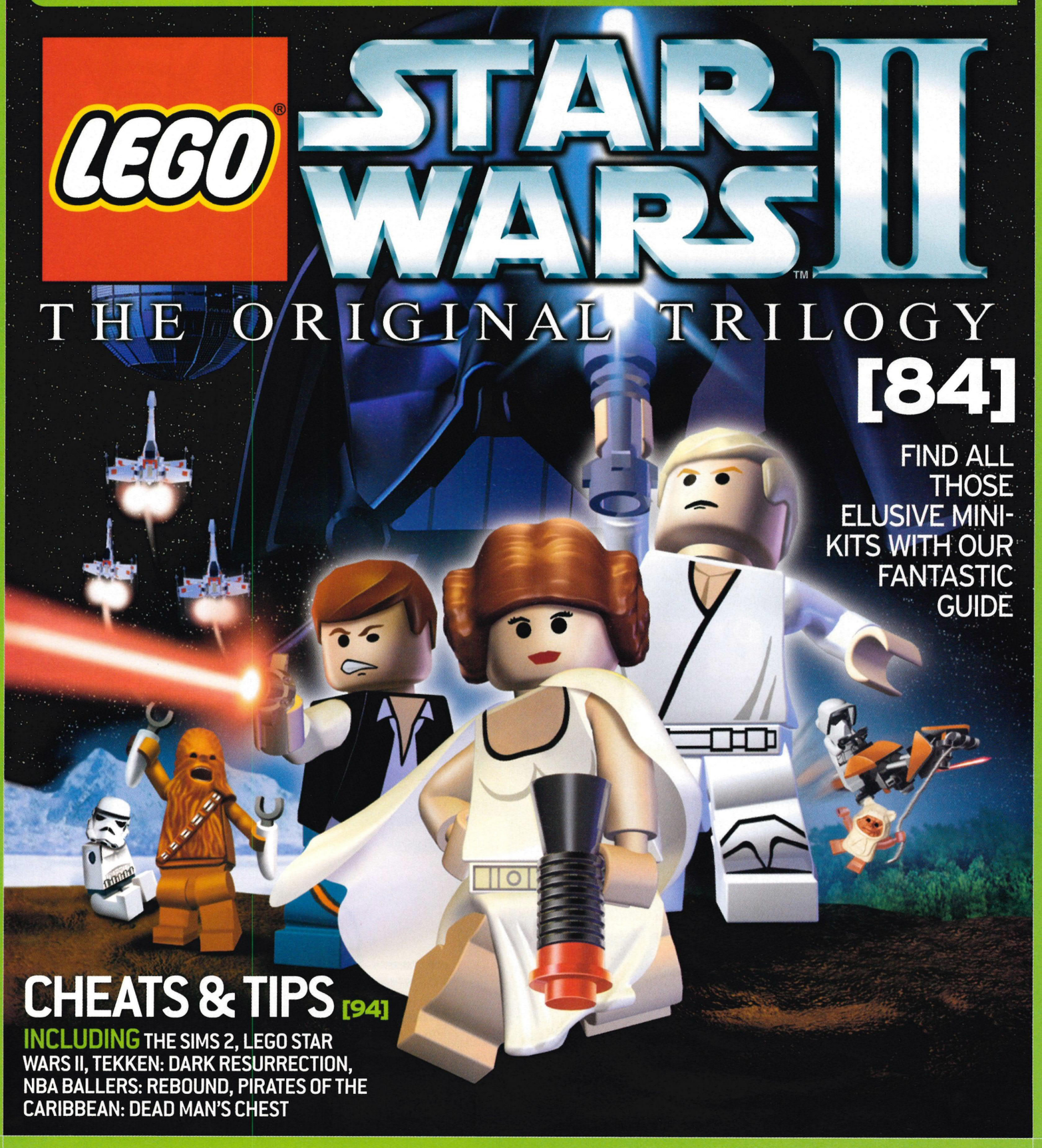
SOLUTION

BEAT THE WORLD BUT DON'T TELL THEM HOW YOU DID IT...

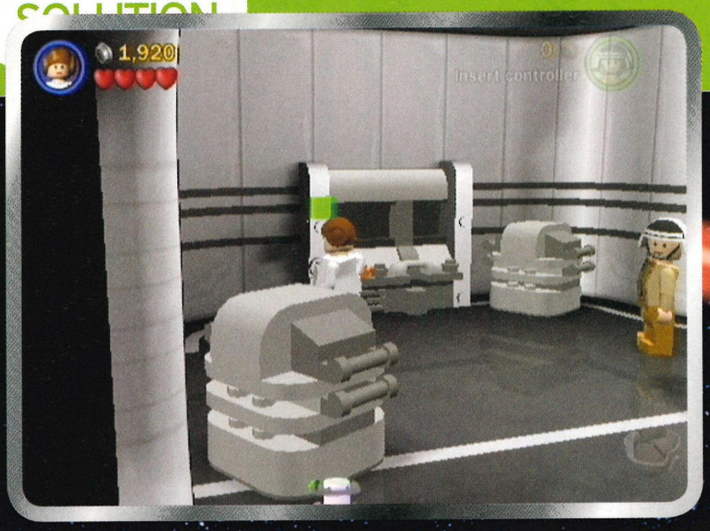


[84]

FIND ALL THOSE ELUSIVE MINI-KITS WITH OUR FANTASTIC GUIDE

CHEATS & TIPS [94]

INCLUDING THE SIMS 2, LEGO STAR WARS II, TEKKEN: DARK RESURRECTION, NBA BALLERS: REBOUND, PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST



EPISODE IV A NEW HOPE

FREEPLAY SECRETS

CHAPTER 1 SECRET PLANS

MINIKIT 1
Unlock 'Freeplay' and take a character who can use the light side of the Force, such as Ben Kenobi. In the room where you build a bridge, use the Force to build two platforms at the top end, jump on them and you'll find your first kit.

MINIKIT 2
In 'Freeplay' mode, take a blue Force-wielding character and get them to move the two large blocks in the room where you must push the striped bricks to open the door. Next, double jump up the boxes to reach the kit.

MINIKIT 3
Again take a Force-wielding character and just after disabling the red force field with C3PO, use the Force on the small brick just after, at the top on the left. This will open a door leading to the Minikit.

MINIKIT 4
In the bridge-making room use Greedo or another Bounty Hunter to throw a bomb onto the shiny grey object on the bottom level. Drop down the hole underneath to find the kit. You'll have to swap into a character who can double jump to get out.

MINIKIT 5
At the far end of the first part of the Bounty Hunter area, use Luke's Force to pull out the small flaps in the corner then enter the two doors either side to create a pile of bricks in the centre. Build the door and pick up the kit from within.

MINIKIT 6
You'll need to collect three purple bricks for this piece of kit.

PURPLE BRICK 1
Destroy the brick to the left of the Bounty Hunter only door.

PURPLE BRICK 2
Take a Bounty Hunter such as Greedo – who you can buy from the shop – and get him to open the Bounty Hunter only door just after fighting Vader for the first time. Turn left once inside and destroy the box on the right.

PURPLE BRICK 3
Next hit the block the other side of the C3PO force field within the Bounty Hunter only area.

MINIKIT 7
Yet again you'll need to collect three items for this kit. It will appear right at the end of the level in front of the bathing Storm Troopers once you've collected them all.

GOLD BRICK 1
You have to fire at the centre of the last white wall in the level on the left to reveal the golden brick.

GOLD BRICK 2
Buy a Storm Trooper from the shop in Mos Eisley then enter 'Freeplay' with him and use him to open the door near the end of the level. Now destroy the boxes close to the screen.

GOLD BRICK 3
Use a thermal detonator with a Bounty Hunter on the large silver object in the final corridor.

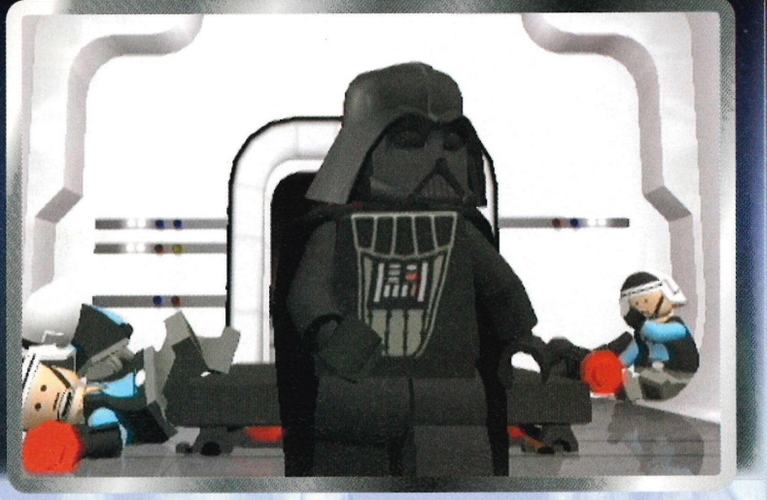
MINIKIT 8
In 'Freeplay' mode, use Darth Vader to destroy the first door on the right just after seeing the first bunch of Rebel Soldiers run left.

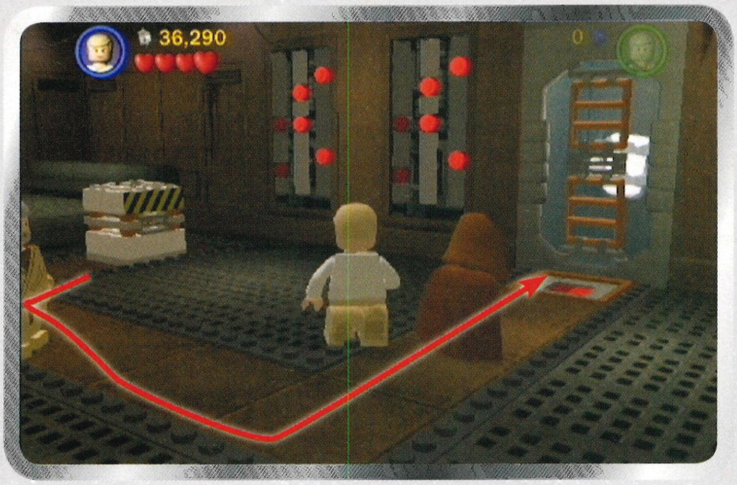
MINIKIT 9
Use Darth Vader's Dark Force on the plug at the bottom of the bath where the two scantily clad Storm Troopers are. It's near the end of the level.

MINIKIT 10
Build the orange vehicle inside the Bounty Hunter area and drive it to the crane room. Steer it on top of the orange lift in the bottom right corner to reveal the final kit.

DOUBLE SCORE ZONE
See Minikit '8'

RED POWER BRICK SUPER BLASTERS
Within the Bounty Hunter area, go through the C3PO force field and enter the shower room at the far end. Use Luke's Force on the first shower on the right to bring up the flowers below. Destroy them and you'll reveal the brick.





CHAPTER 2
THROUGH THE JUNDLAND WASTES

MINIKIT 1
Pull the lever inside the Sand Crawler and push the block along the line marked on the image.

MINIKIT 2
In the area where you first use C3PO to enable the moisture farms so they disable the poisonous water. Build the winch spot at the back then use Ben Kenobi to levitate the hook to the next level. Now you can swing up for the kit; it's marked in green on the image.

MINIKIT 3
When you get to the land speeder part of the level near the end, take the speeder north and you should see the kit on top of one of the rocks. Simply double jump with a trained Jedi to reach it.

MINIKIT 4
In the area before the land speeder bit at the end, where you have to use the Force to build a bridge. Use R2D2 on the opposite side to glide from where you pushed the block, and fly him left onto the platform with bricks on. Then fly him towards you onto the tall thin rock, this will sink leaving R2 able to fly into the small hole to get the kit. Once you have it, fly back to the thin rock and in 'Freeplay' mode, switch to another character to double jump back up.

MINIKIT 5
In the first area just after destroying the bricks to let down the block, build the target winch and get up to the upper level. Switch to R2D2 and hover across the gap. Now use Wicket to crawl into the hole and grab the kit.

MINIKIT 6
Just before Minikit '5' use Darth Vader to destroy the gate on the left. Again use him to make the object on the wall then hop up, destroy the small wall and use the Force once more to build another object on the cliff face. Double jump into the gap it leaves then jump again right to get the kit.

MINIKIT 7
As a Bounty Hunter, blow up all nine of the small silver blobs on the left side of the roof of the sand crawler and stand on one of the switches on the left. Get Wicket to crawl through the hole that appears in the centre to get the kit.

MINIKIT 8
After rescuing R2D2 and going upstairs, use the Dark Force on the panel on the far left beside the grated door. Crawl through the small hole using Wicket then stand on one of the buttons. Use the Force to create a path across the lava for R2D2.

MINIKIT 9
Get to the area where the Red Power Brick is and double jump to the level above it. After this, head left and use R2 to hover over the gap to get the kit.

MINIKIT 10
In the first area with the moisture farms, take a Dark Force character and use them on the concertina bricks in the left corner. Hop up and get onto a Bantha then ride it onto the large button on the right. Leap off and stand on the left-hand button.

RED POWER BRICK
Just to the right, before the crevasse at the start, is another gap. Find it by sticking close to the back wall at the beginning of the level and heading right. Hover over using R2 and thwack a thermal detonator on the silver barrier. Use the Force to build the three-tier platform. Double jump on top then use R2 to hover to the area with the cart. Push the vehicle onto the lower level, which leads to the red brick.

CHAPTER 3
MOS EISLEY SPACEPORT

MINIKIT 1
You'll have to find the three carrots to get the kit that appears above in the centre. You'll need a Bounty Hunter to get it. To reach it send R2 over the broken bridge then use Greedo on the Bounty Hunter door. Now build the fan below and then take it upwards.

CARROT 1
Destroy the large bin to the right of the set of the stairs just right of the start.

CARROT 2
The second carrot is further up the main street on the left.

CARROT 3
Destroy the large bin to the left of one of the huts on the right near the end of the first area.

MINIKIT 2
In the area you create at AT-ST use a Bounty Hunter to blow up the slender silver block in the centre. Build the turnstile then push it, then build the target that drops and swing up to use a double jumping character to pick up the Minikit. It's marked on the AT-ST grab with a green '2'.

MINIKIT 3
After building the AT-ST use it to go back a bit and jump onto the left part and build one of the gun turrets. Kill ten of the scuttling creatures to get the kit.

MINIKIT 4
Destroy the three strange gourds to reveal the Minikit.

GOURD 1
Mash up the bin to the left of the exit of the bar.

GOURD 2
Destroy the brick opposite the C3PO door after first seeing Darth Vader.

GOURD 3
It's in the large room near the end, to the right of the three double barn doors.

MINIKIT 5
Enter the cinema near the end using R2D2 and then use the Force to construct the screen; destroy it with laser fire to reveal the brick behind.

MINIKIT 6
When building the AT-ST shift the three blocks marked green '6', leap up them and grab the kit marked with a green '6b'.

MINIKIT 7
Take a Storm Trooper into this level in 'Freeplay' and head directly right from the start. Open the door then use a Force character to pull the taps on the back wall.

MINIKIT 8
Use Darth Vader to shift the blocks in the first area up on the right. Drop down the hole to get the kit.

MINIKIT 9
Switch to Wicket in Mos Eisley Cantina and use him to crawl through the hole at the back to the left of the kit, behind the force field.

MINIKIT 10
In the final area, double jump up right and use a Dark Force character to open the way to the next area. Again use the Force to turn the four knobs on the wall and then grab the kit from behind the central pillar.

RED POWER BRICK SUPER LIGHTSABER
Over from where you used the Force on the bridge, look for a small doorway. Destroy the nearby barrels and assemble the doorway from the resultant bricks. Switch to R2 to access the power brick.

