THE UK'S BEST-SELLING PLAYSTATION®2 MAGAZINE

PlayStation®2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

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LONDON'S BLEEDING

THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY THE FIRST REVIEW

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PlayStation®2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK
053 DECEMBER 2004

WHERE'S THE NEW LONDON? (SEE PAGE 130)

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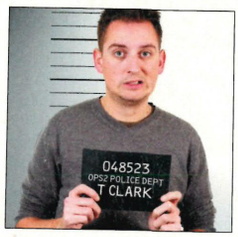
YOUR ROGUES GALLERY

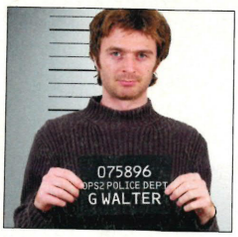
LET THE PLEA BARGAINING COMMENCE, AS THE RAP SHEET IS READ OUT FOR THE *OPS2* PRISONERS...

*In honour of *The Getaway: Black Monday*, we share with you our favourite gangsters, real and unreal



TIM CLARK

Timberlake was caught this month with 'illegal and potentially damaging' material on his hard drive by the all-seeing computer geekoids on the *OPS2* Helpdesk. Threats of sacking, criminal proceedings and – crucially – cutting off his Internet access soon had Clarky deleting everything he could find.
Locked up with: The wonder that is *GTA* meets *Killzone*, *Mercenaries* (p.62).

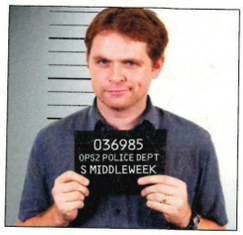


GEORGE WALTER

George's misdemeanour was his appalling effort in the *PES4* European media cup in the south of France. A win, two draws and a defeat meant he didn't even get out of the group stages. According to Gorgeous, the continental hacks are playing *Pro Evo* "on a different level" to us. Apparently so...
Locked up with: *Jak 3*, as exclusively reviewed by Gorgeous himself (p.78).

MICHAEL FRENCH

Not once, not twice, but three times. But the triple attack of lateness is not the crime. No, Frenchy is facing prison on the lameness of his excuses: 1. "The alarm clock didn't go off." 2. "The alarm clock didn't go off, again. I think it was a power cut." 3. "Alarm. I'm having words with the landlord." Pathetic.
Locked up with: *The Getaway: Black Monday*, yet another first review (p.72).



SIMON MIDDLEWEEK

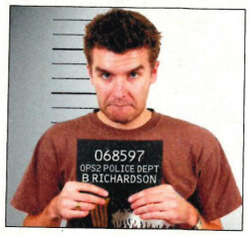
Although you can't tell from his arrest picture here, Simon has the world's longest arms (in comparison to his body). Get the good-natured art ed to raise his hands above his head and you'll see the most amazing sight, as they go on forever. At the zoo even chimps laugh at him. As do we.
Locked up with: Our three games testers and *Gran Turismo 4* (p.34).

NIKI EARP

Purer than the driven snow, Niki has committed no real crime. Ever. Except, it turns out, in the eyes of those crazy Italian types of Italy. There she was pelted with the evil eye in the most extreme way for... wearing short sleeved tops! Oh the harlot! The witch! Etc...
Locked up with: The return of slaphead in *Hitman: Blood Money* (p.22).

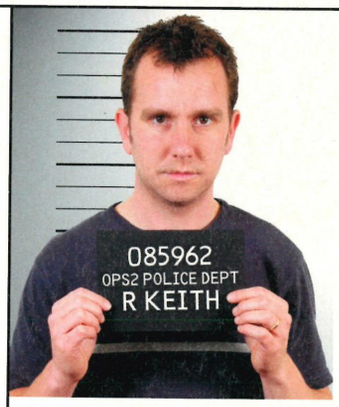
HELEN PRIOR

So one day Hels is complaining of stomach ache. All day. "You just need to let one rip," says each and every male of the team. "No, I think I might be really ill," says the pint-sized rocker. So what happens? She leaves the office and proceeds to fart for 45 minutes in comfort of car and "stomach ache" is gone.
Locked up with: A copy of *SingStar Party* and the rest of her band, Scuba Jo (p.76).



BEN RICHARDSON

As someone once might have said, "A man with no shame is a crime itself." And so it is that Ben must be some kind of a walking crime for the man has no shame. Whatever we do he keeps on smiling. We will let you know at what point he goes completely Mental Ben, because it's coming.
Locked up with: Playmate Natalie Denning from *Playboy Mansion* (p.42).



"NO, I'M INNOCENT, I TELL YOU! INNOCENT! I WAS FITTED UP, HONEST!"

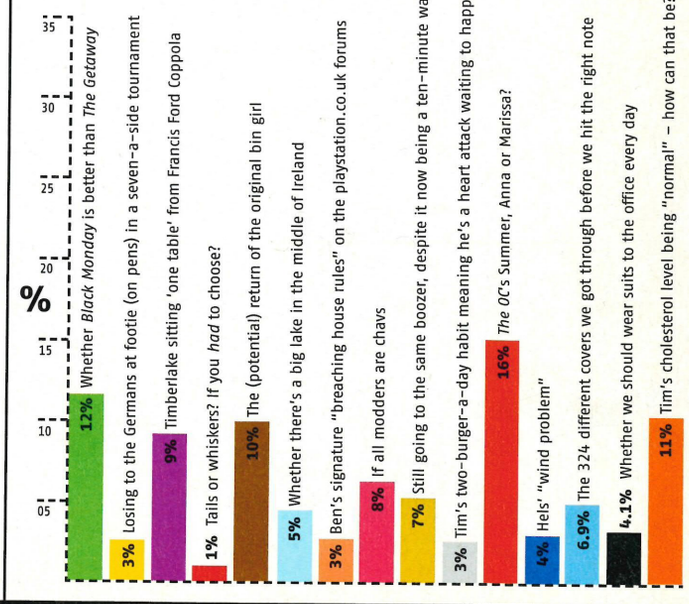
Crime has never been my thing, mainly due to being weighed down by a particular kind of English morality where I don't want to face the embarrassment of getting caught. I was, however, once chased 150 miles across India and held captive for four days after writing a bad cheque. In the process, though, I did get to see some parts of India I'd never have seen otherwise, and the man holding me captive was not only thoroughly pleasant, but able to sell me a range of quality goods at a fraction of their retail cost. Really.

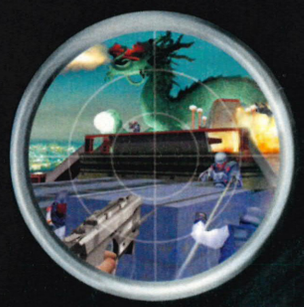
Which only goes to show, while you can't always get what you *want*, sometimes you get what you *need*. What I'm imaging many of you *wanted* from this issue was a review of *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*. Well, there isn't really much need for it, as the game came out last week and chances are you've already bought it. (If you do want our verdict, though, go to uk.playstation.com/features/featureStory.jhtml?storyId=106121_en_GB_FEAT). What you *need*, though, is to know that *The Getaway 2* is back with a bullet, *Killzone* is still awaiting release and *Mercenaries* might just be the game of 2005. This and more awaits a turn or two of the page.

See you back here for plenty more of what you *need* on Thursday, 2 December...

RICHARD KEITH Editor

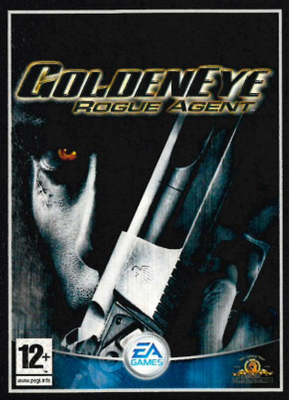
WHAT WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT





THEY CAN TAKE AWAY YOUR LICENSE TO KILL
BUT NOT YOUR DESIRE

Trained as an elite MI6 agent you've been expelled from their ranks for your recklessness and brutality. Now, as a rogue agent, you'll use your training along with an arsenal of over 100 two-fisted weapon combinations to shoot your way to the top of the criminal underworld. Your single-player, split-screen multi-player or online** crusade for vengeance begins at eagames.co.uk/bond



MGM Interactive

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**Online play not available on all platforms. See back of product packs for details. INTERNET CONNECTION required for online play.

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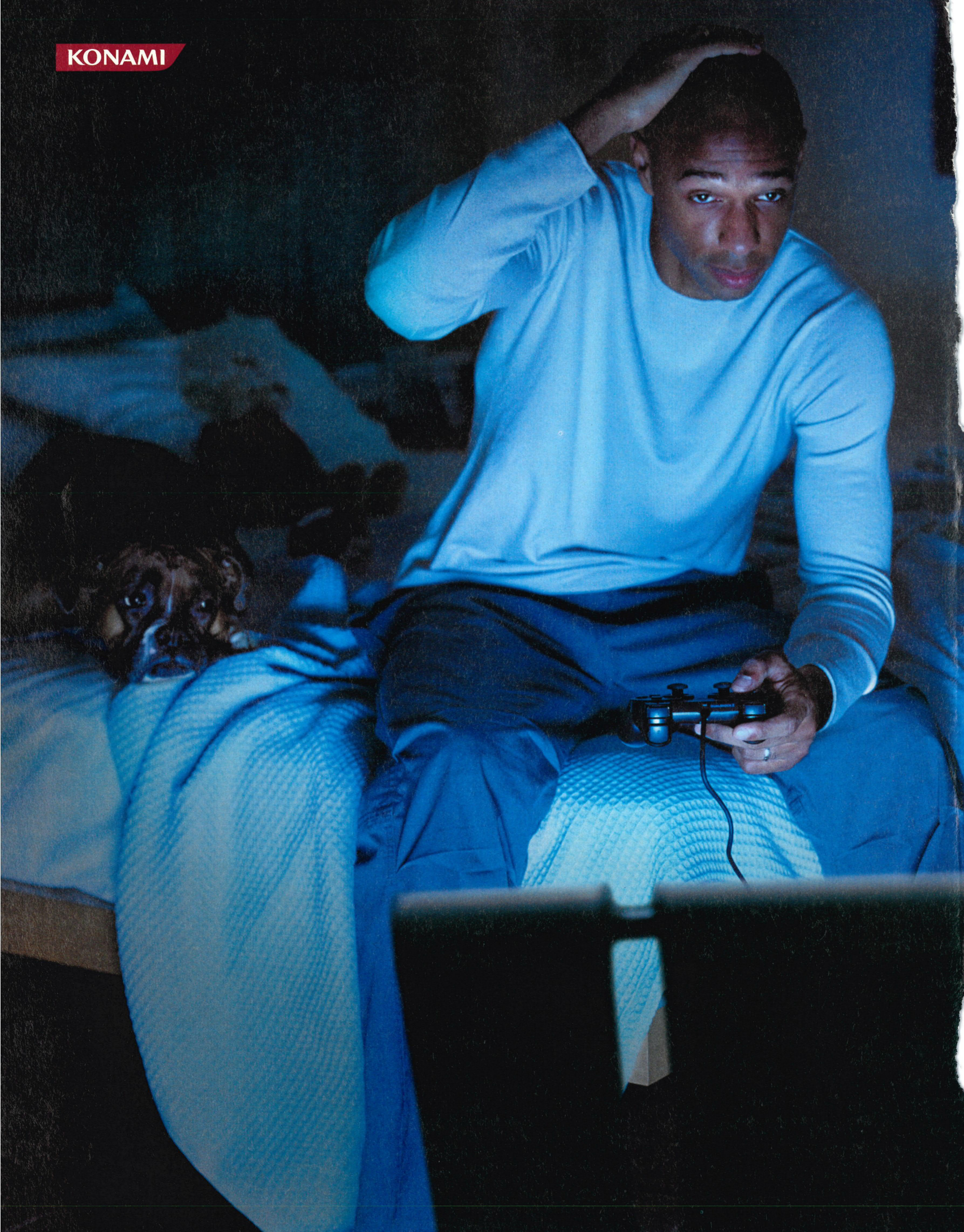
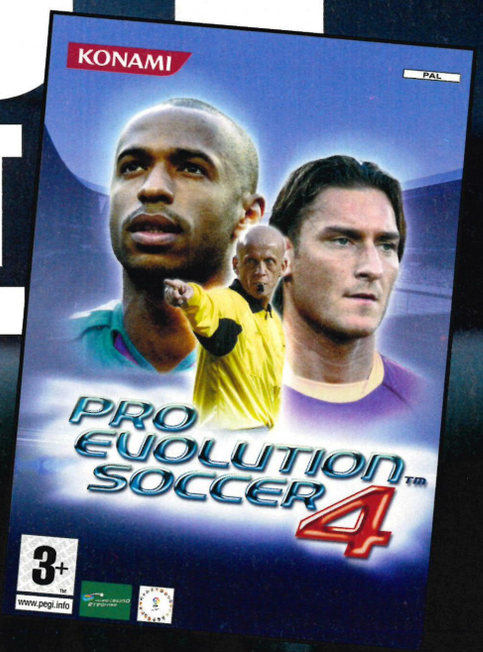

KONAMI

DON'T REST 'TIL YOU BEAT THE BEST



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IF YOU ONLY READ ONE THING, READ THIS!

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spy

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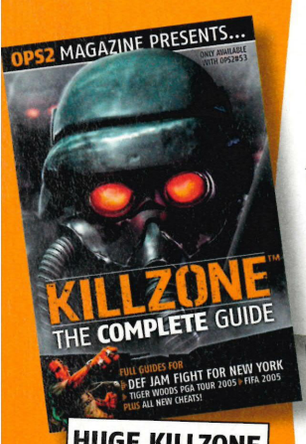
YOU GOT IT!



HUGE KILLZONE GUIDE!

what you lookin' at?

review

THE ONLY SCORES THAT MATTER, FROM THE UK'S BEST-SELLING GAMES MAGAZINE

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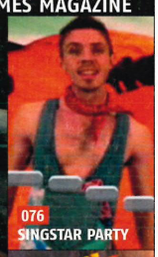

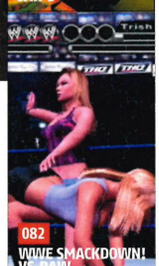

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PLAY GAMES

THIS MONTH'S HOTTEST DEMOS!

PIMPING!

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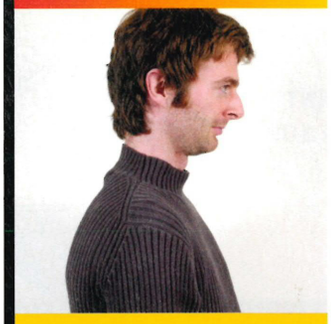
WELCOME

Your very own personal guide to the *OPS2* DVD



It's just occurred to me that my face has appeared in every issue of *OPS2* – sometimes more than once – and for this I apologise. This month, though, you get the side of my head instead. It's just a shame that I look like I'm in for a police mug shot.

There's nothing criminal about our disc, though. We've blagged ten playables this month, so less moaning and more playing, eh?

George

George Walter,
Disc editor

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

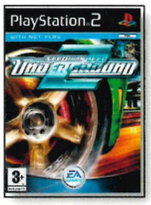
WHY WON'T MY DISC WORK?

To be honest, we're not sure. But if your DVD appears not to be loading properly, first try resetting the console and try loading the disc again. If that fails, we'll gladly replace it for you. Simply mail the faulty disc (no need to send the box) to *Official PS2 Magazine*, DVD Returns, Customer Services, Future Publishing, Cary Court, Bancombe Road Industrial Estate, Somerton, Somerset TA11 6TB. If you have any further queries, email us at the following address: ps2disc@futurenet.co.uk

HOW DO I ACCESS SAVES?

To access the game saves, put your memory card into your PS2 and scroll through the disc menus until you reach the Downloads section (it's in the Replay section). Now highlight the save you want to put on your card and press ⊗. Bingo!

Note: If you have important saves on your disc, back them up. We cannot be held responsible for any saves lost during the process.



01

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2

Boss up the big city streets

What you get: Take the Impreza out and roam the expansive city streets looking for a challenge. Approach other drivers for a race, enter the circuit races or visit the tuning shops to max out your ride.

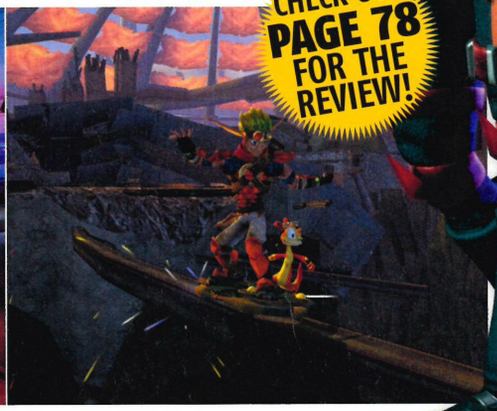
02

JAK 3

The trilogy draws to a close...

What you get: A selection of three excellent missions drawn from the full game, including vehicular combat in the desert wastelands, weapons experience in the mines and an against-the-clock shooting challenge. Something for everyone, then?

JAKKING!



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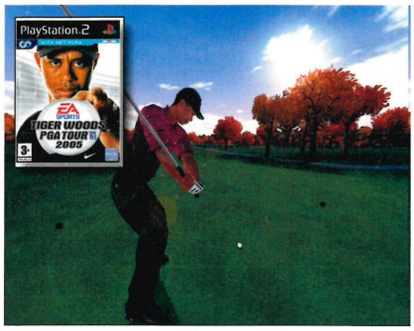
And there's more...

THIS MONTH'S EXCLUSIVE EXTRA DVD CONTENT



83 TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR GOLF 2005

Golfing, par excellence

What you get: A comprehensive taster of the premier golf simulation. Have a go at creating your own character, build the course from hell – with Tiger proofing – and see how the fairways are playing over four separate holes.

84 TOCA RACE DRIVER 2

Puts you in the driving seat

What you get: An insight into one of the most realistic driving games ever. Take part in a qualifier and then choose between the DTM or the Land Rover Bowler class. Change your PS2's language setting and load up the game for an extra surprise.

CHECK OUT PAGE 92 FOR THE REVIEW!

85 TIF 2005

Sony's very own football offering

What you get: Test out *TiF* and see how it squares up to the latest efforts from the *FIFA* and *Pro Evolution Soccer* camps. And for fairness you can play as England, Northern Ireland, Republic Of Ireland, Scotland or Wales. So, which one's best? Oh c'mon, be serious.

86 DRIV3R

Yes, *that* one

What you get: So you didn't buy it, but aren't you intrigued to know what the fuss is about? Here's your chance to get involved over the course of two varied missions: 'Booby Trap', a driving one with a twist and 'Tanner's Escape', for the first-person shooting sections of the game.

CHECK OUT PAGE 84 FOR THE REVIEW!

87 SEGA SUPER STARS

Hey! New EyeToy!

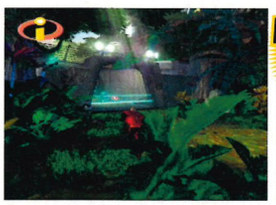
What you get: Another reason to use your EyeToy, so plug it in and test out this gem from Sega. The full game will use Sega's famous characters in original EyeToy mini-games – we've managed to get hold of the Sonic game for you to try out.

CHECK OUT PAGE 88 FOR THE REVIEW!

88 WRC 4

Rally perfection

What you get: A time trial race in either a Subaru or a Ford Focus. And not only that, but two stages to drive them through. Hurtle round testing courses located in both Italy or France, paying careful attention to your co-driver and making sure not to drive off any cliffs. Got that?



89 THE INCREDIBLES

Anti superheroes

What you get: The Pixar smash animated movie hits the small screen in a vibrant action game featuring all the stars from the film. We present a level from the game that demonstrates the fighting, the flying and the shooting. All in one neat demo-sized pack.

CHECK OUT PAGE 112 FOR THE REVIEW!

18 JACKIE CHAN ADVENTURES

Cartoon capers

What you get: Jackie Chan's excellent Saturday-morning cartoon TV show goes all cel-shaded for PS2 in a martial arts/treasure hunting game that's reviewed on page 113 of this issue. Take on the role of Jackie himself and chop-sock your way into a Mexican temple as a precursor to the full game.

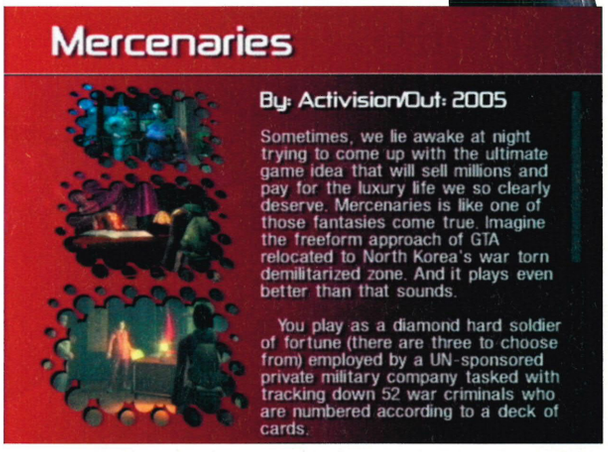
SPY

The biggest news first

THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY
See our London-based cover game in motion.

GRAN TURISMO 4
A brand new trailer of the gentleman's driving sim.

COLD WINTER
We reckon this is a hot tip for 2005.



MONITOR

Hands-on previews

MERCENARIES
We said this was *GTA* in a Far Eastern war zone and we weren't lying. Check out this footage...

VIEWTIFUL JOE 2
The gamer's game (it's nails) returns with new environments, new power-ups and... his missus?

REPLAY

More from your games

DOWNLOADER
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postal

THIS MONTH: LADY TEACHERS, GEORGE'S BEARD AND A MAN MADE OUT OF DEMO DISCS

Write: Postal, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW Email: ps2postal@futurenet.co.uk

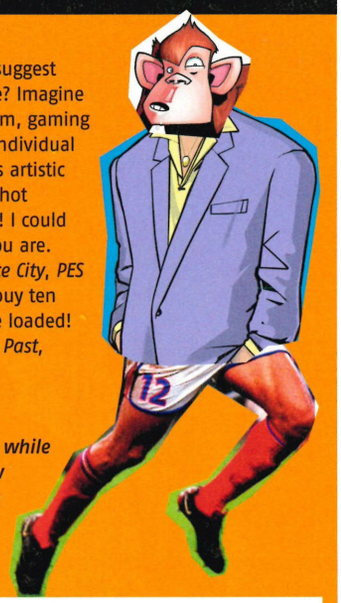
WIN THIS!
Seen something you don't like? Want to be heard? Then get scribbling! This month, letters published here will receive a copy of *Pro Evolution Soccer 4* courtesy of Gamestation.co.uk. Only main Postal letters receive games. Write to: The Editor, c/o Postal, *OPS2*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW or email ps2postal@futurenet.co.uk. Letters will be edited for length and clarity.

gamestation

star letter

OFFICIALLY FOR YOU?

I'm gonna take a walk on the wild side and suggest something. Why don't you guys make a game? Imagine how good it would be, what with your wisdom, gaming knowledge and work effort, not to mention individual qualities – Gentle's enthusiasm; Wednesday's artistic skills; Niki's aptitude at obtaining pictures of hot women; and what about Gorgeous', er, looks! I could go on, but you already know how talented you are. The game would cover all genres and rival *Vice City*, *PES* and *'Splitters*. I'd immediately rush out and buy ten copies, as would all my mates. Then you'd be loaded! You could call it *'The Official Best Game EVER: Past, Present And Future'*. Or not. You decide.
Andrew Edkins, Glossop



Why don't we make a game? Mainly because while we know what makes a good game we know little about how the nuts and bolts of coding a game works. Also, have you seen what developers look like? Not like us, that's for sure. Well, George does have a beard...

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TEA BAG

As an adult, female teacher and reader of *OPS2*, I thought it was irresponsible of you to include a sticker in your September issue that read, 'Make the tea you bitch!' I have enough of a sense of humour to see how this would be an amusing joke between adults, but it sends out a bad message to other parts of your readership. I teach teenagers and they often bring in your magazine to show me the things they like. Not all the children I teach are mature enough to see that sticker as a bit of fun. Some might actually think it's okay to talk to their mums or girlfriends like that. Shouldn't you be setting a positive example? You are merely worsening the stereotypes that already portray gamers as sexist, uneducated geeks. I could lecture you for hours, but unfortunately I have to go and make the tea.
Miss H Huxley, Pype Hayes

Yes, you're right. We're bad, Miss. Very bad. Also, we should point out before we move on, that we never, ever call women bitches. It's so very old and tired. No we keep the bitch word – and ho' for that matter – for the boys. Oh, and last thing Miss Huxley, we'd love to have you lecture us for hours. Just love it.

KILL THRILL

I only want to know one thing: what has happened about the *Kill Bill* game? After being slightly disappointed by the second movie, I'm worried that the game (which should be an action-packed bloodsoaked kung fu/samurai thrill-fest) won't be any good. Who did you say was creating it? If the world was a perfect place the game would already be out and it would be the best fighting game/adventure action ever. Please *OPS2*, look into this for me and find out if I'm worrying needlessly or if the people behind that game are destroying one of the most exciting licences of the last few years.
Roland McShay, Inverness

It's a-coming, it's just going to take a while. Which is probably a good thing beacause it might just mean it doesn't get mangled out of all recognition. Expect a Christmas 2005 release.

THE DIRECTOR'S CUT, IF YOU WILL, OF LETTERS THAT, SHALL WE SAY, TEST ONE'S ENDURANCE

Michael Mackenzie, Fife
I thought you would like to know about the 'drugs' that have been getting me excited recently.

Gavin Freeman, Luton
Can you tell me if there is a kissing sim coming out any time soon?

Bob Seager, Essex
My mum looks like Raiden.

Tom Smith, via email
There's a big hole in the front of my August issue!

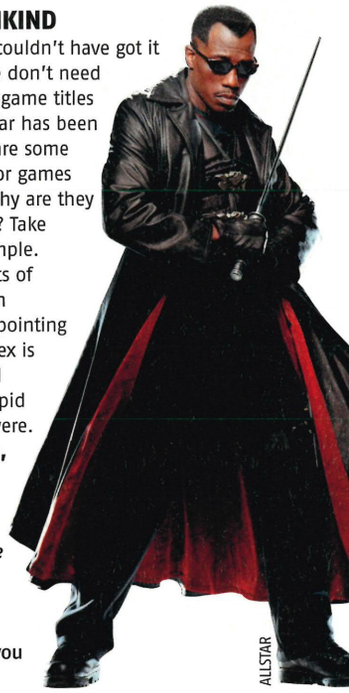
Stephen Wakeman, via email
I've sighted your very own Tim Clark in a video interview. He doesn't look too pleased mind...

James Imam, via email
I can't think of anything to write about. Any suggestions?

Rory Wallis, via email
My PS2 is one of my best friends. I love bragging to my friends (the human ones) about my games collection.

RESPOND UNKIND

Alex Thompson couldn't have got it more wrong! We don't need more movie-to-game titles – every one so far has been garbage! There are some great concepts for games from films, so why are they always so awful? Take *Blade II* for example. Brilliant film, lots of potential, but an incredibly disappointing game. I hope Alex is reading this and realises how stupid his comments were.
Daniel Hastings, King's Lynn



Yes, and let's hope you realise just what an thoroughly interesting and erudite person you so clearly are.

WHO'S THE BEST?

I love the bits in the magazine where you talk about yourselves – I'd love to be a games journo and work at *OPS2* Towers and, who knows, maybe one day I will! But my question is this: are you actually any good at the games you play? And who is the best? My bet would be George because he always writes like he knows the most.
Darren Pederson, Chester

George is actually pretty rubbish at games but has the dogged determination to learn how to mess up other people's games – and he does this all *the time. If this isn't a winning strategy – like his suicidal* Mashed *play – then he'll claim that playing games "isn't about winning".*

A CALL TO CHARMS

Dear *OPS2* girls (that's Niki, Helen and Kirsten). On buying a copy of September's issue I was pleased to find the large sheet of stickers inside. But I was very disappointed not to find your pretty faces anywhere. The obvious solution would be to cut you out of the mag but I don't want to damage my collection. So I was wondering (plucks at heartstrings) if you could send me a photo of each of you, autographed if possible. I could frame them and create a shrine to each of you if you like, but I don't want to sound like a crank. Bet you get these kind of

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Want one of these in the bag next time you buy *OPS2*?

requests all the time, eh?
PS Do Helen and Kirsten have the same tattoo?
James Rose (16), Hoole Village

We could send you a picture – although Hels and Niki are somewhat concerned about your intentions – but because we think you're a bit of a loon we'd have to charge you £1,346 pounds plus VAT for each one. Cheques to OPS2 *at the usual address...*
PS No.

STONE COLD

I just read your *SmackDown! Vs RAW* feature – cool stuff! I thought you might find it interesting that I'm related to none other than Stone Cold Steve Austin. In the past he was married to my Dad's cousin (Lady Blossom) who used to wrestle in the WCW. I've included some pictures of my family (see below). Hope you like 'em!
Steve Williams, Wisbech

Any other readers with famous relatives,

get online in association with BT

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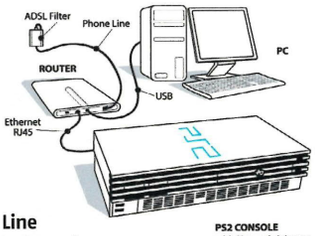

3 **Connect Your PS2 To The Broadband Line** Simply run the supplied ethernet cable from the router to the ethernet port on the PlayStation 2 Network Adaptor (purchased seperately) at the rear of your PlayStation 2.

4 **Set Up Your Online Gaming Account** Simply set up your PlayStation 2 gaming account using the CD provided with your PlayStation 2 Network Adaptor. You must have a memory card with sufficient memory inserted into your console.

5 **Insert Your Online Game Of Choice** Prepare to take your gaming to the next level!

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THE BIG (ISH) ISSUE

LOCK UP YOUR POLITENESS AND LET THE SHOUTING BEGIN. OUR POOR POSTBAG IS INUNDATED EACH MONTH WITH YOUR RANTS AND RAGES – BUT WE LOVE IT. FORCE YOUR ANGER INTO LETTER-SHAPED FORM AND FURIOUSLY THROW IT IN OUR DIRECTION. YOU'LL FEEL MUCH BETTER.

PES VS FIFA

What's your personal leather-bound poison?

REAL DEAL

My mates might go on about *PES*, but for me *FIFA* beats it every time. At GameStars I gave both a go, but I still enjoyed EA's offering a lot more. It may be slower, but it's so much more like real football. And how many footballers do you see kicking the ball around at 100mph anyway? The new *FIFA* is brighter, better looking and has brilliantly improved control. There's really only one winner here.
Jacob Large, Hounslow

CONVERTED KICKER

Well, what do you know? After always being a fan of the officially licensed alternative, I was lucky enough to blag a few goes on *PES* at the recent GameStars event, and was blown away. I'd never played the series before, but now I could never go back. I can't believe what I used to put up with – jerky animation, ridiculous shots and boring tactics. *PES* is exactly what footie should be: tight, challenging and constantly exciting.
Oli Burrow, Derby

BURNOUT VS GRAN TURISMO

Has the release of *Burnout 3* tipped the racing scales?

EXPLODERISED

I'm the sort of guy who likes fast paced, explosive games. Exciting games. Not ones that make me think 'tactically'. That might make me sound a bit dim, but I'd rather race without braking, smashing up my opponents and tearing through the stages with a car that's falling to pieces than have to think. And when I hit someone they should spin out spectacularly, not just shunt slightly. *Burnout 3* is the only choice.
Alexander Dyer, Nottingham

GRAND TURISMO

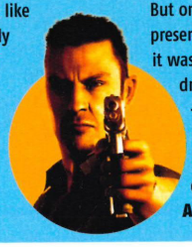
Sure, *Burnout* is fast. It might look nice too. But where's the depth? Once you've won all the races, you're left with boredom. *GT*'s different. You're always improving, tightening your racing lines and finding ways to deal with corners. There's always another car to buy, tool up and race – and each car feels totally different. With GT4 offering the best circuit in the world – Nurburgring – it's going to knock *Burnout* right off the road.
Tom Walter, Bristol

DRIV3R F4RCE?

The burning topic still hasn't let off the gas. But what do you think?

WHINE TIME

Marc Weaver and Mike Burns were really whining when they said *DRIV3R* was frustrating. If they aren't good enough to take on the missions then why don't they just get rid of the game like the total losers they obviously are? Or they could look a bit harder and try out the brilliant Free Ride or Director modes. Maybe they're too busy crying.
Christopher Turam, Liverpool



POOR SHOW

I looked forward to *DRIV3R* for ages. And when you showed the first screenshots in the magazine I got even more excited. So when it came out I bought it immediately. But once I'd got through the nice presentation and into the game I found it was appalling! Immense pop-up, cars driving on jelly wheels, unclear missions – then the on-foot missions! You really don't expect such a huge disappointment from a professionally developed game.
Andy Masterson, Norwich

letters

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caption me!

Alright people at *OPS2*, I've taken some fantastic shots of my huge game collection – look, if I crouch slightly it's almost as tall as I am! Also, to show my undying dedication to the magazine, I've also made some photos of a man made entirely out of *OPS2* demo discs. It took time, effort and countless tests to get it right, but I'm sure you'll agree it was worth it! Thanks!
Chris Nicholas, Erdington

CAPTION COMPETITION!
So you're a wise guy, eh? Send us your caption for this pic – the best one will get a copy of a game!

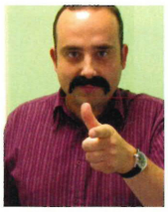
handbag! POETIC INJUSTICE

My name is Stuart Tosney. You don't know me. I am a very, very angry reader. I buy the mag every month; I enter your competitions all the time; I spot mistakes that no other readers do; and I write letters. I write letters until my fingers bleed from typing. I love the magazine. But you never print any of my stuff!

Every month I excitedly tear open the bag to see if something I sent in appears on these holy pages. Instead I open the mag to see a load of crap – instead of interesting letters I see pictures of some idiot holding an issue of *OPS2* and it's the star letter. I look to the 'Helen You Plank' section and none of my corrections are there. I wish to express my anger at the way you print a load of rubbish instead of my submissions, or any other interesting letters that raise important gaming issues.
Stuart Tosney, Bletchley

And yet here you are, showing that everyone loves a trier. Not us, though, as we've plonked you in Handbag for your childish outburst. Do you know how many letters we get? Our Ben does – he opens every single one of them before abandoning them on his desk where they become a river of unpublished words, all desperate to be in the mag. So here you are Stuart. Do you feel good now? Well, do you?

GOT SOMETHING YOU WANT TO GET OFF YOUR OVERLY ANGRY CHEST? THEN WRITE IN TO THE USUAL ADDRESS AND WE'LL EITHER AGREE WITH YOUR PAIN OR POINT OUT THAT YOU NEED TO LIVE A LITTLE... WITH THE AID OF A WOMANLY HANDBAG



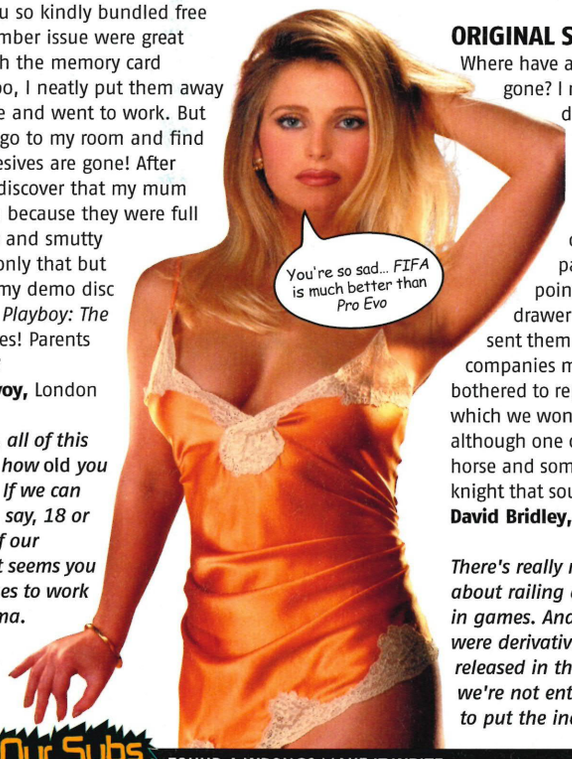
PHRASE YOU
Without your words, readers, this would just be a series of very empty, very lonely pages. We need your observations, your gaming musings and your random arguments. With so many exciting titles on the way, there must be something you'd like to tell us, show us or shout about from the dizzy heights of Postal. Think of something interesting, write it down, send it to us and you could win a game, or even free broadband! It's that easy...

friends or sisters (like Timberlake)?