CHAPTER 4
RESCUE THE PRINCESS

MINIKIT 1
Take a right before getting a Storm Trooper helmet, jump in the crane and pick up and kill ten Storm Troopers with it.

MINIKIT 2
Take a lift up marked in the final control panel room and shoot down ten ships.

MINIKIT 3
It's in the monitor room with the Storm Trooper army on the screen.

MINIKIT 4
After the first corridor, use C3PO to open the door directly right.

MINIKIT 5
Keep going north in the corridor just outside of the first control room where you build two switches. Use R2 to hover over the gap and take the first turn left.

MINIKIT 6
Use R2 to hover right of where you found Minikit '5' and winch up to the next level. Switch to Wicket and crawl through the hole to get the kit.

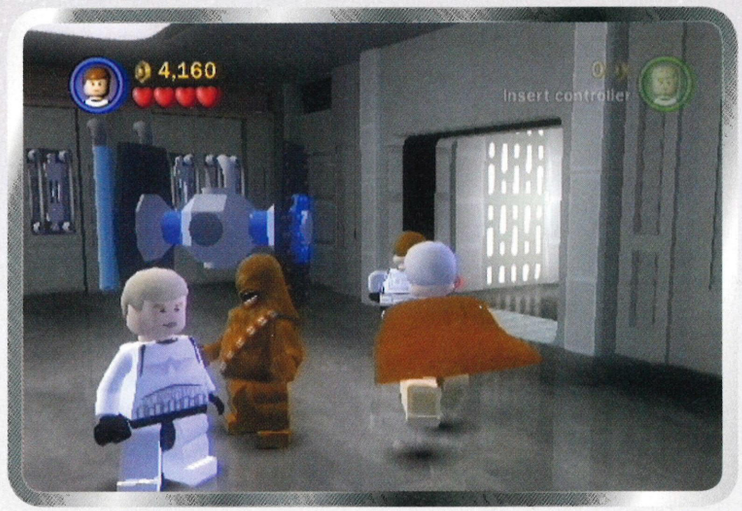
MINIKIT 7
Pull the three switches behind the panels you shift with the Force in the room north of Minikit '6'.

MINIKIT 8
Head left from where you found Minikit '7' and use the Force on the door ahead. Finally, double jump up the platforms on the right to grab the kit.

MINIKIT 9
In the first room where you build a turnstile, use R2 to hover over the doorway right to get the kit.

MINIKIT 10
Just after the large control room with the monitor full of Storm Troopers, use a Force character to shift the three blocks at the far end of the balcony to get access to the level above. Push the block here right and drop down for the Minikit.

RED POWER BRICK
Use R2D2 to open the door on the left in the second corridor after the control room. Hover across the gap then grab the brick.



CHAPTER 5
DEATH STAR ESCAPE

SECRETS

UNLOCK INVINCIBILITY
Note that unlocking everything in this level will allow you to buy Invincibility in the Mos Eisley shop.

MINIKIT 1
In the first corridor after the rubbish compactor, use a Bounty Hunter in 'Freeplay' mode to blast through the yellow and silver block on the wall on the left.

MINIKIT 2
At the far end of the area when there are three levels to pull to create a moving bridge. Kill all the Storm Troopers until they stop spawning, and in 'Freeplay' mode use a light side character to build access to the kit above-right of the exit.

MINIKIT 3
After the swing room ,destroy the scenery at the sides of the next hall in order to reveal the three purple blocks that will make the Minikit appear.

MINIKIT 4
In the room just behind the huge army of Storm Troopers, use the Force to move the two blocks on the right so you can get to the balcony above.

MINIKIT 5
In the final area, go to the balcony where Darth Vader is. Use a Bounty Hunter in 'Freeplay' mode to open the door on the right.

MINIKIT 6
In the first large puzzle room, get to the upper-left platform then pull the lever and push the block down to blast through the floor. Switch to Wicket and crawl through the hole at the top.

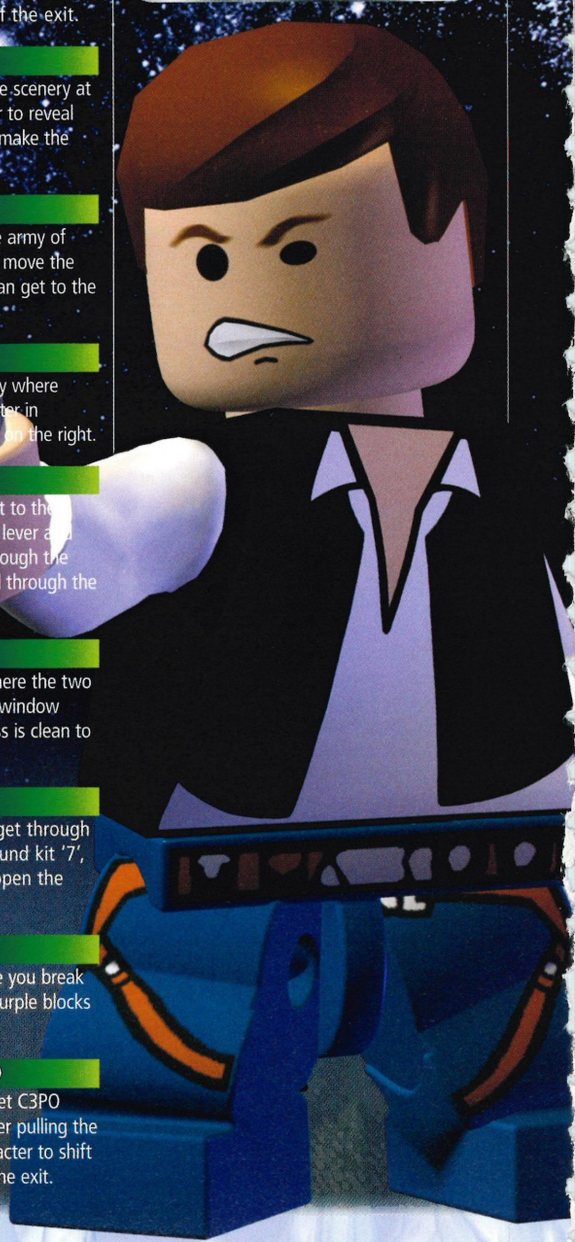
MINIKIT 7
Hop into the crane outside of where the two Storm Troopers are cleaning the window and keep moving it until the glass is clean to reveal the kit.

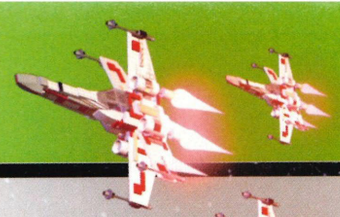
MINIKIT 8
After shifting all the blocks to get through the corridor after where you found kit '7', use a Dark Force character to open the gate on the right.

MINIKIT 9
Head south in the corridor where you break the side walls to find the three purple blocks and leap left out of the window.

MINIKIT 10
In the area where you need to get C3PO past the block at the bottom after pulling the three switches, use a Force character to shift the bricks to the upper-right of the exit.

RED POWER BRICK
After you've escaped the first area, switch to C3PO in 'Freeplay' mode to open the door that's immediately on your left. Then all you need to do is build the fridge on the left and then use the light side of the Force in order to open it.





EPISODE V THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

CHAPTER 6 REBEL ATTACK

MINIKIT 1
In the second area on the left, just by the Tie Fighter door, keep firing at the green and red spinning block then at the bricks that are raised from the Death Star.

MINIKIT 2
It's in the second area; fire at the block to the right of the Tie Fighter door in the right of the area.

MINIKIT 3
Fire at the spinning green and red block – which is just below the first pyramid on the left in the third area – to reveal the third kit.

MINIKIT 4
Shoot at the blue brick on the left just after the force field in area three.

MINIKIT 5
Shoot at the red and green brick in the top-left corner of the fourth area, by where you have to fire the missiles into.

MINIKIT 6
In the first area, where the wall drops back on the right, destroy the three blue poles to reveal a small indent with the kit inside.

MINIKIT 7
Buy the Tie Fighter from the shop in Mos Eisley and use it on the first blocked door on the left. Use a missile inside then blast through the brick that appears.

MINIKIT 8
In the second area, use a Tie Fighter to access the door on the left. Now practice with a snow speeder to fly over all the green buttons in sequence from the top before the first one goes out. Once you've mastered it, use an X-wing to light them all up quickly then fire at the blob in the north for the kit.

MINIKIT 9
Use a Tie Fighter to access the mine maker beyond the first door on the right in the second area. Drag the explosive ball north to the second Tie Fighter door on the right and roll the mine into the side of the force field. Repeat the same process for the other side.

MINIKIT 10
Right at the start, keep firing in the left corner, just after the small dip at the very beginning of the level. Fire at the turnstile that pops up until you can destroy the block that shoots up from the ground.

RED POWER BRICK
In the final area, fly into the top right-hand corner, north-east of where you have to launch the final missiles.

CHAPTER 1 HOTH BATTLE

MINIKIT 1
It's behind the first indestructible wall.

MINIKIT 2
Pull over ten AT-ST's by winching onto them with ◎ then flying as far as you can in the opposite direction until they collapse in a heap in the snow. The miniblock will appear in the far north of the first area.

MINIKIT 3
Fire at the block in the corner marked on the image, it's just in front of the second large wall in the second area and is marked on the image with a green '3'.

MINIKIT 4
Mash up the first set of blocks that is in the third area.

MINIKIT 5
Dismantle the set of blocks just by miniblock '4'.

MINIKIT 6
Take a Tie Fighter through the first door on the right, fly to the very end and fire at the small pile of blocks in the right corner.

MINIKIT 7
Fly a Tie Fighter through the door on the right in the second area then down through the tunnel to find the kit left of the exit.

MINIKIT 8
Destroy the objects in the area outside of the hole where you discovered kit '7' halfway down.

MINIKIT 9
At the start, use a Tie Fighter to open the door on the left, then very quickly drag a bomb right to the very end to blow up the wall – make sure no droids are attached because they'll slow you down and make the bomb fall down the pits. Fire at the canisters on the left towards the back for the kit – this is also a double score zone.

MINIKIT 10
Drag down ten AT-STs in the second area.

RED POWER BRICK
Find Minikit '7', grab a bomb from the open area just before it and drag it straight through the tunnel. Blast through the first wall, then grab another bomb and blast through the one on the far right, avoiding the AT-AT to pick up the brick.

CHAPTER 2
ESCAPE FROM ECHO BASE

MINIKIT 1
Use a light Force user in 'Freeplay' mode to mend all four phones in the first room.

MINIKIT 2
In the ice puzzle area use 'Freeplay' mode to use a character who can double jump up to the Minikit to the right of the turnstile in the centre.

MINIKIT 3
In 'Freeplay' mode, use R2D2 to open the door on the right of the entrance to the large room called 'Snow Troopers' in the main guide. Inside you'll find some Snow Troopers fishing. In the right hole, use the Force to pull out the bricks, then build them into a kit.

MINIKIT 4
In the double score zone, use a Bounty Hunter to blast through the rubble in the left corner. The kit is right on top of the bricks you can construct.

MINIKIT 5
When you see the first manned turret, turn left and make a path using your blaster. Build the train on tracks then turn the turnstile until it breaks through to the room on the left of the turret. Enter the opened room and use a Bounty Hunter to blow up the two shiny objects in front of the ice. Build the heaters out of the rubble and shoot at both of them three times each. Reassemble the skeletons and stand on one of the four foot switches in the centre so that the kit is revealed at last.

MINIKIT 6
In the large puzzle room after the first turret, go to the far end and stand on the Force power block by the exit. In 'Freeplay' mode the other character will warp you above where you need to switch to a Dark Force character to get the kit.

MINIKIT 7
Just after the room where you need a block to push down two of the four floor buttons to open a door, on the left is a slope that you can't climb. Use a Dark Force character to create small platforms, then switch to R2 and hover to each one. This takes quite a lot of practice, but the droid makes leaping from block to block easier than most characters. Turn left and winch up to the next level. Turn into Wicket and let him crawl through the hole on the right.

MINIKIT 8
See kit '7' and turn right at the top of the annoying slope then use R2D2 to open the door. Pull the switch on the right and when you reach the final room, you can pick up the kits from the garage in the bottom corner right by the door.

MINIKIT 9
In the large puzzle room after the first turret, destroy the three blocks in the centre and build the vehicle underneath. Drive it so the back is under the small round shadow just south of where you build it. Use Jedi Luke to hop on the back and double jump up for the kit.

MINIKIT 10
In the same room as kit '9' look on the wall to the right of the far exit. You should see a blue and grey set of blocks tucked in lopsidedly into the wall. Use a thermal detonator to blow it up, it may take a few goes to land it right and the kit is in a small cave behind it.

RED POWER BRICK
Grab kit '8' and open the door on the right with the Tauntauns inside, then go back up the slope described in '7'. Pull the left lever in the room on the right and it'll appear below.

CHAPTER 3
FALCON FLIGHT

MINIKIT 1
Before entering into the tunnel in the first area of the meteor storm, destroy the small grey block floating on the left.

MINIKIT 2
Blast one of the rocks on the right just before the area you have to missile in the second section.

MINIKIT 3
It's right at the far right corner of the Double Score Zone.

MINIKIT 4
Blast the second or third large boulder in the third part of the storm.

MINIKIT 5
In the second area, use a Tie Fighter in 'Freeplay' mode to open the door on the left then switch to a snow speeder and pick up a mine from the back centre. Drag it to the red dot on the floor on the right, then fire at the bricks that appear.

MINIKIT 6
See kit '5' but drag a mine to the red button on the left.

MINIKIT 7
It's hidden in some bricks a little way into the third area, just on the right. Keep sweeping through the meteors here and you'll find it eventually.

MINIKIT 8
Head through the Tie Fighter only door to the left of the barrier you must destroy when you get to the planet in the third area. Use a missile on the purple blob on the floor here for another kit.

MINIKIT 9
At the very start of the fourth area, destroy the asteroid tucked in a small cave on the right.

MINIKIT 10
The final Minikit is tucked away behind the Star Destroyer on the right in the first part of the level. Just fire at the strangely shaped brick you can see here.

RED POWER BRICK SCORE X4
It's at the back of the Star Destroyer second in on the right in the very first part of the mission.

DOUBLE SCORE ZONE
Fly down into the hole just to the right of the second barrier situated in the second section.

CHAPTER 4
DAGOBAH

MINIKIT 1
Smash the three brown blocks described below to reveal the Minikit.

MINIKIT 1/3
When you first join Yoda, smash the brown round block in the left part of the area.

MINIKIT 2/3
After building the bridge in the first part of the area when you get to use the Force with Yoda, destroy the brown round block on the second island.

MINIKIT 3/3
Destroy the third round brown block at the far end of the first area where you get to use the Force with Yoda. It's to the left of the door and the Minikit will now appear in the centre.

MINIKIT 2
In the centre of the second area, there's a small island with a block on top. Use R2D2 to access the island on the left, then make him hover to the one south from there and finally right over to the central one. Destroy the brick for the kit!

MINIKIT 3
Head to the third area as a Dark Force character and just before Yoda's house, use the Force on the bricks on the right. Build the raft and ride it to the far side of the swamp. Run north and chuck a thermal detonator at the silvery bricks for yet another Minikit.

MINIKIT 4
Head into Yoda's house (using a small character, like Wicket) and destroy the telly in the left corner.

MINIKIT 5
In the area where you build a ramp from a tractor trailer, use R2 to head left and then winch up to the platform above the droid panel.

MINIKIT 6
At the very start of the inside area, use a Dark Force person in order to create half a bridge on the right-hand side. Get to the end of it and use more Force power to finish the bridge using the bricks on the other side of the gap. Blow up the two blocks with a thermal detonator and build the winch platform that'll take you up to the secret area.

MINIKIT 7
Just before fighting Vader, use a thermal detonator on the silver bricks on the right. Hop over the bricks that fall away, R2D2 is great for this and you should see the kit on the other side.

MINIKIT 8
Opposite the winch point described in kit '6' and further towards Vader, leap up to the door with a C3PO panel outside. Stay out here and fire left and you should hit the cage with the kit inside.

MINIKIT 9
In the final area, crawl through the brown blocks on the right as Wicket then hover over as R2 to pull the switch. Build the winch pad below and you should be able to double jump up as a Force character for the penultimate kit in this level.

MINIKIT 10
At the very start of the level, use the Force on the three blocks then double jump on them to get to the tree top. Hover as R2 over to the right to get the final kit.

RED POWER BRICK
After building the first walkway at the start, use a Dark Force character to open the gate on the right. Switch to R2 to get over the gap and keep going until you get to a race track. Destroy the block on the left then build the tractor. Drive it quickly around the track until all the red pads turn green to get the red brick.

CHAPTER 5
CLOUD CITY TRAP

MINIKIT 1
During third Vader battle swipe at the right side of the platform to make it rise.

MINIKIT 2
Move left as you enter the last area to find it.

MINIKIT 3
After crossing the first bridge that you built in the last area, jump towards the screen to the platform in front.

MINIKIT 4
At the start of the level, fly north as R2 to the platform with the panel. Switch to a Bounty Hunter to clear the barrier between you and the kit.

MINIKIT 5
After you have made the turret in the second room, turn left in the following corridor and use a Bounty Hunter to open the door.

MINIKIT 6
After fighting Vader for the first time, build the fan just outside and fire at the bricks just below the kit – right of where you are – to create a platform a Jedi can leap to.

MINIKIT 7
At the far-right end of the area where you found kit '6', operate the last platform as R2 and at the top hover left for the kit.

MINIKIT 8
Once you've defeated Vader for the second time, use Wicket to crawl into the small hole on the right.

MINIKIT 9
Use a Storm Trooper to enter the door on the ledges after third Vader battle.

MINIKIT 10
Just after beating Darth Vader in the room where he freezes Han Solo, build the crane then use a Dark Force on the small object to the left of it. Pick up a Storm Trooper from across the gap using the crane and drop him into the hole in the centre at. Build the blocks that are thrown out for the final kit.

RED POWER BRICK MINIKIT DETECTOR
It's underneath the right wing of Luke X-wing at the very start of the level.

CHAPTER 6
BETRAYAL OVER BESPIN

MINIKIT 1
Track back a little at the very start and use C3PO in 'Freeplay' mode to pick up the kit from the other side of the door on the left.

MINIKIT 2
After taking the right door when leaving CLoud City, track back and look just to the right of where you entered the area.

MINIKIT 3
There are three white and blue towers to build in order to get this Minikit. See below for where they are.

TOWER 1
It is in the first corridor, before the stairs that Boba Fett had turned into a slide.

TOWER 2
It is in the room just before the platform where Boba Feet escapes.

TOWER 3
It is in the second set of white corridors, just after you have got C3PO clear of the pushable boxes.

MINIKIT 4
Just after using the hidden switch to reform the stairs – that Boba Fett had turned into a slide near the start – run left into the corner and use R2D2 to open the door. Double jump over the platforms to grab the kit.

MINIKIT 5
After the face off with Boba Feet in the white room, use the Force to destroy the tall decoration in the centre. Drop down the resultant hole to find the next kit.

MINIKIT 6
Use the Force to put the three sets of chairs on the tables, which are in the corner to the right of the two lifts that you need a Storm Trooper to operate.

MINIKIT 7
Take a Bounty Hunter up the left lift after fighting Boba Fett and destroy everything you see until you're left with three blue bowls. Use the Force to shake two of them for the seventh kit.

MINIKIT 8
In the area you need to get C3PO past the blocks by shifting them. Use the winch to get up to the next area and hover with R2D2 right until you hit the kit.

MINIKIT 9
Jump on top of the Falcon before leaving the level.

MINIKIT 10
Stand in the doorway of the Double Score Zone and fire at the hanging ornament above the table.

DOUBLE SCORE ZONE
In the large room with the gas, use a Dark Force character to open the door tucked in on the right

RED POWERBRICK
In 'Freeplay' mode take a Jedi to where Boba Fett's ship, Slave 1, takes off and double jump on the top. The brick is found high above its tail.

EPISODE VI
RETURN OF THE JEDI

CHAPTER 1
JABBA'S PALACE

MINIKIT 1
In the pit boss area at the very end, build the target winch on the floor on the right, then winch up for a kit.

MINIKIT 2
Double jump and do a downward thrust with a lightsaber in the area where you rescue the droids. You've got to land on the blue dome in order to destroy it and find the kit.

MINIKIT 3
At the start, in 'Freeplay' mode head left and then double jump as Luke onto the Black bricks that are glowing red. Next, double jump onto the ledge then switch into a character who can grapple at the end. Double jump again as Luke in order to reach the kit, then use his Force power to create a grapple hook for another character to use to bridge the gap back.

MINIKIT 4
Just north of the black blocks you use in Minikit '3', chuck a thermal detonator at the rubble on the left. Hook up to the upper level then switch into R2 in 'Freeplay' mode to reach the kit using his hover jump.

MINIKIT 5
Just before the first Bounty Hunter only door, turn to the right and then build the panel so that C3PO can open the way to the Minikit.

MINIKIT 6
Using R2, open the door in the same area where the Red Power Brick is located to pick up another Minikit.

MINIKIT 7
Operate the panel in the fourth room then pick up the Minikit inside.

MINIKIT 8
After opening the door before the area where you rescue the droids, build the small object on the left and fire at it until it explodes. The resultant hole will mean you can reach the kit behind the bars.

MINIKIT 9
In the final area before the boss, use a Storm Trooper to open the door on the left.

MINIKIT 10
After raising the bridge with R2, use a Dark Force character in 'Freeplay' mode to open the gate then double jump up for the kit.

RED POWER BRICK
Winch up on the target after the first bounty hunter door and then follow the upper ledge around in order to get the power brick.

DOUBLE SCORE ZONE
In 'Freeplay' mode use R2D2 to hover over the gloop in the corridor first on the right as you enter Jabba's palace.

CHAPTER 2
THE GREAT PIT OF CARKOON

MINIKIT 1
Destroy the blocks on the ships at the start. Another two are in exactly the same place on the next ship on the right, except you must pull the lever in the centre to bring up a block. Push it to the equivalent of point and build the third turret. Repeat the process but push the second block to the equivalent of point. Now use your Dark Force powers to build the structure on the left to get the kit.

MINIKIT 2
On the second ship from the very start, head south and along the plank to grab the kit.

MINIKIT 3
Just before leaping onto Jabba's main ship, use the Dark Force to make a ledge on the right. Leap onto it and the next platform, then remove the panels all the way along and use the three panels to pave the way to the block. Track back and winch up to the upper level, run right and use a thermal detonator to access the item.

MINIKIT 4
Pull the lever up from the winch platform described in kit '3' so you can cross the gap. Use the Dark Force on the block on the other side and build the winch target. Make sure both characters are together and pull one of the green switches, then quickly use a dark character to pull the lever on the left to reveal the kit.

MINIKIT 5
Once inside Jabba's ship, use Wicket in the second room and crawl through the hole in the back left corner. Head north and pull one of the levers behind the blue window.

MINIKIT 6
In the room after the part when you build the music system, destroy the panels on the left and build the blocks to form a kit.

MINIKIT 7
Use the Dark Force to reveal the bricks needed for a winch point on top of Jabba's ship. Winch up, hover as R2 to the second point, winch again and then double jump for the kit.

MINIKIT 8
Get on top of Jabba's ship and look for a small gap on the right. Crawl through here as Wicket and pick up the kit from the centre.

MINIKIT 9
After getting onto the outside of Jabba's main ship, take a right by making a platform using the dark side of the Force. Winch upwards and build the switch on the left, pull it and the one on the right, then fire at the blue block in the centre then build the kit.

MINIKIT 10
In the large open area near the end, destroy the silver blocks up on the left after using an AT-ST to get up onto the grassy ledge and build the caravan out of the bricks.

RED POWER BRICK
Get to the very end of the level on top of Jabba's ship. Destroy the block, winch up and hover across the platforms using R2-D2 for the brick.

CHAPTER 3
SPEEDER SHOWDOWN

MINIKIT 1
In the first part of the speeder chase, move towards your screen and destroy the first box on the right.

MINIKIT 2
Fire at the hanging cage above the speeder chase area.

MINIKIT 3
Go over the two small red ramps in quick succession to get up the small area on the right in the speeder level.

MINIKIT 4
Again use the small ramp in the centre to let the kit down from the treetops in the speeder section.

MINIKIT 5
Run over the long set of platforms and you'll release another kit.

MINIKIT 6
Run over the two platforms in front of a ledge to turn them both green, then over three or four more to reach the kit.

MINIKIT 7
In the area after the first speeder chase, use the AT-ST to get up onto the ledge on the right. Switch to a Dark Force and do a spot of weeding to clear the path to the small hole. Climb up as Wicket, then hover left with R2 to pull the switch. Use a speeder and ram into the box on the floor.

MINIKIT 8
In the area after the second speeder chase, build the brown blocks on the right and use them to get up to the next platform. Chuck a couple of thermal detonators at the two silvery blocks then use the Force to make a path up to the switch. Again drive into it to pick the kit up.

MINIKIT 9
In the area after the third speeder chase, double jump up to the area on the right and destroy the silver block with a thermal detonator. Use the Force on the platform above then winch up and pull the switch. After this, drive into the block on the floor.

MINIKIT 10
In the same area as the red power brick, pull the two levers either side of the lift to the left and use a Storm Trooper and a thermal detonator to break the cage holding the final kit.

RED POWER BRICK
After getting rid of the large force field by destroying all the speeders, push the small box along its path at the back of the next area. Climb up as Wicket for the brick.

CHAPTER 4
THE BATTLE OF ENDOR

MINIKIT 1
Destroy the box at the start then build the turnstile. Switch to R2 to hover across and take the lift up to the Minikit.

MINIKIT 2
Take the lift up next to the hut and pull the switch. Use R2D2 to hover to the far left platform and use the Force to lower the boulder above. Quickly double jump onto the platform on the right and pull the switch when it rises to the top. Drop down and grab the kit from the opened cage below.

MINIKIT 3
Use the Force on the platform to the right of the hut and leap on it from the left side. Jump onto the sturdy platform on the upper right and use the Force again to raise the platform again. Leap back onto it and leap up left for the kit.

MINIKIT 4
After going down the large lift south of the chess board floor, head to the back left of the next area and destroy the flowers. Build the winch point then blast your way through the hut door.

MINIKIT 5
When you reach the river, cross it and destroy the garden. Build the tractor underneath and drive it all the way upstream to grab another kit.

MINIKIT 6
After solving the two gate puzzle, crawl up the hole on the left with Wicket then take R2 right for the kit.

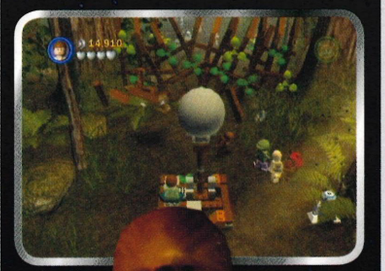
MINIKIT 7
In the large area near the end with the three AT-STs, destroy the plants towards the back and build and push the turnstile. Leap on the platform and use the Force to raise it. Jump left where the troopers are and get onto the brown platform above. Use the Force on the ball hanging on the left then quickly switch to R2 so you can hover to the platform far on the left. Hover again to grab kit number seven.

MINIKIT 8
In the same area as kit '7' but head to the upper level right of the entrance to the shield generator, destroy the two silvery blocks and build the platform. Stand on it and use the Force to raise it. As Wicket, crawl through the hole then use the Force to lower the ledge on the left. Jump on this and get onto the sturdy one on the left then use the Force again to raise the last ledge back to where it was. Now you can grab the kit.

MINIKIT 9
When you're inside the shield generator building, turn right and when you pull the switch downstairs behind the force field, use R2 just to the right in order to fly over for the kit.

MINIKIT 10
In the large open area near the end, destroy the silver blocks up on the left after using an AT-ST to get up onto the grassy ledge and build the caravan out of the bricks.

RED POWER BRICK SUPER EWOK CATAPULT
Inside the shield generator building, head left. Get a Dark Force character to build the block on the right, then destroy the object in the right corner so you can push the brick you created into the hole it leaves. Crawl through the hole on the left as Wicket and push the brick all the way to the end to get the brick.



CHAPTER 5
JEDI DESTINY

MINIKIT 1
At the start, use the Force to build the ledges leading up to the Minikit on the left wall from the emperor's chair.

MINIKIT 2
Head downstairs from the start and blow up the silver block on the right so you can build the winch platform in order to reach the kit above.

MINIKIT 3
In the centre of the main area, blow up the two silver doors on the central pillar. Behind one of them will be the kit you need.

HOW TO ACCESS THE SECRET AREA
Head for the central pillar from the start area and turn left. Blow up the blocks on the right to reveal a hole small enough for an Ewok. Crawl through and push the block down and then blow up the rubble.

MINIKIT 4
4a Build the panel at '4a' and operate it.

4b & 4c Blow up the silver blocks with a thermal detonator, winch up when you've built the target and pull the switch at '4c'.

4d Build the blocks at '4d' and push them onto the circular green panel south-east of its position.

4e Destroy the two chairs and build the turnstile. Push it around so the arrow on the block points right. Now shove the turned brick along the path east so that it slots into the semicircle as marked.

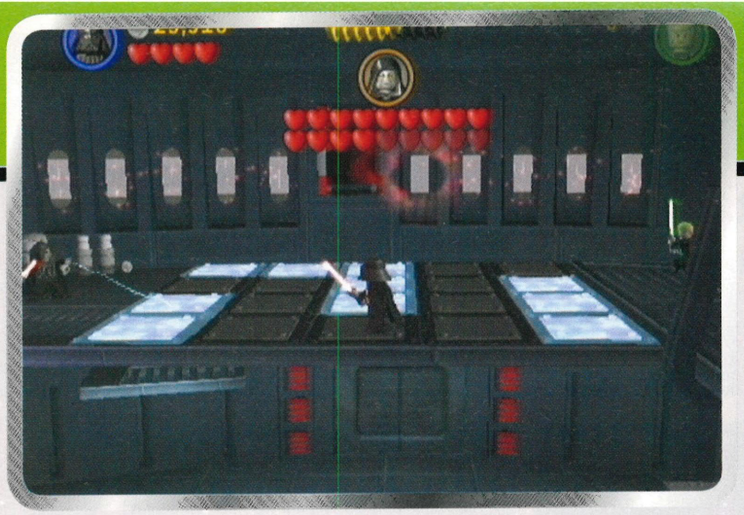
4f & 4g The block should set off the lift; use it to gain access to the lever at '4f', pull it and drop down, then double jump to get the kit at '4g'.

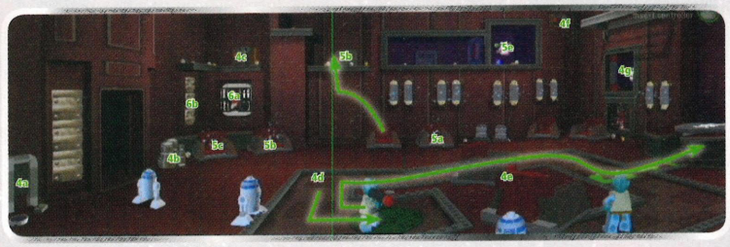
MINIKIT 5
5a, 5b & 5c Use the Force on the chairs marked in this order, '5a', '5b' and finally '5c'.