TOUGH LOVE

My mum is mad, I tell ya! Those quality stickers that you so kindly bundled free with the September issue were great (nice touch with the memory card stickers). Anyhoo, I neatly put them away in my wardrobe and went to work. But on my return I go to my room and find my prized adhesives are gone! After investigating I discover that my mum shredded them because they were full of "rude words and smutty pictures". Not only that but she threw out my demo disc because of the *Playboy: The Mansion* features! Parents these days, eh?
Jonathan McEvoy, London

Well, to be fair, all of this really depends how old *you are, Jonathan. If we can assume you're, say, 18 or 19, like most of our readers, then it seems you have some issues to work out with your ma. However, if you're, like, 12 or something then we have nothing but sympathy for you but your mum is right: you're way too young for big words such as 'bitch' and 'ports' and, er, 'tea'.*



ORIGINAL SIN

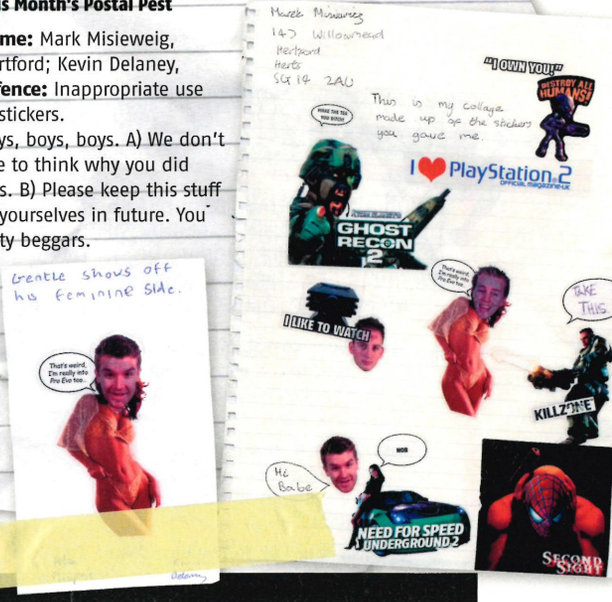
Where have all the original game ideas gone? I mean, most of them these days seem to come from films or TV shows or... [Goes on like this for about three pages] ... why can't game developers get some original ideas... [Another page, but we're nearly at the point]. I have some really top-drawer ideas for games and have sent them to lots of so-called games companies most of which haven't even bothered to reply. [Goes into the ideas which we won't bother to repeat, although one of them does feature a horse and some kind of King Arthur-type knight that sounds okay]. So there!
David Bridley, Ivor Heath

There's really nothing very original about railing against unoriginality in games. And as most of your ideas were derivative of one movie or another released in the last 12 months or so we're not entirely sure you're the man to put the industry right, Dave.

Name and shame

This Month's Postal Pest

Name: Mark Misieweig, Hertford; Kevin Delaney,
Offence: Inappropriate use of stickers.
Boys, boys, boys. A) We don't like to think why you did this. B) Please keep this stuff to yourselves in future. You dirty beggars.



Savage Our Subs

FOUND A WRONG? MAKE IT WRITE

As the director of words at *OPS2*, Helen scours these hallowed pages, hunting out mistakes. Have you spotted a blunder she's overlooked? Then write in and let us know.

#1 The Undertaker Vs Mick Foley match (*OPS2#50*, page 45) actually happened in '98, not '96.
Steven Lockett, Nottingham

#2 Page 122, *OPS2#50*, says 'chose the' when it should read 'choose'.
Jordan Wright, Liverpool

Write to:
HELEN, YOU PLANK!
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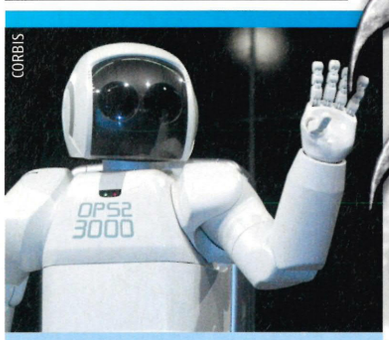
ALL THE PS2 NEWS THAT'S FIT TO PRINT, AND SOME STUFF THAT PROBABLY ISN'T...

WELCOME TO SPY

News meteors punching through the PS2 atmosphere and landing here

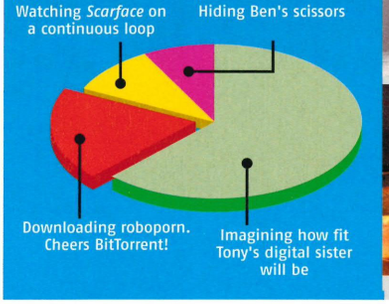


<BLEEP BLEEP BLEEP> Hello chums, my name is *OPS2* 3000 and I'm a top of the range newsbot. When my masters at Sony discovered that this magazine had misplaced *another* news editor they sent me to help out. You will be pleased to hear that my hard drive comes pre-loaded with all kinds of exclusives, including first images of the PS3's design (think Baroque minimalism with fuschia trim) playable versions of the entire PSP launch line-up and secret *Killzone 2* footage. So let's start by telling you about... <BZZZT SKKKRTTT GNNNNGH>

Strange, the only thing left in my database is a press release about the next *Rise To Honour* game. Bugger. Thank heavens I managed to input some other stories. Printed on the subsequent carbon-based sheets is data on the next *Hitman*, the first screenshots from the *Jaws* game, info on *Outbreak 2* and something called *Survivor* which made the humans' eyes leak. Wait, I've found the PS3 launch date, it's... <DRNNG WOOP FZZZT>

OPS2 3000,
News editor (temporary)

THIS MONTH I'VE BEEN...



WELCOME TO SAN ANDREAS, FOOL

OPS2 SALUTES THE

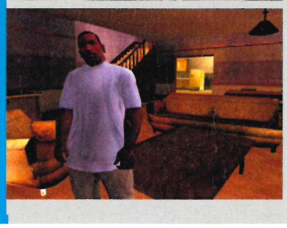
Biggest Game of all time

only in... PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK

SAN ANDREAS is here and life will never be the same

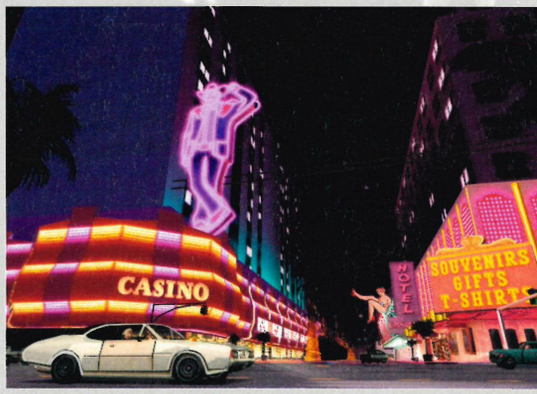
READ THE OFFICIAL REVIEW!

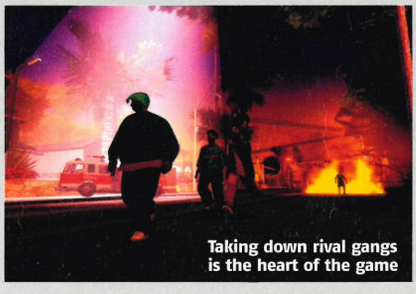
We've already put *GTA: SA* through its paces and our first review is finished. Point your browser at uk.playstation.com/features/featureStory.jhtml?storyId=106121_en_GB_FEAT to see it. Our comprehensive follow-up review will blow the game wide open in the magazine next month!



It's time. Stock the fridge as you would in preparation for a nuclear winter. Lock up the pets, nail shut the doors and rip out the phone. Finally, take a hammer to every other piece of entertainment equipment in your home (barring the TV, of course). After six months of waiting, pacing around and playing *Straight Outta Compton* really loud, we're living the *San Andreas* dream. It doesn't disappoint.

As we've been telling you for months, it's a vast game, hugely impressive in scope and variety. While the story of CJ's family – caught in the crossfire of gangsta life – pulls you in, the streets keep you there, packed with things to do and discover. There's so much, in fact, that we estimate that it will take you about two weeks of continuous play to finish the story mode. And that's without sleeping. Even then there'd still be loads to find out. It's because of this that we're saving our massive review for you until next month, when we'll tuck into the game and tell you all about the marvels within. That doesn't mean you get to miss out on our first review. Indeed, the game is so important to us that we've posted our first ever online review on the web on the day of release – point your browser at uk.playstation.com/features/featureStory.jhtml?storyId=106121_en_GB_FEAT to go straight there. Go on, do it now... ■ MF




Taking down rival gangs is the heart of the game

The bikes handle even better this time

SPY CONTRIBUTORS | TIM CLARK, PAUL FITZPATRICK, MICHAEL FRENCH, RICHARD KEITH, GEORGE WALTER

THE SIX BIG THINGS YOU NEED TO DO IN SAN ANDREAS...

❑...realise how it makes real life seem drab and dull

Well it does, doesn't it? This is a game that renders on DVD a set of cities within a huge state of land. This state has a mountain. It has clouds. Yes, clouds, like the ones you see in the sky right now. The moon even appears on a realistic 30-day lunar cycle. Plus, you aren't the only one getting down and criminal – you can stumble upon other characters carjacking or caught in a shootout. It all adds up to an amazingly detailed, awe-inspiring experience that proves without a doubt that *San Andreas* is the game of the year.

❑...explore the R3 missions

Okay, so we all know the standard ambulance and police missions. But what of the new burglary mode – how many houses have you busted into? And then, of course, there are the extra extras (modes for extra players and pimping missions, anyone?)...

❑...just go for a drive

The roads between San Fierro, Las Venturra and Los Santos (and the hicksville countryside) offer you scenic and seamless drives through multiple routes via backwater towns, off-the-road hideouts and across the vast world map. It's massive and will take you months to learn properly.

❑...kick off some gang warfare

San Andreas is, at its core, a game all about respect, reputation and rivalry. The precious checker-like colours adorning the map of the state needs constant maintaining as you grow your empire, and we've had a lot of fun taking over neighbourhoods and districts. How much of the city has succumbed to the green-coloured grip of CJ's familial Orange Grove gang under your instruction? And how much of that was done by recruiting men off the street for some impromptu disorganised crime sprees?

❑...blow all your cash on blackjack

Las Venturas' Vegas-a-like Strip – coated in neon and smelling of money – plays host to the Caligular's Palace casino. It's huge inside and full of games, with tables dedicated to blackjack and roulette, plus slot machines and video poker. We suggest taking a gamble and putting everything you have on 50-50 black at the roulette table. Go on, homie, just do it: take a chance.

❑...work on your image

Haircuts, shopping, eating, exercise – it all counts in *San Andreas*. And image matters a lot. The classier areas of Los Santos, such as Rodeo, demand that you wear suitable attire – lest you be rumbled as the lower class oik you really are. Conversely, CJ's bud Ryder tells him early on to get his hair cut, as his boring Liberty City barnet is an embarrassment to be around in the Orange Grove 'hood. So it's up to you to make sure that you're shipshape and looking good on the mean streets.

AN AUDIENCE WITH KING SEABASS

PES5 online, *PES6* on PS3 and *PES* on PSP. *Pro Evo* guru Shingo Takatsuka (that's Seabass to his mates) tells all to *OPS2*...

WORLD EXCLUSIVE PES NEWS!

■ Why wasn't *PES4* online?
It would have been technically possible – we have a version running online in our studio right now. The main reason it's not in there this year is we are waiting for the Sony Online service to pick up. Then we need to set up servers as Sony doesn't provide these.

■ What are your plans for *PES5* and *PES6*?
PES5 will be the last game for PS2. *PES6* will be on PS3.

■ What will PS3 technology bring to the game?
We'll be able to increase the amount of motions and movements through more advanced motion-capture. The main advantage is the amount of space PS3 will afford us and this will allow us to improve AI and gameplay. We also have lots of online ideas that we couldn't build into PS2 as we're running out of space.

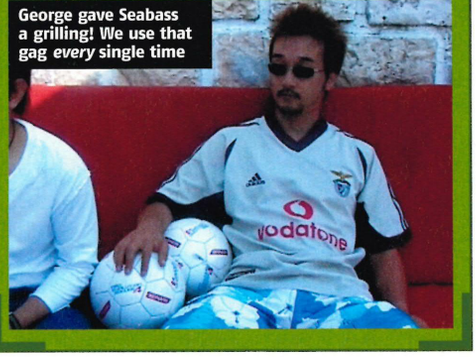
■ What are your plans for PSP?
We're interested in the LAN capabilities [so you could compete wirelessly]. There's also the possibility that players could use the PSP to set up teams and edit formations etc, while on the move and then upload this information to the console to use in the PS2 version.

■ The other criticism is licensing...
Yes, we tried to obtain six licences for *PES4* but due to timing and restrictions we were unable to get them all. Our focus is solely on getting six European licensed leagues and that includes the Premiership. We're also looking to the UEFA Cup and Champions League.

■ Who should we buy in the new Master League?
I always buy Recoba [Inter Milan/Uraguayan forward].

■ Analogue stick or the D-pad?
The D-pad is definitely more responsive, although in some Japanese tournaments players do very well using the stick. I would say, use the D-pad, but if your fingers start to hurt then use the stick instead.

■ Does spending so much time making *PES* affect your enjoyment of real football?
I still enjoy football. I play football. I go to football matches and I love it. Having said that, whenever I'm watching and playing I'm unconsciously thinking, "Oh, wouldn't it be great if we could use *this* in *PES*!"

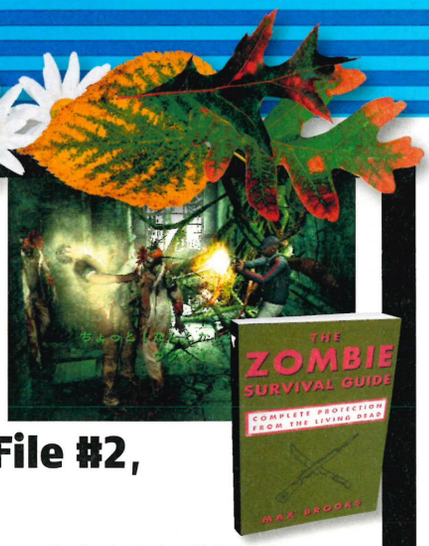


George gave Seabass a grilling! We use that gag *every* single time

GREEN FINGERS

AFTERNOON OF THE DEAD

Resident Evil returns with **Outbreak: File #2**, and it's all gone a bit *Ground Force*...



We've just taken delivery of a book – actually, it's more of a manual – called *The Zombie Survival Guide: Complete Protection From The Living Dead*. As the title implies, every possible scenario involving an attack by brain-hungry cadavers is fully explored. Not in an ironic stocking-filler way, either. There are no, repeat, *no* jokes. And the more we read its agonisingly serious pages the more we find ourselves looking forward to the zombie apocalypse. Simply because we'd rather go out fighting the undead than watching *Eastenders*, alone and senile.

Of significantly less value in End Of The Word preparation terms, though, is *Resident Evil Outbreak: File #2*. Unshackled from the need to draft a coherent plot, Capcom's designers have gone shouting-at-the-moon mad. As with the first file, gameplay is broken into five easily digestible chunks – two of which we've sampled thanks to the game's recent Japanese release. The whole game appears to be unlocked from the start, so we headed straight for the zoo. Sure enough, it's patrolled by the zombie elephant from the first ever screens we showed you a few months back. Seeing Nelly in the (rotting) flesh isn't exactly scary, but the fact her stomach's hanging out does look all kinds of unpleasant. Other 'highlights' include zombie hyenas and finding a regular zombie eating the arse out of a dead rhino.

Nice, but more intriguing is the 'flashback' scenario. Set in a woodland area, the survivors (now when you play solo you can choose your two companions) stumble across – can you guess? – a sinister research facility. Inside they're set upon by bizarre organic zombies with flowers on their heads and a half naked man wearing a bag and armed with an enormous axe. Homage to *Manhunt*? Maybe, but doubtful. Like we said, it's weird – but not unenjoyably so. Generally, *Outbreak 2* feels like more of the same – find key, ignore gibbering companions, shoot corpse – but our sources at Capcom are confident that when it arrives next year it will be network enabled. Lord knows we've heard that before, but we're trusting types... ■ TC

A stark warning to anyone cultivating man plants

WIN THIS!

Terms and conditions
Send your entries to 'The car's the star' at the usual address (see p.141), or email ps2compos@futurenet.co.uk and put 'The car's the star' as the subject. Turn to page 141 for full terms and conditions.

WIN A FLASH CAR NOW!

Empire's **FlatOut** inspires insanely generous competition prize

Empire is pretty damn pleased with its latest release, the shunt-happy, muscle car flavoured, destruction derby racer, *FlatOut*. How do we know? Well, it's good for a start. Check out the review on page 106 this instant if you're the doubting kind.

But there's another reason why we suspect the makers of *FlatOut* are in a bullish mood. It's a sexy looking, 2.0 litre, 141bhp reason with cruise control, air con, electric sun-roof, metal grain trim and leather seats. It's a Hyundai Coupe SE, and if you can answer our fiendishly simple question below correctly, and are 17 years old or above, you could be on your way to winning it. Of course, Empire wouldn't be stumping up a prize as generous as this if you could simply answer a foolishly elementary question and be in with a chance of snagging it. That's why there's a tie-breaker to complete as well. Hey! Those are the rules, people. Deal with it...

THE QUESTION

How many valves does the Hyundai Coupe SE's snarling mofo of an engine possess?

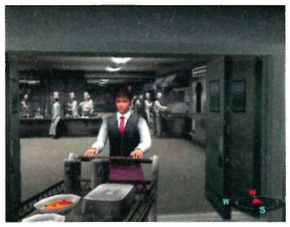
A) 1/2 **B)** 16 **C)** 5,690

TIE-BREAKER

Please complete the following tie-breaker in 15 words or less:

If I had a Hyundai Coupe SE the first thing I would do is...

INFO NUDGE



FLOODY HELL

Zettai Zetsumei Toshi 2: Itetsuita Kioku Tachi. Remember the name, people. That's what they (in this case 'they' being the Japanese) are calling the follow up to *SOS: The Final Escape*. But whereas that game had you trying to survive the aftermath of an earthquake, its sequel focuses on a devastating flood. Yes! Dying tragically in a natural disaster rules. No word on a UK publisher, but expect a deluge of info once someone signs *ZZT2:IKT*. Nice acronym, son.

TAKE MY PS2, PLEASE

Christ knows we've done some questionable things in the pursuit of a fireside wrestle, but check this out: a New York man is offering to give his PS2 (plus controller, memory card and three unspecified games) to anyone willing to set him up with a girl. Level of attractiveness isn't specified, but the console will be awarded to whoever makes the most 'successful' match. On that note, we're prepared to offer the contents of Frenchy's bulging games cupboard to anyone who can give us Elisha Cuthbert's phone number.

SAMURAI GAME #346 REVEALED!

So you're thinking, 'what's happening in Japan right now? A couple of days have passed since anybody announced a feudal swordplay game...' and then BONG, along comes *Genji*. Officially disrobed at the Tokyo Games Show, the obvious comparison is *Onimusha* – what with the demons, tight combat and pretty scenery. We'll have more when some bright spark at Sony UK decides it's worth punting out.

"A must-have for real fans." XBox World

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INFO NUDGE

PSYCHIC POWERS, YOU SAY?

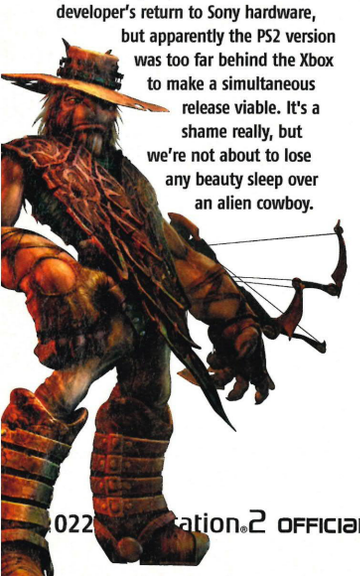
Psychonauts is the kind of game we couldn't make sense of in 1,000 words, much less the piteous space here. In short, it's a platformer starring a kid with psychic abilities (imagine *Psi-Ops*' little brother). It's out next year and is currently generating US buzz like a beehive being stamped on by cruel teenagers. Expect a full investigation shortly.

BAGGY JEANS FOR GOALPOSTS?

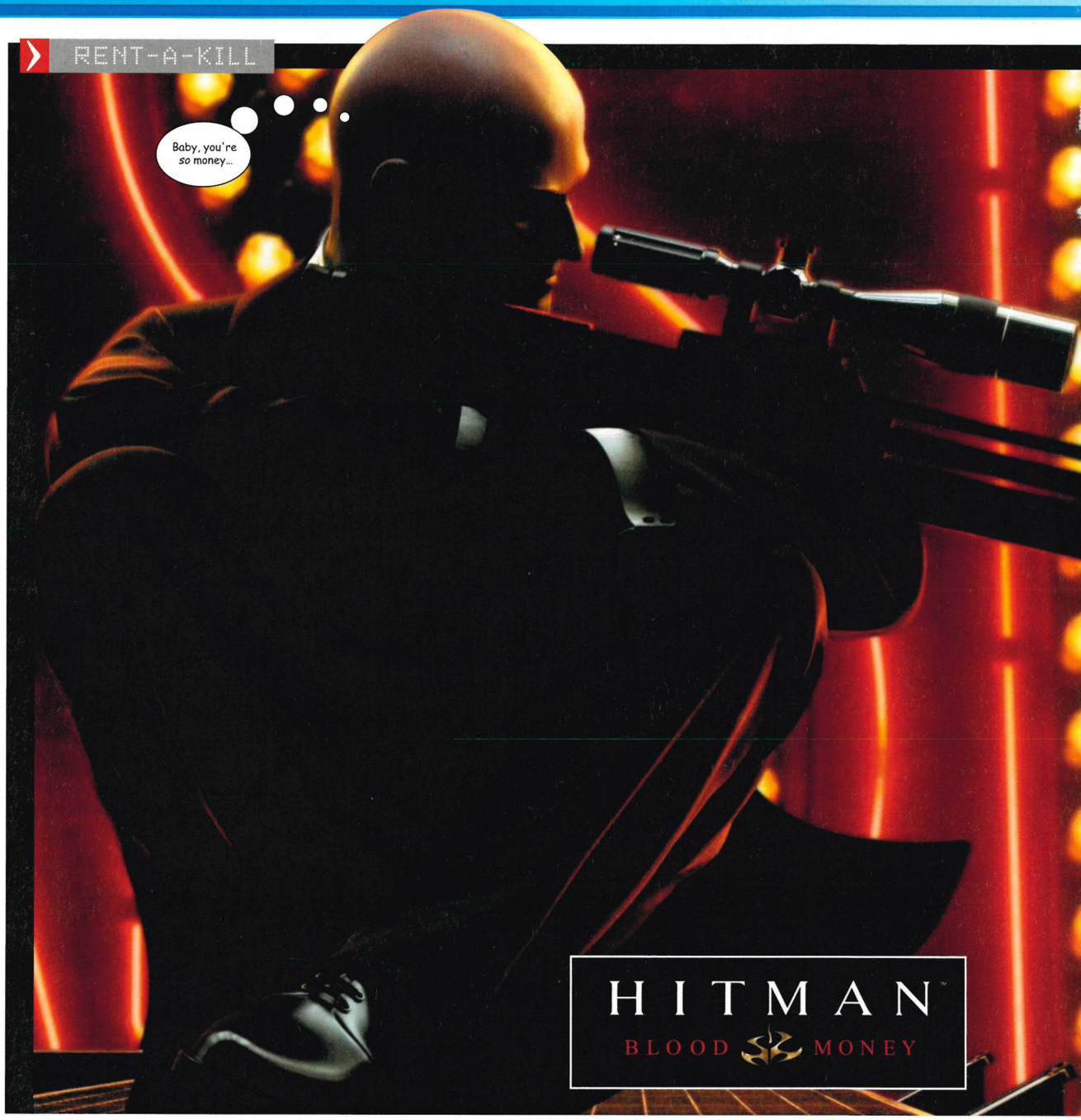
Ever played *FIFA* and thought, 'Y'know, it could really do with being fused with *Urban Freestyle Soccer*'? No, us neither, but someone at EA HQ has so *FIFA Street* is on the way next year. Billed as stripping football "to its core", it'll feature real footballers with specific skills playing four-on-four matches to get nuff respec'. Clearly what we'll get is Viera and co in baggy shorts and singlet bringing off mad skillz on graffitti-strewn inner-city streets. Yeah, cool...

ODDWORLD OBLITERATED

Like an ex-girlfriend who offers a mercy shag and then changes her mind at the last minute, Oddworld Inhabitants has decided not to bring its new game to PS2 after all. *Oddworld Stranger*, published by EA, was due to mark the developer's return to Sony hardware, but apparently the PS2 version was too far behind the Xbox to make a simultaneous release viable. It's a shame really, but we're not about to lose any beauty sleep over an alien cowboy.



RENT-A-KILL

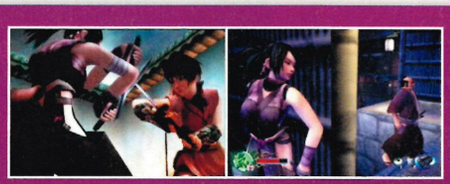


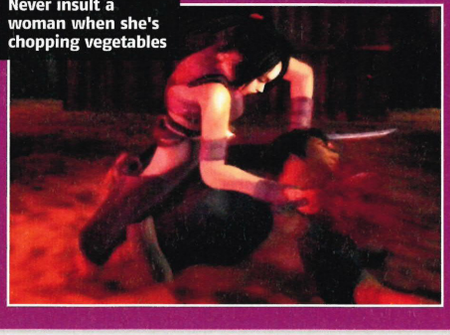
NEW NINJA EMERGES FROM THE SHADOWS

Original steath game **Tenchu** sneaks back up on us...

Time marches onwards. Monolithic, cruel and impervious to our hopes and dreams. And it would appear that time hasn't been kind to *Tenchu*. Back in the PSone's salad days, the original was a pioneer of stealth-based play – replacing Snake with sneaky ninja types. Sadly, the sequels that followed (*Birth Of The Assassins* and *Wrath Of Heaven*) didn't add much to the stalk-and-slash mix, and so sneak-minded gamers defected to the likes of *Splinter Cell* and *Hitman*.

But now *Tenchu*'s back for another stab at glory and looking... um, quite similar. Sega recently firmed up plans to publish the fourth game, *Fatal Shadows*, which stars returning assassinatrix Ayame, plus the newcomer, Rin. (What happened to the old star, Rikimaru? Did he die in the last one? Oh forget it...) Anyway, it's out next spring, the shots look impressively brutal and we're told there's far less trial and error involved. Which has to be a good thing, so let's drink a cup of rice wine to that. ■ TC





Never insult a woman when she's chopping vegetables

HITMAN FINALLY GETS PAID

only in... PlayStation 2 official magazine-uk

The world's first details on what to expect from baldy's next murder spree...

"Let's see now... there was poisoning the French ambassador and garrotting his wife, plus kicking the butler to death. Oh, and shooting a couple of bodyguards on the way out, which I'll do you for half price... all told that comes to 50 large ones, but I'll take 45 for cash. Probably best to avoid the taxman on this one. Now then, can I interest you in a two-for-one special on dead lawyers?"

The *Hitman* series has always made it clear its genetically engineered assassin is the best in the business – and therefore able to command premium whacking rates. What hasn't been so clear is what – beyond an entire wardrobe of bespoke suits – he does with the cash. Probably spunks the lot on expensive hair restoration treatments and self-help books for sociopaths.

Hitman: Blood Money, as the name suggests, is all about the Benjamins. Unlike this year's *Contracts*, which delivered extra graphical sheen but didn't really expand the experience, *Blood Money* is a full sequel – but this time you'll be paid for each successful assassination. We understand that there are going to be a number of things to spend your kill fees on, although exact specifics are tightly guarded at present. Our guess is that you'll be able to buy new weapons and upgrade your arsenal with scopes and silencers. There's also likely to be more inventive ways to empty your wallet. Again, this is pure speculation, but how about bribing cops, hushing up witnesses or hiring expensive call girls to numb the pain... the constant pain.

SHOT BY BOTH SIDES

But why bother spending when you could just murder everyone, right? Wrong. *Blood Money* is going back to basics, in the sense that going on a disgruntled IT worker-style rampage will be impossible. The emphasis is back on killing creatively and remaining undetected. In terms of plot, we're told the other operatives working for our hitman's agency are being eliminated, possibly by a rival organisation. When contact with the office is lost entirely, Agent 47 (for that is he) heads for the US and, judging from this exclusive bit of artwork, Las Vegas.

Our source at Eidos reveals that much of the gameplay takes place in the States, but there will also be missions set in Europe. We're also told that the game, running on a new version of Io's impressive Glacier engine, looks sensational. Better still, the suggestion is that *Blood Money* will be a much less linear experience – to some degree, the order you eliminate targets will be flexible, creating separate paths through the game. *Hitman: Blood Money* is due out next spring and we'll be paying top dollar for the first official screenshots very soon. ■ TC

THANKS UNCLE SEGA...

...it's *just* what we wanted; **another rally game** for PS2

Hang on one minute, though. With *Sega Rally 2005* we're talking about the resurrection of the rally franchise that started it all. Before *WRC*, before *Colin* even, *Sega Rally* introduced the coin-op masses to the joys of dusty knuckled stage mastery. Okay, so you raced against competitors as well as the clock, and the courses were optimised for speed not hardcore, technical virtuosity, but while purists may scoff, this was a sublime wedge of arcade racing that quickened the pulse and emptied the pockets.

All well and good, but why breathe new life into it now? Could it be a desire to test-run the new Automatic Course Generator feature that enables you to save your favourite, unique stages to share and revisit? Possibly. Could it be that since *Burnout 3* and *Need For Speed Underground* have rekindled a long sputtering fire for uncomplicated, addictive race action, rejuvenating *Sega Rally* seemed like a towering no-brainer? More likely. Then again, could it simply be that Sega is oblivious to the fate of *Driv3r*, another dormant classic that was prodded awake only to find it was just too damn late to make up for lost time? Sweet baby Jesus no. We hope not. ■ PF

mashed
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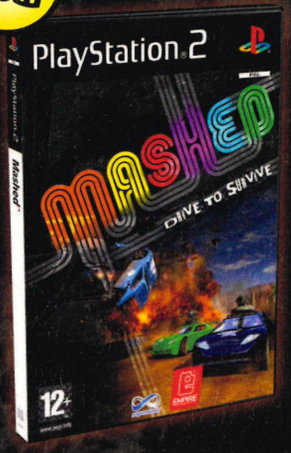

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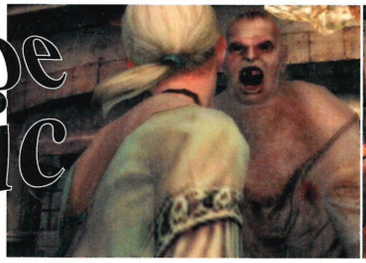
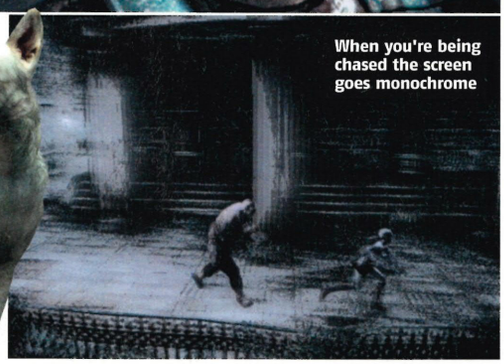
could be a classic



...IT'S THE GAME THEY'RE CALLING ONE VERY SCARED WOMAN AND HER DOG

Fiona silently prayed that she'd turned off her mobile...


When you're being chased the screen goes monochrome

HAUNTING GROUND

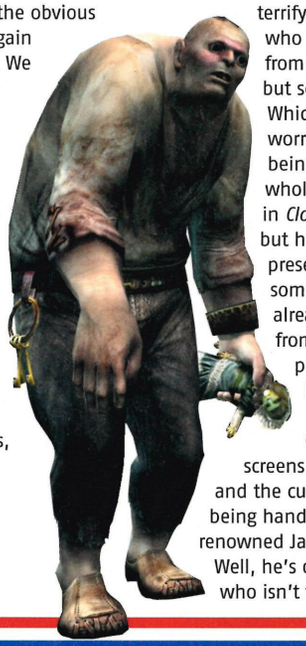
ETA: Early 2005

WHAT WE KNOW

With a roster that includes schizophrenic assassins, pint-sized superheroes and magical wolves, Capcom is starting to look like an increasingly eccentric – but nonetheless loveable – Japanese uncle. Take the company's latest foray into survival horror, for example. *Clock Tower 3* is the obvious touchstone because you again play a largely helpless girl. We say 'largely' because Fiona (who's cute like an iPod mini) is accompanied by an Alsatian called Hewie. At first, Hewie's reluctant to so much as fetch a stick, let alone attack the terrifying monsters that roam the castle which Fiona inexplicably finds herself in. Gradually though, the pair build a Turner & Hooch-style rapport and she can order the pooch to retrieve items, keep guard and 'sic balls!'

COULD BE A CLASSIC BECAUSE...

Fiona is the hottest horror starlet since *Silent Hill 3*'s Heather. More pertinently, the game has some intriguing tricks up its billowing skirt. When Fiona gets scared, the pad will vibrate to mimic Fiona's pounding heartbeat and colour also drains from the screen. To calm herself down, the poor flower must escape from her assailants (including the particularly terrifying Debilitas, who looks like Sloth from *The Goonies*, but scarier) and hide. Which is a slight worry, because being chased the whole time sucked in *Clock Tower 3*, but hopefully Hewie's presence – and some good buzz already coming from Japan – points to this being a deeper experience. Certainly these screens show promise, and the cut-scenes are being handled by a renowned Japanese director. Well, he's on imdb.com but who isn't these days? ■ **TC**



A *FINAL FANTASY* MUSICAL?

No, that would be stupid. So why does the new game, **Dirge Of Cerberus**, translate to 'love song by a three-headed helldog'?

Games aren't short of dark, broody heroes who fire more bullets than they do lines of dialogue. So why not add another to the mix, right? Never one to miss a trick when it comes to confusing spin-offs of its *Final Fantasy* saga, Square Enix has resurrected a character from *FFVII* for a new adventure.

Yep, you read that right: *Final Fantasy VII* is returning to PlayStation. The fanboys got their wish... well, uh, kinda. This new one is a side story, not an RPG sequel, and the star of the show is former second-fiddle character Vincent Valentine.

The story sees Vincent protecting a Gothic city under siege from a group of terrorists called Dirge Of Cerberus – which explains the silly name. Early footage shows Vincent patrolling the city wielding his trademark triple-barrel pistol. He's even got a red cape.

Sound familiar? Perhaps, but hopefully *Dirge* will be more than a riff on *Devil May Cry* timed to kickstart a *FFVII* revival along with the sequel film, *Advent Children* which is due on DVD in the first half of next year – the same time as *Dirge Of Cerberus*. ■ **MF**

Unlike the RPG series, *Dirge* is fast-paced action

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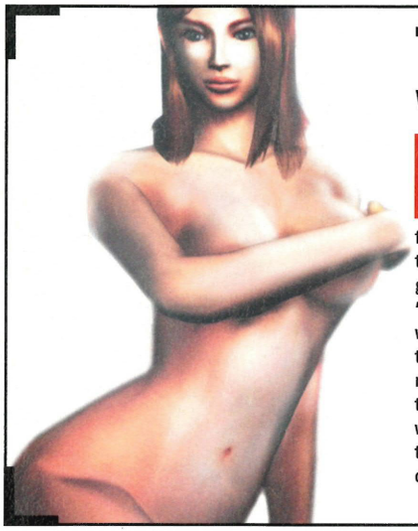
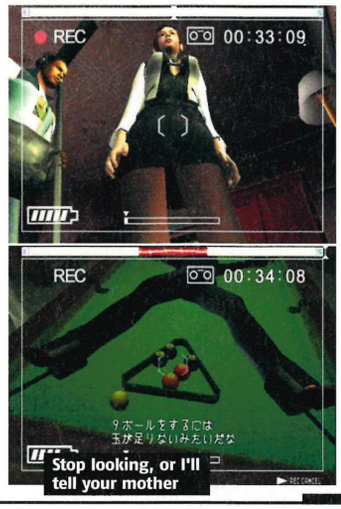


TOO HOT FOR THE UK?

Why only a crazy person would release **Michigan** over here...

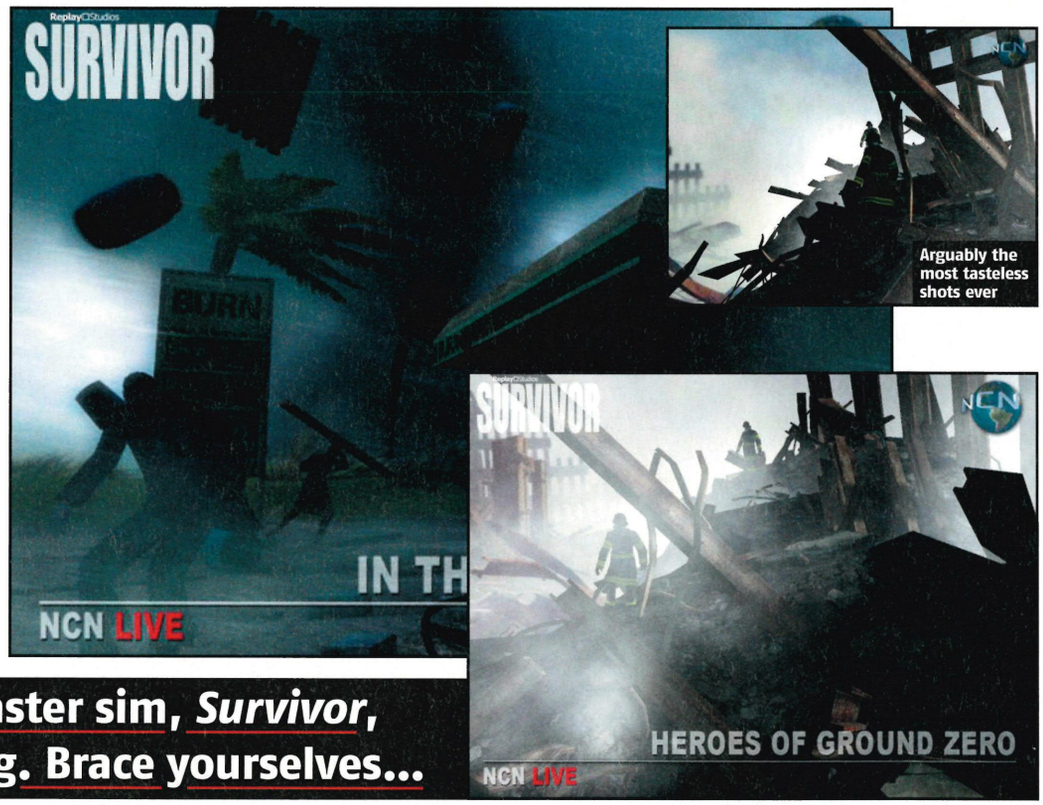
Four issues ago we introduced *Michigan* to you as a potential classic in waiting. Developed by Spike (the folk responsible for *Crimson Tears* and *Riding Spirits*), the title had all the hallmarks of a gusset-glimpsing reimagining of *Project Zero*'s 'capture the horror on film' gameplay, with a stiffening dose of moral dilemma to complement the shameless softcore rumpo aspect. As a news cameraman sent to cover an unfolding zombie disaster, would you help people in peril or film them getting minced? Ooh, what a dilemma that is. Yeah, right.

Well, in light of recent assets uploaded to the *Michigan* website (www.zaka.tv), the dilemma could prove to be academic at best. It turns out that the sauce-factor may be a notch or two higher than we anticipated. So much so, that the wallpapers of the game's (hem hem) professional news anchors relaxing after a hard day's newsgathering are pretty much all we *can* show you. In fact, if you're under 18 or easily offended by bad acting, questionable sexual practices or strong violence (often all at once), we recommend you should steer clear altogether. *Michigan* has no UK release date, and we don't expect to see EA snap it up any time soon. ■ **PF**



Stop looking, or I'll tell your mother

9/11 GAME IS NO JOKE



Arguably the most tasteless shots ever

Replay Studios' disaster sim, *Survivor*, is all kinds of wrong. Brace yourselves...

Where do you draw the line when it comes to presenting documented human tragedy in videogames? A glance at the shelves in the local EB suggest that if you're talking crippling conflicts, it's open season. WW1 and its 'sequel' WW2 are fair game, as are recent conflicts like Vietnam and the first Gulf War.

If we're talking about civilian tragedy, though, it can be a little harder to know when the line between gritty depiction and omigodchristalmighty is being transgressed. Let's try a few illustrative examples. Say you wanted to create a disaster survival game; would you include the following scenarios?

THE SINKING OF THE TITANIC (1912)

Hell, if James 'call me Mr Subtlety' Cameron can snag Oscar glory on the back of the disaster that killed 1,500 people, a game should be fine.

OPS2 INVESTIGATOR: PAUL FITZPATRICK

HIROSHIMA (1945)

Technically it's part of WW2, but we're still on dodgy ground here. 200,000 innocent civilians vaporised while they were fixing breakfast? Hmm, dodgy.

MEXICO CITY EARTHQUAKE (1985)

Oh no. This isn't right. 25,000 people died when an earthquake measuring an incredible 8.1 on the Richter scale devastated one of the most densely populated cities on earth. Can't we find something else?

HURRICANE ANDREW (1999)

23 people died and thousands were made homeless by the worst recorded hurricane to hit continental USA. It's only *five* years ago, people. Let's move on.

SHOPPING MALL FIRE, PARAGUAY (2004)

Sweet baby Jesus. At the start of August a fire swept through a mall in the city of Asuncion. Over 300 people died because the owner had earlier locked the emergency exits to prevent thieves entering. Jeez...

9/11 (2001)

You've got to be *@#&*$% kidding.

Pretty stomach churning, right? Well, here's the punch line: *Every* last one of these scenarios is currently lined up to appear in Replay Studios' upcoming PS2 disaster sim, *Survivor*. Don't believe us? Take a look at these early grabs. Incidentally, Replay Studios is currently looking for a publishing partner. Good luck with that, fellas...

Want to get closer to the horror? Check out www.replaystudios.de/survivor ■

MINI ME

PS2 GETS SLIMMER, SEXIER

Meet the latest addition to Sony's family. Go on, you can touch...

Rich insisted we waxed his legs for this photoshoot

Imagine if overnight your girlfriend or boyfriend (oh Christ, who are we kidding?) was replaced by a smaller, slimmer and unquestionably sexier model, possibly with a new socket. You would rightly feel a mixture of elation, hope and confusion. Such was the reaction here as Sony uncurtained the remodelled, smallified version of PS2.

"Everything we know is wrong," typed Frenchy on one of the exclusive forums he frequents. Hours later, Rich returned from London, having witnessed the device being birthed at Sony HQ. "Yeah, it looks pretty nice," he confirmed – arguably the most excited we'd ever seen him.

So what's in the box? Exactly the same stuff that's in your current model, only with the added bonus of an Ethernet adaptor built-in, meaning it's ready for network gaming 'out of the box'. Design-wise, the new PS2 is incredibly similar to the original machine – masculine charcoal black, grooves like a Bang & Olufsen toaster – only with a swanky flip-top disc mechanism, similar to the PSone. The real selling point, though, is the almost absurdly slimline size, made possible thanks to the technological alchemy of older big chips now being replaced by modern little ones.

The new machine – which is on sale now and will set you back around a ton (that's £100) – is 75% smaller than its predecessor and just 2.8cm thick. We've seen it for real and it's smaller than a collection of erotica or a pretty lady's ankle. Now the bad news: although your old joypads and memory cards are compatible, your multitap isn't. The prong is too fat, see? No matter, the new PS2 is still likely to find its way under a lot of decomposing evergreens this Christmas.

And hey, you might want to buy a new unit just to permanently house your copy of *GTA: San Andreas*. We've soldered ours shut. ■ TC

Kwik Fitz

He's rumoured up to the nines but he's only got time to write a line

CONFIRMED: The *Way Of The Samurai* sequel is set in the Wild West

RUMOURED: There's a *Red Dwarf* game on the way. Smeg

CONFIRMED: *King Kong* will be developed by the same team that made *Beyond Good & Evil*

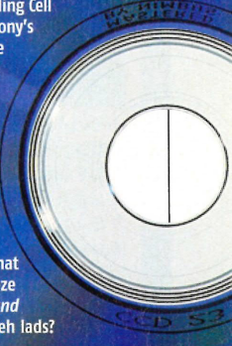
CONFIRMED: The next *Mortal Kombat* game will be called *Shaolin Monks*

PS3 IN 'REAL FACTS' SHOCKER

Supercomputer finished, enormo-discs confirmed... it's all here

Bespectacled engineers at IBM, Sony and Toshiba recently downed tools, lit cigarettes and phoned their long-suffering wives. "Darling, it's done," they collectively sighed. 'It' in this case being the faintly sinister-sounding Cell chip, tipped to be the brain of Sony's next console. Wading through the infogarble, what's clear is that Cell will be better at maths than God.

Meanwhile, Sony has also confirmed that PS3 games will come on Blu-ray discs. These glorified DVDs can store a whopping 54GB of data, which is roughly six times more than standard PS2 discs currently hold. The good news obviously being that Rockstar should be able to squeeze all of America into the next *Grand Theft Auto*. Best get cracking, eh lads?

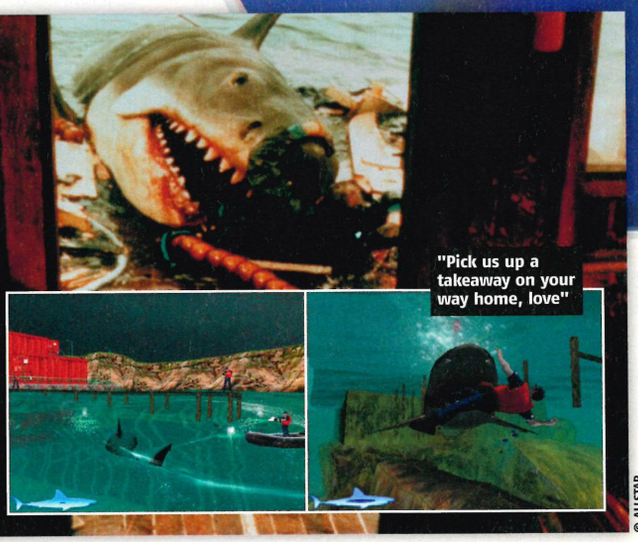


JAWS MAY LACK DEPTH

Sure, it looks nice, but **will there be any game** to get your teeth into?

You play the shark. Just let the implication sink in for a second. For the first, oh, three or four minutes it sounds absolutely magic – roaming the ocean, snub nose twitching as a droplet of human blood plunks into the water a couple of miles away and then speeding towards a tourist beach and munching toddlers like fleshy M&Ms. Really, what's not to like? Nothing. That's what. Particularly as the team at Appaloosa Interactive – who previously made *Ecco: The Dolphin*, which looked pretty but had annoying hippy tendencies, like the girl who works in our local delicatessen – is promising a 'dismemberment engine', with 25 severable locations to bite down on. Throw in buckets of blood and we could be talking *Manhunt* underwater. Or not...

Because after that heady first few minutes thinking about shredding windsurfing instructors, it strikes you: what else does a big fish do? The answer is solve 'action-based puzzles' and engage in 'multiple area boss battles'. Ak! More promisingly, we're told the game will feature scenes and character offshoots from the movie, which suggests the developer has given the gameplay a major overhaul since these shots were taken, when the game was unlicensed and known as *Sole Predator*. *Jaws* is currently without a publisher in the UK – embarrassing, even for a fish – but we'll be dipping a toe in as soon as someone lands the game, which they're sure to soon. ■ TC



"Pick us up a takeaway on your way home, love"

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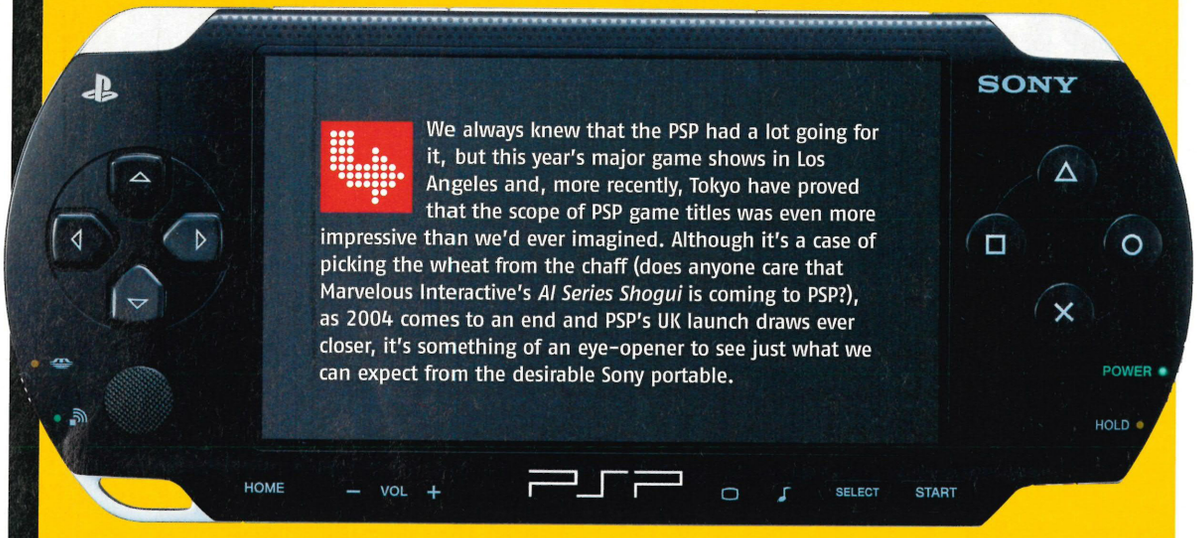
WHAT'S IN YOUR POCKET?

FEEL THE WIDTH...

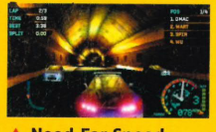
...and (mostly) the quality. **PSP** gets even more games



We always knew that the PSP had a lot going for it, but this year's major game shows in Los Angeles and, more recently, Tokyo have proved that the scope of PSP game titles was even more impressive than we'd ever imagined. Although it's a case of picking the wheat from the chaff (does anyone care that Marvelous Interactive's *AI Series Shogui* is coming to PSP?), as 2004 comes to an end and PSP's UK launch draws ever closer, it's something of an eye-opener to see just what we can expect from the desirable Sony portable.

RACING

- **WipEout Pure** (Updated PSone classic)
- **Tokyo Freeway Battling** (Japanese street racer)



▲ **Need For Speed Underground Rivals**
- **ATV Offroad Fury**
- **Ridge Racer**
- **GT4 Mobile** (Apparently a direct PS2 port)

ACTION

▲ **Dynasty Warriors**

▲ **Coded Arms** (Cool-looking Konami FPS)
- **Devil May Cry**

▲ **MediEvil** (Updated PSone title)
- **SOCOM: US Navy SEALs**
- **Spider-Man 2**
- **Tenchu**

STRATEGY/RPG

▲ **Metal Gear Acid** (A new card-based version)
- **Tales Of Eternia** (Namco RPG)

▲ **Armored Core: Formula Front** (Robot strategy)

▲ **YS: Ark Of Napishtim** (Konami RPG)
- **The Urbz**

SPORTS

- **PES** (Now officially confirmed)

▲ **Hot Shots Golf** (Sony's cute golf sim)

▲ **Gretzky NHL 2005**
- **NBA Street**
- **NFL Street**
- **Tony Hawk's Underground 2**

▲ **Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf**

▲ **Mobile Train Simulator**

PLATFORMER/ PUZZLE GAME

▲ **Ape Escape** (Like the original game)
- **Ape Escape Academics** (A party game spin-off)
- **BomberMan** (Mortar-themed puzzler)
- **Death Jr** (Sony character action)

▲ **Puzzle Bobble Pocket**

▲ **Lumines** (From the maker of *Rez*)
- **Jak And Daxter**

▲ **Puyo Pop Fever** (Like PS2 game)

PSP CAPTION COMPETITION!

Back by popular demand!

So, there you are at the Tokyo Game Show, minding your own business, when this grinning sailor girl pops up out of nowhere and waves a PSP in your face. All very well, but what's she saying? Send your offering to: PSP Caption Compo, *OPS2* and the rest of the usual address. The winner gets a prize. But not a PSP, 'cos we haven't got one yet.

HI SCORE

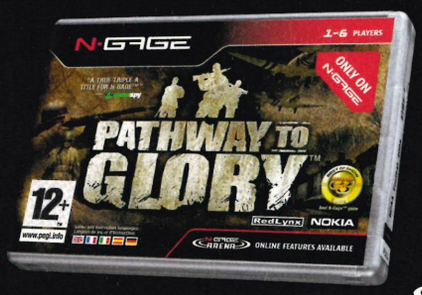
- *Mercenaries.* Imagine Rockstar doing airstrikes and artillery, but with crackerjack visuals
- Tim sitting one table across from Francis Ford Coppola in a Chinese restaurant
- The *PES4* obsession rages unabated – we've started saving passing moves to memory card
- Frenchy being shown the map maker in *'Splitters 3* while EA wasn't looking. Much more next month...
- *Survivor.* so morally indefensible we initially thought it was a hoax. Game of the month, then

IN THE FADE

- *Playboy: The Mansion* delayed until next year. Our softcore empire will have to wait
- Impossible deadlines meaning we have to stand in line for *San Andreas* just like everyone else
- *Oddworld Stranger* bites the dust. Could've been a contender, but it's dead to us now
- Being constantly moaned at about our review scores... Hey, make better games, maybe?
- No online play and it's slipped to January. *Gran Turismo 4* just won't come easy

GAME OVER

Introducing 6 new ways to challenge your friends



Recruit your mates in
Pathway to Glory

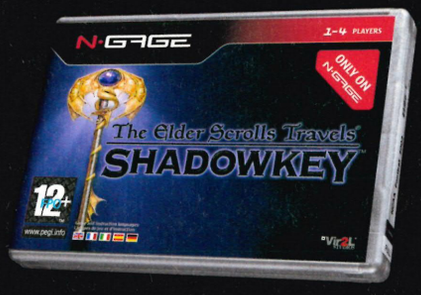
N-GAGE ARENA

Tear up the streets in
Asphalt: Urban GT™

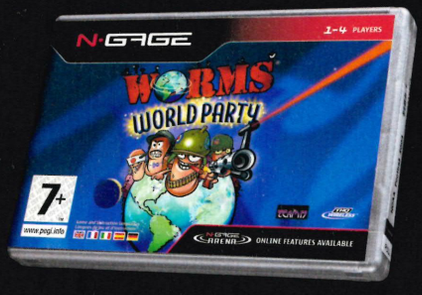
N-GAGE ARENA

Conquer the world in
Pocket Kingdom: Own the World

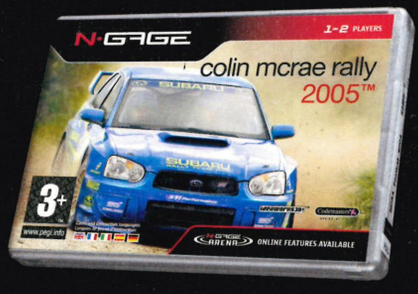
N-GAGE ARENA



Fight the forces of evil in
The Elder Scroll Travels: Shadowkey

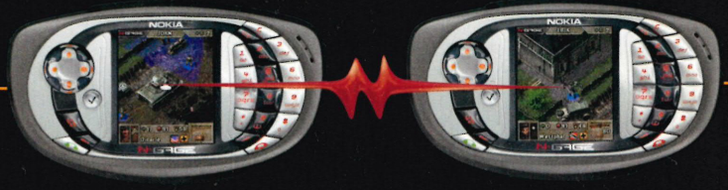


Wipe out your opponents in
Worms World Party



N-GAGE ARENA

Put your foot to the floor in
Colin McRae Rally 2005



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MOST WANTED

UK GAMES AWARDS 2004

CATEGORY WINNERS

FIND OUT
The most wanted game of 2004
by visiting GamesRadar.com or www.goldenjoystick.co.uk
at 5pm on 5 November

Gentlemen. Ladies. Pray silence. The waiting is finally at an end. The wax seals on the Most Wanted UK Games Awards 2004 ballot boxes have been solemnly broken during a dawn ceremony presided over by games-loving druids, and the votes within counted, checked, made into elaborate paper aeroplanes, smoothed out, counted and checked again. And only now can we reveal the final Category Winners that you voted for.

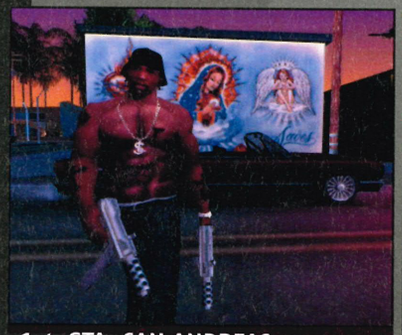
What do the results tell us? For one thing, that you lot love your games and care about letting us know. The response has been absolutely staggering. So thank you, all of you, for voting (and if you did, you were entered into a prize draw – the winner of which will be notified by post very soon).

Moreover, the results reveal that when it comes to stuffing your PS2's disc tray with gut-busting gaming come Christmas time, the title that gets your juices flowing like the Niagara Falls and sets your anticipation meters to overload is... *GTA: San Andreas*. Not an enormous surprise we grant you, but what were you expecting? *Fight Club*? And as for second place, it seems that not even the threat of 974-minute-long cut-scenes can dent the daddy of sneak-'em-ups' appeal with the console masses. All hail *Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater*, for you are truly a pompous yet utterly brilliant game. As for third, fourth and fifth. Hey, you can read. Take a look for yourself.

Of course, while all these individual categories have their very own winners, there's also the top accolade of the single Most Wanted UK Game 2004 award still up for grabs – and you can find out who the eventual winner is by logging on to either of the www.gamesradar.com or www.goldenjoystick.co.uk websites at 5pm on 5 November. A fiver says the winner is *Hot Wheels Stunt Track Challenge*...

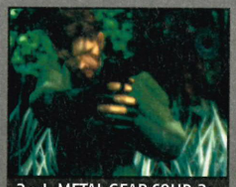
gamesradar.com

PLAYSTATION 2 GAMES

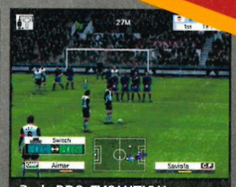


1st GTA: SAN ANDREAS

You want it, we want it and by the time you read these words you'll be able to buy it. Will it be good? Yep, you can bet your lungs on it.



2nd METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER



3rd PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4

4th KILLZONE

5th GRAN TURISMO 4

DRIVING GAME

1st GRAN TURISMO 4

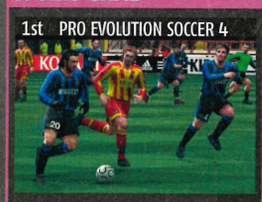
2nd Need for Speed Underground 2
3rd OutRun 2
4th Forza Motorsport
5th Richard Burns Rally

FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER

1st HALO 2

2nd Half-Life 2
3rd GoldenEye: Rogue Agent
4th Killzone
5th Doom 3

SPORTS GAME



1st PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4

2nd Championship Manager 5
3rd Football Manager 5
4th WWE SmackDown! Vs RAW
5th WWE WrestleMania XXI

ACTION / ADVENTURE GAME

1st GTA: SAN ANDREAS

2nd Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater
3rd Resident Evil 4
4th Prince Of Persia 2
5th Zelda: Four Swords Adventure

STRATEGY / RPG GAMES

1st SIMS 2

2nd LOTR: Battle Of Middle Earth
3rd Warhammer 40K: Dawn of War
4th RollerCoaster Tycoon 3
5th Rome: Total War

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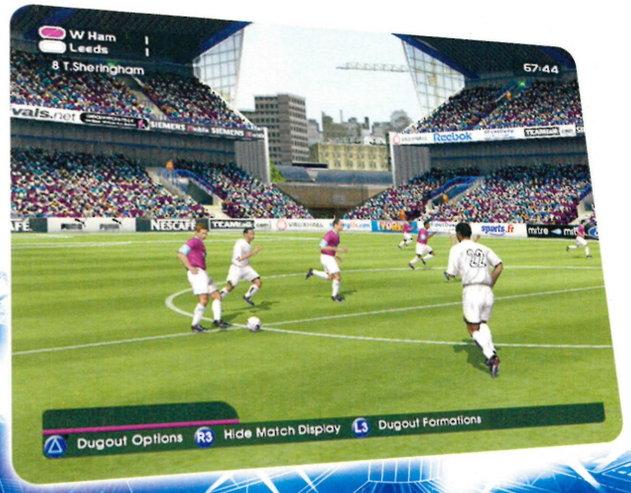

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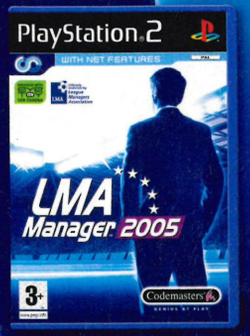

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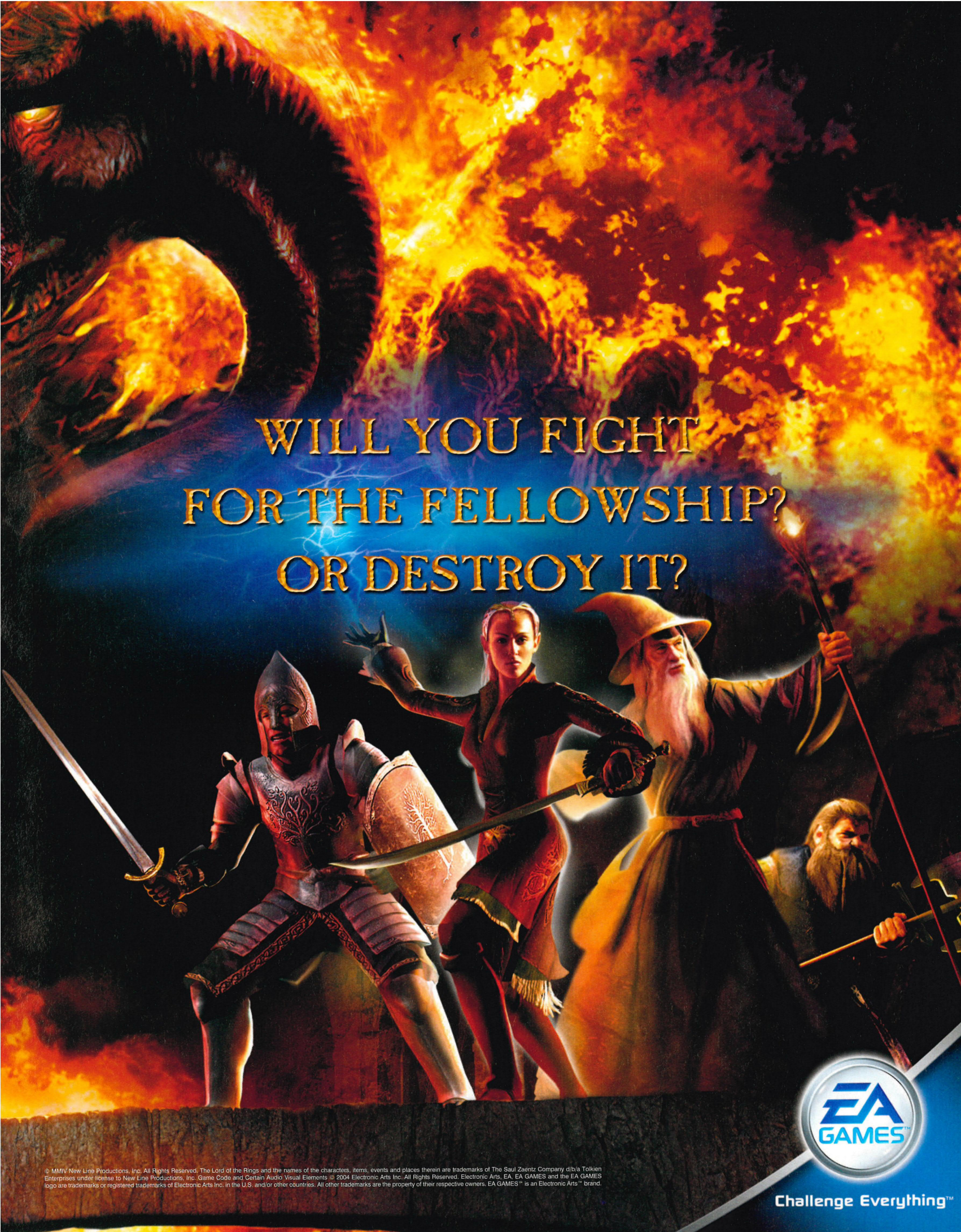
PlayStation.2 GAME BOY ADVANCE XBOX NINTENDO GAMECUBE NEW LINE CINEMA



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ON A DIFFERENT LEVEL

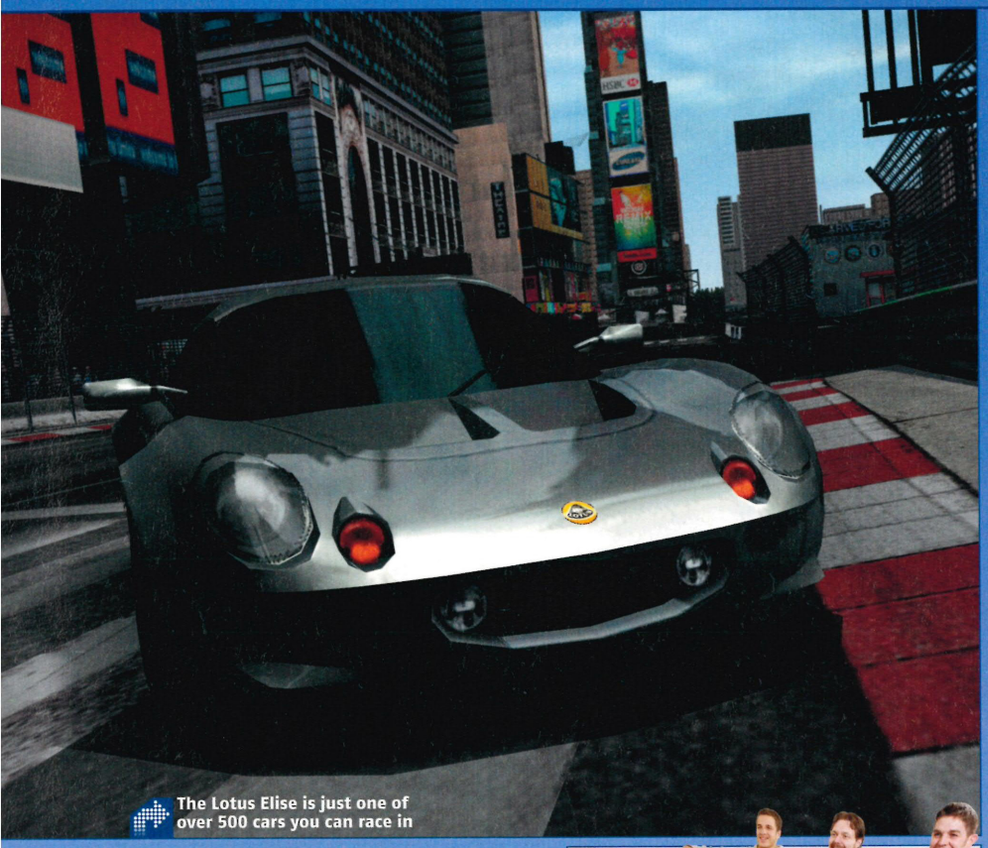
WORDS: RICHARD KEITH PHOTOGRAPHY: GAVIN ROBERTS

After a three-year wait, Gran Turismo 4 is now only a couple of months away. But with the online mode stripped out and *Burnout 3* and *NFSU2* around, will it still bethe world's best racer? We went looking for answers with the OPS2 Games Tester panel

Plenty has changed in the three years since *GT3: A-Spec* appeared to universal acclaim, and while *GT* overlord Kazunori Yamauchi has been roaming the world looking at shiny cars things have moved on. In the past year, *NFS Underground* and *Burnout 3* have turned racing games from a dying breed waiting for the next *GT* into possibly the most exciting genre around. So with the release of *GT4* set for January – and the exclusive review in *OPS2* – we thought we'd see what our latest panel of Games Testers would make of the newly online-less driver. We brought in three eager readers to *OPS2* Towers, stuck them in a small room with nothing but a sofa, a big TV and an early copy of *GT4*. Then we sat back and waited to see what the lads would think. Will this be the big comeback or has Kazanori left it too late?

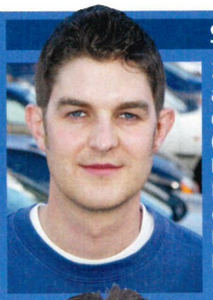
The Test Situation

The panel tested an early pre-preview version of *Gran Turismo 4* with only nine tracks and just over 150 cars to choose from. This is the code *OPS2* was given to preview the game and was more than enough for the lads to get a flavour of the game. The final game will obviously have far more cars and tracks.



The Lotus Elise is just one of over 500 cars you can race in

THE PANEL

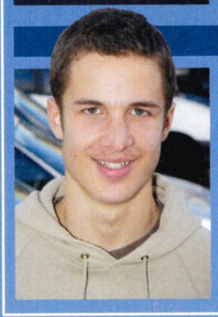


Sam Bainton

27-year-old Sam quit his job as a trainee "actuary" (don't ask, it's very dull – which is why he quit) and spent most of the past year in New Zealand and Canada snowboarding (where he bought a PS2, good lad).
Favourite game: *GTA3* or *Pro Evolution Soccer 3*, but he likes "all games, except management". Probably why he's currently unemployed, then...
Playing now: *Burnout 3* ("fun, fun, fun")
Driving knowledge: Been driving for seven years, playing *Burnout 3* for a month and took *A-Spec* though its paces.