5d Jump on the single chairs right of the pile in order to double jump up to '5d'. Switch to Wicket to crawl through the hole here.

5e Blast through the fan on the right so you can pick up the fifth Minikit.

MINIKIT 6
Use a Dark Force character on the





panel at '6a' twice. Now stick a thermal detonator to the right side of the metal at '6b' to blow through the fan to get another kit.

MAIN AREA KITS
MINIKIT 7

Walk around the central pillar in the main area again until you find a broken panel. Rebuild it, cross the bridge and build the Minikit inside the small room.

MINIKIT 8

Underneath where the Emperor goes after losing four or five hearts after the start, break the boxes on the right and build the panel. Switch to a Bounty Hunter to operate it and use it to gain access to the platform above. Hover as R2 on the left to pick up another piece of the puzzle.

MINIKIT 9

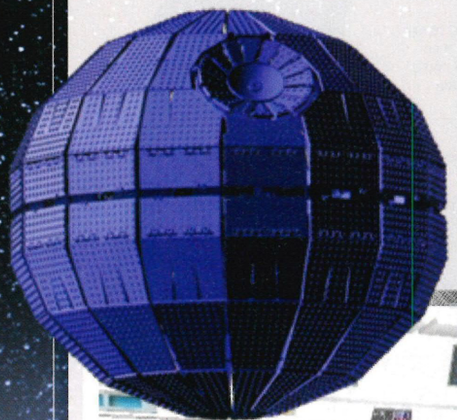
Go into the room you just hovered over in kit '8' and you'll see a pit in the floor. Keep running around it making the floor panels turn subtly red. When all of them are lit at the same time the kit will appear in the centre.

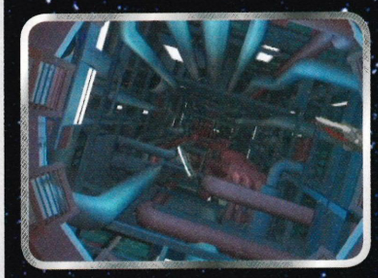
MINIKIT 10

Utilise a Dark Force character in the second part of the battle just after you've defeated him when he electrocutes the floor. There are ten panels on the wall at the back, quickly use your Force powers on them in turn; when all of them have turned around the Minikit will appear in the centre.

RED POWER BRICK

Use Darth Vader in the second part of the battle to quickly turn the eight red blocks (four on each side of the Emperor's chair) to reveal the power brick.





CHAPTER 6
INTO THE DEATH STAR

MINIKIT 1

Pick up a missile and then fire it directly at one of the purple blobs on top of one of the Star Destroyers.

MINIKIT 2

See '1' and check behind where the Star Destroyer was.

MINIKIT 3

See '1' and check behind where the Star Destroyer was... again.

MINIKIT 4

Fire three missiles at the three blobs in front of the four that disable the force field inside the Death Star.

MINIKIT 5

Blow up a block over on the right just after the first corner as you escape the doomed Death Star.

MINIKIT 6

On the third corner of the second part of escaping the Death Star, fire your lasers at the block on the right.

MINIKIT 7

As above but fire your lasers at blocks in the third part of the Death Star escape.

MINIKIT 8

When you reach the first force field inside the Death Star, switch into a Tie Fighter in 'Freeplay' mode and access the doorway on the right by the entrance.

MINIKIT 9

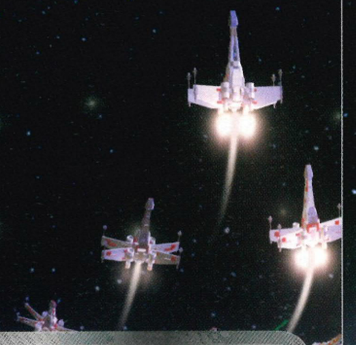
In the second area within the Death Star, fly to the end of the blue corridor and just before the exit, take a left and you should see a Tie Fighter only door. Beyond this is the kit you want.

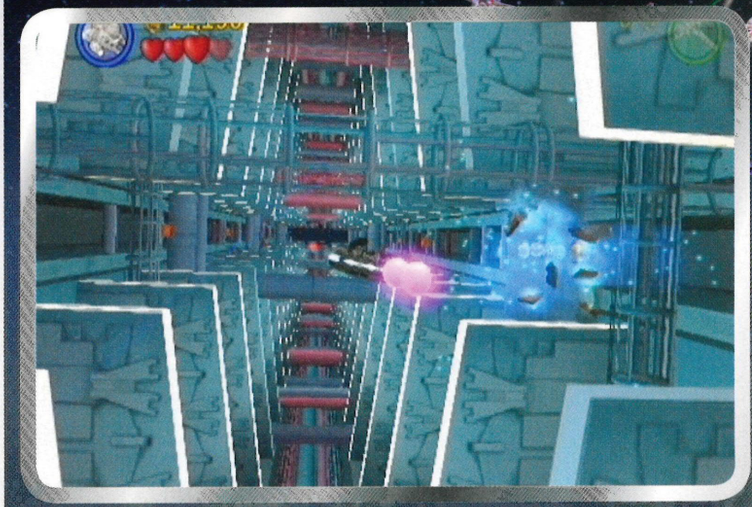
MINIKIT 10

In the centre of the Death Star, as you're about to destroy the reactor, fly towards the screen and search here for this kit.

RED POWER BRICK

In the centre of the Death Star, as you're about to destroy the reactor, fly towards the screen and search here for this kit.





Beat the world, but don't tell them how you did it...

CHEATS & TIPS

Tekken: Dark Resurrection

Unlockable extras
Complete the following requirements to unlock the corresponding extra.

Extra	How to unlock
'Theatre' mode	Complete 'Story' mode
Tekken Bowling	Complete 'Story' mode three times
Gold Rush Time Attack	Complete 'Story' mode three times
Command Attack	Complete 'Story' mode four times
3,000,000 G	Complete the Ranking Tournament in Void Dojo
Heaven Dojo	Complete Void Dojo after beating Ranking Tournament and Jinpachi
Jinpachi Ghost	Complete Void Dojo after beating Ranking Tournament and Jinpachi
Tekken Dojo Gold Rush	Complete the Wind Dojo
Tekken Dojo Roulette Battle	Complete the Void Dojo
Tekken Dojo Survival	Complete the Fire Dojo
Ketten Dojo Time Attack	Complete the Water Dojo

NBA Ballers: Rebound

Select the 'Inside Stuff' option, then 'Phrase-ology' and enter any of the following codes.

Cheat	Code
All gear, players and movies	NBA BALLERS TRUE PLAYA
Allen Iverson's Recording Studio	THE ANSWER
Karl Malone's Winter Chalet	ICE HOUSE
Scottie Pippen's Yacht	NICE YACHT
Chris Weber's alternate gear	24 SECONDS
Clyde Drexler's alternate gear	CLYDE THE GLIDE
Julius Erving's alternate gear	ONE ON ONE
Lebron James's alternate gear	KING JAMES
Steve Francis's alternate gear	RISING STAR
Wilt Chamberlain's alternate gear	WILT THE STILT

Pirates Of The Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest

Enter any of the following codes during play in single-player mode.

Cheat	Code
'God' mode	△, ○, ○, △, △, □, ✕, ✕
Restore health	△, ○, △, ○, △, ○, ○, ✕
One shot kill	△, ○, ○, △, △, □, □, □
Treasure levels unlocked	○, ○, ○, △, △, △, ✕, ✕
Kraken battle unlocked	○, ○, ○, △, △, △, □, □
Unlimited power moves	△, △, △, □, □, ✕, ○, ○

The Sims 2

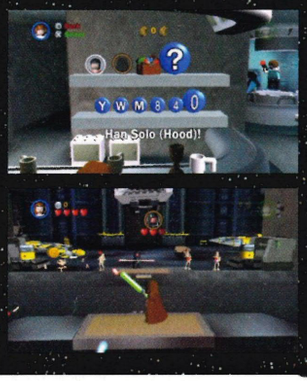
Cheat mode
Enter the 'Buy Perks' screen from the info menu, then hold L + R + □ and a 'Cheat' perk will appear showing a free Woo-Hoo icon. Buy it to get a cash boost, more skills, clear your needs and fill your sanity.

LEGO® STAR WARS™ II

THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY

Bonus Characters
Enter these codes at the Mos Eisley Cantina to unlock the character for purchase in Free Play mode.

Password	Effect
UCK868	BEACH TROOPER
BEN917	BEN KENOBI (GHOST)
VHY832	BESPIN GUARD
WTY721	BIB FORTUNA
HLP221	BOBA FETT
BNC332	DEATH STAR TROOPER
TTT289	EWOK
YZF999	GAMORREAN GUARD
NFX582	GONK DROID
SMG219	GRAND MOFF TARKIN
YWM840	HAN SOLO (HOOD)
NXL973	IG-88
MMM111	IMPERIAL GUARD
BBV889	IMPERIAL OFFICER
VAP664	IMPERIAL SHUTTLE PILOT
CVT125	IMPERIAL SPY
UUB319	LOBOT
SGE549	PALACE GUARD
CYG336	REBEL PILOT
EKU849	REBEL TROOPER (HOTH)
GBU888	SKIFF GUARD
NYU989	SNOWTROOPER
PTR345	STORMTROOPER
HHY382	THE EMPEROR
HDY739	TIE FIGHTER
NNZ316	TIE FIGHTER PILOT
QYA828	TIE INTERCEPTOR
UGN694	UGNAUGHT

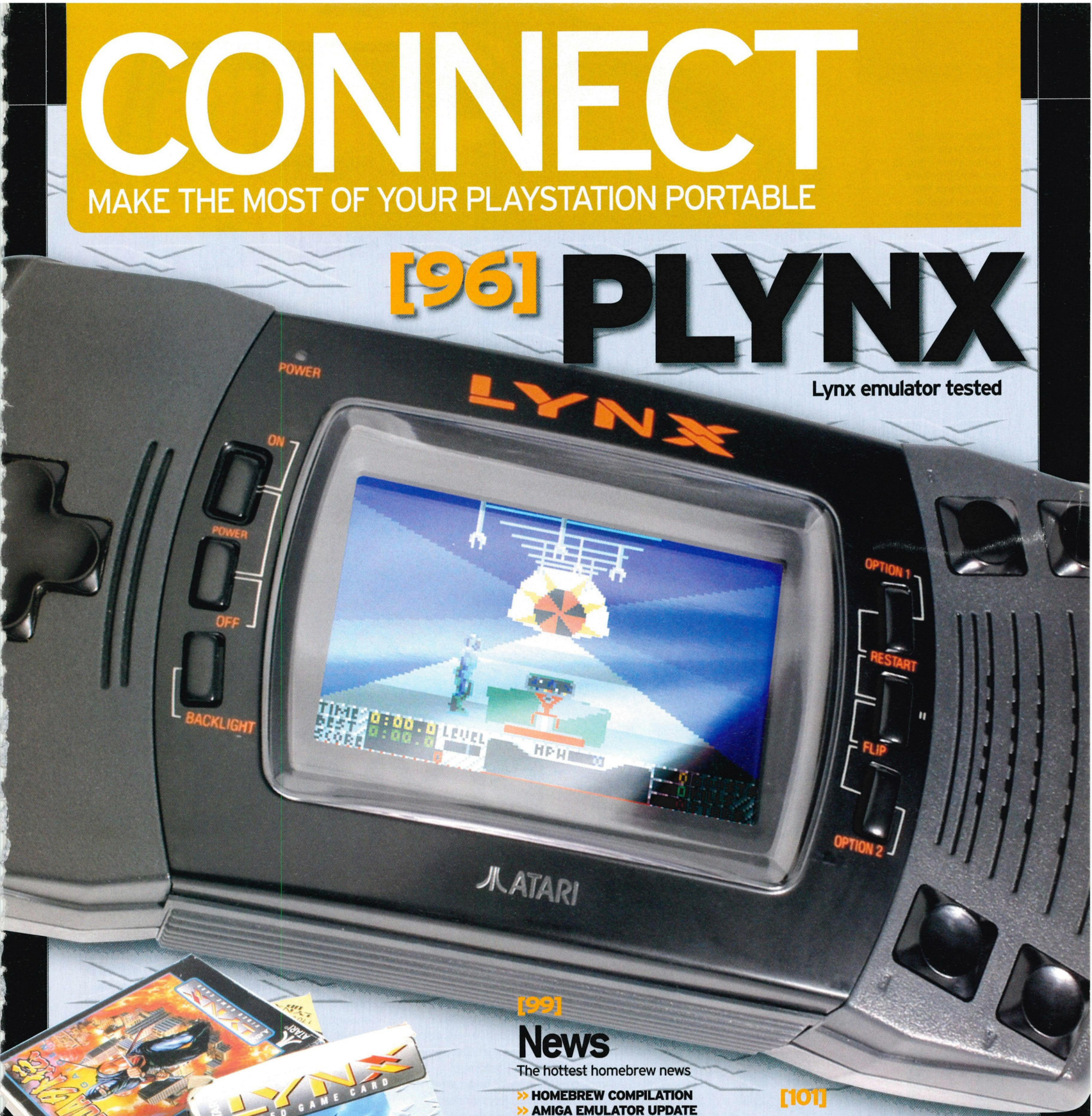


CONNECT

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR PLAYSTATION PORTABLE

[96] PLYNX

Lynx emulator tested



[99]
News
The hottest homebrew news

» HOMEBREW COMPILATION
» AMIGA EMULATOR UPDATE
» ZOMBIE HOMEBREW GAME

[100]
Retro Reviews
Classic Capcom arcade games

» ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
» X-MEN VS. STREET FIGHTER
» DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: SHADOW OVER MYSTARA

[101]
Movie Watch
What trailers are worth downloading this month?

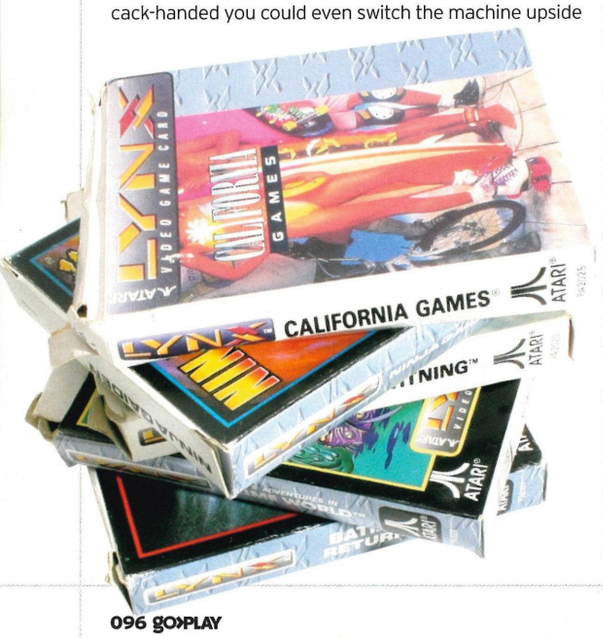
[102]
Expand
The latest peripherals rated

Please check your firmware version before attempting to run any homebrew applications. You will need 1.5 or a downgrader to run PLYNX.

Console history

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT... PLYNX

Atari's Lynx boasted a number of firsts when it appeared back in 1989. It was the first ever handheld to be in full colour, it boasted a very handy backlit display, featured hardware support to handle zooming sprites and was able to draw relatively fast, filled polygons. Oh, and if you were cack-handed you could even switch the machine upside down and flip the screen. It was revolutionary at the time, but the extra features didn't stop there. Fancy being able to rotate the machine through 90 degrees in order to play games in their original vertical ratios? Or maybe you want to be able to link up to other Lynxs – 17 was technically possible, but most games supported a maximum of eight. The Lynx could do it all, but it still became one of many victims of Nintendo's Game Boy.