Martyn Bowell

Somerset born and bred, Martyn is a supervisor at specialist model car maker Brooklin Models. He plays the bass (that's the musical instrument, not the fish), has unfortunate facial hair and shares a passion for snowboarding with fellow panellist, Sam.
Favourite game: Doesn't have one.
Playing: *The Getaway* ("for the first time")
Driving knowledge: Been legally behind the wheel for six years, loved *A-Spec*, *Burnout 3* and the *McRae* games, but thought *NFSU* was a bit too "boy racery" for him.



Lewis Belizaire

The youngster of the panel, 16-year-old Lewis hails from the home of *OPS2*, Bath. An A-level student at college in nearby Bristol, Lewis is a relative newcomer to *OPS2*, with just a year's experience behind him.
Favourite game: *Tekken*
Playing: *Burnout 3* ("entertaining to play *and* watch")
Driving knowledge: Although too young to drive himself, young Lewis has a wealth of gaming experience on the road, including *A-Spec*, *McRae*, *Burnout 3*, the "impressive" *Need For Speed Underground* and more.

ARRIVALS

"Where is everyone?"

Sam was first here. In fact, Sam got to the office before anyone else from the magazine team and had to wait in reception for Rich to arrive and let him in – not far behind was the already enthusiastic Martyn. Both were briefly allowed into the hallowed arena that is the *OPS2* floor, before being whisked up to the test area room for a day of intense *GT4*-ing. Lewis, who had to go to college first, arrived a little later, but the trio were soon in place on the sofa and learning just why *GT4* developer Polyphony thought people should play *Gran Turismo 4: Prologue* before trying out the full game.

GETTING STARTED

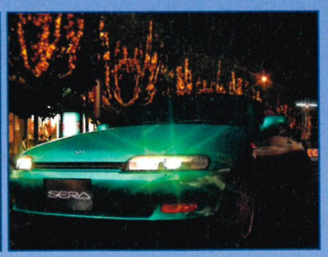
"It was so gorgeous I parked up to look at the views"

First impressions

Martyn: **** me! How good looking? The visuals are the first thing to hit you. Reflections on the cars look great and the animation's super smooth. The animated crowd is a nice touch, too – it adds to the realism.
Sam: The first thing I'd say is: don't go straight into *Gran Turismo 4* from *Burnout 3*. That's what I did and I was slamming into walls left, right and centre on my first few goes.
Martyn: The first impression is all about the looks. Far-reaching views and no pop-up so far. Details like the road-side dust look realistic. It's all as wonderful as ever.
Sam: The looks are unbelievable. It's very fast and like Martyn says, there's no trace of pop-up. The Grand Canyon course was so utterly gorgeous I had to park up at the side to look at the view.
Lewis: The courses look great and the cars are amazing for sure, but it's the realism of the handling that impresses me. It's very realistic – you have to brake a really long way in advance.
Sam: Absolutely. The handling is pure simulation, but then that is what *GT* is all about. At the moment it's very, very difficult, but from my previous experience on *GT3*, I know that patience and time bring great rewards. It doesn't have an equal on the simulation front, but arcade racing fans probably won't have the patience to stick with this as it's *seriously* tough.
Martyn: The handling is very unforgiving – one mistake and you're off – and racing lines have to be followed. Braking needs to be done in advance. And don't turn off the traction control!

Comparisons

Martyn: I'm glad to say that it's a step up from *A-Spec* in every respect.



Sam: We couldn't tinker with the cars in the version we were playing, but it seemed like *A-Spec* with bells on, taking things to another level.
Lewis: It outclasses all the other *Gran Turismos* easily with its graphics, choice of cars and scenery. It's also a lot harder.

It doesn't have an equal as a simulation, but arcade fans might not have the patience to stick with it

Best bit so far

Sam: The difference in handling between the different vehicle types.
Martyn: Good choice of cars – I like racing the old '70s and '80s ones. And this is only half of them, you say?
Lewis: The Grand Canyon course.

Best track:

Martyn: The Nurburgring, because of the sheer scale of it!

Lewis: Grand Canyon – completely awesome and great views, too!

Sam: Nurburgring. It's 20km long for goodness sake!

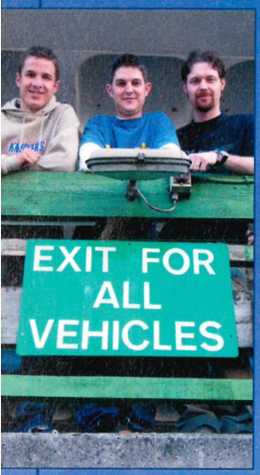
THE CHALLENGES

"That makes me the Mummy"

After lunch at the *OPS2* café and a few photos across the road in the car park, the lads were back in the room. This time, though, they had a steering wheel, the lights out and a challenge or two to take on...

Challenge one

First of all, our resident *Turismo* expert, Mental Ben, set a time on the Tsukuba circuit and gave the lads 30 minutes to beat it.
TIME TO BEAT: 1:10.895



FIRST ROUND
Martyn: 1:13.609 – Immediately complains that Sam had been playing the game before he arrived.
Lewis: 1:13.486 – The quietly confident Lewis beats Martyn's first try.
Sam: 1:13.105 – Sam is the fastest of the three.

SECOND ROUND
Martyn: 1:12.226 – Fastest time so far. "Who's the Daddy? Oh, I guess it would be Ben. So that makes me Mummy."
Lewis: 1:12.622 – Hangs too close to the grass on the side of the track and when he comes off, tries for a shortcut that doesn't really work.
Sam: 1:11.890 – Again, fastest.

THIRD ROUND
Martyn: 1:12.362 – As Martyn races, Sam mentions that they'd been giving Lewis some tips. Martyn thought he said "turps" and starts talking about poisoning the competition...
Lewis: 1:13.900 – As the others get better, Lewis just can't get under 1:12

Ben then decided to show off and beat his own challenge, completing it with four seconds to spare

Sam: 1:12.237 – Starts chatting about why *PES* is better than *FIFA* and loses concentration.

FOURTH ROUND
Martyn: 1:12.395 – A fast lap, but it could have been better as he's too busy telling the other cars to get out of his racing line and messes it up on the final corner.
Lewis: 1:15.595 – Lewis' last real attempt is dire. He can't keep up the consistency at all.
Sam: 1:10.433 – Fastest lap and beats Ben's challenge lap by 0.4 of a second.

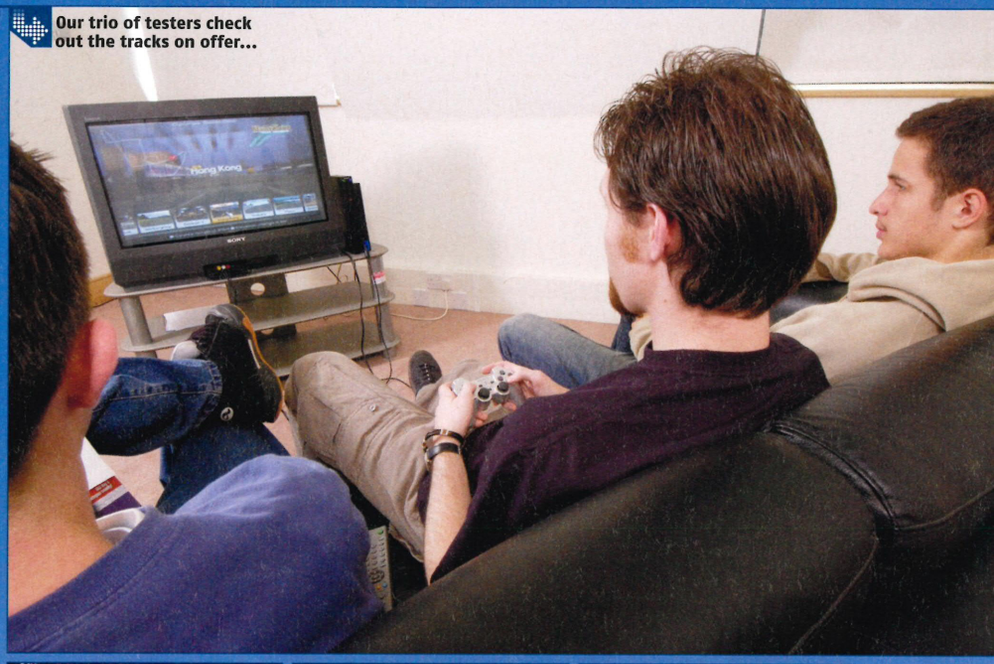
For a slower pace, why not take the Lupo for a spin?

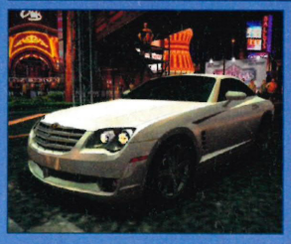
So Sam cleared up on the first challenge, although Ben was critical of his narrow entries into the corners that cost him time. Martyn was second, but showing a few flaws in his technique – often using the opposing cars to bounce his way round a corner. And while Lewis was last, he'd had less time to practice than the other two and that, as was becoming very obvious, is a key factor with *Gran Turismo 4*.

Challenge two

This time the lads had to complete two laps in under two minutes and were promised something from the prize cupboard if they could manage it.

First off was a Clio Sport, but it proved impossible – even for Ben. So they were given a Nismo-tuned Nissan Skyline, which was closer but still too hard. Finally, Ben brought out a seriously tuned race-spec GT car.

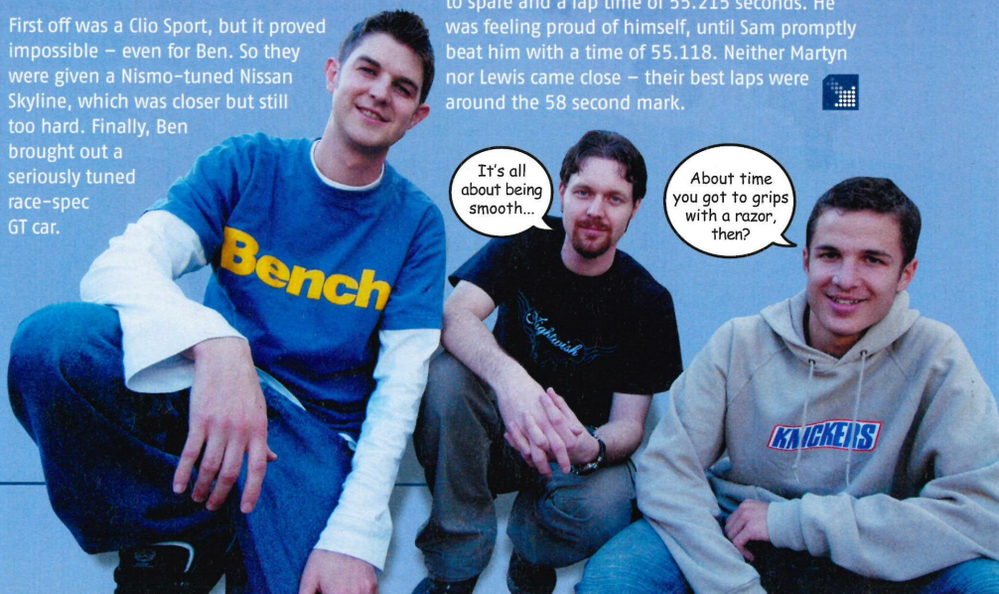

Our trio of testers check out the tracks on offer...



The rallying is "just as good as *Colin*" reckoned our lads

Martyn and Sam were pretty close with their first attempts. Lewis was having trouble with the power – the car was very fast and easy to lose control of. Sam came within a second of completing the challenge, then Martyn completed it first, Sam second. Lewis was close – only four seconds off.

Ben then decided to show off and beat his own challenge, completing it with four seconds to spare and a lap time of 55.215 seconds. He was feeling proud of himself, until Sam promptly beat him with a time of 55.118. Neither Martyn nor Lewis came close – their best laps were around the 58 second mark.



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From Chris Carter, creator of The X-Files™

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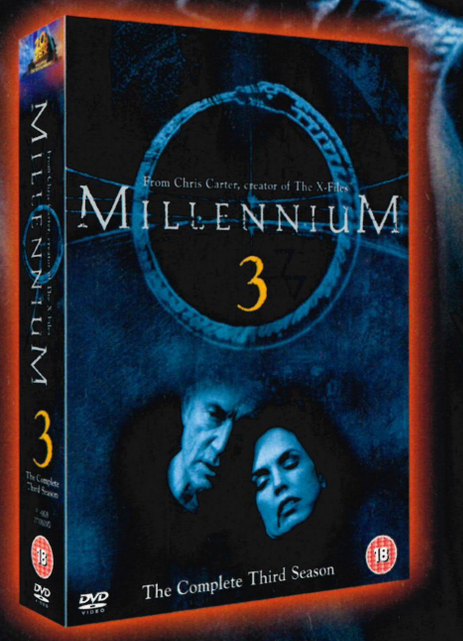

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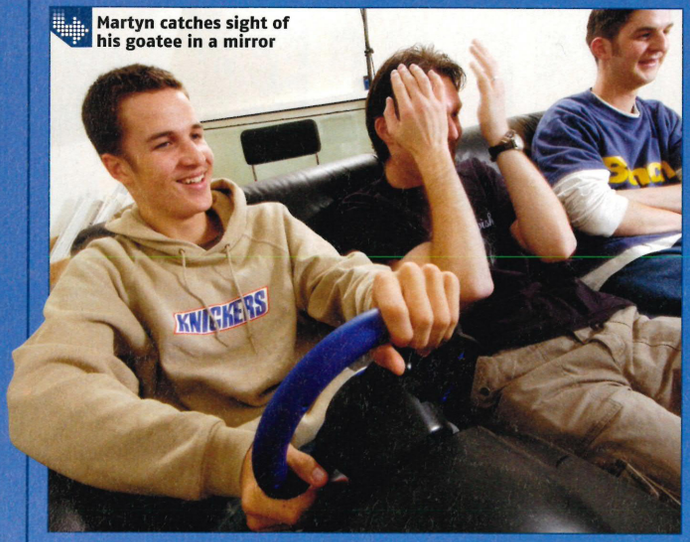
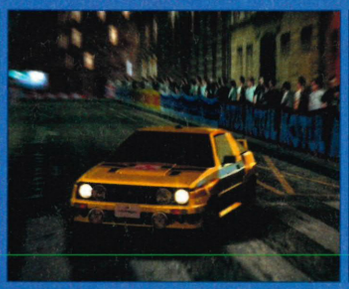
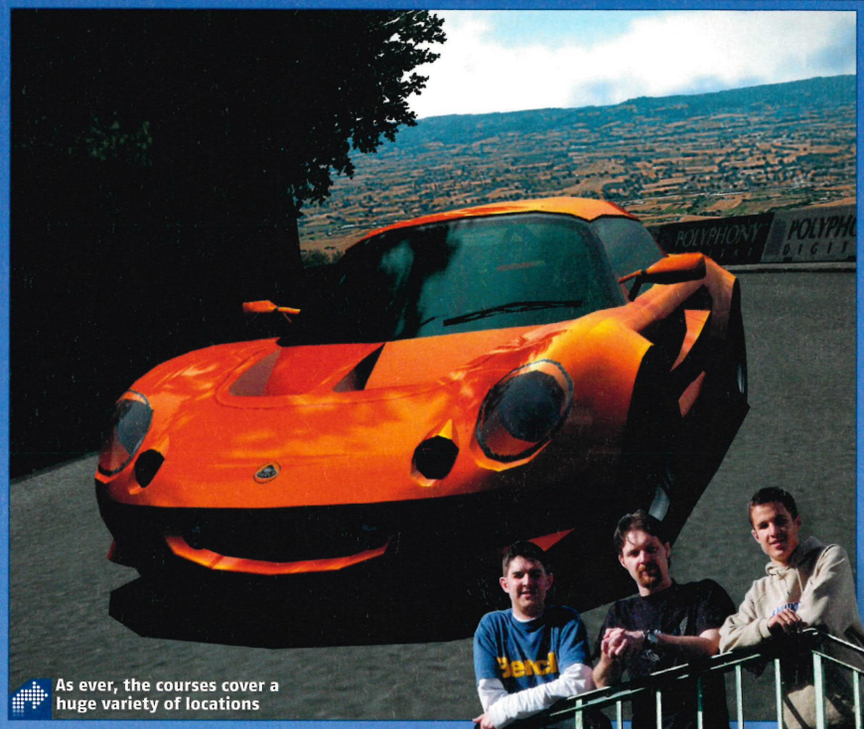


Martyn catches sight of his goatee in a mirror





As ever, the courses cover a huge variety of locations

AT THE END OF THE DAY

"It's definitely the best-looking PS2 game ever!"

What did you like about *Gran Turismo 4*?

Martyn: The graphics! I think the way the spectators and photographers move is great and it's also nice to see a driver in some soft tops. The city courses are challenging and, oh, did I mention the graphics?

Lewis: The realism, the scenery, the graphics on the cars. The total simulation!

Sam: The superb draw distance (with absolutely no pop-up whatsoever) and the excellent choice of cars you have, from real slow skips on wheels to raw pace supercars. Oh, and the handling is magnificent and very different from car to car. It's also the best-looking PS2 game ever – just don't expect to be driving with any sense of style for a few hours.

It looks phenomenal, especially with the bonnet-cam view, which is as photo realistic as I've ever seen

What didn't you like?

Martyn: No damage and some tracks are a little 'brake, rant, brake, rant, crash'. [No, we're not sure what he meant either.]

Lewis: No damage! Also it was perhaps a little hard to control in places.

Sam: Yep, it's the lack of damage again. Also, although brake and accelerate are analogue, it's very hard to get consistency between zero and full power.

How does it compare to other driving games?

Martyn: It's the Daddy, the Big Kahuna. For arcade style, choose *Burnout 3*, for the best drive ever, choose *Gran Turismo 4*!

Sam: Disregarding *A-Spec*, there's nothing like it. It's so different from a *Burnout* or a *Need For Speed*, that it's almost a different genre.

Lewis: It's certainly more of a challenge than any other driving game I've played, and that includes *A-Spec*.

What three words would you use to describe *GT4*?

Sam: Beautiful, deep and HARD!

Lewis: Realistic, challenging and awesome.

Martyn: Oh. My. God!

THE VERDICT

"It's a lot harder than *GT3: A-Spec*"

Martyn: It's a lot harder than *A-Spec* – a bad thing to start with, but should prove more reliable in the end. My last words on the subject: Hurry up and release it!

Lewis: It's certainly a lot harder than the other *Gran Turismos*, but it's still the best driving game I've ever played.

Sam: It's definitely harder than *A-Spec* – the handling is *so* unforgiving. The cars look incredible – aficionados will probably recognise them down to the last wheel nut! The real world settings are very authentic – racing down the Champs Elysee or through New York is brilliant. Finally, it looks phenomenal, especially with the bonnet-cam view, which is as photo realistic as I've ever seen. Is there anything missing? Don't think so... except naked women, perhaps.

So they came, they played, they had to play again to get any good and then they left – fulfilled in their desire to be an *OPS2* Tester and happy that all is well with *Gran Turismo 4*. Bring on the review...

Favourite car

Martyn: For looks, it had to be the Plymouth Cuda. For driving, the Aston Martin Vanquish

Lewis: Castrol Supra – I've used it in every *GT*!

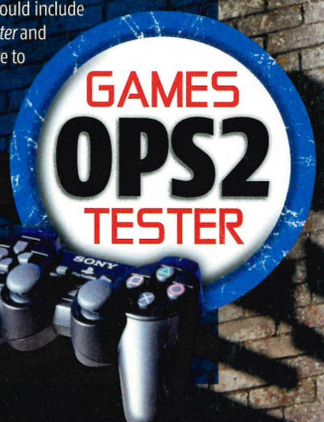
Sam: Aston Martin Vanquish – I'd sell my own grandmother just to sit in one

How To Be An *OPS2* Games Tester

Fancy testing a game months before it's out? Read on...

Yes, we're still looking for testers for *OPS2* Game Tester panels. Upcoming games could include *Metal Gear Solid: Snake Eater* and *TimeSplitters 3*. All you have to do is send an email (or a letter, if you must) to the usual address and make sure it's marked '*OPS2* Games Tester Panel'.

You have to tell us your age, full contact details and your availability (if you don't you won't get picked). And then be patient...



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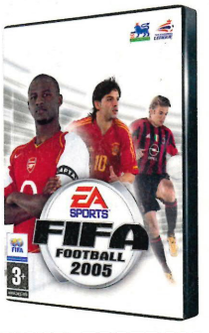

FLUID FOOTBALL

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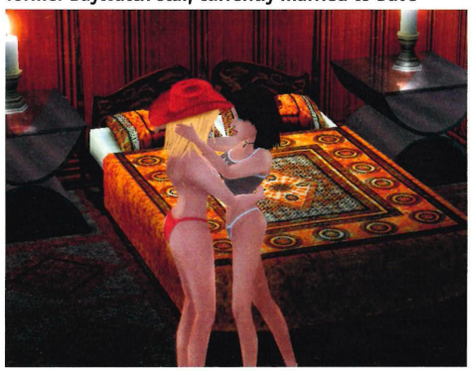
"WANT TO DATE ME?"

PLAYBOY PLAYMATE NATALIE DENNING REQUESTS YOUR COMPANY...

'There ain't no party like an S-Club party!" trilled Tina, Bradley, Hannah, John, Rachel, Paul and [shiver] Jo. And the doomed teenyboppers were absolutely right. For starters, there's the alluring prospect of Playboy parties – which anecdotal evidence suggests are attended by significantly higher wattage stars and enough denuded models to make you and the next five generations of male children in your family go blind. *Playboy*, the magazine, launched in 1953 bedecked with snaps of Marilyn Monroe in the raw – and ever since Hugh Hefner has been the host with the most. Now, thanks to the game, *Playboy: The Mansion*, we're giving you the chance to enjoy an agonisingly real glimpse into what Hef's life must be like.

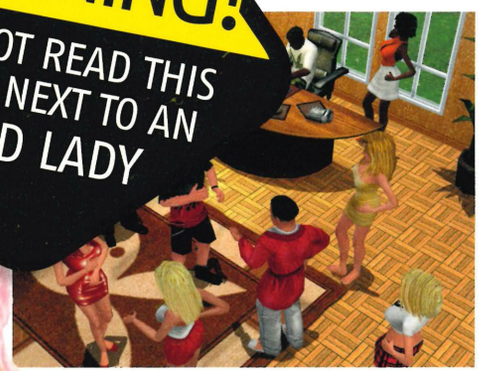
Obviously, we can't let you 'entertain' the Dahm triplets in his grotto. That would breach all kinds of regulations. But we are offering one lucky reader the chance to enjoy a luncheon date with Ms Natalie Denning. She's Miss Playboy TV UK and, as you may have guessed, is the fetching lady who adorns these pages. The 'date' will occur in December and take place in that there London. To be in with a chance of winning the prize all you have to do is tell us **which former Baywatch star, currently married to Dave Navarro, features in the game** (see terms and conditions below for details on how to enter).



We've also got ten copies of the game for runners-up. Ah yes, the game. Think *The Sims* but with a lot more emphasis on throwing debauched social events (orgies, but with better food) while running a flourishing softcore empire. Obviously. Starting off with a comparatively small mansion and one potential Playmate, the young Hugh commences his plans for world grumble domination.

PUSH HER BUTTONS

As with *The Sims*, success is a matter of juggling a range of meters relating to character's emotions, the mansion's décor and so on... However, unlike *The Sims*, Hef's social options range from 'smoke cigar' through 'intimate caress' all the way up to 'make love on the sofa'. We've yet to discover an 'ask girls to kiss each other' button, but we're willing to bet Matt Dillon's career that it's there somewhere. The game charts Hef's entire career, meaning that by the end you should have a mansion the size of Balmoral and a body like a toad trapped in the noonday sun. Along the way you'll shoot reams of centrefolds and covers. You also have to hire journos to pen those important purchase-justifying features. Like working here, really... but with a lot less angry men. To surmise, then: if you've ever found yourself secretly hunting for a code that removes the muff-concealing pixels in *The Sims*, then this – friend – is your game. ■



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DO NOT READ THIS PAGE NEXT TO AN OLD LADY

Terms and conditions: Send your answers to 'Natalie Denning's my missus', *OPS2*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW, or via email to ps2compos@futurenet.co.uk, remembering to put 'Natalie Denning's my missus' in the subject line. Entries to reach us by 1 December 2004. No purchase necessary. Entrants must be 18 or over. Competition only open to UK residents. No correspondence will be entered into. No employees of Future Publishing, Ubisoft, Sony or any affiliated company may enter. No cash alternative is offered to this prize. If prize becomes unavailable, we reserve the right to replace it with another of equal value. Multiple entries will be disregarded. We will not advise non-winners of the result. Normal competition rules apply. We will accept no responsibility for entries lost in the post. The Editor's decision is final.

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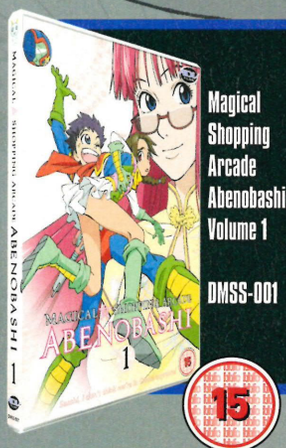

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DMK-002

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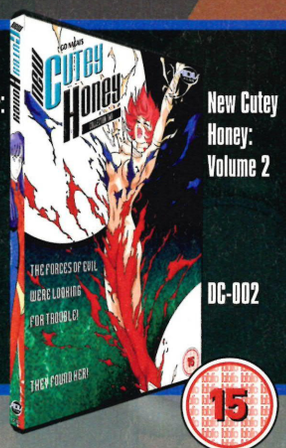

New Cutey Honey: Volume 2

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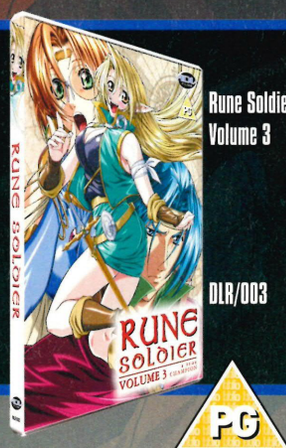
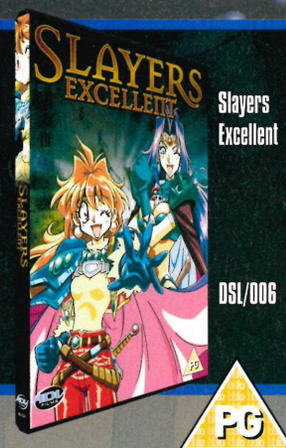


Rune Soldier: Volume 3

DLR/003

PG



Slayers Excellent

DSL/006

PG

CHECK OUT THESE OTHER HOT TITLES ALSO ARRIVING IN NOVEMBER!

ADV FILMS

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Final Fantasy Unlimited

whatever turns you on!

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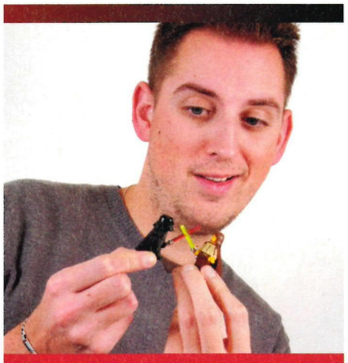
monitor

WE... LIKE... BIG... GAMES AND WE CANNOT LIE...

WELCOME TO MONITOR

Like a departure lounge for PS2 games flying in first class



Christmas is like *so* over. My job as skipper of the Monitor section means I'm always looking to the future, constantly moving forwards... y'know, like a shark. But for games. Consequently, I write this bloated on turkey sarnies and luxury Stilton – having held my own festive dinner two days ago. With that out of the way I'm free to concentrate all my attention on next year's PS2 line-up. Got a mate who bangs on about how original games are dead? Just point him in our direction...

Crammed into this month's section you'll find mud-slathered hotties, tiny plastic Jedi and skyscraper-sized monsters. Honestly, you've never been in so much demand – because all of 'em want your cash. But as an *OPS2* reader, you're not going to be swayed by the first swish of a Lego lightsaber or some girls in grimy underwear (well...) and before deciding whether or not a game's worth your brainspace, you need to read our detailed impressions. Obviously, we're happy to oblige. Oh, and have yourselves a merry non-denominational holiday. Me? I'll be playing *Mercenaries*...

Tim x

Tim Clark,
Deputy editor

046

RUMBLE ROSES

THE MOST IMPORTANT GAME IN PS2 HISTORY! OKAY, MAYBE NOT...

047 **CONSTANTINE**
Keanu's diabolic movie (almost certainly in both senses) transmogrified into game form

048 **SNIPER ELITE**
Slooooooooow like actually beaing a sniper, but also tense, gritty and utterly... [BLAM]

050 **METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER**
Another meaty length of snake for your delectation

052 **BROTHERS IN ARMS**
This WW2-based tactical shooter forces you to choose between your squad or your family

054 **LEGO STAR WARS**
What are they smiling about? Well, this could be the best *Star Wars* game yet? Bagsy be Darth Maul

056 **OKAMI**
It's a dog with fleas! But for once that's actually kinda the point

058 **ICO 2**
Incredible looking sequel to the only game we're allowed to describe using the word 'elegiac'

050

056

058

Like, do they have little plastic midichlorians?

AISHA

Height:	180cm
Weight:	63kg
Vital stats:	Chest: 36
	Waist: 29
	Hips: 36
Likes:	Cats
Dislikes:	Nuclear proliferation
Special:	Double Melon Drop

In our dreams, this is what happens in the next episode of *The OC*

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

new screens

REIKO HINAMOTO

Height:	166cm
Weight:	52kg
Vital stats:	Chest: 34
	Waist: 26
	Hips: 34
Likes:	The Strokes
Dislikes:	Stereophonics
Special:	Angel Dive

DIXIE CLEMETS

Height:	180cm
Weight:	65kg
Vital stats:	Chest: 36
	Waist: 29
	Hips: 36
Likes:	Reverse cowgirl
Dislikes:	Missionary
Special:	The Dixie Buster

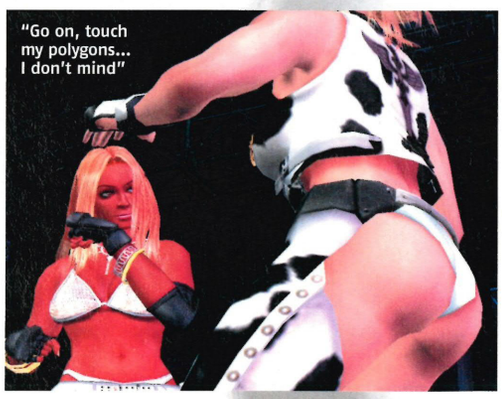
PUBLISHER KONAMI | DEVELOPER KONAMI TOKYO/YUKES ENTERTAINMENT | WEBSITE WWW.KONAMITYO.COM/RUMBLEROSES

RUMBLE ROSES

"MUM, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET DIXIE... SHE'S AN ENTERTAINER"

Playing *Rumble Roses* for the first time was an overwhelming, almost religious experience. As rivulets of digital mud trickled down the lady wrestlers' impossibly hard bodies, so a single glittering tear rolled down our collective cheek. Oh stop trying to look all superior. You want this as much as we do. God knows we've played *SmackDown!*, secretly wishing the pork-brained dudes would disappear and leave the chicks to get on with it. And now, thanks to the Christ's eternal mercy – and to a lesser degree the hard work of some Japanese men – that dream is reality. More chin-stroking journals than this will doubtless accuse Konami's lesbonic grappler of being crass exploitainment. Well, fair play – but don't make the mistake of thinking these girls can't handle themselves.

Given that the team at Yuke's previously worked on the *SmackDown!* series, the wrestling is solid enough to compete with the offerings from *Def Jam* and the *WWE*. More importantly, there's the physics... the *glorious* physics. Watching two mud-slathered swimwear models go at it like knives, with every ripple, quiver and tremble rendered to sine wave perfection is exactly what got Isaac Newton into physics in the first place. And get this: there's even a 'hands off' mode that just lets you observe two computer-controlled lasses grappling... in front of a log fire, while being sprayed with champagne in slow motion. No, that last bit's not true. But here's what is: there's a nurse in the game called Anaesthisia, complete with microskirt, stockings and a monitor wedged in her cleavage. That's it, we're going private. ■ TC



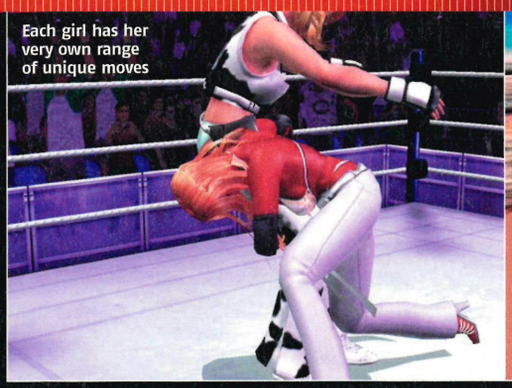
"Go on, touch my polygons... I don't mind"

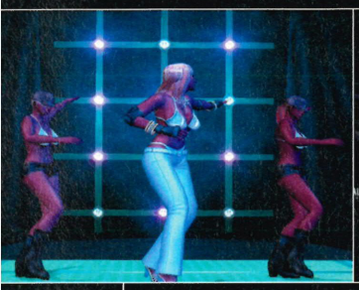
monitor — PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

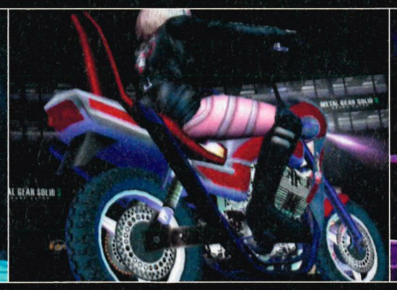
***RUMBLE ROSES* IS TO FEMINISM** what battery acid is to cocktail mixers. We like it an almost embarrassing amount, and barring disaster this could be our favourite ruck buddy. Next time: the weapons

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID | WARM | **HOT** | BOILING | MELTDOWN


Each girl has her very own range of unique moves





Evil Rose is the world champion. Worship her

Gentlemen, all hail the greatest screenshot ever

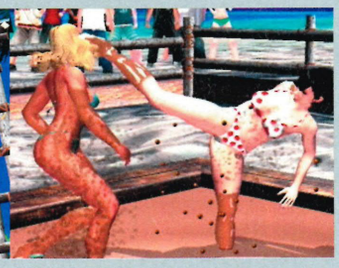
WARNING! DO NOT READ THIS PAGE NEXT TO AN OLD LADY

WISH YOU WERE HERE?

Of course you do, it's crawling with tanned hotties who wrestle each other for fun. *Awesome*!

Look, there's Reiko lounging by the pool. She's probably thinking about obscure '70s horror films or how brilliant it would be if she met a slightly overweight man with a working knowledge of the upgrade system in *Final Fantasy*.

Uh-oh, here comes Aisha. Pausing only to arrange her thong for comfort, she saunters up to Reiko and gives her 'the eye'. The girls size each other up like noble lionesses as nearby cocktail waiters stop pouring drinks and start taking bets. It's on!


BASH! With Reiko now sporting a fetching polka dot bikini the girls attack each other, a fine spray of liquid mud quickly coating their supple bodies, creamy brown goo trickling down their thighs and pooling in... [Suddenly feels all empty inside and less of a person.]

ALSO 3 MONTHS AWAY...

PUBLISHER **SCI** | DEVELOPER **BITS** |
WEBSITE **WWW.SCI.CO.UK**

CONSTANTINE

THE ONLY CONSTANT THING SEEMS TO BE THE LACK OF INSPIRATION. BUT THERE'S HOPE...

They're possessed. The glowing eyes give it away, see

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK hands on

Last month we laid our cards on the table and said that, despite some of the positive buzz around its filmic source material, we weren't sure that the game of *Constantine* is going to be any cop. Flaky conversion of quality comic-book property aside, a derivative third-person action game doesn't really set us aflame with excitement. But publisher SCi really wants to change our mind. So much so that it brought us a new version of the game to try and re-educate us.

Now, our mothers told us that if you had nothing nice to say, then say nothing at all, but fortunately, we've found a few glimmers of hope in the game. For a start, it's clear the weapons *Constantine* is armed with are so ridiculously esoteric in their blasphemous design, it's hard not to find them satisfying. Among others, there's a crucifix shotgun (it fires blessed bullets in a cross-shaped firing pattern) and a smart bomb made of rags taken from the shroud of Moses. Repeat: a smart bomb made of rags taken from the shroud of Moses. We were also shown an impressive hellish parallel universe with its impressive fire and brimstone effects.

With these touches in mind, we're now faintly optimistic, if cautiously so – there's still a lot that needs sorting out. Will the gameplay be anything other than a mindless action shooter? Will the game reach the level of invention that's gone into its weaponry? Will we be damned to hell for all eternity? That's not a question about *Constantine*, just something to think about for a couple of months until our review appears. ■ **MF**

The hell dimension is rendered with wonderful effects

HOT OR NOT?

The jury's out, but the vote may swing in its favour

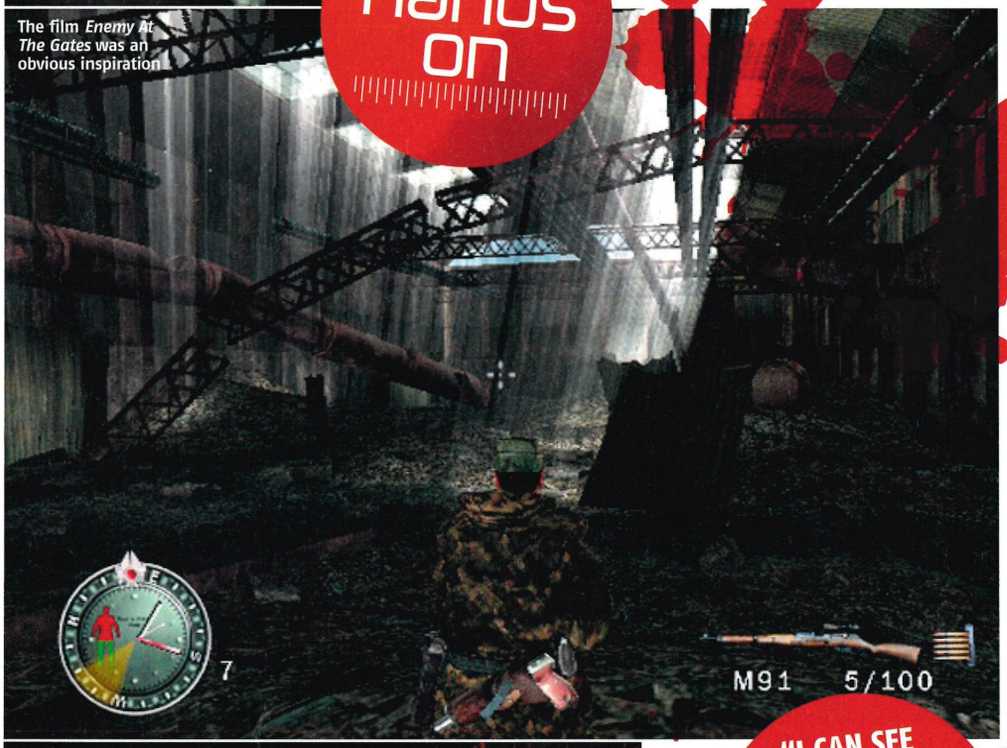
TEPID | WARM | HOT | BOILING | MELTDOWN

PUB TBC | DEVELOPER REBELLION | WEBSITE WWW.REBELLION.CO.UK/SNIPERELITE.HTM

SNIPER ELITE

DEEP BREATH... BE THE BULLET.... EXHALE SLOWLY... TAKE THE SHOT

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK **hands on**

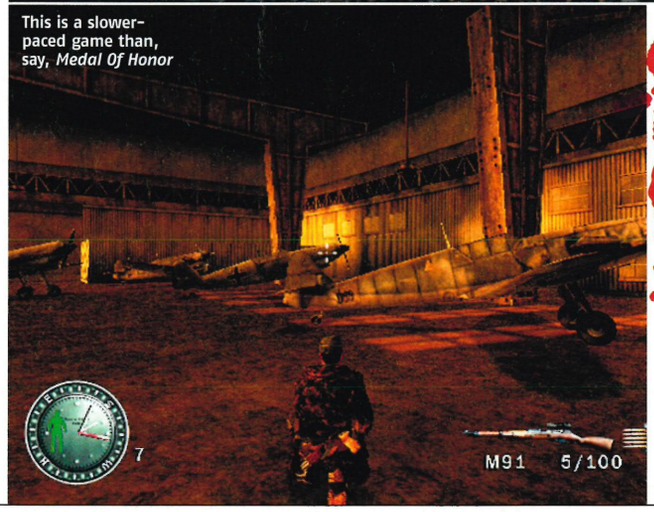


Glance at the screens and you'd be forgiven for thinking it's another *Medal Of Honor* clone, but admittedly one with surprisingly detailed visuals. Not so. Gameplay involves crawling around Berlin's ruined streets, nervously scanning the shattered skyline for enemies and, very occasionally, firing a round into their unsuspecting faces. Saying it's slow is like saying evolution probably isn't worth waiting around to watch. But this is actually a good thing, an is what separates *Sniper Elite* from the rest of the WW2 titles.

WAITING TO EXHALE

Your marksman is woefully under protected, so run around in the open and, commonly, you're dead in a puddle seconds later. Consequently, the tension's leotard tight as you squat behind cover, desperately trying to spot who's shooting at you. The flipside is when you manage to sneak within range and line up a shot yourself – pressing ◎ makes you exhale, steadying your hand. Other factors to compensate for include gravity, wind and your own heartbeat. Christ, sounds complex eh? But sensibly all these elements can be switched off – and three difficulty levels plus a number of 'use anywhere' saves reduces frustration.

What's particularly satisfying is the feeling of a city under siege, with bombers flying overhead and tanks patrolling the rubble. The atmosphere really is tremendous and also extends to the behaviour of the troops. Injure a soldier and his comrades will try to help him, enabling you to enjoy a two-for-one deal on dead Russians. There's plenty more to talk about, like setting trip wires, hiding among bodies and the potentially superb online mode. More of which soon, but first a question: is it normal when the sniper rifle in your dreams occasionally morphs into a giant nob? ■ **TC**



"I CAN SEE HIS HEAD COME APART FROM HERE"

During WW2, the average range snipers operated at was between 300 and 500 metres. However, the boys at Rebellion have managed to nail a Russian from a kilometre away. We know. They showed us the video. Twice

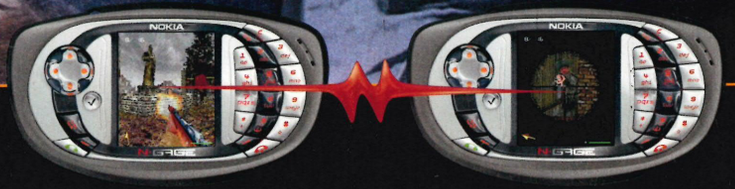
monitor PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

FOCUSING PURELY ON SNIPING is definitely a great and highly original idea, and although the tectonic pace will turn some people off, we reckon the über-tense gameplay could make for a surprise hit

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN

CALL OF DUTY™



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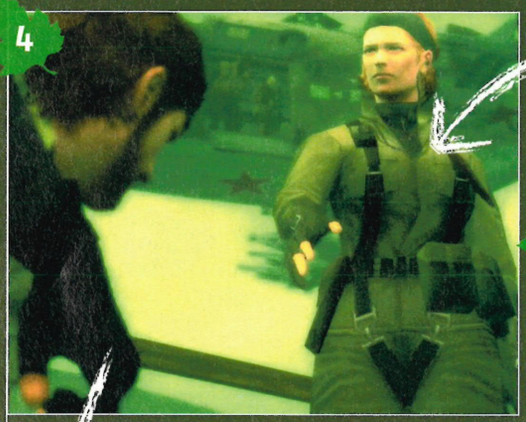
PUBLISHER KONAMI | DEVELOPER KONAMI | WEBSITE WWW.KONAMIJPN.CO.JP/PRODUCTS/MGS3

METAL GEAR SOLID 3

THE BRAND NEW *MGS3: SNAKE EATER* TRAILER REVEALED AT THE RECENT TOKYO GAME SHOW IS THE MOST THRILLING YET, PACKED AS IT IS WITH SEXY NEW INFO. PULL UP A SEAT AS WE REVEAL THE TOP TEN MOMENTS THAT EVERY *METAL GEAR SOLID* FAN HAS TO SEE...

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

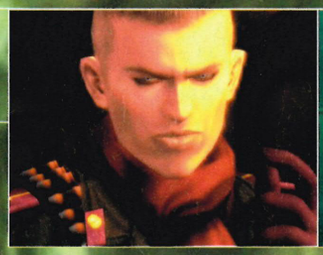
new screens

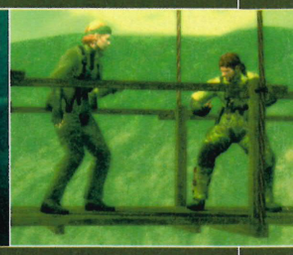


SCAT'S ENTERTAINMENT!

Remember the *MGS3* Camouflage Campaign compo? Well the jury's in and one of the winning entries really stinks...

For once we're not just using sweary words to look cool (although, remember kids, it *is*, and we *are*). The thing is, the *MGS3* Camouflage Campaign is finally over, and one of the four camo designs chosen for inclusion in *Snake Eater* really is a steaming pile of crap. The theme for Yutaro Nakahara's cacktacular design is 'filth in friendly way' and it depicts steaming links of arse fudge surrounded by swarms of hungry flies. As the no-doubt-perfectly-normal Yutaro-san himself puts it, "I have never been this thankful to solid wastes." How quaint.





TRAILER PARK

Ready for a full explanation of the shots from the new *MGS3* trailer? 'Course you are, now just read on...

1. LIVE AND LET DIE
The first glimpse of *MGS3*'s main mission and Snake's all dolled up for a spot of sneaking by moonlight.

2. POCKET ROCKET
Launched by a Blackbird spy plane, Snake's insertion vehicle rockets away from pursuing MIGs. Very cool.

3. MASTER BLASTER
We see Snake fight his former mentor and new adversary, Boss. She totally pans his ass.

4. FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES
With Snake reeling, Boss leaves with new allies Colonel Volgin and Ocelot.

5. UP AND ATOM
Volgin prepares to launch a stolen US nuke at his own soldiers. Ocelot is horrified. What's he up to?

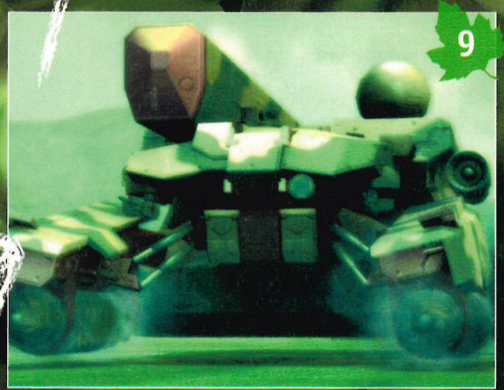
6. BOSS SLOG
Snake prepares to confront Boss again. What's up with her silver threads? Could there be a cosmonaut connection here?

7. DOWN AND OUT
Beaten and tortured by his former mentor, Snake can only look on helpless as she skips town...

8. MEET SHAGOHOD
...and with her she takes the Shagohod, the original prototype for all Metal Gear nuclear tanks.

9. TANKS BUT NO TANKS
In an incredible sequence, Volgin pilots the Shagohod and tears after Snake and Eva on a motorcycle/sidecar.

10 THE APES OF WRATH
Prepare for *MGS3*'s Snake Vs Monkey mode. Kojima loves *Ape Escape* and has created a crossover mini-game pitting Snake against Ape. We can't wait...



monitor

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

IT'S A FAMILIAR ROUTINE BY NOW, but with each fresh trailer, the new *Metal Gear* just looks better and better. We love the new boss characters and the Shagohod completely, like, rocks. Release it now!

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN

HAVEN'T WE MET BEFORE?

We broke the news of *Snake Eater*'s cast way back in July's *OPS2* before anyone else. Now you can see them here in the flesh for the very first time

The Fear, The Sorrow, The Pain and The Fury. While these may sound like the four stages of mental anguish gamers are doomed to undergo if *MGS3* forces them to sit through 45-odd minutes of arse-numbing FMV like *MGS2* did, in reality, they, along with The End, make up *Snake Eater*'s cluster of big bad boss characters. *OPS2* exclusively revealed the identities of The Cobra Unit way back in June, along with the rest of the game's cast, but now, at long last and thanks to the brand new trailer shown at the Tokyo Game Show, we can put faces (or in The Fury's case, a helmet) to those names.

1. THE PAIN
Boasting bumble-stripe camouflage and probably smelling sweetly of honey, The Pain has the power to manipulate whole swarms of bees, using them as weapons against you. Unusual, but effective. Probably.

2. THE FEAR
Lanky-limbed acrobat with a freakishly long forked tongue, incredible agility and a long list of incredibly-attractive girlfriends. Will he be able to 'lick' Snake in a straight fight though? Eh? Lick? Tongue? No?

3. THE FURY
Chargrilled former cosmonaut who now feels no pain, but likes to dish it out via the medium of flame. Oh, the irony. Possesses a jet pack as well as a flame thrower and has his face hidden behind a dome helmet.

4. THE SORROW
Part-time Hannibal Lecter look-alike, The Sorrow is actually dead and exists as a phantom capable of telepathic communication and summoning the dead. Better kill him quic... Oh. Right.

5. THE END
Wispy-haired old gimmer who pioneered the use of the sniper rifle and remains alive thanks to a parasitic lichen that sustains him through photosynthesis. Hey, we didn't make this up...

6. THE THE
Terminally glum chroniclers of Britain's 1980s oppressive spiritual, political and economic malaise, fronted by scowling troubadour Matt Johnson. Would kill Snake just like that, but really, what's the point?

7. THE BOSS
Legendary femme fatale, who single-handedly turned the tide of WW2 and was Snake's mentor before defecting to the USSR with a pair of nukes. The only man who can stop her? Her favourite protégé.

8. VOLGIN
Colonel Ephgeny Borisovich Volgin is a fully paid-up member of the GRU, the Russian military intelligence division. Okay, if that's true, what's he doing working with The Boss and crackling with electricity?

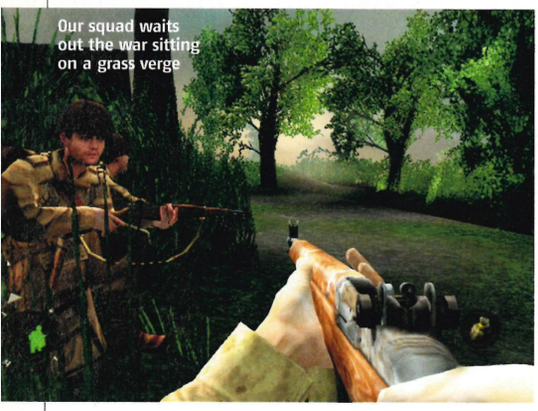
9. SOKOLOV
Director Sokolov is the brains behind the Shagohod, the nuclear tank that is the prototype for all Metal Gears. He's the nervous type who Snake is ordered to rescue in the game's prologue mission.

10. OCELOT
The teenager handgun virtuoso who will, one day, have an arm transplant, grow a ponytail and become an ally of Big Boss. He's not called Revolver Ocelot yet. It's Snake who suggests he changes firearms.

11. EVA
A deep cover spy for the US, Eva has infiltrated the Soviet facility behind the Shagohod and acts as Snake's contact. She also wanders around in a bikini for no obvious reason and falls for our moody hero.

12. SNAKE
Last but not least, meet Jack. Jack has the codename Snake, but is in fact the man who eventually becomes Big Boss, and the guy whose DNA was used to create the clones Solid, Liquid and Solidus Snake.

ETA 4 months
Mar 2005


Our squad waits out the war sitting on a grass verge

Jerry's tactical masterstroke: run in three directions at once

PUBLISHER **UBISOFT** | DEVELOPER **GEARBOX SOFTWARE/UBISOFT SHANGHAI** | WEBSITE **WWW.BROTHERSINARMSGAME.COM**

BROTHERS IN ARMS

...IN WHICH MARK KNOPFLER DEFEATS THE THIRD REICH USING ONLY THE POWER OF ADULT-ORIENTATED ROCK

Sometimes it's tough coming up with the introductory bit of these stories. Particularly when dealing with a genre that's so elbows-in-the-ribs crowded. Occasionally it can take up to ten minutes before the word fairies arrive with something workable. But look: it's done! And that was hardest thing on today's 'to do' list. In marked contrast, grandpa's generation could reasonably expect to be gassed, shot and shelled all in the same day. Christ, imagine dying in France of all bloody places! What the hell did the Germans want with the place anyway? Soft cheese?

Luckily, we can now enjoy the mind-breaking horror of WW2 via the medium of videogame. But for all the bleating about historical accuracy, the likes of *Call Of Duty* and *Medal Of Honor* are arcade shooters at heart – full of gritty imagery, certainly, but tactically naïve. The difference with *Brothers In Arms* is that it takes the business of winning the war very seriously indeed. The game places you as Sgt Matt Baker of the 101st Airborne Division. His men have been sprinkled all over Normandy thanks to a botched parachute drop, the place is crawling with Hermans and he forgot to pack any stockings for the French chicks. Merde.

NAZI CHIC

The first few missions involve rounding up your missing paratroopers, but once that's done you'll be in command of two 'fire' teams. Here lies the crux of *Brothers*' appeal. To defeat Jerry you must outflank his units. This means using one team to pin the enemy with suppressing fire while the other sneaks around the side and catches Fritz with his bratwurst out. WHOOP WHOOP. Don't worry, that's just the 'complicated squad-based shooter' klaxon going off. But it's a false alarm. Issuing orders is incredibly simple – just point the cursor where you want the men to go/shoot – and, more importantly, your boys are super bright. Meaning they won't wander around in no-man's land with 'kill me quick' scrawled on their helmets.

Unfortunately the Nazi scum are pretty smart too. But that's no bad thing, because it should make for some ultra-tense skirmishes as you relive the eight days of hell that took place after the D-Day landings. There's also the prospect of online play to consider – with each player taking control of a fire team and then working together to out-strategise the enemy.

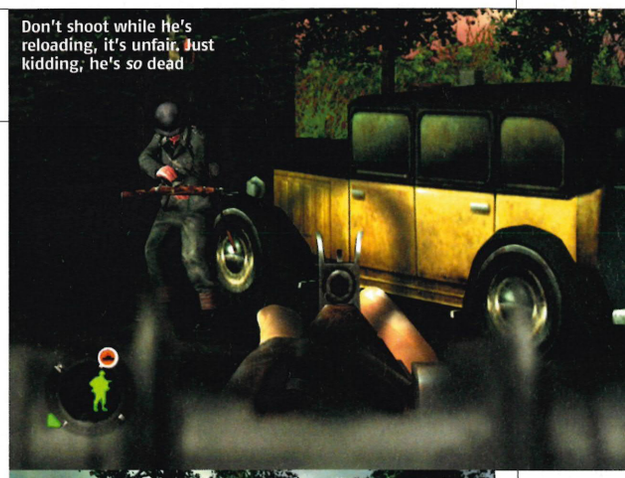
To cut the briefing short, we like the look of *Brothers In Arms* a lot, especially because it doesn't shirk on the ruined guts front. Example: early in the game a stray German shell hits a nearby field, raining chunks of bloodied cow over the road. War, eh? Brilliant. ■ **TC**

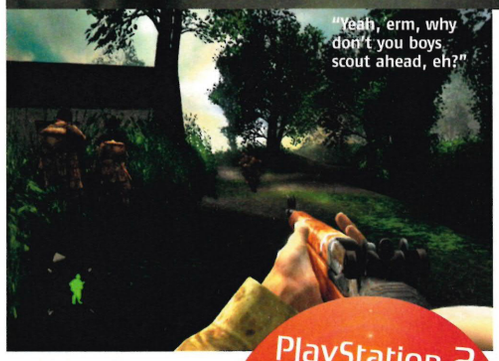
monitor — PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK

NOTABLY BRAINIER than the other WW2 shooters, *Brothers In Arms* has the potential to be the best. We'll drop into action for a full playtest next month. Until then, tell mother we miss her

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID | WARM | **HOT** | BOILING | MELTDOWN

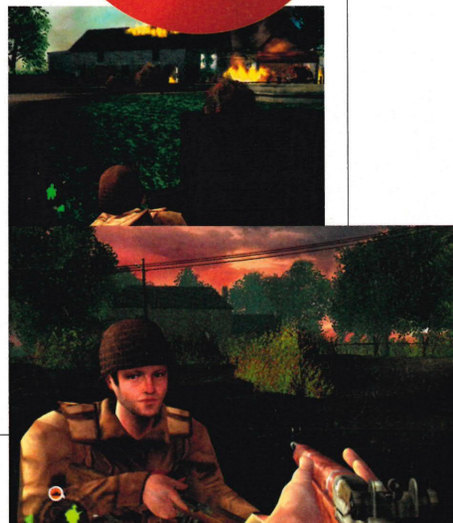

Don't shoot while he's reloading, it's unfair. Just kidding, he's *so* dead


"Yeah, erm, why don't you boys scout ahead, eh?"

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK **new info**

Herman made the fatal mistake of hiding in front of the car

The small stone buildings were the first to die



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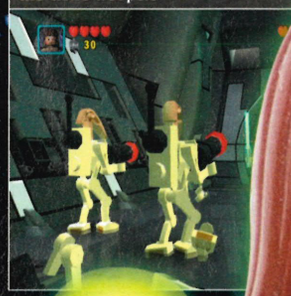
PUBLISHER GIANT INTERACTIVE/EIDOS | DEVELOPER TRAVELLER'S TALES | WEBSITE WWW.T-TALES.COM

LEGO STAR WARS

THESE AREN'T THE TOYS YOU'RE LOOKING FOR. ACTUALLY, NO, WAIT... THEY ARE!

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK hands on

You get to fight either for or against the Clone Troopers



Separately, *Star Wars* and Lego have a lot to answer for. The former helped shape the modern blockbuster-driven Hollywood as we know it, setting the benchmark for the typical special effects-laden movie and merchandising template. Lego, meanwhile, scarred our childhoods with creativity but has recently descended into capitalist hell, with most of its clever ideas replaced with movie tie-ins like *Spider-Man* and *Harry Potter*. Putting the two together as a videogame would be a horribly cynical cash-in, right?

It was with this fear in mind that we turned to *Lego Star Wars*. Would it be a wash out? Would the fact it's being branded as a game 'for kids' mean that it's juvenile and bland? It was an old, tiny wrinkly green fellow that said that fear was the path to the dark side, and it turns out he was right – a hands-on session quickly dispelled our doubts to prove that *Lego Star Wars* is in fact a pretty, shining beacon.

Following the three *Star Wars* prequels, action is split – just like the films – between character action sequences and shooty bits in vehicles. Along with getting to control Obi-Wan Kenobi, Yoda and lots of non-Jedi heroes, enemy characters such as Jango Fett, Darth Maul and Count Dooku crop up for boss battles and skirmishes. Although the Lego representations of Obi-Wan and co are, of course, massively disproportionate to what Ewan McGregor and his thespy friends look like on film, *Lego Star Wars* does its utmost to replicate everything else from the galaxy far, far away. Famous scenes are reproduced shot for shot, too. For instance, a fight with Darth Maul closes with a scene that shows him killing Qui-Gon before Obi-Wan vengefully returns the favour. The dialogue, music and camera angles have been retained, but everything is rendered in Lego form.

CHARACTER HOPPING

As the game follows the film's lead with a massive cast of characters, most important to the gameplay is jumping between control of them all. The game is playable for both single-player and two-player co-op – for the latter, just plug in an extra controller at any time to join the action as one of the characters on screen. Whether played solo or with someone else, characters must work together to solve puzzles and search areas to progress – standard stuff, but with a difference: you'll also have to switch between the characters on screen, using their special attributes. In an early section, Jar Jar Binks leads the two Jedi through Naboo with the player utilising Jar Jar's jumping abilities before switching to one of the Jedis, using Force powers to reassemble a mosaic on a wall into a bridge crossing a chasm.

And those Force powers are, from what we've seen, the *coup de grace*. You may have heard of The Force: it's an energy field that surrounds us, penetrates us and binds us all together. Corny *Star Wars* quoting aside, it does the same in the game. Yes, psychic powers are on the verge of being passé – *Second Sight*, *Psi-Ops* and *GoldenEye: Rogue Agent* will have done the telekinetic thing to death by the time *Lego Star Wars* rolls around, but special powers are said to not just amount to lifting objects for giggles. The specifics are a little woolly at best for now, but we're optimistic.

And don't think that just because the game is based around two of the biggest-selling kids' toy lines it will be a walk in the park. The difficulty level is promised to be adaptive, meaning it changes in response to how you play – baddies will become tougher if you're a dab hand with a lightsaber, or they'll

DEARTH OF INFORMATION ABOUT DARTH AND CO

Will the classic trilogy gang get Lego-ised?

As *Lego Star Wars* strictly focuses on the prequel trilogy (the release is currently pencilled around the same time *Episode III* lands in cinemas), there will be no dinky Han Solo, no Lego Leia in Jabba's kinky slave outfit and no confrontation with the decrepit Emperor. And it's not even clear yet – given the way *Revenge Of The Sith*'s plotline is being closely guarded – if the evilest Jedi of all, Darth Vader, will even appear once Anakin succumbs to the dark side in this game's interpretation of *Episode III*. But hey, once we've had our way with the first *Lego Star Wars*, all the old notables from the original trilogy are bound to turn up in a sequel, right? We bloody hope so.

It's Obi-Wan on the planet Camino. Or is it toy town?

STOP PRESS • STOP PRESS • STOP PRESS • STOP PRESS • STOP PRESS • STOP PRESS

We've Seen Them All!

Having seen a top-secret catalogue of the new Lego kits, we're confident that the game will include Anakin's Starfighter, robo-Sith villain Darth Grevious, plus lots of Clone Troopers in a massive battle with a horde of Wookies. There are more too, but you'll have to wait for that. Oh yes...

simply roll over and die quickly if your combat skills aren't all they could be. So it's a game for everyone, but hopefully by everyone it means beyond something for three year olds who don't know better.

So far, the big key to all this fancy toy town work isn't just the attention to detail. Yes, it's got all the authentic sounds from the films, but so have other *Star Wars* games. Yes, the vehicles smash into little bricks when destroyed, but so did dross like *Lego Drome Racers*. What's different is the way *Lego Star Wars* brings it all together, giving you unprecedented access to the *Star Wars* universe while also doing justice to both the toy line and the infamous movie franchise. ■ **MF**

That plastic figure is more animated than Liam 'wooden' Neeson

BRICKIN' IT

Make way for the 'real' world of *Lego Star Wars*

Killzone may have its particle effects, but *Lego Star Wars* puts it to shame. Sort of. It isn't put together like your average game, at least. There's no polygon blandness or fancy 3D doodles here, oh no. *Lego Star Wars* is built with 'real' virtual building bricks that have been rendered on a computer and then put together to create the game's vehicles and characters. So when constructions come apart, it's just like real Lego toys smashing into bits. And there's a massive array of vehicles you'll be able to pilot, including Naboo fighters, pod racers and plenty of other vehicles, including the under-wraps ones that'll be seen in *Episode III: Revenge Of The Sith*.

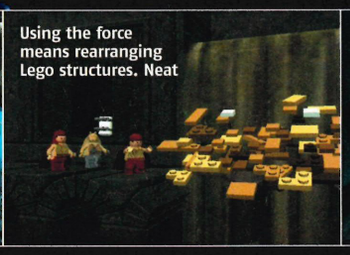
monitor

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

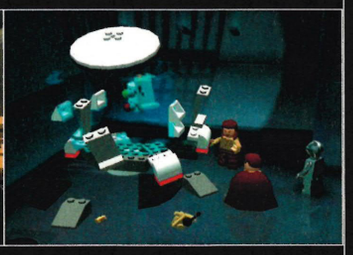
A STUNNINGLY FRESH NEW TAKE on *Star Wars* that ticks all usual boxes for a title based on the saga (those sound effects, the whiff of merchandise bankrolling), but also adds a few pleasingly unexpected ones

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN



Using the force means rearranging Lego structures. Neat



ETA 6 months
May 2005

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PUBLISHER CAPCOM | DEVELOPER CLOVER STUDIO | WEBSITE WWW.CLOVERSTUDIO.CO.JP

OKAMI

RIGHT, SO YOU'RE THIS MAGICAL WOLF HEALING THE WORLD THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF COLOUR...

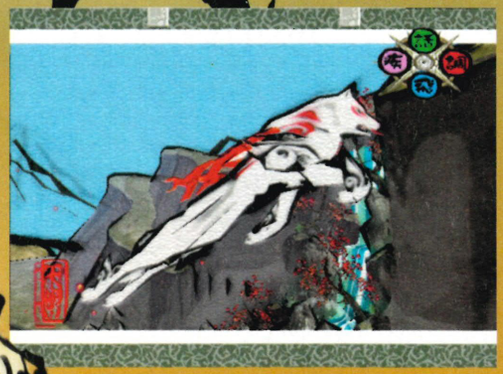
Go on, pee against the steps. There's no one watching

...and if you're still reading after that pitch – which sounds more like a community theatre workshop – then you might be in for a treat. Ignore the unforgivably hippy premise (the sun god Amaterasu has come to Earth in the form of a wolf to fight monsters that are draining the world of colour... thank you, we will have a herbal tea) and you're left with one of the prettiest games ever to grace a PS2. This is one of those occasions when static shots, lovely though they are, simply don't do justice to the purple-mountained majesty of seeing *Okami* in motion – all flowing brush strokes, Japanese calligraphy and frolicking wildlife.

To shake the fleas off another cliché, the game is like a cartoon come to life. Not some Saturday morning crap, either. We're talking artsy 'Best Foreign Animation' nominations here. Okay, that's unlikely to get the pre-orders flooding in. Let's try again. So you're a wolf, with all the possibilities that entail: prowling through the woods... digging stuff up... howling at the moon... savaging fawns in front of their terrified mothers. Sounds ace, right? Sure, but like Gozer The Gozerian, you're also an *actual* god, and accessing your powers is going to take a little faith.

Grrr... expect wolfy to have all manner of magical attacks

Jump, wolfy, jump! You can make it! You can... oh God



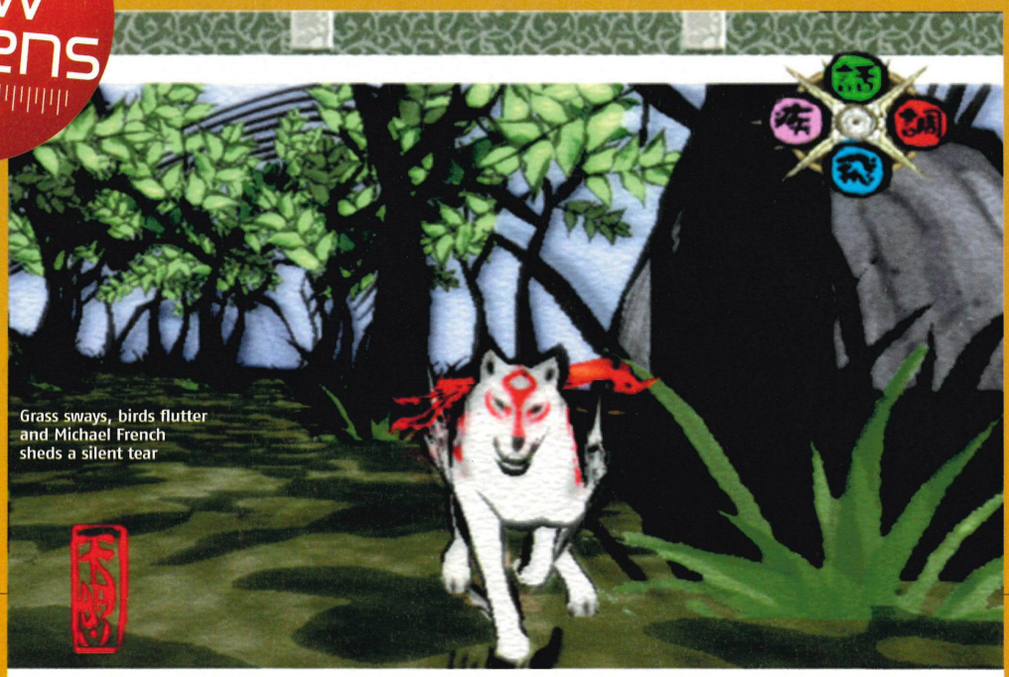
DOGGING

To reach her full potential wolfy must impress the yokels. This is achieved by running errands – 'What? Timmy fell down the well again!' – defeating monsters and re-colouring the landscape. The climax of the trailer shown at the Tokyo Games Show sees Technicolor life flooding back into an otherwise barren greyscale environment. Proper beautiful it looks, too. Kind of like when the Genesis device goes off in *Star Trek II: The Wrath Of Khan*... erm, yeah, whatever [cough]. And having restored balance to the cosmos she pads off for a nap. Bless.

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK new screens

"WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!" [Translated: "Help, I can't swim"]

Other stand-out moments include Amaterasu scampering along a beach, tossing a villager onto her back for a ride and scratching around for coins. Of course, the harsh reality is that *Okami* is so catch-your-breath unusual – particularly in the current guns/cars atmosphere – that it may struggle to find an audience. Hey, nature's cruel like that. But, that said, seeing the smile creep across Frenchy's normally inscrutable face as we watched the footage together suggests that gamers willing to make the leap of faith will be richly rewarded. Woof. ■ TC



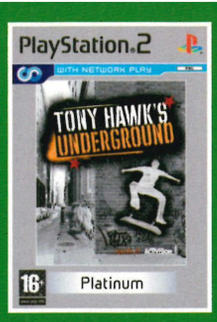
Grass sways, birds flutter and Michael French sheds a silent tear

monitor PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

CEL-SHADED GAMES usually sell like dog sandwiches, but open your minds and this could be something very special indeed. Expect a 'you'd be barking mad to miss it' headline next year

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN



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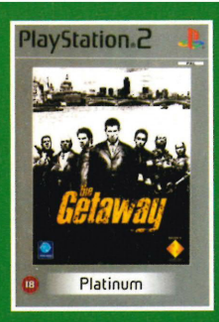
Tony Hawk's Underground Platinum

£19.99
Sonic Heroes Platinum



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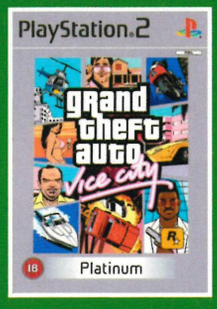
The Getaway Platinum



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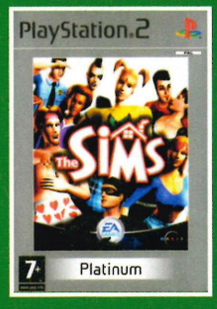

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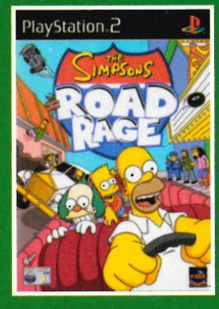
Sims Platinum



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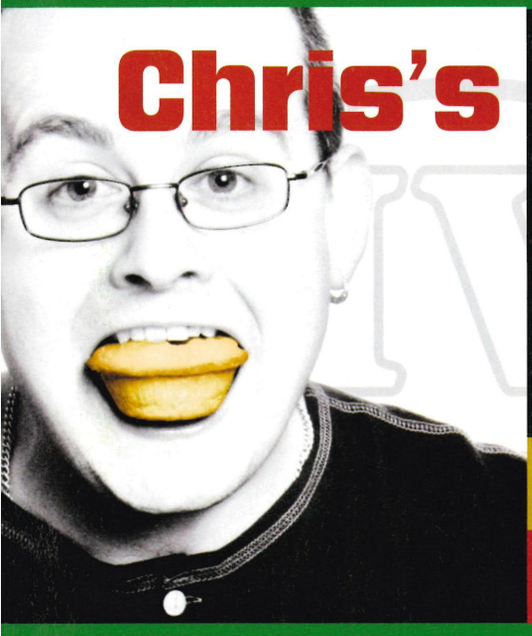
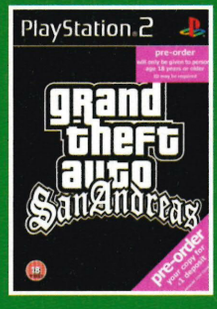


Chris's Christmas cheer:

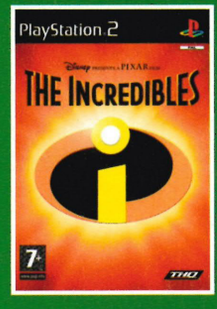
2 Games for £28 or £19.99 each!