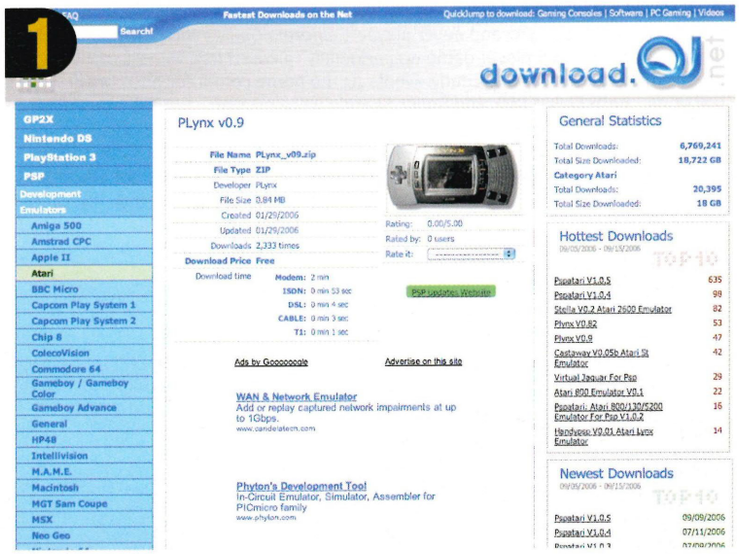
Atari's Lynx was initially known as the Handy and it was completed by Epyx (creator of games such as *Impossible Mission* and *California Games*) in 1987. Due to financial problems, Epyx decided to seek out a partner, and at January 1989's Consumer Electronics Show (CES) it found that partner in the form of Atari. With a deal in place – Atari would take care of the marketing and publishing, while Epyx worked on the software – Atari made a few adjustments to the machine, including dropping the thumbstick and changing its name to Lynx, and headed back to the summer CES.

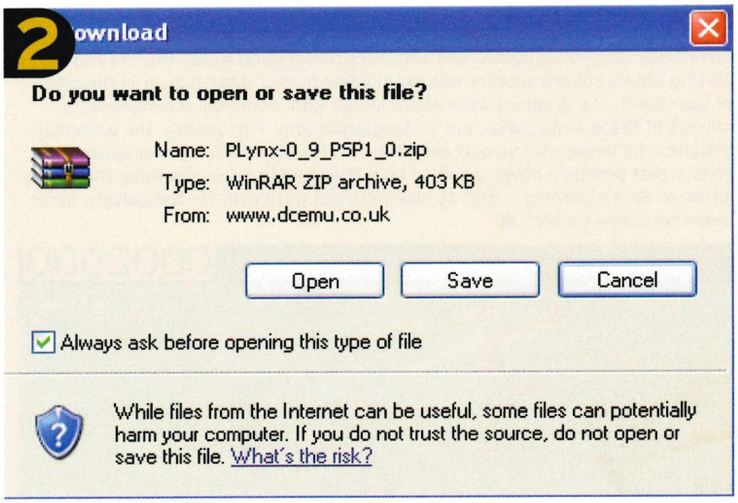
The new wonder machine cost $189.95 which seemed like a decent price for what was a very powerful piece of kit, but Atari soon found out that it had a rival – Nintendo was also revealing a new handheld console. Atari must have felt safe at the time though. Sure its machine was $80 more expensive, but who was going to buy a machine with inferior graphics and a monochromatic display when they could have cutting-edge technology? Quite a few people apparently...

Sales initially started well for Atari's handheld, but as Game Boy's momentum built, the more technical console was left floundering in its wake. Triple-A titles like *Super Mario Land* and *Tetris*, a superior battery life (over ten hours from four batteries compared to less than four hours from six on the Lynx) and Nintendo's sheer retail clout meant that Atari's machine never really stood a chance. Even a sleek new design wasn't enough to save it, and despite boasting some very good games, Atari's console breathed its last breath in 1993. Simon still isn't over it. ■

The simple pleasures of games like *Blue Lightning* ensured the Lynx had plenty of loyal fans

SETTING UP THE EMULATOR IN FIVE EASY STEPS





Okay then, so you've read a little bit about the history of Lynx, and you're wondering if the machine was as really good as Simon says it is. Well, there's obviously one easy way to find out and it requires you to do little more than stick PLynx on your PSP. All right, so there's a little bit more to it than that but, hey, that's why we're here, right?

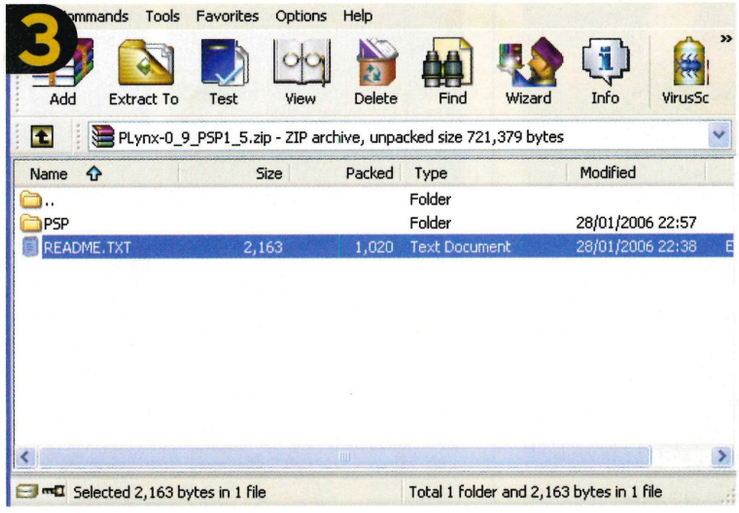
The first thing you obviously need to do is gain access to the actual emulator. You can either download it from its official website at **http://plynx.dcemu.co.uk** or head on over to a website such as PSP Updates **(Step 1)**.

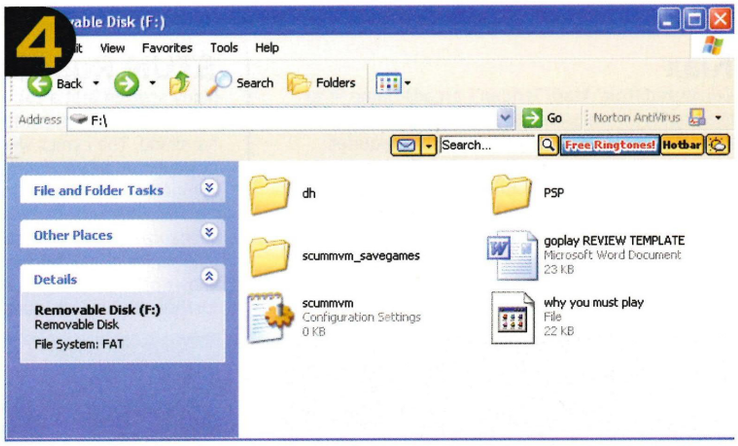
You'll be pleased to know that there are two different versions of PLynx currently available. One is designed to run on the older 1.5 firmware, while the other is fully compatible with Fanjita's excellent ELoader, so make sure you download the correct file **(Step 2)** otherwise it's all going to end in big fat tears.

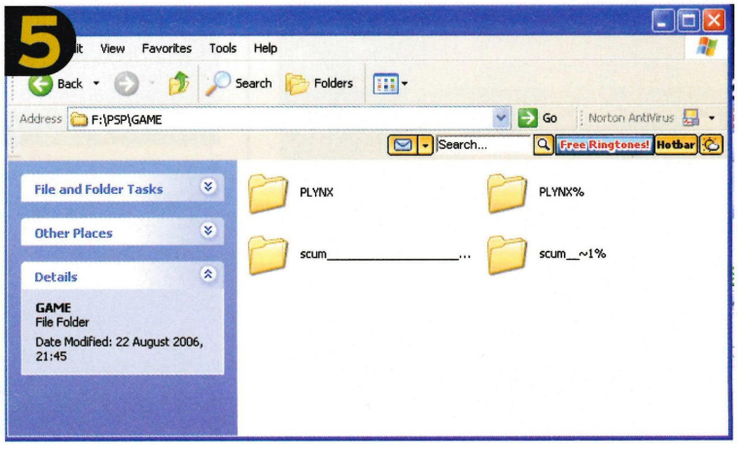
Like practically every other emulator that we've covered in Connect, PLynx features some interesting information in its ReadMe file, so it's a good idea to have a quick glance through it after you've extracted the relevant files **(Step 3)**.

Now the required files are sitting on your desktop, you need to get them onto your PSP. Take out your trusty USB cable, link everything up and open up your PSP's details via My Computer. What you're looking for is a folder called PSP **(Step 4)**. Double-click on the folder to open it and if you've been a regular reader you should have a folder called Game already stored on your PSP. If you haven't then you've obviously missed the last few issues and need to create the relevant folder. Once you've done that, open up the PLynx folder and look for two files. One of them is called PLYNX the other is PLYNX%. Place both these folders in the game folder **(Step 5)**.

Finally, open up the PLYNX folder and you'll discover another folder called roms – this is obviously where you need to store any legal ROMS you own. And that's it. You should now have a fully working Atari Lynx emulator on your PSP. Aren't we good to you? ■







LYNX TOP FIVE GAMES

So your emulator is up and running, but which games should you pick up? Check out these little beauties...

Blue Lightning

Along with the excellent *STUN Runner*, *Blue Lightning* is one of the Lynx's most technically impressive games and still looks pretty good today. Back in 1989 playing Epyx's superb shooter was like holding Sega's *After Burner* in the palm of your hand. The graphics were phenomenal with incredible scaling effects, masses of detail and spectacular-looking explosions. Fortunately, the gameplay matched the impressive visuals and offered a variety of different missions to ensure that boredom never set in. In fact, if we had to gripe, the thing that really let down *Blue Lightning* is that its nine missions were over far too quickly; other than that it was perfect. ■

California Games

If you used to own a Lynx and never played *California Games* you're rather unlucky as this excellent multi-player game was originally released free with the console. It may not have featured as many events as the home computer and console versions – both Flying Disk and Roller Skating were missing – but the remaining four events were of a very high standard. Surfing is especially nice, with vibrant visuals, great use of sound and sublime control. Half-Pipe features some really nifty scaling effects, while Hacky Sack is a great little time waster that allows you to pull off some impressive tricks. The BMX event is the only weak link, but even that's reasonable fun. ■

Klax

Converted from Atari/Tengen's arcade game, *Klax* is a quality conversion and a fantastic Lynx puzzler to boot. It's one of the rare games that requires you to hold your Lynx vertically, but the trade-off is a look that perfectly mimics the original arcade machine. Throw in some superb speech from one of the sexiest female voices ever (at least from a videogame point of view) a constantly mounting difficulty level and great gameplay, and *Klax* is a title that will keep you going forever. ■

STUN Runner

Many scoffed that a conversion of the polygon-heavy *STUN Runner* would be impossible on Atari's handheld. The cynics were soon proven wrong however, as *STUN Runner* turned out to be a highly competent conversion. In fact, it's even better then the recent arcade conversion on *Midway Arcade Treasures 3* (you can actually play this). If you're looking for a fast, futuristic racer that perfectly shows off the Lynx's technical skills then look no further, you've just found racing nirvana. ■

Chip's Challenge

It might not look too special, but Epyx's *Chip's Challenge* is easily one of the most addictive puzzlers the Lynx has to offer. Each level (of which there are over 144) requires you to reach the exit. Nothing more, nothing less. Of course, reaching the exit is easier said than done, especially as there are so many different problems to solve on each stage. If you love puzzle games but are sick to the back teeth of *Tetris*, why not take up *Chip's Challenge*? You'll be glad you did. ■

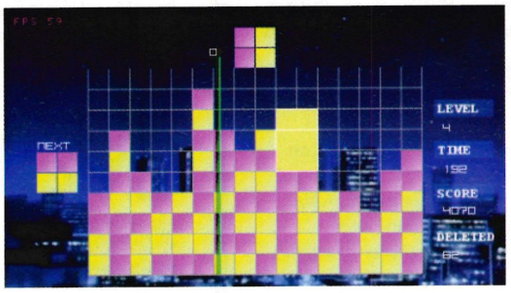
HOMEBREW MADNESS

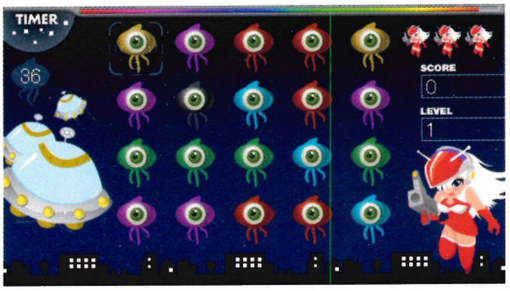
Download PSP's first homebrew compilation

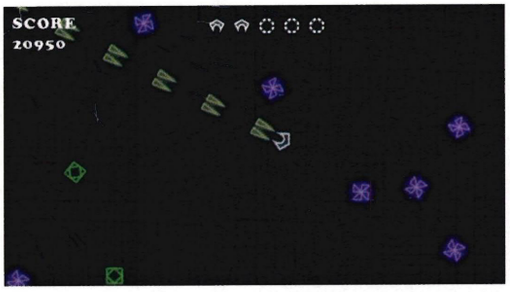
While some dubious PSP owners like to use hacked PSPs to play the latest illegal ISOs, we at **Go>Play** like to enjoy more law-abiding methods of play.

There have been a slew of great homebrew games released over the past year, and now, one bright spark has decided to compile them all in a handy compilation. While Hyrus is the clever coder behind this great package, he's gone to great lengths to ensure that people don't think he's responsible for the actual games (of which there are 16). Meyitzo, DeNitro, IamJeff and moonlight are the real talent behind the games, but we have to give credit to Hyrus for having the bright idea of putting them together in one handy pack.

'So what's been included?' we hear you ask. Some of the best homebrew titles currently available, that's what. So if you're new to the homebrew scene, you have titles such as *Attack Of The Mutants*, *PSPChess*, *Hockey*, *Luminex*, *Simon* and *Trigonometry Wars* to look forward to. All the games are compatible with either 1.0 or 1.5 firmware and are extremely easy to install, so there's no reason at all why you shouldn't introduce yourself to a big slice of classic homebrew. ■





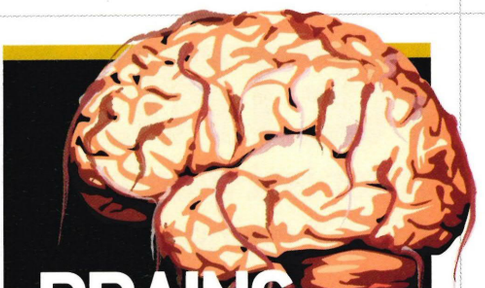


AMIGA ACTION

PSP's Amiga emulator receives a long-overdue update

Commodore's Amiga is one of the greatest 16-bit computers ever made, so it's hardly surprising that a great fuss was made when an emulator was announced for PSP. Sadly, the emu wasn't without its problems, and after months of no updates, it was beginning to look like the emulator's creators had given up on it. Fortunately, this seems to be far from the case, and after a lengthy dry spell, the smashing emulator has had a number of excellent features added to it.

The most beneficial is that PSPUAE now works for both 1.50 and 2.00+, so all PSP users should be able to enjoy this promising emulator. Other notable improvements include the ditching of Hard Drive support and the removal of serial ports (to ensure the emu runs faster), keyboard mapping has been fixed, and the emu itself is far easier to set up. PSPUAE is far from perfect, but it's a lot better than previous versions and it's great to see that this potentially great emu is receiving plenty of support. ■



BRAINS, BRAINS...