Plus don't miss the three great new releases below.

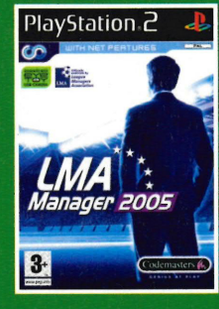
Chris Steel MVC Store Manager, Barnsley.



Grand Theft Auto San Andreas*



The Incredibles*



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ICO 2

LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT THING! *ICO 2*'S MASSIVE VISION COMES INTO FOCUS

If you need proof of how much of an engaging mystery *Ico 2*'s development has been, then consider this: about a year ago, when we expected the first details of what was then called *Nico*, we mentioned it briefly in the pages of this magazine. Just a single word reference on our next month page. But the date of the announcement came and went without a word – this happens with lots of games, with publishers set to tell the world about a new title only to change their minds at the last minute, so we resigned ourselves to the fact there would be no news. Yet the Internet went crazy from our single tease, with obscure message boards based as far away as Japan name-checking us, despite the lack of factage. No details until, that is, last month, when we scooped the first information ahead of more promised details at the pre-Christmas Japanese games show-off event, the Tokyo Game Show.

As we explained in our news burst last month, the new game is a big departure from the slower, gentler pace that dictated the first *Ico*. There's no wandering around elaborate castles this time, as our new hero must race across the desert plains, battling giants made of flesh, fur and bricks. We knew that combat and puzzle solving has been spliced together for the battles against these mammoths – meaning you have to attack and climb their bodies – but now we've learnt that your sword is not just for dealing deadly blows, but is also a tool to create extra grip.

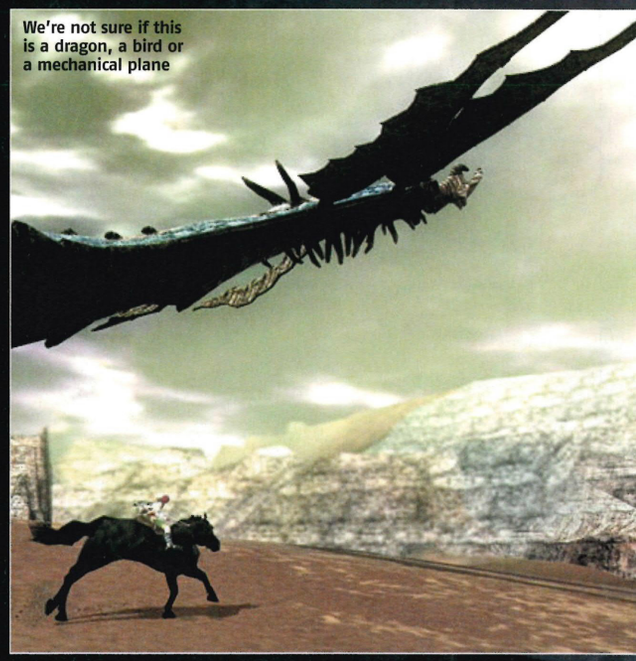
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK new info

The behemoths imposingly tower above the ground

The colossi aren't just ground-based. Some are winged

While this is very much a spiritual sequel to the first game, it's clear that what the original did for atmosphere, *Ico 2* does for spectacle. Witness the shots we have here, showing the scale between your adventuring hero and the colossal monsters that roam the massive and detailed landscapes.

Sure, there's a lot of detail in the new visuals, but there's still so much more we want to know. The big question is: how will it all be executed? *Ico*'s control famously forced you to hold hands with damsel-in-distress Yorda by pressing and holding one of the shoulder buttons. *Ico 2* relies on you climbing vast structures – so will a similar technique be used this time out? Perhaps the left and right shoulder buttons are held down when climbing the colossus beasts that ravage the landscapes? And what of *Ico 2*'s massive monsters – are they boss fights or run-of-the-mill enemies? Will it be a mission-based or story-driven game, seeing the young hero charged with hunting down certain monsters in a set order, or will the world be a *Grand Theft Auto*-style toybox that you're free to explore in the hunting of colossi?



We're not sure if this is a dragon, a bird or a mechanical plane

This mystery is all intentional, of course. The developer wants to keep anything remotely related to the plot under close guard so as not to spoil it, so these questions will be slowly answered over the course of the next year as a way to build interest. After all, while the first game was a critical but not commercial trailblazer, it makes sense to slowly lift the lid on this one. It certainly tantalises us and we're expecting a play test very soon, where answers to our many questions should begin to emerge. In the meantime, cast your eyes over our shots and prepare your mind for the wonder that will be *Ico 2*. Or *Wanda And Colossus*. Or... ■ MF

WHAT'S IT ACTUALLY CALLED, THOUGH?

From *Ico 2* to *Nico* to *Wanda And Colossus* and back to *Ico 2*...

AUGUST 2002 – ICO 2?
This was the first hint that Sony had a new *Ico* game in the works. An ad in a Japanese games magazine asking for programmers to work on the game, along with a piece of art of three *Ico*-alike characters on horseback surveying a barren plain.

MARCH 2003 – NICO?
Sony showed us a trailer of a game called *Nico* that seemed to star Ico. We were asked not to write about it. So we didn't, until someone spilled it on the Net. It looked then like Ico would return and spend a lot of time fighting big monsters. Hmm...

SEPTEMBER 2004 – WANDA AND THE WHAT?
Sony opens a website for a game called *Wanda And Colossus*. While it's definitely the new *Ico* game, we're not allowed to call it that yet – it may lose the Wanda bit entirely by the time it's released – so we're going back to the working title in the meantime.

monitor PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

A VAST EPIC ADVENTURE pitting a mighty solo hero against monsters as tall as skyscrapers that are covered in copious amounts of body hair? Hmm, we like the sound of that. Where do we sign up?

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN

This vast castle scene kicks off the adventure

The misty skies look almost photo realistic

WANDA AND THE CLOTHES HORSE

Putting the rags into gladrags...

Much of *Ico 2* may be a closely guarded Sony secret, but that doesn't stop us speculating a little. Most interesting is the fact that, although the developer insists the game isn't a sequel in the typical sense of the word, it's clear there are some links between this and the first game. Take, for instance, the similar-looking adventurer's cape worn by Ico and the hero of the new game. And along with the vastly detailed, almost architecturally designed monsters that evoke memories of the first game's imposing castle, the inky black spirits that chased after Yorda seem to spill out of the colossus monsters when vanquished.

FLATOUT

"HAS A VIOLENT STREAK THAT WILL HAVE YOU GRINNING FROM EAR TO EAR"
XBM

"DESTRUCTION DERBY FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM"
PSM2

"THIS AND BURNOUT 3 ARE THE NEXT GENERATION OF CONSOLE RACERS"
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"BURNOUT SHOULD BE RATHER CONCERNED"
EDGE

"FLATOUT WILL BECOME A LIVE FAVOURITE"
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PlayStation 2

The way it's meant to be played
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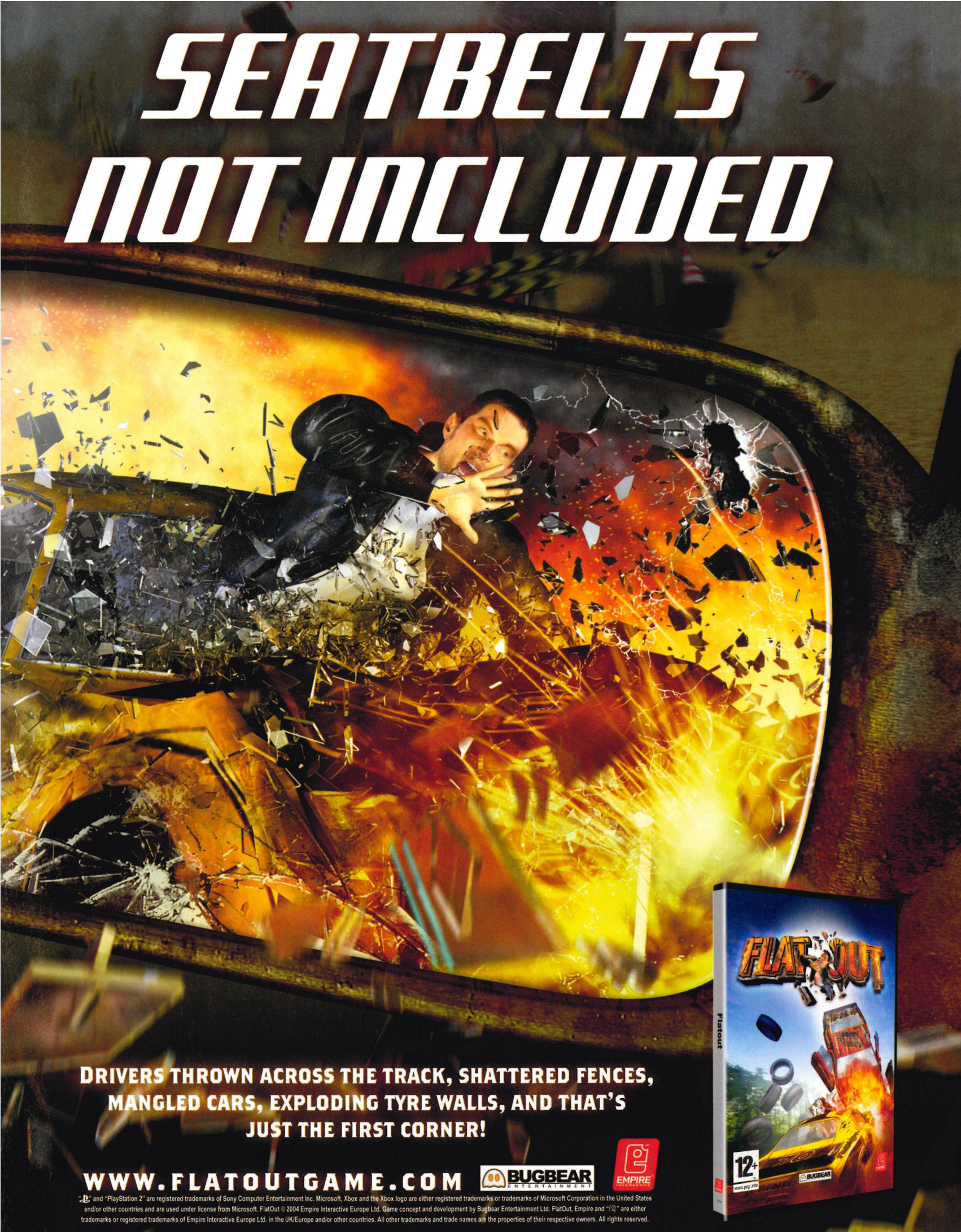

DRIVERS THROWN ACROSS THE TRACK, SHATTERED FENCES, MANGLED CARS, EXPLODING TYRE WALLS, AND THAT'S JUST THE FIRST CORNER!

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grand theft WARZONE

WORDS: TIM CLARK

***Mercenaries** looks incredible, plays better and does for war what GTA did for crime. Are you ready for next year's most explosive game?*

So right now you're balls-deep into *San Andreas*. Then, once all three cities are yours, it's off into space for some galactic slaughter, *Killzone* style. After that, *Gran Turismo 4* will be parked outside, the wind caressing its shiny bodywork and whispering 'play me, play me...' But what then? Where's the next big thing going to come from? What game are you going to spend months lost in, completing twice just for kicks. Our money – the smart money – is on *Mercenaries*.

Pandemic's ridiculously ambitious actioner first came to our attention in March, when one of the team returned from Skywalker Ranch with wide eyes and talk of a top secret new game with staggering visuals. Obviously we were excited, but naturally cautious, too. Maybe it was the smell of gin, but something was making the office bull detector go crazy. Sensing the cynicism, our man attempted to prove his point: "It's completely freeform... like *Grand Theft Auto* in a warzone." And you know what? He was absolutely right.

CASH FOR CORPSES

So many games have been 'inspired' by Rockstar's phenomenal series, that as a point of reference it has become almost meaningless. But until now, nobody's come close to recreating that signature 'go anywhere, do anything' freedom. But, from what we've seen, *Mercenaries* nails it. Set in the near future, a military coup has thrown North Korea into chaos. Five groups are fighting for control – the North and South Koreans, the Russian Mafia, the Chinese Red Army and an allied peacekeeping force that's the UN in all but name. Each faction has a different agenda, but generally it involves blowing the crap out of everyone else. Politically, a nightmare – but, for a mercenary, the ultimate pay day.

Working for Executive Operations – a fictional private military company specialising in 'off the books' work – your first decision is which lone wolf to pick. There's Chris Jacobs, the American ex-soldier whose body armour makes him good for first timers. Or you could go for edgy Swede, Matthias Nilsson, whose work as a Coastal Ranger has made him fast on his feet and a crack shot. Patriotically, though, we select SAS-trained stealth specialist, Jennifer Mui – purely on the grounds that she's British and therefore pronounces the word 'arse' properly. Seconds later, she's being dropped

STRIKE TWO

Arsing around with the choppers is reminiscent of the old *Desert Strike* games. It turns out that *Mercenaries* was originally pitched as an update, but EA passed on the game...

"Hey, wait up, Dave! I'm not on it yet..."

Jenny takes down the Two Of Clubs. Ker-ching

WHY NOT TRY HIJACKING A TANK OR, FOR THE SERIOUS SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, AN APACHE GUNSHIP?

into the demilitarised zone (that's the DMZ, military acronym fans) in an armoured Hummer. Waiting for Jenny are 52 war criminals, numbered according to a deck of cards and each with a corresponding dollar bounty – the ultimate prize being General Song, the Ace Of Spades.

Capturing the different 'cards' has the same function in *Mercenaries* as story missions in *GTA*, in that they can be approached in a varying order, but to advance the plot they must all be completed eventually. The four suits – Diamonds, Clubs, Hearts and Spades – comprise four separate chapters split across two vast maps. Seriously, we're talking 15 minutes to walk from one side to the other. During which time, the environment shifts with amazing coherency between cities devastated by guerilla warfare, military outposts perched high in the mountains and remote coastal areas fringed by trees. *Mercenaries* features one of the most attractive landscapes ever drawn on PS2 – to the point that if you could only ignore the constant shelling and screams of maimed and dying soldiers, the DMZ would make a cracking holiday destination.

Once 'in country' you're advised to avoid walking around unless it's completely necessary. Pandemic's mantra when it comes to the 30-odd vehicles in *Mercenaries* is: 'If you can drive it, you can steal it.' Press △ next to a jeep or truck and your merc jumps in. Now hit ◎ to sound the horn and any friendly troops nearby will climb onboard and man the weapons. Which is fine for doing the school run, but faced with heavy resistance you're going to need something sexier. Why not try hijacking a tank or, for the serious soldier of fortune, an Apache gunship? The choice really is yours and, as you can imagine, provides a near infinite array of fantastic gameplay possibilities.

The different vehicle types have unique controls

Stand around and look innocent, they'll never guess

ADIOS ANGEL

The voice of your female handler was originally provided by Melissa George (Angel from *Home & Away*). We thought Mel was ace, but Pandemic didn't and have hired a girl with 'more sass'. The fools!

GOTTA CATCH 'EM ALL

Fundamentally, *Mercenaries* is all about freedom. There are two ways to discover the location of the card characters. It's possible to stumble across lower ranking enemies while exploring, but to get the necessary intel on the face cards – Jack, Queen and King – you're going to need the help of the factions, that operate like the gangs in *GTA*. Each force has an HQ you can visit to undertake contracts and the missions on offer vary massively (see 'Korea Advice'), but if you're successful you'll be rewarded with cash and, hopefully, information.

Keeping all your paymasters happy is no easy matter, though. For instance, if the Chinese hire you to assassinate a prominent figure in the Russian Mafia, Uncle Ivan isn't going to be too chuffed next time you turn up asking to buy some black market hardware – unless of course you manage to carry out the hit without being seen. Cleverly, regardless of how much you arse off the factions – there's a meter showing how they feel about you, but being shot on sight is fair indication – it's always possible to get back on side by killing rival troops and collecting their dog tags. Think of it like an incredibly violent popularity contest.

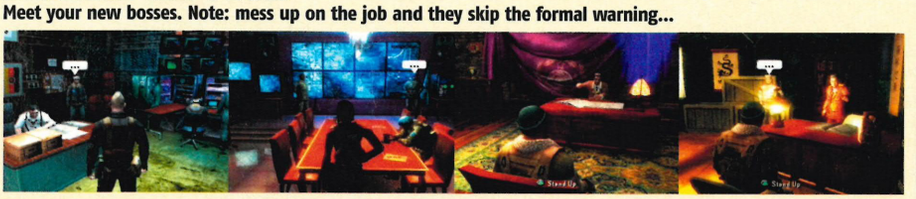
GAMBLING MAN

Given that almost everyone seems to want to kill you, your lone man army needs something to redress the balance – the answer, as ever, is capitalism. The money you earn can be spent in the field, either by paying a friendly faction to airlift supplies and vehicles to your location, or by splashing out on the numerous air strikes available. Whereas the A-Team relied on weapons cobbled together using tennis balls, sticky tape and farm machinery, you can call on bunker busters, cluster bombs, gunship support, cruise missiles, artillery barrages... George Bush's Christmas list, essentially. Every single building in the game is destructible (just think about that) and until you've seen a fuel air bomb destroy an entire city block in a flash of searing light and billowing smoke, you haven't really seen what your PS2 is capable of.

The key thing is to weigh up how much a target's worth before spunking the readies on extravagant missiles. Also

KOREA ADVICE

Meet your new bosses. Note: mess up on the job and they skip the formal warning...



SOUTH KOREA
Typical mission: A town is under attack from the North Korean forces and you're hired to help the defence – rushing between gun emplacements to blast the waves of attackers arriving on jeeps, all the while keeping an eye on the South Korean's fragile morale.

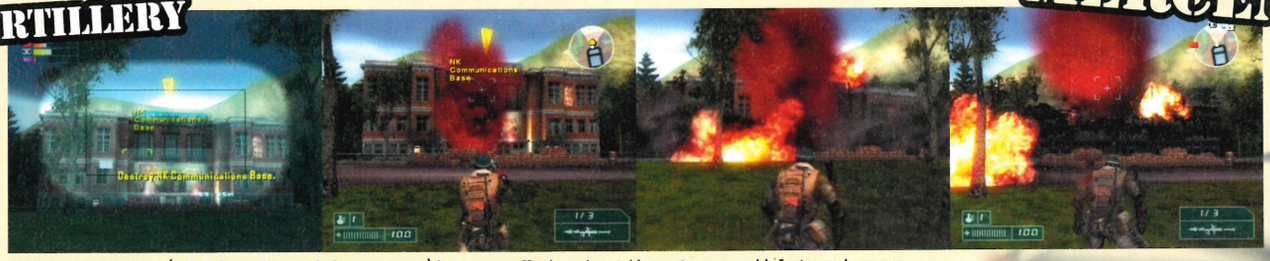
ALLIES
Typical mission: Early on you're asked to take a transport helicopter to pick up a squad of allied soldiers. Once onboard, they pepper the North Koreans using the side-mounted machine guns. Totally *Apocalypse Now*, and totally cool.

RUSSIAN MAFIA
Typical mission: The Reds love stolen motors and ask you to bring them some North Korean trucks that are protected by machine gun nests. Complete the job and you're given access to the Mafia's online store: Merchant Of Menace. Now you can order dodgy kit at any time.

CHINA
Typical mission: The Chinese aren't too keen on the Russians moving in, so they pay you to take out several Mafia bosses. Make sure you use a sniper rifle or C4 charges to remain undetected if you want to avoid upsetting your contacts in The Organizatsiya.

MERCENARIES

ARTILLERY



Artillery lacks precision (a flare is used to mark the target area) but proves effective when taking out encamped infantry and armour

CLUSTER BOMB

First lock onto the target with the satellite guidance system, then an A-10 Tankbuster swoops over and scatters bomblets over a wide area

FUEL-AIR BOMB

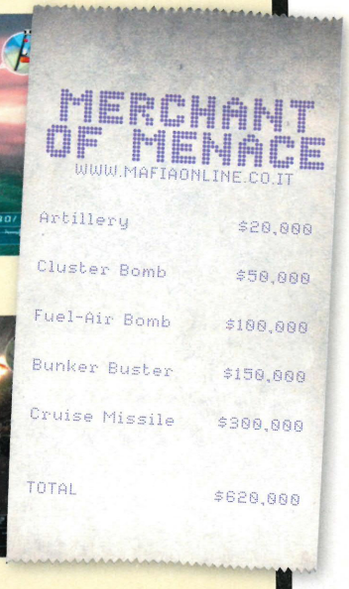
Plenty of bang for your buck, as an aerosol disperses a cloud of inflammable gas which is then detonated in a building-flattening blast

BUNKER BUSTER

Essential for destroying large structures, the bunker buster's armoured tip enables it to drill down before delivering its huge payload

CRUISE MISSILE

Pricey, but the gentleman's choice. Paint the target with a laser then watch the Cruise missile whistle towards its target



bear in mind that the allies only pay half price for a charred corpse. To get the full bounty, the card has to be alive when you bundle him into the extraction chopper that swoops down, rotors scattering the crimson smoke from your marker flare. Choosing which weapons to use – and when – is unquestionably the coolest thing in *Mercenaries*, and what truly separates it from *GTA*.

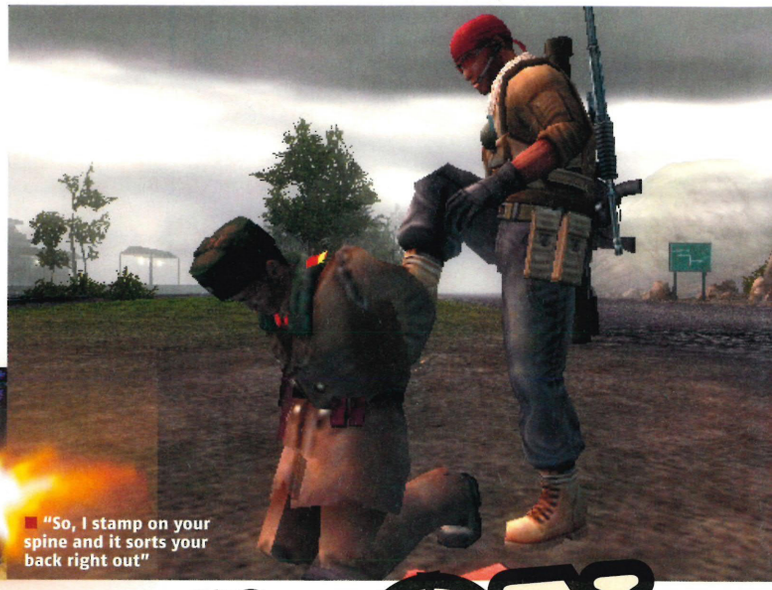
Mercenaries is the ultimate game of toy soldiers, and with a few months to go before its February release, it already feels like a breathtaking step forward. Every player will experience the game differently, specialising in different weapons and designing unique tactics. The risk with so much freedom is that *Mercenaries* could lack focus, but the missions are beautifully structured and well signposted. Crucially, the combat feels chunky, rewarding and dynamic. You can read our hands-on impressions over the page, but this is all you really need to know: *Mercenaries*' working title was simply 'Have Fun Blowing Shit Up'. It's time to amend your most wanted lists and now would be a good time.

The explosions look tremendous, scattering debris and bodies

MERCENARIES

The fuel-air bomb in action. Could it be the greatest PS2 weapon ever?

"Stay off my land," Korea-style



"So, I stamp on your spine and it sorts your back right out"

HANDS-ON

Join us as we take down the Queen Of Hearts. No, it's nothing to do with Lady D

Our target is Chi-Seong An – a North Korean chemical weapons expert the allies have designated as the Queen Of Hearts. There's a $35k reward for his capture, but before getting his location the South Koreans want you to dismantle his operation. Playing as Nilsson, we arrive outside a heavily defended base, ringed with high concrete walls and sentry towers. No problem. Fiona, our handler, recommends a cluster bomb, and we're not about to argue.

Pressing ↑ on the D-pad brings up your support items, and having selected the correct ordinance with R1, you then use a satellite guidance system to paint the target. Ker-ching. Money drains from your account as the bombers swoop overhead and pound the front gates with a rolling wave of high explosives. Walls crumble, guard towers explode and the gates are obliterated.

DROP THE BOMB, KILL 'EM ALL

A North Korean jeep suddenly emerges from the smoke, machine gun rattling. You can only carry two primary weapons at once (plus two types of grenade), so we switch from the Carbine to the rocket-propelled grenade and blast the jeep with extreme prejudice – thanks to the Havok physics engine, explosions make vehicles and soldiers hurtle through the air. Inside, the compound is crawling with infantry. The control system is blessedly intuitive, using the left stick to move and the right stick to aim, with just the slightest trace of automation to guide your hand.

Initial suspicions that *Mercenaries* might not offer anything more than run-'n'-gun action prove misguided. Staying alive is very much a case of using cover and adopting a crouched stance (click L3) to improve accuracy. Before nuking the main weapons factory, we're ordered to destroy several surface-to-air missile launchers protecting the base. As ever, the method is entirely up to you. We sneak up behind one and plant a C4 charge. Another launcher fireballs after we hijack a tank and blast it from range. Feeling extravagant, we blow the bank on a second cluster bomb – all the time trading fire with troops in the base.

Next to the final launcher we discover a helipad and a 'little bird' chopper with our name on. One of the North Koreans makes a desperate run for it, but we gun him down and get inside. Once airborne, the excitement cranks up a notch as we buzz around mopping up the remaining forces with missiles and chaingun fire. En route to the primary target a plan forms. We land the chopper on the roof of the building nearest to the weapons factory and from here we've got the perfect vantage point for a bunker buster. Nilsson 'paints' the target with a laser and again the flyboys score a bullseye, levelling the structure with one enormous detonation.

With his plans in ruins, the Queen Of Hearts tries to escape, his icon pinging onto the map. Blasting our way through her majesty's bodyguards, we close in and take the Queen out with a swift elbow to the temple. Press △ and your merc performs a signature take down, knocking the card to the floor and cuffing him like an overzealous cop. Now it's just a case of calling in the extraction chopper and deciding what to spend the blood money on. Daddy needs a new cruise missile... ■

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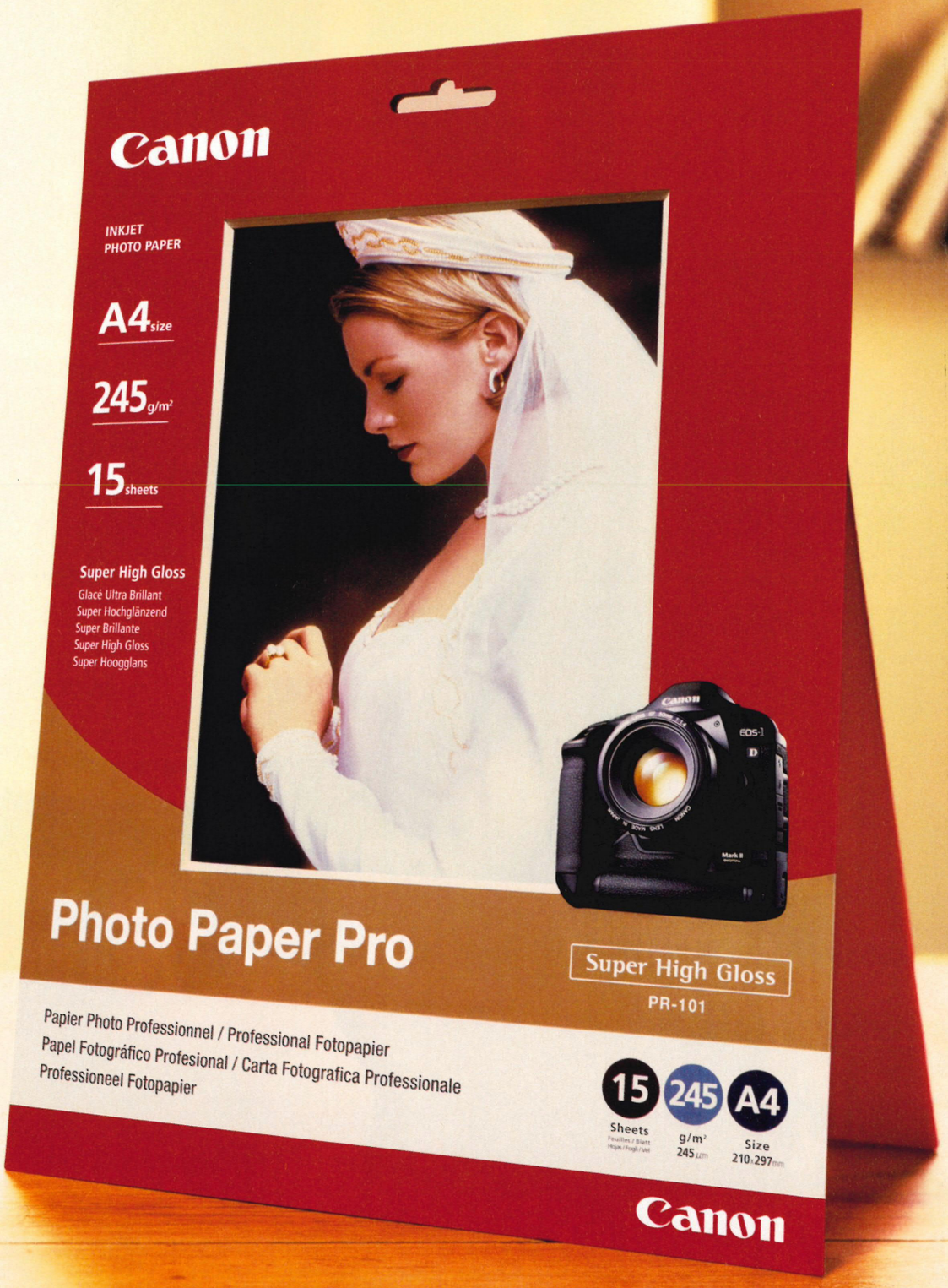

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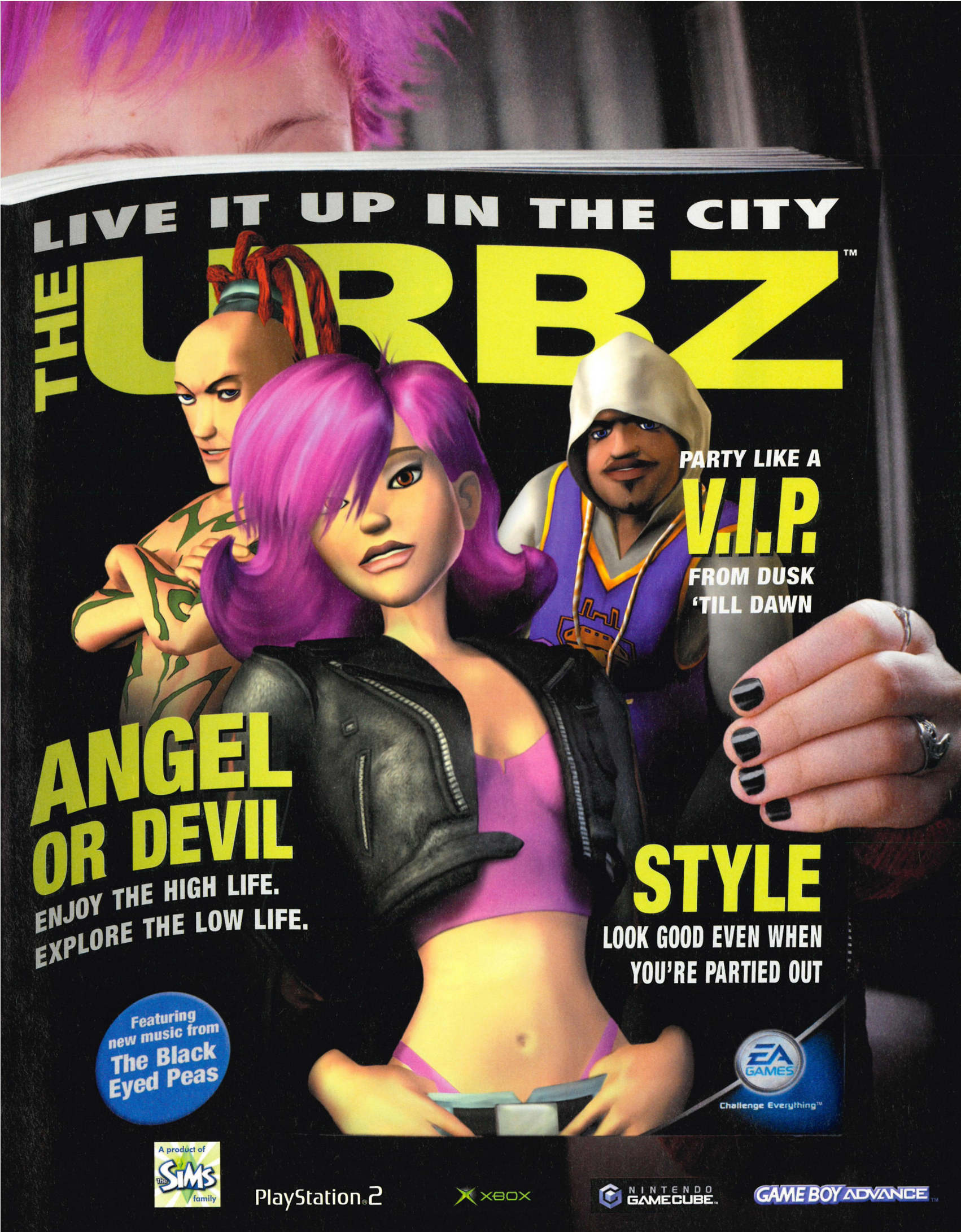
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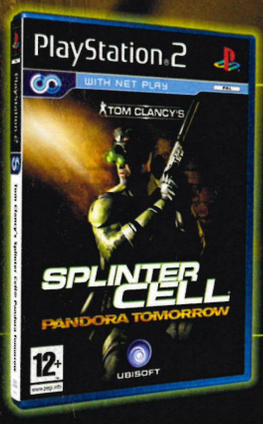

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review

VERDICTS THAT MATTER FROM PEOPLE WHO KNOW

WELCOME TO REVIEWS

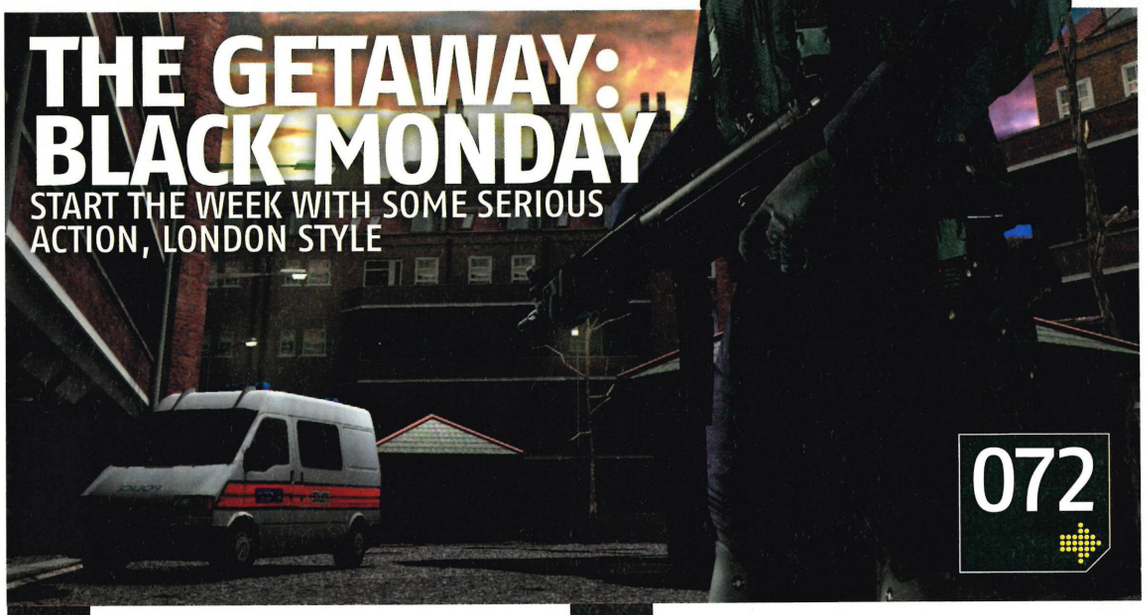
This man plays *all* the new games. Yes, you may envy him

I don't think anyone could call me an arrogant man, but you can surely understand my immense displeasure when people have the audacity to challenge my supreme authority. It was a rocky one this month, coming to a peak when George and I almost came to blows over the eternal question facing PS2 gamers. It is, of course, what was best between *Ratchet & Clank* or *Jak* – check out both reviews this month to find out what *we* think.

Now, I won that bout. As the mighty opinion monolith that towers over the world of *OPS2*, my knowledge and carefully educated games palate has been finely tuned over steady years of gaming. Fortunately, I now have the opportunity to use my powers for good, as it's here that we play through all the chaff to find you the finest wheaty gaming goodness. And this month I think you'll find we've harvested quite a crop.

Michael

Michael French,
Reviews editor



THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY

START THE WEEK WITH SOME SERIOUS ACTION, LONDON STYLE

072

076 **SINGSTAR PARTY**
The best party game on PS2 returns as an, er, party game. So what's new?

078 **JAK 3**
The trilogy draws to a close, but does Jak bow out with a bang or a pitiful whimper?

080 **TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2**
Laughing at cripples, fart gags, skating as dead US Presidents... *Hawk's* goes all *Jackass*

082 **WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW**
It's online, there are real 'talent' voices, there's spanking, oh, and some wrestling as well

084 **EYETOY PLAY 2**
Dust off the EyeToy, we've got two games for you. First the return of *Play* and then...

084 **SEGA SUPERSTARS**
...a whole load of the Sega back catalogue: Sonic, Super Monkey Ball, Virtua Fighter and more

086 **UNDER THE SKIN**
Every now and again a game comes along that's impossible to describe... Say hello to *Under The Skin*

088 **WRC 4**
WRC takes a slightly different course to last year but will it affect its finishing position?

090 **NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2**
Last year's sales phenomenon returns with a bigger, open, city. Plus! We see what real modders think

092 **THIS IS FOOTBALL 2005**
Sony's annual footie title comes with amazing EyeToy compatibility but does it come with a game?

094 **RATCHET & CLANK 3**
Still looking for weapons of mass destruction? It would appear that most of them can be found here

096 **GET ON DA MIC**
Hoping to do for rapping what *SingStar* did for singing. We're not so sure about it, though...

102 **THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE THIRD AGE**
Rings gets the RPG treatment at last

106 **FLATOUT**
The only driving game where you get to catapult your driver through the windscreen and onto a dartboard

PLUS

098 PREMIER MANAGER 2004/2005
098 TOTAL CLUB MANAGER 2005
100 POOL SHARK 2
100 NBA LIVE 2005
104 CRIMSON TEARS
104 WORMS: FORTS UNDER SIEGE
108 METAL SLUG 3
108 KING OF FIGHTERS 2000/2001
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112 DRIVEN TO DESTRUCTION
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113 MIDWAY ARCADE TREASURES 2
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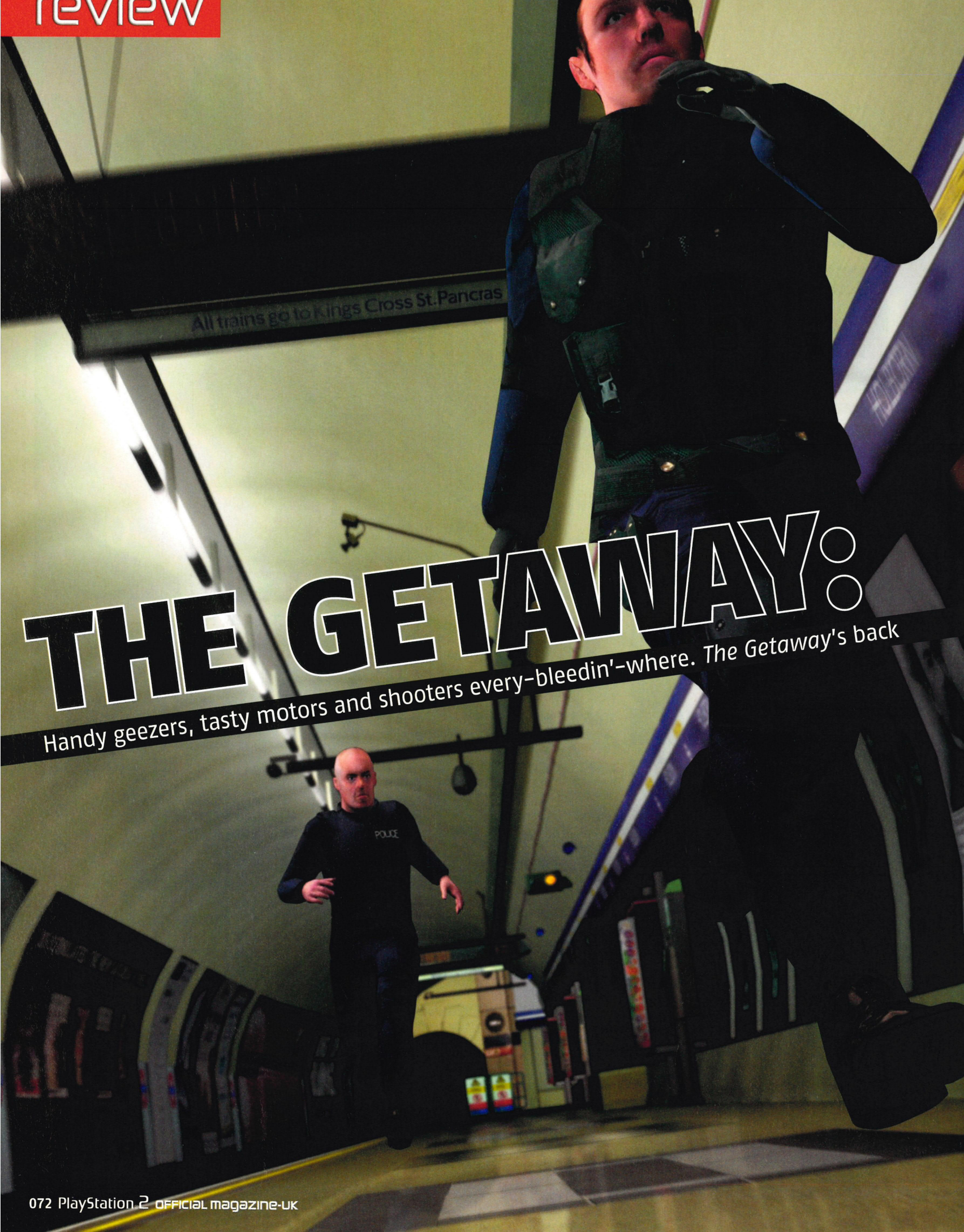
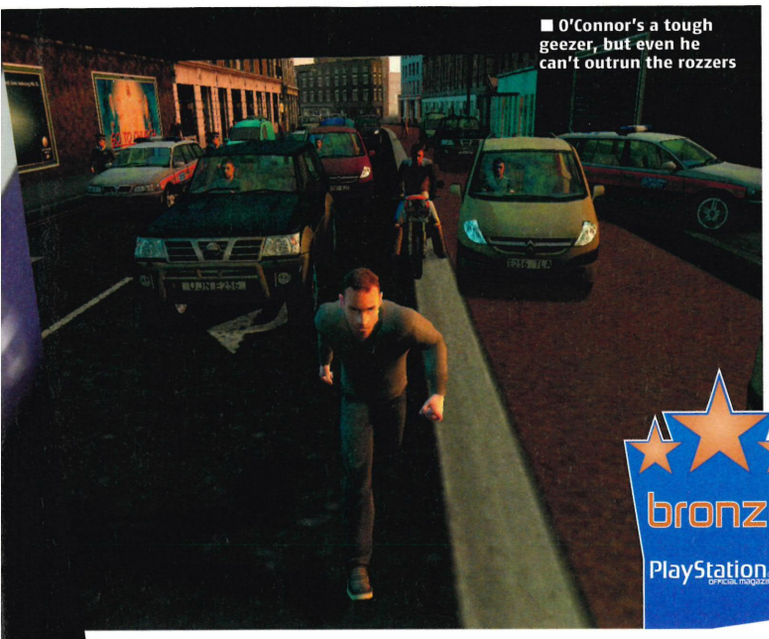
113 TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER 2: BUSH RESCUE
114 CRASH TWINSANITY
114 DRAGONBALL Z 3: BUDOKAI
114 SHARK TALE
114 ROBOTECH: INVASION

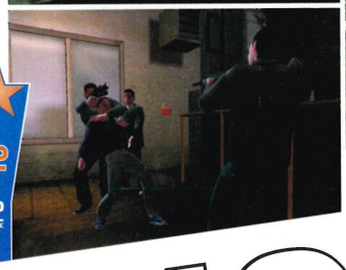


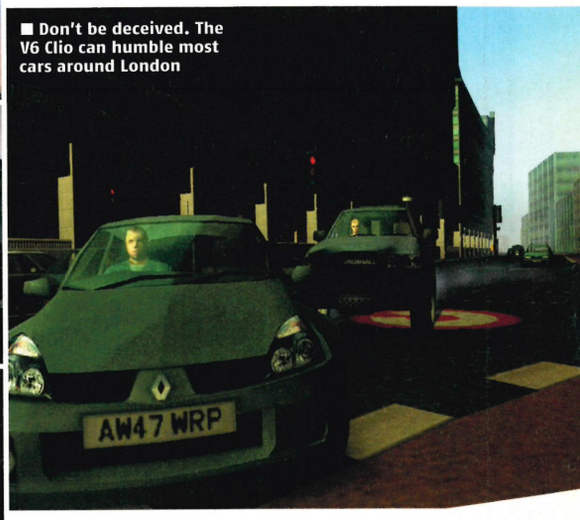
THE GETAWAY:

Handy geezers, tasty motors and shooters every-bleedin'-where. *The Getaway*'s back



■ O'Connor's a tough geezer, but even he can't outrun the rozzers





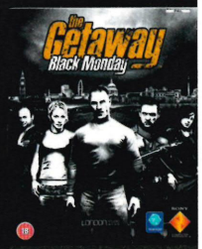
■ Don't be deceived. The V6 Clio can humble most cars around London

bronze

PlayStation 2 official magazine-UK

BLACK MONDAY

to reclaim the manor and it's as serious as murder...



DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER TEAM SOHO
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT 12 NOVEMBER
WEBSITE PLAYSTATION.CO.UK
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES

AT A GLANCE

Time to polish up your best Damon Albarn mockernee, as Studio Soho's gritty whelk stall of cinematic shooting and driving is open for business again, gangster style. Muppet.

A word in your shell-like. If you're coming to this review with the question 'is *Black Monday* as good as the original *Getaway* game?' burning a hole in your frontal lobe, can we settle that one right out of the trap, 'cause we've got bigger fish to fry and there's precious little time to mess around.

So yes. It is. If yes means that everything you loved about *The Getaway* is suited, booted, and hot to trot, then *Black Monday* is definitely its predecessor's equal.

The exhaustively mapped, grimy sprawl of yer actual London town that was scarcely credible as a feat of programming first time around is there in all its heavily thumbed A-Z glory once again. And if anything, the big smoke's wounded magnetism has been captured with an even keener eye second time around, with new areas showcased and richer textures throughout. Hammond and DC Carter are videogame history, but in their place you've got a new pair of mismatched thugs from opposite sides of the thin blue line, Sgt Ben Mitchell and Eddie O'Connor. And just like last time, our geezers' stories split the game's 22 chapters in two, but duck and dive around one another like East End boxers, occasionally connecting with a wallop of gamer recognition.

What else rings a Bow Bell or two? You've got a capital city full of real motors to 'alf inch. You also get the familiar lack of any (and we do mean 'any') on-screen furniture during play. And on a 'best till last' tip, you've got your cinematic cut-scenes, which are still packed to the gills with *Long Good Friday*-strength cockney dialogue and the kind of sudden, dulling violence that screams of anything *other* than traditional videogame excess. All of which sounds like it's time to get 'em in and have a celebratory knees up round the ol' Joanna. Sorted. Altogether now! 'My old man's a dustman, he wears a dustman's hat...'

SUITED, BOOTED AND HOT TO TROT, *BLACK MONDAY* IS DEFINITELY ITS PREDECESSOR'S EQUAL

Ah, but wait. Hold your horses, sunshine. There's another question it would pay to ask, especially since we're in sequel territory. Is *Black Monday* as *flawed* as *The Getaway*? If you've played the original game, you'll know exactly what that means. *The Getaway* was a diamond to be sure, but one hell of a rough diamond in places. While brilliant and worth a hundred times its weight in pie and mash, it was a gem forced to shine through clag in the shape of an infuriatingly spasmodic camera and 'eccentric' auto-aim in the shooting missions. It also had a dedication to the purity of 'no on-screen furniture' that, for those gamers unfamiliar with the Hangar Lane gyratory, bordered on the masochistic. All issues that grated. All wrinkles that could, no, *should* be ironed out for a sequel. All of which, inexplicably and disappointingly, make their presence felt in *Black Monday*. Good. Bad. Brilliant. Infuriating. Perhaps a little elaboration would be a good idea...

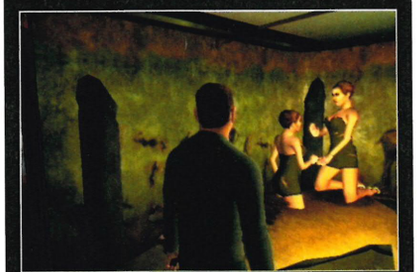
LOST THE PLOT?

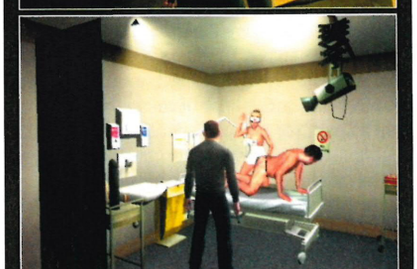
Plot-wise, *Black Monday* has set up shop two years on from the events of the original *Getaway*. The Yardie gangs are still doing a brisk trade in drugs, death and arms and are now making uneasy links with a particularly violent, ludicrously well-funded satellite of the Russian Mafia. As mentioned above, you approach this toe-curling Yardie/Russkie collaboration from different directions, as both amateur boxer/hired

MUSTN'T GRUMBLE

If you think that a black mamba is a reptile and DVDA is the latest digital format, perhaps you should look away now...

The Getaway: Black Monday is hardcore. Got that? Council estate chavs effing and blinding, gangland execution and plenty of scrotum meets razorblade torture. Still, even *we* choked on our pork scratchings when we clapped eyes on the porntacular backdrop to O'Connor's grumble-studio visit. And yes, that is a double ender...

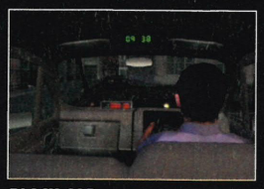




CRAZY... BLACK CAB?

In *The Getaway*, free-roaming around the nation's capital was a slice of heaven. This time around, it's not your only distraction

RACE
The ambient traffic is gone. In its place you've got a series of point-to-point races, with themes including 4x4s through London's royal parks and a Mod-inspired scooter race. There's even a set of Le Mans-style prototypes for you to try.

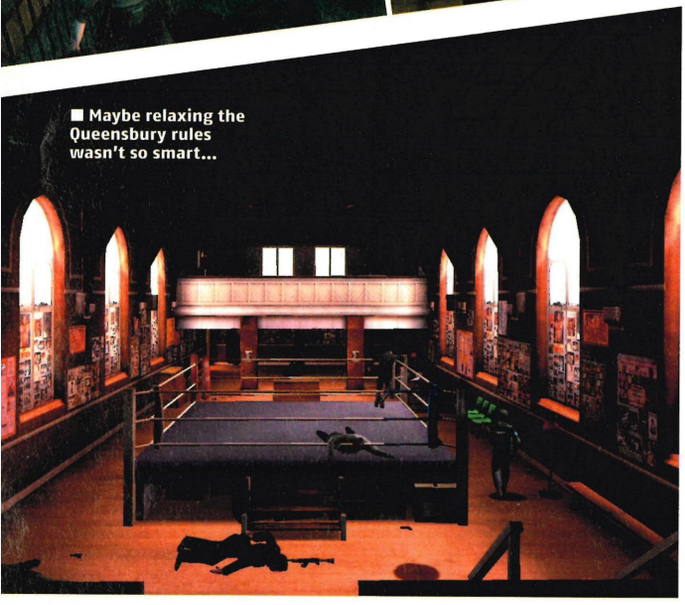


BLACK CAB
The Getaway comes over all *Crazy Taxi* – with more than a nod towards *GTA*. You get a Hackney carriage and limited time to notch up some easy money ferrying people around the big smoke. South of the river? You'll be lucky at this time of day, love.

CHASE
It's like *Driv3r* without the need to shake your fists at God, sobbing 'why?' Chase the perp and ram him off the road till he's completely wrecked. Do it enough times and you'll get a standard issue Metropolitan Police Lotus Esprit.

FREE ROAMING
Still as much of a draw as it ever was. Unlock characters (including a 'tached, thong-wearing porn star on a mountain bike) and explore the biggest, most detailed city in videogame history, boosting cars and searching for one-offs.

■ Outside is where the on-foot levels work best



■ Maybe relaxing the Queensbury rules wasn't so smart...

■ *Black Monday* 'does' London in all its grimy brilliance

NOTHING ELSE OUT THERE DOES ADULT AND UNCOMPROMISINGLY GRITTY QUITE LIKE THIS

East End muscle, O'Connor, and the armed response cop, Mitchell. And frankly, that's about all the plot info you'll be getting from us. For one thing, unravelling the two-headed narrative is all part of the fun, but there's another reason, too. Much as we suspect the developers at Sony's Team Soho would like to be making movies (and they do a bang-up job of creating a cinematic vibe), *Black Monday* remains a game. And while a gritty and believably menacing atmosphere is a genuine asset, it's essentially just garnish. The bits between the cut-scenes are the dish itself, and considering it blends only two real ingredients (driving from A to B and shooting people up when you get there), it's there that we need to fix our mince pies.

The good news is that the driving sections are as enjoyable as we'd hoped. Despite congestion charging, London's streets are busier than ever and, as you'd expect, a variety of new models are in circulation. Of course, anything from a Smart For Two or Vauxhall VX Monaro to a double decker or Westminster council refuse van can be jacked, driven and destroyed with a pleasing level of realism (it's still the only franchise outside of *TOCA* we can think of that accurately conveys how a broken car feels to drive as well as looks). This love affair with 'the real' also returns in the marques' unique handling – a knackered Renault 5 will have all the rigidity and torque of, well, a 20-year-old French hatchback, while a box-fresh Lotus Exige will shift like stink and corner on rails. Following *Vice City* and *Driv3r*, *Black Monday* also gets motorbikes and scooters, too. Welcome for sure, and great for weaving through gridlock at dizzying speeds.

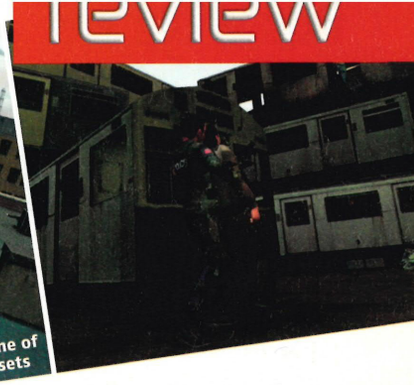
ALL MAPPED OUT

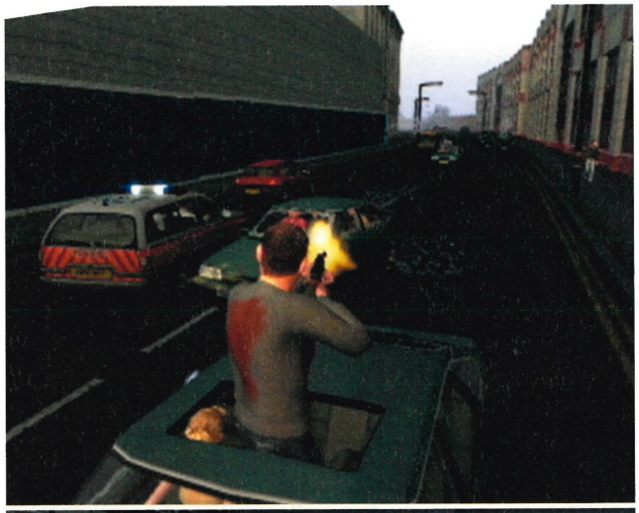
Also new is the welcome addition of a map showing your location and orientation and relative position of objectives. Not that you can actually see the map *while* you're driving, of course (you've got to pause the game for that). And not that the map shows any useful info like direction of traffic flow. Still, it *is* better than nothing and makes the now familiar 'navigation by indicator lights' a little easier to master in a crunch. Not actively user friendly, but then again, nobody said driving at full pelt through a congested city was going to be child's play.

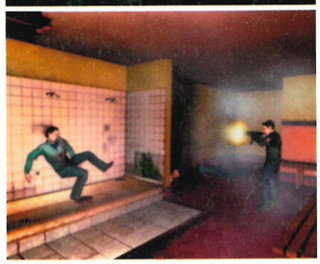
Once O'Connor and Mitchell get out of their motors, however, the good news is a little

■ Shooting while driving is new and welcome, but it's rarely that useful during missions

■ Level design is one of the game's best assets







■ Riding shotgun takes on a whole new meaning...

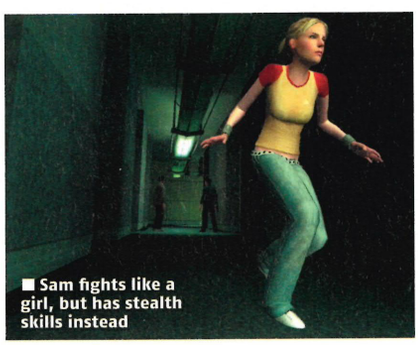
■ You can forget about friendly bobbies right away

harder to find. The erratic auto-aim feature that plagued combat in the original *Getaway* feels only marginally improved, and often sees you locking on to a distant goon while another empties a full clip into your left ear at whispering distance. Absolutely infuriating. Particularly so, given that enemy AI seems sharper than ever. Sadly, there's worse to come. In an attempt to free up the rigidly fixed camera from the first outing, Team Soho has created a fixed/flexi hybrid that manages to outdo even its predecessor for howling disorientation. Change direction quickly or wander into an enclosed space (indoors, for example) and the effect on your ability to get your bearings is right up there with drinking a bathful of tequila and going circuit training for an hour. But you can struggle through, and the chances are you will want to, because, despite it all, the gunplay retains the brutality that marked out the first game as a minor classic. That said, you really shouldn't have to struggle at all.

ON THE LEVEL

Mercifully though, level design *is* improved which is a genuine reason to be cheerful. Often incorporating roof-top chases, shooter missions tend to flow from exterior to interior and out again with clear paths getting complicated and rerouted mid-mission. There's also a genuine attempt this time around to embrace stealth with a couple of chapters that cast Sam, O'Connor's teenage hacker sidekick. She can't match her *Splinter Cell* namesake, but does manage to supplement the default wall hug/corner peek manoeuvres with an effective stealth walk. It provides a subtlety of movement the big apes O'Connor and Mitchell sorely lack. For while the former can take hostages and the latter can arrest rather than kill – and both are able to drag and hide bodies – in practice you're unlikely to bother, as the camera blunts finesse and reduces most scenarios to bloody firefights.

As the sun sets over old London town, it's hard not to feel a little disappointed by *Black Monday*. It's not that the game short-changes you. Nothing else out there does adult and uncompromisingly gritty quite like it, and it still has the power to pick you up by the scruff of the neck and suck you into its seedy world. What's more, if you've never played the original *Getaway*, this *just* shades it, if only for a cluster of additional mini-games (See 'Crazy... Black Cab?') But for everyone else? Without the original innovation that seduced gamers first time around, *Black Monday* feels more like a full-sized expansion pack than an evolution. The good, the bad and the ugly features from *The Getaway* are all here and, for many, that will still be more than enough to warrant ponying up the readies. That said, when *The Getaway 3* rolls around, which it will, we're praying that Team Soho can take its own incredible, virtual London for granted and make gameplay the headlining star. ■ **Paul Fitzpatrick**



■ Sam fights like a girl, but has stealth skills instead

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	08	London looks better than ever
Sound	08	Great score, but the dialogue's overdone
Gameplay	07	You shoot. You drive. You sneak. Repeat
Lifespan	07	22 chapters will keep you busy

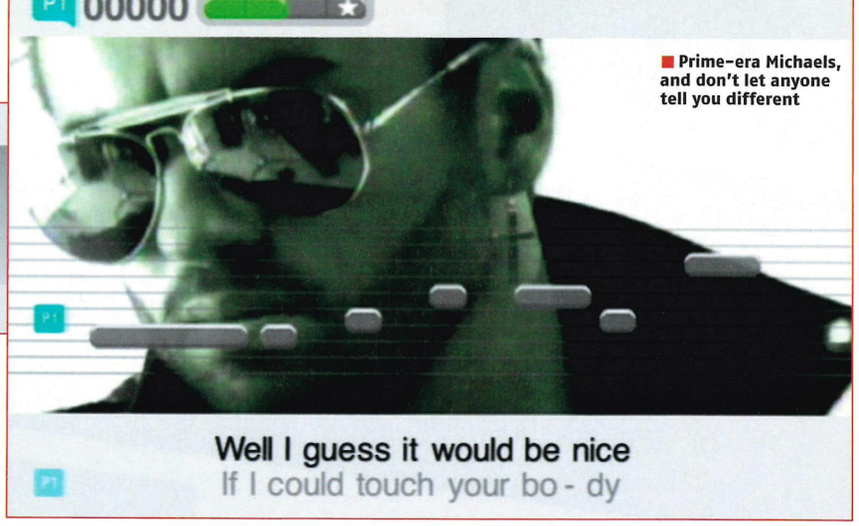
***Black Monday** feels too similar to its predecessor to land classic status. It's stylish and gritty, but there's just no evolution*

8/10

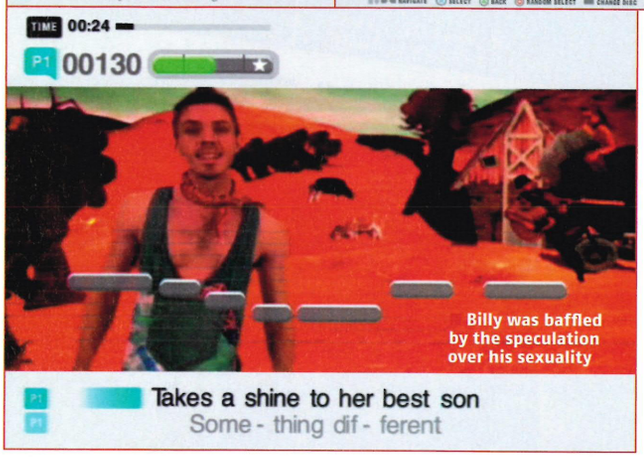
LEAVE IT AHT!

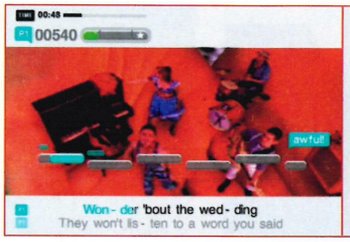
Don't be a mug. Do the *OPS2* knowledge and gem up on our *Black Monday* themed cockney rhyming slang. Slag

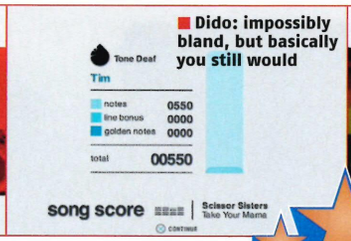
COCKNEY	THE QUEEN'S	USAGE
Brian Clough	Rough	'Ere, the camera in these shooting levels is a bit bleedin' Brian innit?
Kermit The Frog	Dialogue	Who the hell wrote this Kermit? It stinks like a docker's Niagaras
Niagara Falls	Balls	(See above)
Pantomime Dame	Auto-Aim	What's up with the Panto? That geezer was standing right behind you with a sawn off. How could you miss?
Eel Pie	AI	Blimey, the eel pie ain't 'alf sharp. Shame about the grimace, though
Grimace And Frown	Slowdown	(See above)



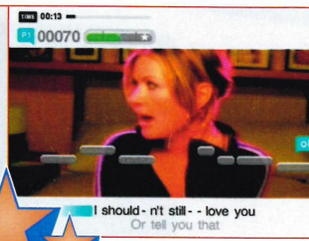
Prime-era Michaels, and don't let anyone tell you different







Dido: impossibly bland, but basically you still would



SINGSTAR PARTY

What, there's no Einstürzende Neubaten at *all*?

bronze
PlayStation 2 official magazine-uk

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER LONDON STUDIOS
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1-8
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.SINGSTARGAME.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

AT A GLANCE

This is the follow up to Sony's innovative singing game. *Party* can be bought either with microphones or as a stand-alone disc and is once again compatible with the EyeToy.

See, even George's got his eye on the games we're playing

Even though we spend the entire week together, staring at each other until our faces swim and blur, unbelievably some of the staff on this magazine still *choose* to socialise together. Fuelled by a heady mix of cheap gin and hope we head for the nearest flat, and once we're done discussing advances in the real-time strategy genre and rapping about the hos, the lights dim and the microphones come out. *"Well I guess it would be nice, oh, if I could touch your body..."*

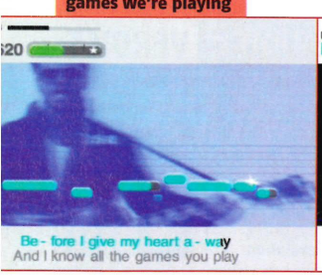
We're not making this up for the purposes of this review, either. It's real. We *actually* sing. Dreadfully, yes, but that's not the point. Well, it sort of is... but anyway, actual parties! So when *SingStar Party* arrived, text messages were hastily sent, comestibles purchased and leisurewear sported. Those of you familiar with the original need only glance rightwards at the new track selection. Whether or not you buy this update will be entirely dependent on how many of these songs you fancy murdering in front of your embarrassed-for-you friends.

SING WHEN YOU'RE MINGING

Meanwhile, debutantes can expect 30 tracks of gorgeously presented karaoke. (Actually, Sony hates us calling it karaoke... someone explained why at some length, but the logic escapes us now.) The selection manages to be both populist and bafflingly eclectic. So you've got Bob Marley sat awkwardly next to Busted and Duran Duran staring lustily at Destiny's Child. The obvious problem being that catering for the broadest audience possible means most players will HATE at least half a dozen of the artists. Hello, Natasha Bedingfield and Jamiroquai.

Overall, we reckon *Party*'s line-up is slightly weaker than its predecessor's. Personal faves include *Take Your Mama Out* (terrifyingly, your reviewer's range is almost exactly that of the *Sisters*' Jake Shears), *I Think We're Alone Now* and *Gold*. But, even accounting for taste, some of the choices are inexplicable. Like, why include a scarcely known Elvis track when his back catalogue's groaning with classics? *Tutti Frutti* simply doesn't work, either. However, where the game succeeds is with the new emphasis on duets.

Any song can be sung as a duet, but the best ones are proper call-and-response tunes like *Don't Go Breaking My Heart* and *A Little Time*. You can also insert the original *SingStar* disc to access its tracks as duets. Still, you can exhaust the entire roster in a single night, and Sony has also failed to iron out creases in the scoring that enable people to mumble through while racking up points. Example: two lads are singing *Every Breath You Take*, one sounds *exactly* like Sting, the other like a dying rhino, but at the end only 20 points separate their scores. For that reason we're dropping the mark by a point, but *SingStar* remains social gaming at its finest. **Tim Clark**



PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK		VERDICT
Graphics	08	Exquisitely stylish menus plus proper videos
Sound	08	Kylie sounds like Kylie. What do you want?
Gameplay	08	Silly on your own, amazing in multiplayer
Lifespan	07	Once again, 30 tracks feels like too few

***Party** is a welcome addition to the SingStar family, but next time the answer has to be separate versions tailored to specific genres*

8/10

TRACKS OF MY FEARS

"Please, don't make me sing the Marley"

Alicia Keys – Fallin'
Ashford & Simpson – Solid
Bill Withers – Ain't No Sunshine
Blu Cantrell – Hit 'Em Up Style (Oops!)
Bob Marley – No Woman No Cry
Buggles – Video Killed The Radio Star
Busted – Year 3000
Cyndi Lauper – Girls Just Wanna Have Fun
Destiny's Child – Survivor
Dido – White Flag
Duran Duran – Hungry Like The Wolf
Elton John & Kiki Dee – Don't Go Breaking My Heart
Elvis – Way Down
Franz Ferdinand – Take Me Out
George Michael – Faith
Jamiroquai – Cosmic Girl
Javine – Real Things
Kylie Minogue – I Should Be So Lucky
Little Richard – Tutti Frutti
Maroon5 – This Love
Natasha Bedingfield – Single
Pink – Just Like A Pill
Sonny & Cher – I Got You Babe
Spandau Ballet – Gold
Spice Girls – Who Do You Think You Are
The Beautiful South – A Little Time
The Foundations – Build Me Up Buttercup
The Police – Every Breath You Take
Tiffany – I Think We're Alone Now

KEY:
RED: Warning! This song is rock hard!
GREEN: Easy! Try singing this if you're tone deaf

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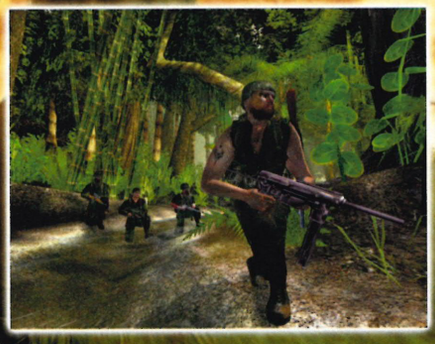

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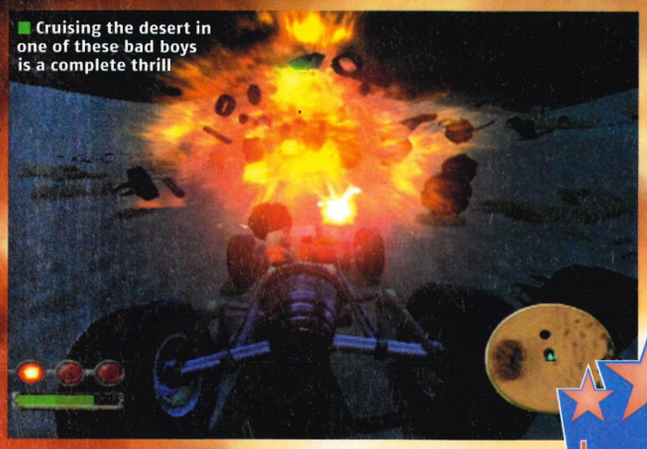
The gun training missions from *Jak II* return in force

ON THE DVD

As usual the visual effects are original and spectacular

only in... PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK


Cruising the desert in one of these bad boys is a complete thrill

Jak's friend Keira makes an early appearance in the desert

bronze PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK

JAK 3

Jak and Daxter's last outing turns out to be too much of a good thing

DETAILS

PUBLISHER	SONY
DEVELOPER	NAUGHTY DOG
PRICE	£39.99
PLAYERS	1
OUT	26 NOVEMBER
WEBSITE	WWW.NAUGHTYDOG.COM
60HZ MODE	NO
WIDESCREEN	YES
SURROUND SOUND	YES

AT A GLANCE

Jak brings his ground-breaking blend of combat, action and platforming to PS2 for one last time before bowing out of the gaming world. He'll be back on PS3, we're sure.