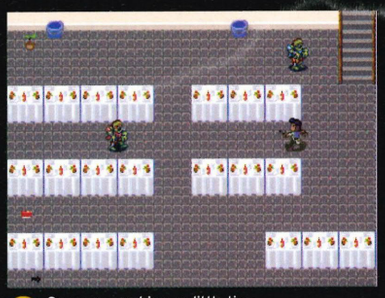
Zombies run out of control in Eskema's new homebrew game

We're suckers for anything featuring zombies. Zombie films, zombie books, and especially zombie games. So you can imagine how much we're enjoying Eskema's *BioHazard*.

It's like *Dead Rising* meets the ancient SNES classic *Zombies Ate My Neighbours* and is a hell of a lot of fun to play through. Featuring extremely cute visuals and plenty of zombies to maim and disfigure, it's proven to be quite a lot of fun and is a cut above many of the homebrew titles that have been released recently.

In fact, our only real gripe is that the controls are sometimes a little sluggish and that the game is only playable on a 1.5 PSP, which is bound to frustrate those who aren't prepared to downgrade.

Still, if you're looking for a highly polished homebrew title that features more zombies than the average George Romero flick, then simply head on over to **http://dl.qj.net/index.php?pg=12&fid=7971**. ■



So many zombies, so little time

PSP UPDATES

PSP Updates, the flagship blog of **QJ.NET**, has been the ultimate PSP resource for over a year. Nowhere else will you find a PSP website updated 24 hours a day, seven days a week with all the latest news, hacks, exploits, and homebrew releases as they happen. It's the one-stop shop for all your PSP needs. Get the latest info and screenshots on upcoming PSP games, download the latest homebrew releases at **DL.QJ.NET**, or get help from a forum full of experts and enthusiasts. With exclusive interviews, contests, and editorials, PSP Updates has all you could want from a PSP site. And the good times don't stop there - branch out with **QJ.NET** to find the latest information on the next-gen consoles, technology, gadgets, games, and more... ■

RETRO REVIEWS

After last month's CPS-1 blow-out we've decided to check out some classic CPS-2 games – our emulator of choice? The spiffy CPS2

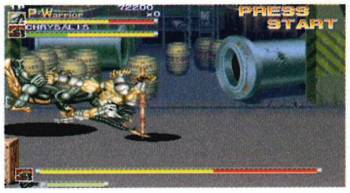
ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

Alien vs. Predator

Originally Released **1994** / Emulator Used **Capcom CPS2**

FORGET THE RATHER naff piece of celluloid that Paul Thomas Anderson tried to pass off as a film, Capcom made a far more enjoyable slice of entertainment a long time before that, and it was interactive as well!

While it's not quite as polished as *Shadow Over Mystara*, *Alien vs. Predator* is still a very good beat-'em-up and well worth tracking down, especially as licensing issues mean that Capcom is highly unlikely to ever release it on a compilation. Taking control of one of either two predators or two humans (one of whom is a certain Dutch Schaefer) *Alien vs. Predator* is nothing more than a scrolling beat-'em-up by the numbers. Of course, when you're up against hordes of salivating aliens things get more exciting, and while the combat isn't as subtle as *Mystara*'s, it's still highly enjoyable to play through. ■



X-MEN VS. STREET FIGHTER

X-Men vs. Street Fighter

Originally Released **1996** / Emulator Used **Capcom CPS2**

STREET FIGHTER STALWARTS avoided this series, as they felt that the action was too far removed from the mastery seen in *Street Fighter II*. Ignore these miserable cynics and check out our favourite game of the lot, *X-Men vs. Street Fighter*.

As its name suggests, it pits some of the most famous Capcom fighters (including Ryu, Ken and Chun-Li) against some of the uncanniest X-Men ever. Cyclops, Juggernaut, Magneto and of course Wolverine are just a few of the fighters that are on offer and they've been perfectly integrated into the *Street Fighter* world.

The action, as always, is perfect, but Capcom has spiced things up by allowing you to choose two fighters at the start of the game. Any time you're battling, a quick press of the heavy punch and kick buttons will swap your fighters over and hopefully allow you to gain the upper hand against a floundering foe. Add in silky smooth animation and the ability to combo in the air, and Capcom's fighter shouldn't be missed under any circumstances. ■

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: SHADOW OVER MYSTARA

Dungeons & Dragons: Shadow Over Mystara

Originally Released **1996** / Emulator Used **Capcom CPS2**

THIS MAY WELL have been one of its last scrolling fighters, but Capcom certainly made sure it was one of the best ever made. Like 1993's *Tower Of Doom*, *Shadow Over Mystara* was essentially *Golden Axe* with a *D&D* theme. Capcom's mastery of the genre meant that it was able to inject all sorts of interesting gameplay mechanics into its two *D&D* games and they were finely honed by the time *Shadow Over Mystara* appeared in 1996. Four players could battle from the world of Mystara at the same time, there was a wealth of recognisable *D&D* monsters to fight against and the graphics were superb.

Capcom's games (especially its beat-'em-ups) are constantly praised for their impressive animation, but the six playable characters are truly breathtaking to behold. Each and every hero is animated to perfection and boasts a staggering amount of detail. This loving care and attention has also been used on the many enemies you fight, but is most notable with *Mystara*'s many bosses. Not only does each major boss feature intelligently designed attack patterns, many of them are HUGE and will leave you gobsmacked the first time you meet them.

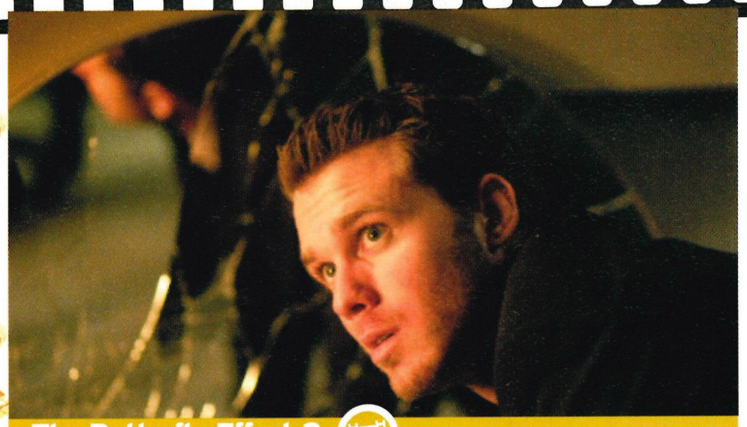
Of course it's the gameplay that truly manages to set *Mystara* apart from its many peers. There's a spectacular array of moves to uncover, a staggering amount of magical spells to cast and a range of weapons to use. Branching levels also offer much replay value and it will take you plenty of time (and a whole lot of credits) before you've seen everything. Even if you're not keen on the *D&D* licence that's attached to it. ■

While there are six heroes to choose from, we always pick the Elf because she's sexy

The superior CPS2 board enabled Capcom to cram some fantastic animation into *Shadow Over Mystara*. Just wait until you meet the bosses...

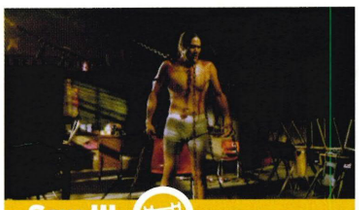
MOVIE WATCH

MEMORY STICKS DON'T HAVE INFINITE SPACE ON THEM SO IT'S GOOD TO KNOW WHAT'S WORTH DOWNLOADING AND WHAT ISN'T IN OUR PSP MOVIE ROUND-UP...



The Butterfly Effect 2

A straight to DVD sequel and by the look of this trailer, rightly so. The first movie was a decent thriller that dealt with time travel and alternate realities reasonably effectively, even if it did star Ashton Kutcher. Understandably Kutcher is absent from the sequel, which instead focuses on a new set of characters. Everything looks a little too familiar so don't bother downloading this trailer unless you really are a massive *Butterfly Effect* fan.



Saw III

This teaser doesn't give much away except that the apparently terminally ill Jigsaw is still very much alive and kicking. A couple of his traps are on show, one of which is reminiscent of the chains found in most of the *Hellraiser* movies. Hopefully there are plenty of twists and surprises in store for this next instalment of the surprisingly good horror franchise. The shortness of this teaser and the fact that is doesn't give very much away makes it a less than essential download.

Casino Royale

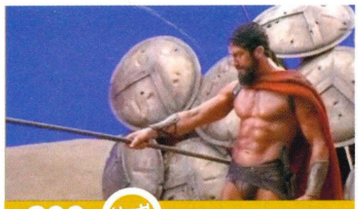
This full trailer shows us much more than the awesome teaser did and reveals that the rookie Bond is much more sensitive than the seasoned veterans in earlier films. The action looks absolutely top-notch and much more grounded in reality than *Die Another Day*. In fact, gadgets barely even make an appearance in *Casino Royale*. This does look like a totally new type of Bond film and as such the trailer is worth downloading for that reason alone. A couple of short behind-the-scenes featurettes are also available that centre on one of the chases as well as some set building to boot.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre: The Beginning

Seeing as the original *Texas Chainsaw* had a handful of sequels, the Hollywood suits have clearly decided that the remake deserves a prequel instead. Here at **Go>Play** we actually thought the remake was pretty accomplished but this sequel just looks like a rehash of that, which is a real shame. Not enough is given away to confirm that assumption, but it certainly looks very similar. If you've seen the *Texas Chainsaw* remake then there's little point in downloading the sneak peek of the prequel, as they look virtually identical.

The Departed

Martin Scorsese's new film is looking great if the trailer is anything to go by. The tale follows a cop undercover in the mob and a dirty cop on the take from the same mob, and the hunt for these moles on both sides looks like it will provide plenty of trademark gritty action from Scorsese. Playing the two cops are Scorsese favourite Leonardo DiCaprio and Matt Damon, with the legendary Jack Nicholson taking the part of lead mobster. Worth downloading just to see Jack in something other than a comedy for once.

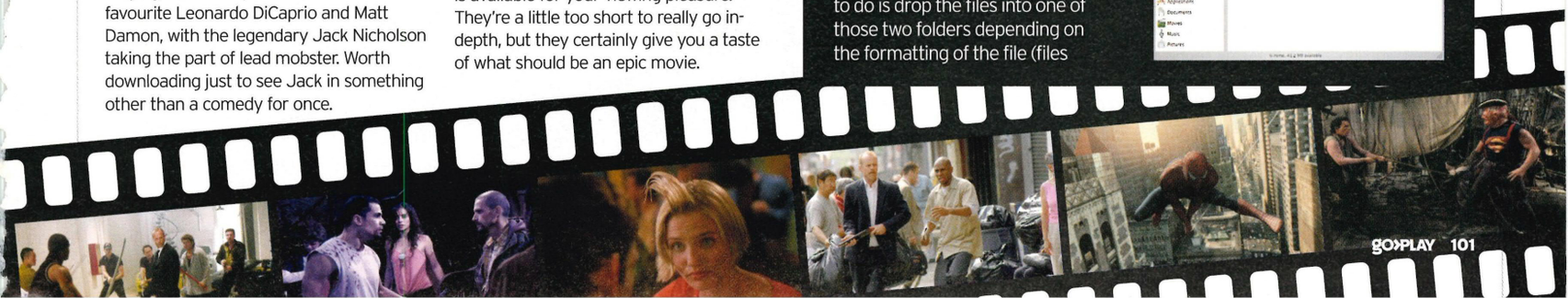


300

This adaptation of Frank Miller's graphic novel is still a way off so no trailer has been released yet. However, as is the norm these days, an episodic production diary is available for your viewing pleasure. They're a little too short to really go in-depth, but they certainly give you a taste of what should be an epic movie.

SETTING UP YOUR MEMORY STICK

IN ORDER TO get movie clips on your PSP you'll need a Memory Stick and USB cable. However, you'll need to tinker with the memory card slightly before putting movie files on it. If there isn't a folder called MP_ROOT created already then do that first. Now inside that folder create another two, one called 101MNV01 and another 101ANV01. That's it basically. Now all you need to do is drop the files into one of those two folders depending on the formatting of the file (files starting M4V into 101MNV01 and files starting MAQ into 101AN01). Remember you'll need the thumbnail image in the same folder too; otherwise you won't be able to see the file on your PSP screen. ■

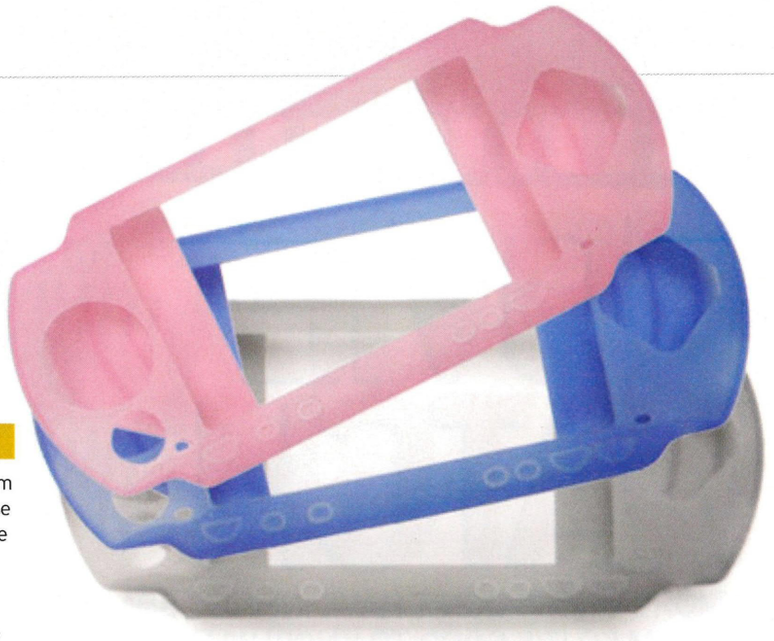


EXPAND

MORE PERIPHERALS PUT TO THE TEST

THE FLOW OF ITEMS TO AID YOU IN YOUR PSP-ING IS NEVER-ENDING. LUCKILY WE'RE HERE TO HELP YOU DECIDE WHICH ARE WORTH YOUR TIME AND MONEY...

Proporta Thermo-Reactive Silicone Case £11.95



EVER FELT THAT your PSP was just a little too shiny and glossy? Find that it slips from your sweaty mitts all too easily? Well, Proporta has the answer with its new silicone case that wraps around the PSP like a second skin. Not only does this offer protection for the PSP from bumps and scratches, but it also gives that little bit of extra grip should you need it.

Handy holes have been cut so that you have access to all the buttons and sockets. Therefore, once the case is on you should have no reason to remove it. This is all pretty standard but what makes this case stand out from the crowd is its sensitivity to heat. Once the silicone material warms up it begins to turn white, which is a rather neat trick – and is quite novel – but it's one that doesn't actually serve any purpose. It also takes quite a long time for the silicone to actually change colour, which makes it a little less exciting and a little less novel we suppose.

We we're surprised by how effective the case is at protecting the PSP though. The raised edge around the screen will even help prevent scratches. All we would change is its colour. With only blue, pink and charcoal available, your choice is limited. We'd like to see a solid black version – and we're not fussed about the heat sensitive technology.

SCORE: ★★★★

Proporta Protective Aluminium Case £24.95

PROPORTA IS KNOWN for its pricey PSP cases but the durability and protection that it offers is usually worth it. Made with aircraft grade aluminium, which we assume is a good thing, this case will take many hard knocks and still protect your beloved PSP inside, cushioned by soft, protective neoprene. As you can tell, some quality materials have gone into this case, making it both durable and, dare we say it, ever so slightly stylish.

Our main gripe comes with the clip that is used to close the case. During normal use it's absolutely fine but when dropped, the clip has a tendency to pop open, allowing your PSP to spill out onto the floor. Not too much of a problem on carpet but it's a different story on concrete or other surfaces that aren't very PSP friendly. This seems to fly in the face of everything else this case does, which is all about protecting your PSP as well as possible. Still, if you're not the clumsy sort then you could do worse than this case.

SCORE: ★★★★

Proporta Semi Rigid Case £9.95

AS YOU MAY HAVE noticed, Proporta carries a huge range of PSP cases for a variety of eventualities. This is a pretty good case for the money, which not only offers some sturdy protection but also some extra storage space for UMDs, cables or Memory Sticks. You can even strap it to your belt if you're that way inclined. We weren't, just so you know.

While the case holds the PSP pretty well, we found that trying to fit anything else in was a tight squeeze. Now, we're not ones to shy away from sitting on a suitcase if it won't close, but there's something about squeezing a PSP into a case that just doesn't sit right with us. If all you want to carry with it is a couple of spare Memory Sticks then it's not too much of a problem, but start putting UMDs in there and you'll hear the creaking sound of plastic as you zip it shut. The PSP will probably come out unscathed but UMDs aren't exactly renowned for their durability, so you might want to invest in a separate carrier for them if you buy one of these cases.

SCORE: ★★★

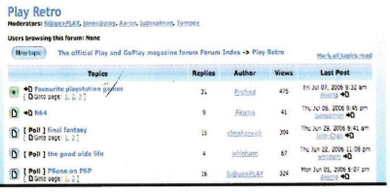
JOIN THE DEBATE...

www.play-mag.co.uk/forum

THE PSP FUN doesn't end when you've read the latest issue of **Go>Play** from cover to cover. Get yourself on the net and come on over to our forum. You can chat directly to the people who put your favourite magazine together and discuss the highs and lows of PSP gaming with loads of other readers.

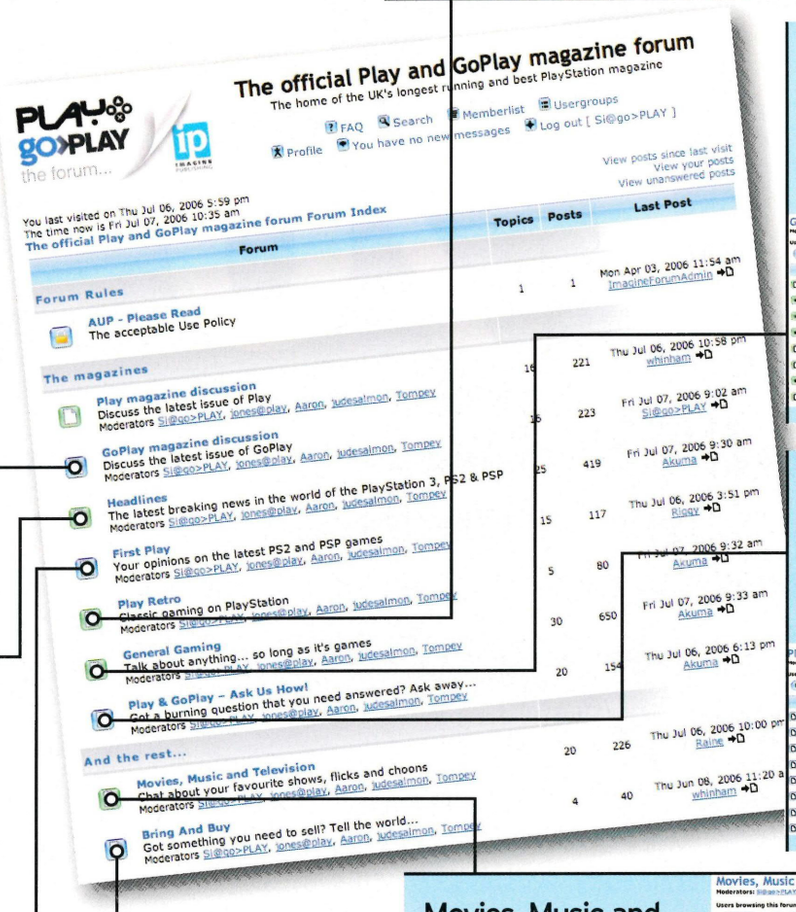
Play Retro

If you love old games as much as we do you'll want to talk about them in here. From *Space Invaders* and *Dizzy* to *Oddworld* and *Duke Nukem*, if it's old it's welcome.



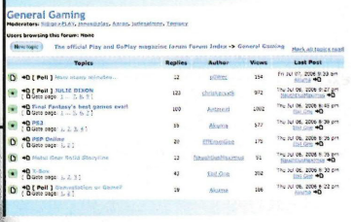
Magazine Discussion

Chat about the mag with us and other readers. Tell us what you like or don't like or simply shower us with compliments, we like that.



General Gaming

Any game, any format, any genre. It doesn't matter what you discuss in here as long as it's games from the latest *GTA* to the price of the PS3.

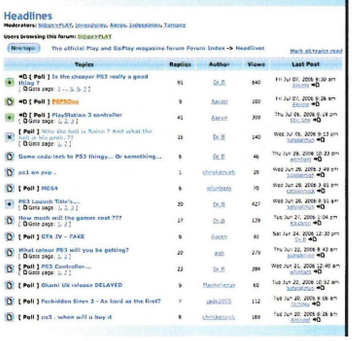


Ask Us How!

Got a particular query about the forum, the mag or a game? Post it in here and we'll do our best to give you an answer or at least point you in the right direction.

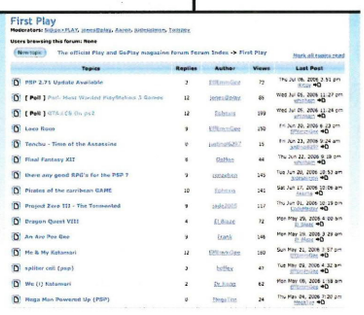
Headlines

Find out all the latest news in the world of PlayStation and chat about it to your heart's content.



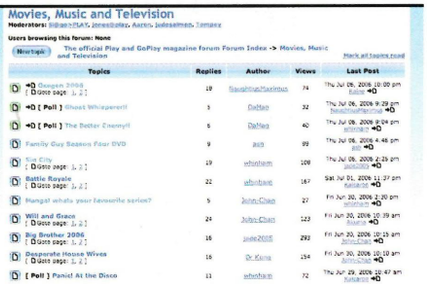
First Play

Got an opinion on a game? Then share it with the world here. This is the place to tell everyone what games float your boat or sink it without a trace.



Movies, Music and Television

Talk about the latest release at the cinema, last week's episode of *Lost* or the last album you bought, the choice is yours.



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DIRECTORY

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE NOT-SO-UGLY LIST OF PSP GAMING

TITLE	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE	GENRE	THOUGHT FOR THE DAY
Ape Academy	SCEE	1	85%		Simian silliness of the highest order and tremendously enjoyable to boot.
Ape Academy 2	SCEE	10	85%		More monkey madness that, as you can tell, is no better or worse than the original.
Ape Escape: On The Loose	SCEE	1	62%		Do we really need this old PSone game on our shiny new PSP?
Ape Escape P	SCEE	5	74%		A port of the old PSone version with virtually no improvements at all.
Archer Maclean's Mercury	Atari	1	82%		A tough challenge but there's no way you'll be able to tear yourself away.
Armored Core: Formula Front - Extreme Battle	505 Gamestreet	5	56%		Great for hardcore mech fans; impenetrable to everyone else.
Astonishia Story	Ubisoft	7	61%		Pretty outdated as far as RPGs go, this will struggle to hold your interest until the end.
ATV Offroad Fury: Blazin' Trails	SCEE	2	70%		Fun for a while, but only if you don't mind a rather limited experience.
B-boy	SCEE	10	83%		Mixes elements of beat-'em-ups and *Tony Hawk's* to create a surprisingly good game.
Blade Dancer: Lineage Of Light	Ignition	10	70%		Very tough to get into and a little bit dull, but it does have a few redeeming features.
Burnout Legends	Electronic Arts	1	71%		The lack of draw distance ruins the fun, but *Legends* is still worth a play.
Breath Of Fire III	Capcom	4	76%		A decent effort but starting to show its age now.
Bust-A-Move Ghost	505 Gamestreet	5	85%		Hugely playable and addictive, though the 'spooky' treatment does nothing for the game.
Capcom Classics Collection: Remixed (Import)	Capcom	6	81%	N/A	Well, here's a mixed bag of retro gaming where the good outweighs the bad.
Carol Vorderman's Sudoku	Xplosiv	6	69%		Better than *Go! Sudoku*, but it's still just a Sudoku game.
Cars	THQ	8	71%		Not a particularly demanding title, but it's certainly not a terrible game.
Championship Manager	Eidos	2	80%		Addictive but there's plenty of room for improvement.
Championship Manager 2006	Eidos	5	81%		A little shy of *Football Manager*'s greatness but not far off.
Coded Arms	Konami	1	64%		Okay attempt at an FPS but not quite okay enough.
Colin McRae Rally 2005 Plus	Codemasters	1	83%		Just like the PS2 version but a bit smaller in size.
Crash Tag Team Racing	Vivendi	2	77%		*Bandicoot* fans should find this funny, innovative and perfect for the PSP.
Darkstalkers Chronicle: The Chaos Tower	Capcom	1	79%		A good game and a good port, but the controls are far from perfect.
Daxter	SCEE	4	89%		Not overly original but manages to be an addictive platformer all the same.
Dead To Rights: Reckoning	Electronic Arts	3	63%		Reasonable blasting action that quickly gets repetitive.
Def Jam Fight For NY: The Takedown	Electronic Arts	8	81%		Smashing the crap out of rappers is fun if repetitive.
Dragon Ball Z: Shin Budokai	Atari	5	69%		Too much button mashing mars what could have been a decent beat-'em-up.
Dynasty Warriors	Koei	1	70%		Fun at first but even fans will be a little bit disappointed.
Everybody's Golf	SCEE	1	91%		Fun, addictive and perfect golfing in almost every way.
Every Extend Extra (Import)	Namco Bandai	10	91%		An original and addictive puzzle game that gives *Lumines* a run for its money.
Exit	Ubisoft	3	83%		Enjoyable puzzle action that can get a bit frustrating.
F1 Grand Prix	SCEE	1	81%		Spot-on adaptation of the sport, worthy of a decent place on the grid.
Field Commander	Ubisoft	8	81%		Quality strategy game that offers engrossing gameplay on and offline.
FIFA 06	Electronic Arts	1	76%		Possibly the best footy game on PSP (after *Pro Evo 5*).
FIFA Street 2	Electronic Arts	4	76%		PSP is clearly the best place for *FIFA Street* - it's actually quite good.
2006 FIFA World Cup Germany	Electronic Arts	6	72%		A solid footy experience but it lacks the flair to make it great.
Fight Night Round 3	Electronic Arts	3	93%		You need this absolutely fantastic boxing simulation in your collection.
Fired Up	SCEE	1	59%		Just about playable, but not worth anything more than a passing look.
Football Manager Handheld	Sega	4	88%		A cut-down version of the game that is still just as compelling as ever.
Formula One 06	SCEE	8	77%		A decent Formula One sim that has some impressive online capabilities.
From Russia With Love	Electronic Arts	4	62%		A poor PS2 game that's even worse on PSP. Goodbye, Mr Bond.
Gangs Of London	SCEE	9	80%		Loads of stuff to see and do but dodgy controls hold it back from greatness.

Ape Escape P

Why we couldn't have a new *Ape* game rather than this PSone rehash is anyone's guess but this is most definitely a letdown. Get one of the *Academy* games instead.

Coded Arms

A nice idea but the dodgy controls really make this a chore to play, which is never good. The sequel is on the way so hopefully that will be a great deal better.

Fired Up

A reasonable bit of automotive destruction but nothing particularly inspiring. Multi-player provides a decent diversion but there are better Wi-Fi games out there...

TITLE	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE	GENRE	THOUGHT FOR THE DAY
Generation Of Chaos (Import)	Nippon Ichi	7	73%		A strange mix of RTS and RPG that sort of works. Good but not great.
Gitaroo Man Lives!	Koei	9	89%		This port of the PS2 version is almost perfect. The best rhythm game on PSP!
Go! Sudoku	SCEE	2	40%		An expensive way to play a game that really only needs a pen and paper.
The Godfather: Mob Wars	Electronic Arts	10	78%		A shame the driving had to go but it's still a solid game, for a film licence.
Gottlieb Pinball Classics	System 3	4	86%		Well-crafted and the provider of hours of enjoyment.
Gradius Collection (Import)	Konami	8	76%		A solid collection that's sadly missing the fifth game in the series.
Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories	Rockstar	1	97%		Quite simply the best there is. If you only buy one game, make it this one.
GripShift	Ubisoft	1	69%		An interesting kart-based game with not enough racing.
Guilty Gear XX #Reload (Import)	Sega	7	89%		Plays far better than *Street Fighter* and *Darkstalkers* - the 2D beat-'em-up of choice.
Harry Potter And The Goblet Of Fire	Electronic Arts	1	70%		It's good for the fans, but sadly not many others.
Infected (Import)	THQ	4	77%		A gory horror-fest that gets slightly repetitive. Great multi-player, though.
Juiced: Eliminator	THQ	7	77%		Not the best looking 'pimper' but definitely more fun to play than its rivals.
Kao Challengers	Atari	2	55%		Surprisingly good multi-player, but everything else about this is so, so bad.
Key Of Heaven	SCEE	4	80%		Looks lovely and plays well too, unfortunately it's just too damn repetitive though.
Koloomn	505 Gamestreet	5	70%		Best played with a friend as the single-player isn't particularly engaging.
Lego Star Wars II: The Original Trilogy	LucasArts	10	88%		Although it's a little easy there's so much fun to be had in the *Star Wars* universe.
Lemmings	SCEE	2	82%		The suicidal critters are back and they're just as good as you remember.
LocoRoco	SCEE	7	95%		If this isn't in your collection you don't really deserve to own a PSP.
The Lord Of The Rings: Tactics	Electronic Arts	1	74%		Decent effort from EA, but it falls short of its potential.
Lumines	Ubisoft	1	88%		Delightful to watch and addictive to boot - this really is puzzle heaven.
Madden NFL 06	Electronic Arts	2	76%		Too much is missing from the PS2 version for this to get top marks.
Madden NFL 07	Electronic Arts	10	74%		Some annoying controls keep this from scoring a convincing touchdown.
Marvel Nemesis: Rise Of The Imperfects	Electronic Arts	1	73%		A reasonable beat-'em-up, but flawed and nowhere near as good as it sounds.
Me And My Katamari (Import)	Electronic Arts	3	91%		Quirky, crazy and bizarre, but you'll love it.
MediEvil: Resurrection	SCEE	1	67%		Big on personality if not on gameplay. A disappointing return for Sir Dan.
MegaMan Maverick Hunter X	Capcom	4	82%		Rock hard, but great fun once you get to grips with it.
MegaMan Powered Up	Capcom	3	79%		This valiant effort isn't the best *MegaMan* game on PSP.
Mercury Meltdown	Ignition	10	63%		Our high hopes were dashed by this frustratingly difficult sequel.
Metal Gear Ac!d	Konami	1	82%		Tough to learn, but an original slice of action for fans.
Metal Gear Ac!d 2 (Import)	Konami	5	91%		Fixes all the flaws of the first game - essential!
Miami Vice: The Game	Vivendi Universal	8	76%		While not a classic, this decent shoot-'em-up still contains some nice touches.
Micro Machines V4	Codemasters	7	80%		A rather tricky difficulty level slightly mars an otherwise fun game.
Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition	Rockstar	1	70%		If 'pimping rides' is your thing then look no further.
Midway Arcade Treasures: Extended Play	Midway	4	77%	N/A	A strong compilation with some real classics on board.
Monster Hunter Freedom	Capcom	5	79%		There's some frustration and boredom at first, then it becomes an ultimately great adventure.
MX vs. ATV Unleashed: On The Edge	THQ	5	65%		A so-so racer that is fun for a while but ultimately an unfulfilling game.
NBA Ballers: Rebound	Midway	5	88%		Nice to look at and fun to play, a great b-ball game.
NBA Street: Showdown	Electronic Arts	1	87%		Great conversion of a solid game - truly excellent in multi-player.
Need For Speed Most Wanted	Electronic Arts	1	68%		Not particularly good, but adequate all the same.
Need For Speed Underground Rivals	Electronic Arts	1	61%		'Pimped' to the post by the superior *Midnight Club*.
NFL Street 2: Unleashed	Electronic Arts	1	76%		Fun but still plagued by the flaws of the PS2 version.
OutRun 2006: Coast 2 Coast	Sega	3	93%		Looks amazing, plays even better. Yet another great PSP racing title.
Pac-Man World 3	Electronic Arts	7	40%		As generic as they come despite a few stolen moments of fun.
Pilot Academy	Rising Star	10	84%		Fun and varied, this flight sim is well worth checking out.
Pirates Of The Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest	Buena Vista Games	8	59%		Has its moments but ultimately just isn't that fun.
Pocket Racers	Konami	10	48%		The only miniature racer you need is *Micro Machines*.

Go! Sudoku

The Carol Vorderman-endorsed games is better than this but only because it has more options. This does have puzzles available to download, however.

Key Of Heaven

One of the better RPGs on PSP but despite its good looks it still falls short of greatness because of the repetitive nature of the game. You could do worse though.

Metal Gear Ac!d

An acquired taste even if you're a *Metal Gear Solid* fan. It takes time to master, but once you do it provides a rewarding experience with plenty of action-packed moments.

Quick, turn the page for more great games!

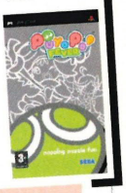
DIRECTORY

Racing | Sport | Platform | Puzzle | Beat-'em-up | RPG/Strategy | Shoot-'em-up | Action/Adventure

TITLE	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE	GENRE	THOUGHT FOR THE DAY
PoPoLoCrois	Agetec	3	69%		Far too simplistic to satisfy the majority of RPG fans.
Power Stone Collection	Capcom	10	91%		Two classic games on one UMD and an essential party game.
PQ: Practical Intelligence Quotient	D3Publisher	4	75%		An original piece of brain-bending puzzle action that can get frustrating.
Pro Evolution Soccer 5	Konami	2	79%		The best footy game on PSP, but a few flaws hold it back from classic status.
Pursuit Force	SCEE	1	89%		High-speed hi-jinks that really show off PSP.
Puyo Pop Fever	Sega	6	68%		Not the best puzzler on PSP, but still a decent effort.
Rengoku II: The Stairway To H.E.A.V.E.N.	Konami	10	45%		Better than the original but it's still not much fun.
Ridge Racer	SCEE	1	92%		*Ridge* is back on form with a truly fantastic PSP debut.
Ridge Racer 2	SCEE	10	82%		If you own the first there's not enough new stuff to warrant buying this.
Samurai Warriors: State Of War	Koei	4	75%		Provides a decent slice of hack-'n'-slash fun, but it's nothing particularly special.
The Sims 2	Electronic Arts	2	86%		*The Sims* is always great and that doesn't change on the PSP.
SOCOM US Navy SEALs: Fireteam Bravo	SCEE	4	91%		A few control problems don't mar this excellent tactical shoot-'em-up.
Spider-Man 2	Activision	1	47%		Spidey's latest outing sadly pales in comparison to the PS2 version.
Splinter Cell: Essentials	Ubisoft	3	80%		Not a bad first outing for Sam Fisher, but we were expecting more.
SpongeBob SquarePants: The Yellow Avenger	THQ	6	52%		Buy the movie on UMD instead; it's cheaper and a lot more fun.
SSX On Tour	Electronic Arts	4	87%		Great single-player, great multi-player, and looks to die for.
Star Wars Battlefront II	LucasArts	2	80%		Controls take getting used to but still an absolute blast.
Street Fighter Alpha 3 MAX	Capcom	3	80%		Arcade-perfect port let down by the awkward controls.
Street Riders	Ubisoft	5	56%		*187 Ride Or Die* with a different name but, in reality, still just as rubbish.
Super Monkey Ball Adventure	Sega	7	78%		It's *Monkey Ball*, which is great, but it's too hard, which is bad.
Syphon Filter: Dark Mirror	SCEE	6	93%		A fantastic game on nearly every level, miss this at your peril.
Taito Legends Power-Up	Xplosiv	10	76%	N/A	Missing a few classics but still filled with retro goodness.
Tales Of Eternia	Ubisoft	3	84%		Despite offering little that's new, it still manages to be highly addictive.
Talkman	SCEE	6	72%		A great idea but there aren't enough phrases to make it an indispensable buy.
Tekken: Dark Resurrection	SCEE	9	94%		Do you even need to ask? This is the greatest handheld beat-'em-up ever!
Tenchu: Time Of The Assassins	Sega	8	60%		Camera problems and a terrible draw distance mean this hasn't got much going for it.
TOCA Race Driver 2	Codemasters	1	81%		Carbon copy from PS2, but it does manage to impress.
Tokobot	Take 2	3	72%		A nice idea that doesn't really work as well as it should.
Tomb Raider: Legend	Eidos	6	78%		Some control issues let Lara down, but this is still a solid adventure.
Tony Hawk's Underground 2 Remix	Activision	1	70%		More of the usual boarding antics let down by some rather dodgy controls.
Twisted Metal: Head On	SCEE	2	70%		Fun in multi-player but this game is plagued by annoying control issues.
Ultimate Ghosts 'N Goblins	Capcom	9	91%		Takes the retro template and builds an awesome game around it - essential!
Untold Legends: Brotherhood Of The Blade	SCEE	1	73%		A button-bashing RPG that unfortunately doesn't quite make the grade.
Untold Legends: The Warrior's Code (Import)	Ubisoft	6	78%		Offers nothing particularly original but fans will enjoy it.
Valkyrie Profile: Lenneth (Import)	Square Enix	9	89%		One of the better RPGs on PSP even if it is more suited to console gaming.
Viewtiful Joe: Red Hot Rumble	Capcom	5	85%		A little mad on the eyes but still a great deal of fun.
Virtua Tennis World Tour	Sega	1	90%		One of the most addictive games on the PSP to date, an essential buy.
WipEout Pure	SCEE	1	88%		Fast, beautiful and intense futuristic racing game.
World Poker Tour	2K Sports	5	81%		Great poker for both poker veterans and newcomers.
World Snooker Challenge 2005	Sega	1	89%		Filled with content, and plays surprisingly well.
World Tour Soccer 2	SCEE	7	74%		A worthy effort to take the genre in a new direction. Arcadey but fun.
World Tour Soccer: Challenge Edition	SCEE	1	71%		No trailblazer, but worthy of Premier League status.
Worms: Open Warfare	THQ	5	84%		*Worms*, back to its 2D best with a solid single-player experience and a fantastic multi-player.
WRC	SCEE	1	65%		Solid but lacklustre racing coming a firm second place to Colin.
WWE SmackDown Vs RAW 2006	THQ	2	90%		A perfectly formed miniature version of the PlayStation 2 grappler.
X-Men Legends II: Rise Of Apocalypse	Activision	2	69%		Fun for fans of the super-mutants but far from perfect.

Puyo Pop Fever

There are plenty of puzzlers out there more worthy of your attention but this isn't terrible by any means, it's just a great deal more fun in multi-player than on your own.



SSX On Tour

This has made a great transition from the PS2 and despite losing some detail it still looks really nice and moves along swiftly. Superb fun with friends of course, too.

Tokobot

A nice mixture of genres but it doesn't really shine in any of them as well as it could. More interaction would make this far more involving than it actually is.

WipEout Pure

Easily lives up to its predecessors with insane speed and flash visuals. Downloadable tracks and more make this even better value. Great fun over Wi-Fi as well.

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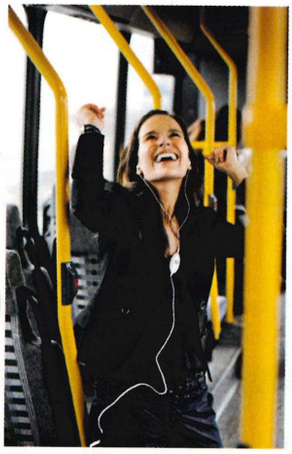


JABRA HEADPHONES AND ACCESSORIES!

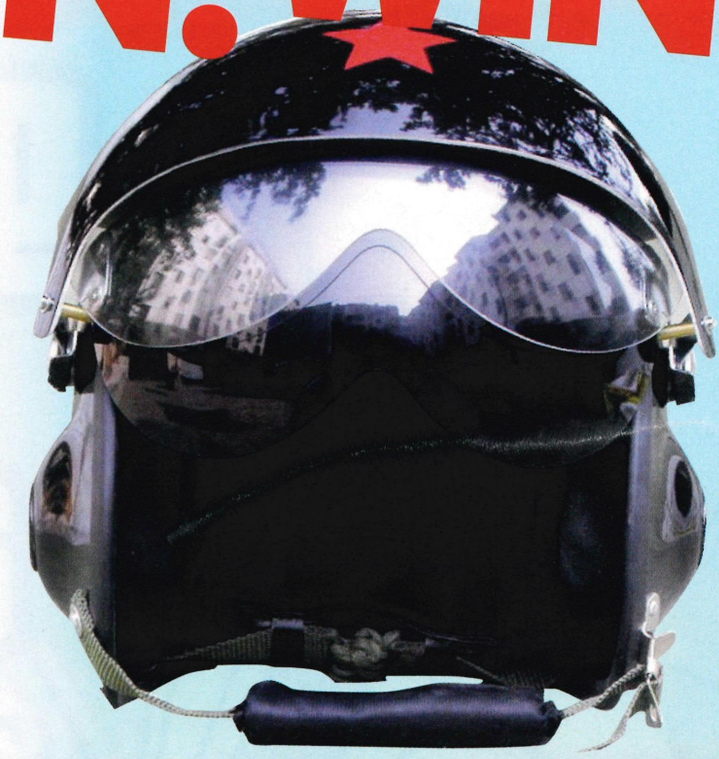
Drown out the world with this high quality gear

WE HAVE A treat for music lovers this month in the shape of some rather nice headphones from Jabra. The C820s High Performance Active Noise Cancelling Stereo Headphones provide users with superior audio quality, whatever the source.

If you fancy some wireless enjoyment of your music then the A120s Bluetooth Music Adaptor enables any device with a 3.5mm jack (like your PSP) to use Bluetooth devices, which is handy as we're also giving away sets of BT325s Bluetooth Headsets, which have high performance stereo headphones.

We have three of each of these Jabra products to give away so to get your hands on these goodies just answer the following question:

The name Bluetooth is derived from a 10th Century king. Which country was he the ruler of?



PILOT ACADEMY UMDS AND AN ACTUAL PILOT'S HELMET!

Take to the skies with your feet still firmly on the ground

THANKS TO OUR lovely friends at Rising Star we not only have ten copies of the fantastic *Pilot Academy* to give away but one lucky winner will also win a Chinese Red Army Fighter Pilot helmet. So next you're stuck for a costume at a fancy dress party you'll know exactly what to go as!

To be in with a chance of winning just answer this simple question:

What score did we give *Pilot Academy* last issue?

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Send either of your answers on a postcard to the address below or in an email to **goplay@imagine-publishing.co.uk**, putting Jabra or Pilot in the subject depending on which competition you are entering. Get your entries in no later than 15 November and be sure to include your and address with your entry so that we can send out your prize!

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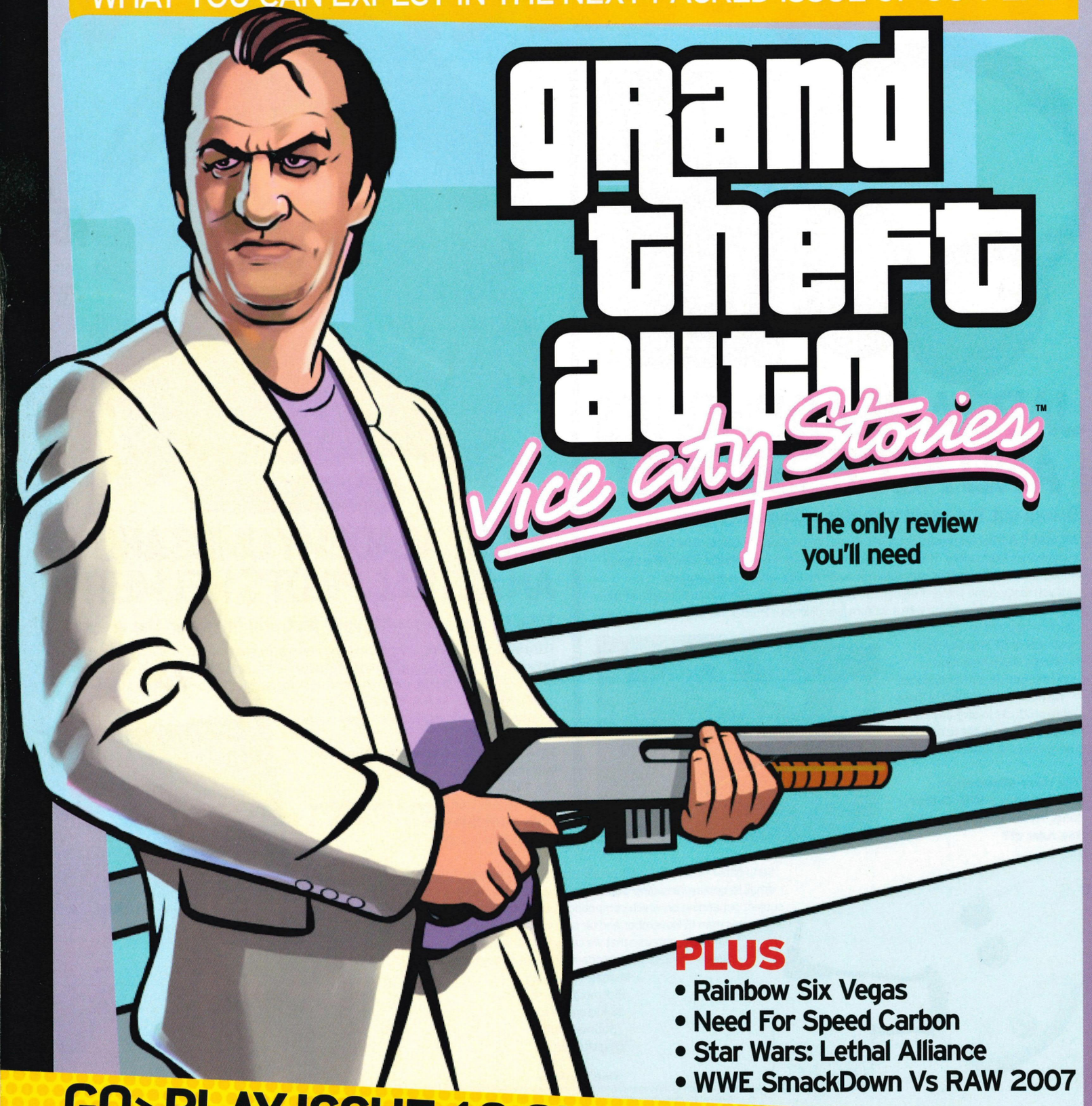
NEXT MONTH

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT IN THE NEXT PACKED ISSUE OF **GO>PLAY**



PLUS

- Rainbow Six Vegas
- Need For Speed Carbon
- Star Wars: Lethal Alliance
- WWE SmackDown Vs RAW 2007

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