The following is an extract from an actual conversation between two members of *OPS2*, while playing *Jak 3*. A: "It looks <expletive removed> beautiful doesn't it..." B: "I know. Imagine if 15 years ago, when the best game you'd ever seen was on a <expletive removed> old computer like a Spectrum or an Atari... and, somehow, you were given the opportunity to see *Jak 3*." B: <laughs> "You'd <expletive removed> your pants!" And so on and so forth.

It's true. If there's a series to show you just how far videogames have come since the days of tape-loading, 2D 16-colour graphics and mono sound, it's *Jak And Daxter*. In the original, it was the vast, seamless island environments and the development of a truly likable pair of central characters, animated to the standard of a Pixar motion picture. Then, to up the ante, *Jak II* saw the introduction of the sprawling Haven City – a valid attempt to amalgamate the freeform mission structure of *Vice City* to the character action format. And if you hadn't noticed yet, that's everything you need to know about Jak and Daxter's impeccable heritage in two breathless sentences.

JAK TO THE FUTURE

Jak 3 is a direct sequel to *Jak II* and begins in the lawless wastelands that surround Haven City. Jak's been thrown out of Haven City (woo-hoo!) and gets picked up by a group of monks who've holed themselves up in a village stronghold. The deal is that you get refuge in their camp as long as you're prepared to risk your life in to-the-death combat in their Gladitorial arena. After you've been initiated, provided with a weapon and given the chief monk's blessing, you're free to begin unravelling the true reasons behind the fall of Haven City.

And you know what? For at least two hours we thought this was our favourite Jak game yet. The tranquil beach-side location, all azure seas, hazy sunsets and calm – everything we loved about Sandover Village from the first game – came as a welcome contrast to the dark, urban sprawl of Haven City and its omnipresent Crimson Guard. We even got to ride around on a lovable cross between a kangaroo and a puffin, and, for a second, had it in our heads that we'd never have to drive a hover bike again. And guess what? The only method of transportation in the desert is four-wheeled, ground-based dune buggies. Just think exaggerated bouncy physics and big fat tractor wheels and hold on to your haaaaatttt!

So what happened after two hours? Well, mainly we had to travel back to Haven City. And it was much the same. With hover bikes and everything. But wait – wracked by futuristic war, half the city is now inaccessible and open fighting takes place in the streets. Here Jak hooks up with Torn, the leader of the resistance, and runs missions in the city. If this isn't discouraging enough, a visit to the previously lush forest sections (previously a beacon of serenity in the urban sprawl) reveals an entirely different landscape. It's like the woods surrounding Chernobyl.

It's not that we think these less serene environments affect the game basics, it's just hard to get away from the fact that the number one thing we loved about the original game was the tranquil, pastoral nature of the islands. Even when you had to visit a dark cave or a fiery volcano crater, you were never too far away

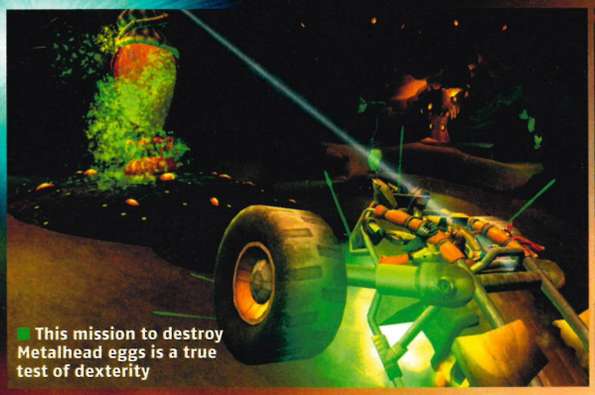
THE *JAK 3* SCORE-O-METER...

How we came to decide *Jak 3*'s score...

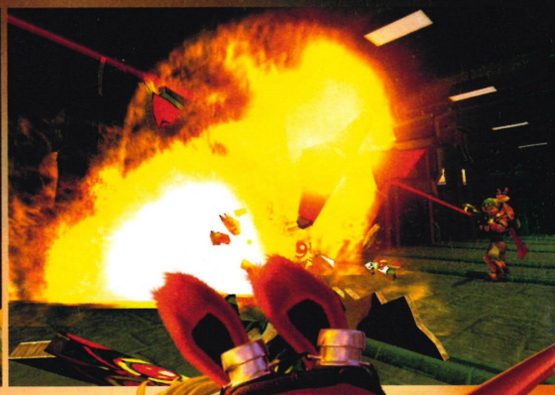
HEAVEN SENT

The Dark Jak powers might still be rubbish but Light Jak opens up a new world of possibilities

While we still only use the Dark Jak powers after accidentally pressing the L2 button (and then shout at ourselves for being so stupid), the Light Jak power-up is pleasingly useful. Among its functions are invisibility, a dramatic slow-down-time effect and an option to trade Light Jak juice for Jak's energy. You're free to use these powers whenever you like and it's topped up by collecting blue orbs. The angelic, ethereal animation that accompanies Light Jak is worth triggering it alone...



This mission to destroy Metalhead eggs is a true test of dexterity



The leaper makes a welcome replacement to the hover bike

The whole gang reunited again. They don't look too happy about it, mind...

from a beautiful sunset or breathtaking view.

In *Jak 3* it soon becomes apparent that Naughty Dog's main aim is to finish the series with a bang. This means giving Jak a bewildering array of different missions, utilising multiple vehicles and game styles. Of these, many are familiar – item collection, weapon-based combat, puzzles, against-the-clock challenges and platform sections. As a result it's the more original offerings that shine through. Sticking Daxter on a missile with no air brake and getting him to drive it round an assault course is hard (but genius), as is a later mission where Jak has to take out huge dinosaurs with a turret gun while being driven through a vicious desert storm. Other new undertakings are the antithesis of these – the section where Jak goes into a weird top-down view and has to defend the harbour in a *Baldur's Gate*-style almost got the game a four out of ten – thank God we finished it first go. Plus, while we love the new desert vehicles, their twitchy handling can be 'testing' to say the least.

JAK IT ALL IN...

In fact, if more meant better, *Jak 3* would be the best game ever made. Hold that thought and then hear why it's turned out to be probably our least favourite *Jak*...

By cramming so much into the experience, we've lost sight of Jak's world. There's no sense of place any more. You're permanently ferried from area to area, never allowed to pause, take stock and admire the admittedly incredible landscape. Not only that, but the narrative is confusing (to be honest we lost track halfway through *Jak II*.) In *Jak 3* it's worse – we no longer understand why we're doing the missions, they just feel like a linear checklist to be ticked off. Honestly, we never skipped a cut-scene and still couldn't tell you what the story's about or what a Precursor is. It's like a preoccupation with giving us everything has led to a loss of structure.

IF MORE MEANT BETTER, THEN *JAK 3* WOULD BE THE BEST GAME EVER MADE

Frankly, we're too big a fan to ignore this. As Jak's final bow, our expectations were higher. We dreamt of something more surprising. Maybe a return to Sandover Village or to see Daxter returned to his human form. Instead we got (a lot) more of the (very good) same. All we can hope is that when Jak reappears on PS3, he isn't remembered in the same way as other faded PSone heroes like Crash Bandicoot and Spyro are. Jak and Daxter we salute you, it's just a shame you couldn't have been on better form for your leaving do. **George Walter**

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK	VERDICT
Graphics	09 To say sublime doesn't do this justice
Sound	08 Rousing orchestral musak
Gameplay	08 A huge undertaking, but in a good way
Lifespan	08 So varied it's bursting at the seams

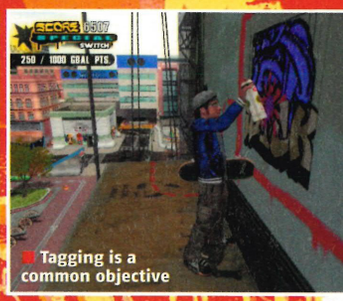
You can't go far wrong with* Jak 3 *for an all-round, rewarding experience. Returning fans, however, may feel differently

8/10

The dune buggy missions are among new additions to the series

The freedom in *THUG2* is utterly exhilarating

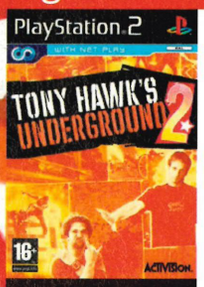
Yes, that's Benjamin Franklin



Tagging is a common objective

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2

If games could talk *THUG2* would say, "Pull my finger!"



DETAILS

PUBLISHER ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER NEVERSOFT
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.ACTIVISION.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND NO

AT A GLANCE

Accomplished, competence-demanding skateboard sim which eschews the tourney scene in favour of street skating and chummy poo gags.

Hello buttnugget!" That's the first thing Tony Hawk's new co-star Bam Magera says to you as you embark on their 'world destruction tour'. And in a nutshell, this phrase sums up the game: verbal abuse, faecal mumblings and below-the-belt anatomical discussions. It'll all come clear when you see pro-skater Bob Burnquist catch a tennis ball in the squeakers.

And while all that *Jackass* jazz is funny for a bit, it's no reason to buy the game. If you need one, then think of it this way: it's a *Tony Hawk's* game, and as we all know, that's a seal of precision. *THUG2*'s no exception to the rule, and as such, it's an absolute must for fans of past *Tony Hawk's* games.

Continuing in the vein of its predecessor, *THUG2* deals with street-level competition rather than international tournaments (although the old-style *THPS* is available in classic mode), taking you to cities around the world as you skate off against another team to decide who foots the bill for the tour. Pro-skaters such as Hawk and Rodney Mullen put in an appearance, but the focus is mainly on you, as a gifted young skater learning the ropes and improving your stats as you pull off ever-more-saucy tricks.

However, each level lets you switch between different skaters to achieve different goals. Alongside pro-skaters, there are guest skaters, themed to the cities they appear in, and these are usually downright daft – such as the rodeo-riding bull skater in Barcelona. The controls remain pretty much the same, although they tend to have very specific abilities, such as super-high ollies or superior grinding skills.

But, as ever, the one thing *THUG2* really excels at is the deft twinning of fear and exhilaration as you tie together umpteen tricks and try not to bottle it as you go for more. Above and beyond the sticker slap instituted by *THUG* (and of course, the manual from *THPS3*), you don't really need any more 'binding' tricks (ie, moves that help you tie a high-scoring line of tricks together) so aside from the new skaters, there's little in the way of evolution except for feeling faster and smoother than ever before.

Add in the 'create-a' modes – in which you can create your own tricks, skaters, parks, pretty much anything, in fact – and there's plenty to keep you playing. But if it's an entirely new experience you're after, then ollie off and look elsewhere. It's hard to shake the feeling that you've done it all before, and that's really because, at the end of the day, you have. Minus the fart jokes, of course. **Al Bickham**

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

Graphics	07	Frankly, it's looking a bit dated
Sound	08	Faith No More, the Chilis... nice
Gameplay	08	Slick-tricks, clean grinds
Lifespan	09	Add in the classic mode and it's huge

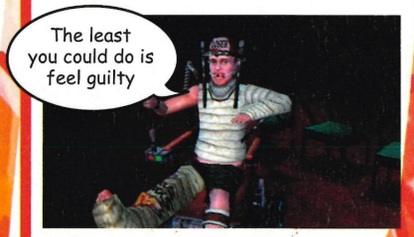
Precise, sharp and ultimately enjoyable: another class effort. Prepare to feel more than a little déjà vu, though

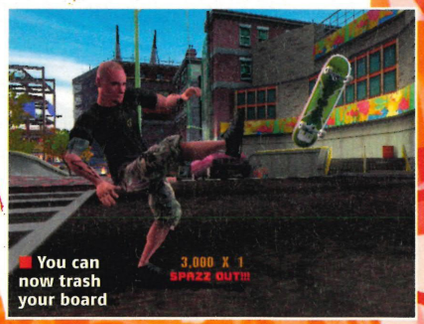
8/10

CHARIOTS OF FIRE

New meaning for the word 'wheelies'

Nothing is sacred, and political correctness is for pussies. That's the simple, some would say *powerful* message that *THUG2* conveys. And it's never more apparent than when you challenge wheelchair-bound Paulie, a ten-year old hick skate-fan, to a race around Boston. Laugh! Laugh, while young Ironside careens around the streets like a glue-fuelled schoolboy! See the sparks fly! Hear, as he howls dementedly through his jaw-brace! A-haw! Haha! Yes! Hmm.





You can now trash your board

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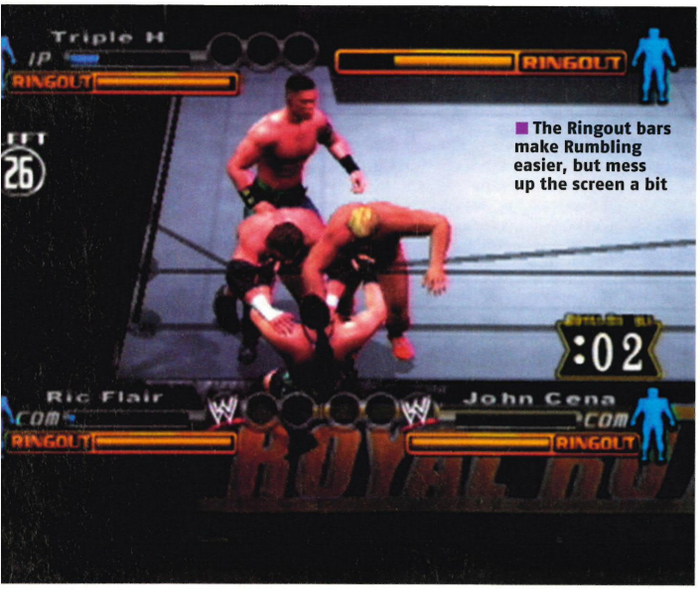
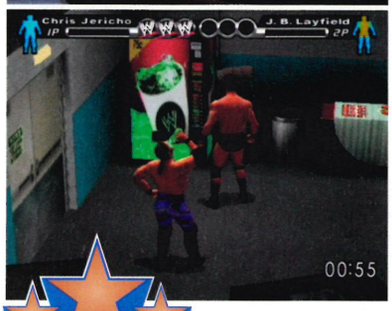
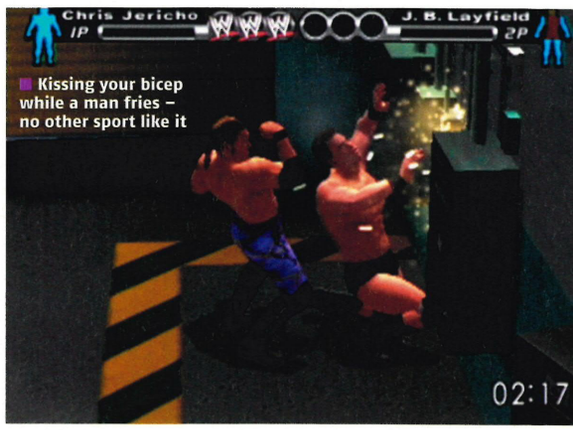


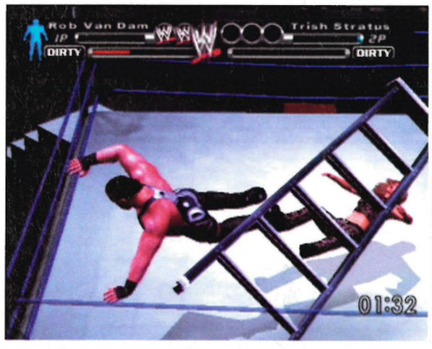
■ The Ringout bars make Rumbling easier, but mess up the screen a bit

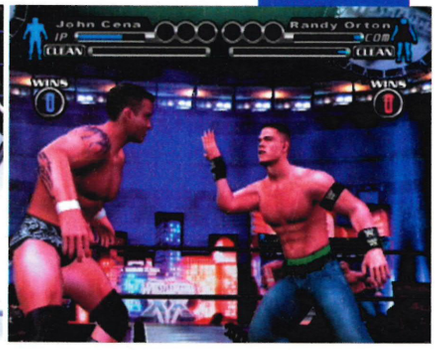


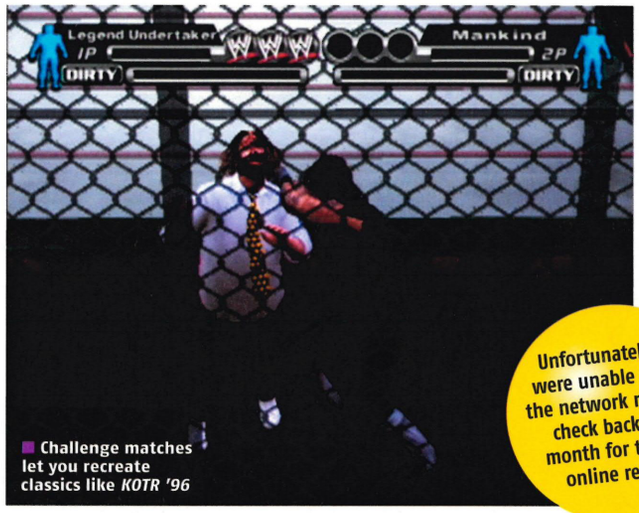


■ Kissing your bicep while a man fries – no other sport like it

bronze
PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK







■ Challenge matches let you recreate classics like *KOTR '96*

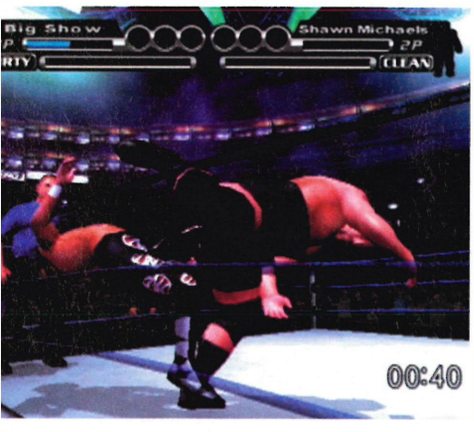
Unfortunately we were unable to test the network modes – check back next month for the full online review

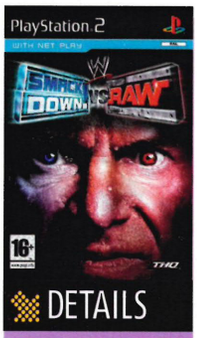
WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW

Lesnar's gone and The Rock's a 'legend' – but what else is new?

ONLINE

■ A nice backstage touch reminiscent of *Survivor Series 2003* – pyro explosions can blind people





DETAILS

PUBLISHER	THQ
DEVELOPER	YUKE'S
PRICE	£39.99
PLAYERS	1-6
OUT	19 NOVEMBER
WEBSITE	WWW.THQ.COM
60HZ MODE	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES

AT A GLANCE

It's Yuke's sixth go at the *SmackDown!* franchise and this time RAW's joining in the fun. Can an online mode and acres of lady-flesh deliver a stunner?

"The crowd looks nice," said three separate people on their first glance at *SmackDown!*. And, yep, it's true: the crowd looks *brilliant*. The camera cuts to them every so often as your ultra-shiny grappler minces down the ramp, and there they are, flapping their arms in glorious 3D. They're probably the best crowd ever.

Sensing a 'but' in all that? You'd be right. Thing is, those sign-toting gawpers are a symptom of the main problem with the *SmackDown!* series. It's getting better every time, definitely, but it's getting to the point where you have to be a clipboard-waving trainspotter to say exactly *why*. Champs can pick up their belt and use it as a weapon? Check. Refs signal for a long two-count? Check. Wrestlers kick out 'with authority' – ie, hurling their opponent across the ring if they're still high on health? Check. Heels can dispute the count? Check – as part of a clever system that rewards fighting 'clean' or 'dirty' dependent on your wrestler's rep. A myriad of tiny touches improve the experience, but *SmackDown!* has been good enough, for long enough, that no single change is enough to fundamentally change the experience.

The trouble is, while this works just fine for *Pro Evo* – a near-flawless gem that doesn't need any 'fixing' – every year that goes by without *SmackDown!*'s more *basic* faults being fixed is like another ham-sized slap to the face. Case in point: it's been four sequels since Table matches were introduced, and the wrestlers *still* skate across the woodwork like Torvill and Dean. The commentary's just glitchy wallpaper, with about two stock phrases for each wrestler and another couple introduced whenever someone cheats – Tazz and Michael Cole make Brackley and Brooking sound like after-dinner speakers. RVD still 'does' the split-legged moonsault off the ladder, even though that's blatantly impossible. Certain wrestlers – and this took a bit of working out – still hold on to invisible ropes as they're stomping someone wedged against the guardrail, because Yuke's has doubled up on the animation.

Most jarringly, the season mode's still predictable like a Big Show/Shannon Moore squash. Sure, for the first few months, you're given the 'option' of whether to play heel or face by your responses to cut-scenes, but the outcome is the same whatever you do. Yes, you get to chat up ladies backstage – which is a nice touch – but it's still fairly limited. Where's the chance to engineer a feud by constantly ambushing another grappler? Or the opportunity to form your own clique via backroom chatting and the occasional mid-match assist? In an entire season of play, we were the victim of *one* run-in, and even that happened at the start of the match instead of – as is traditional in WWE – near the end. A couple of guest referee slots aside (and, inexplicably, the stripy shirt's been ditched, so you ref in your normal match gear) we *never* got the chance to interfere in another match.

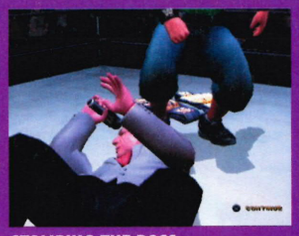
FOUL? WHO CARES?

Phallocentric soap opera? Intellectual slumming? Nope, wrestling is better than football. Here's why...

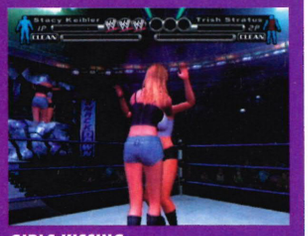
SPANKING
Imagine it: Ashley Cole over David James's knee, getting a firm... no, see, doesn't work, does it?

HITTING THE REF
Be honest, wouldn't you like to see Kim Milton Nielsen getting his chest crushed under a loading bay door?

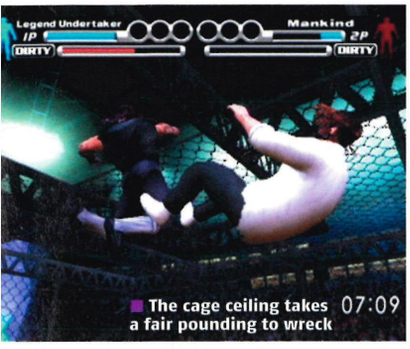
HALF-TIME ACTION
When the action hits the backstage area, things are just getting going. "Have a pineapple, I said!"



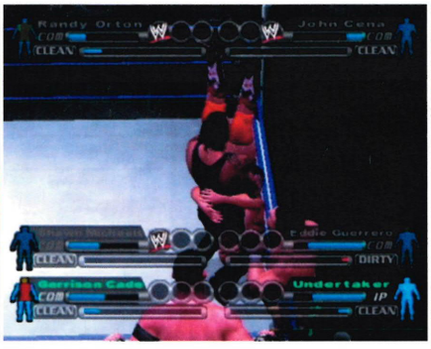
STOMPING THE BOSS
Vince McMahon is 55, earns millions, and still regularly gets beaten up on his own TV show. Step up, Roman Abramovich.

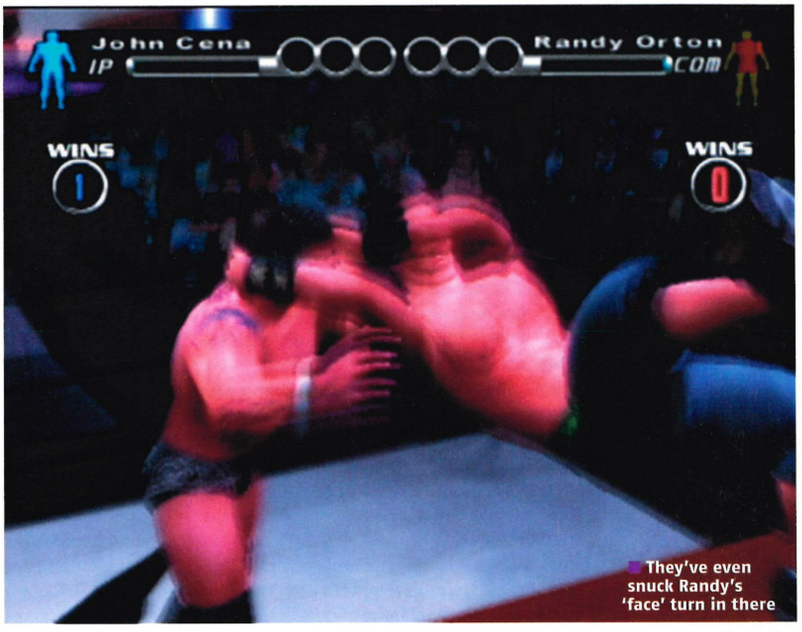


GIRLS KISSING
Land three consecutive 'spank' attacks and your grappling lady drops the tongue on her unsuspecting opponent.

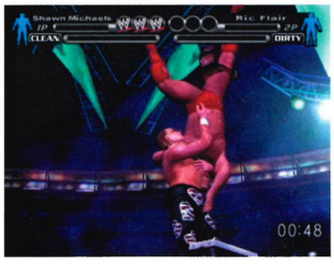


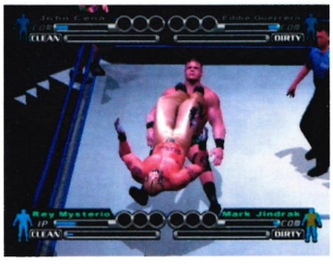
The cage ceiling takes a fair pounding to wreck

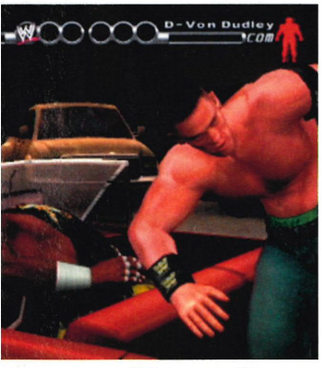




They've even snuck Randy's 'face' turn in there







Erm, something about backseat *pile*-drivers? Ah-ha-ha-ha

The grappling system itself is similarly confused. The main innovation's the introduction of a golf-style swingometer to determine the outcome of chop battles or shove-offs. Unfortunately, combined with the fact that you need to do a preparatory grapple move before even the most basic powerslam – something that doesn't happen much in the WWE – matches tend to be slower. The three types of submission on offer (hammer the button, time the button press, or wait for them to let go) don't help; it's easier to make someone tap out from a side headlock than from the Crippler Crossface, which is clearly insane.

All of which isn't to say that *SmackDown!* is never fun. When it comes together like a 'proper' wrestling match – when you call on your manager and he squabbles with the ref for *just* long enough to let you crack Randy Orton with a chair, say – it's almost poetically beautiful. The Clean/Dirty system's genuinely excellent, and the AI actually wrestles 'in-character', which is superb. Bret Hart, long-time enemy of Vinnie Mac, finally makes the cut, so he can get his revenge on Shawn Michaels. A new belt system lets you create old titles (like the now defunct Hardcore championship), assign them 'value' through defences and swap them between memory cards, which is an excellent touch. And kids who'll be impressed by the real wrestler voices heard during the cut-scenes are probably going to love it. The online situation's less clear – at the time of writing, only singles matches were available, which doesn't exactly offer the exciting league-based prospects we were after.

IF YOU'VE EVER WORN A 'DON'T BE AN ASS CLOWN' T-SHIRT IN PUBLIC, YOU'LL GO NUTS FOR THIS

SMACKDOWN! VS *DEF JAM*

Let's be honest, if you're not a WWE fan there's no way you're going to tolerate *SmackDown!*'s eccentricities, let alone grow to love them. For casual head-smashery, *Def Jam: Fight For New York*'s got it trumped – just compare the two games' car-wrecking matches to see the difference in collision detection. If you've ever marker-penned your own sign or worn a 'Don't Be An Ass Clown' T-shirt in public, you'll go nuts for it. Just like the crowd. They really are brilliant, by the way. **Joel Snape**

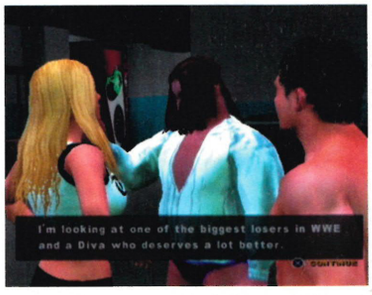
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	08	Shiny like a new Ferrari but still glitchy
Sound	06	Mis-timed commentary's a bit embarrassing
Gameplay	08	Nice touches hampered by repetitive flaws
Lifespan	09	A typically huge toybox for grapple fans

Not so much a leap forward as a geriatric shuffle. It doesn't fix many of the last version's flaws, but still delivers plenty

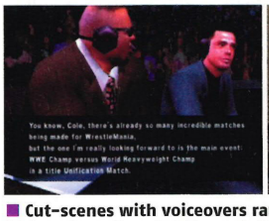
8/10

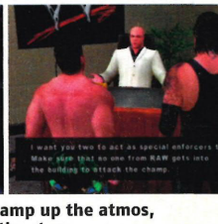
MY NAME IS...

'Special' wrestling man-child left off the roster... shock! Not to worry, though...



With Brock Lesnar gone to join the NFL, Stone Cold retired and only Mark Jindrak, Rene Dupree and Garrison 'who he?' Cade new to the roster, the line-up's looking a bit flimsy this season. Not to worry though, there always *SmackDown!*'s flawless Create-A-Wrestler mode. Apart from new body-morphing options, there are 75 pre-created movesets to slap onto your CAW character, covering every absentee from William Regal right up to New Japan legend Jushin 'Thunder' Liger. We've gone for Rain Man-style wrestling savant Eugene – the ladies love him...





Cut-scenes with voiceovers ramp up the atmos, but you're railroaded through the story

DETAILS

- **PUBLISHER** SEGA
- **DEVELOPER** SEGA
- **PRICE** £29.99 (£39.99 WITH EYETOY)
- **PLAYERS** 1
- **OUT** NOW
- **WEBSITE** WWW.SEGA-SUPERSTARS.COM
- **60HZ MODE** NO
- **WIDESCREEN** NO
- **SURROUND SOUND** NO

ON THE DVD

EYETOY PLAY 2 VS SEGA SUPERSTARS

Can't choose? Our grudge match will settle the score. Well, sort of...

DETAILS

- **PUBLISHER** SONY
- **DEVELOPER** SONY LONDON
- **PRICE** £29.99 (£39.99 WITH EYETOY)
- **PLAYERS** 1-4
- **OUT** NOW
- **WEBSITE** WWW.EYETOY.COM
- **60HZ MODE** NO
- **WIDESCREEN** NO
- **SURROUND SOUND** NO

IF YOU LIKE EYETOY...
...then check out our reviews of EyeToy compatible games *SingStar Party* on page 76 and *This Is Football 2005* on page 92

Confession time: no matter how innovative EyeToy is, no matter how popular it is (over a third of you plucky readers own one) or how many awards it's won (lots), the novelty wore off pretty quickly. Don't get us wrong, we doff our hats to the clever people at Sony London who thought it up, but most games designed for the device have just revolved around the basic principle of whacking things on screen (barring *U Move Super Sports*, which tried to spice things up a few months ago by introducing a few original touches). So it's no real surprise to find EyeToys sat atop TV sets, tucked into a cosy blanket of dust or, like ours, nestling in a drawer calmly awaiting new games and next year's *EyeToy Chat*.

With this Christmas' pair of big EyeToy games, we're hoping that someone has looked past the impressive but shallow 'Look, I'm on telly!' buzz that has since been killed by really bad ads for car insurance, to deliver something that is more game than gimmick.

EYE LIKE TO WATCH

First in for its close-up is *EyeToy Play 2*. As its forebear was the mould-definer, this should surely be the mould-breaker – and it doesn't disappoint. While the overall mini-game vibe remains, each of the themes has been broken up into rounds and levels, adding depth and longevity. The best of the batch are Secret Agent, Mr Chef and DIY, which give you a series of stealth/culinary/handyman chores to complete. If the first *Play*'s WishiWashi was Mr Myagi's 'wax on, wax off' training (simple and repetitive), then this lot is like training for the SAS – it's tougher, well paced and a decent challenge.

EYE'M SEEING STARS

Sega Superstars, on the other hand, takes practically every major Sega character you can think of and turns them into an EyeToy game. A newly devised sensor technique minimises the amount of space you take up on the screen for some games, meaning mini-games like Monkey Ball and NiGHTS sense your movement back, forth, up and down, giving you control over 3D environments and putting *Play 2*'s flat designs to shame. Conversely, some of the basics don't work as well as they do when compared to the Sony ones. The Space Channel 5 game may be great-sounding rhythm action, for instance, but it can be imprecise – and is outshone by *Play 2*'s brilliant Air Guitar. Although, at the same time, *Play 2* does have the odd dud game in its stable, such as the dull table tennis.

EYEING THEM UP

Before we hit the verdict, though, remember this: both discs have a weakness, which is unoriginality. *Play 2*'s Table Tennis and Goal Attack, and *Superstars*' House Of The Dead and Virtua Striker are retreads of old EyeToy concepts. *Play 2* counters this with a playbox full of memorable toy elements, such as bubblewrap and spellcasting. *Superstars* tries to spice things up with a monster-nurturing element that keeps track of your score, but is ultimately quite forgettable and a little dull.

It's because of this that *EyeToy Play 2* wins the fight, but only just. The game you should buy is really dependent on what exactly it is you want. If it's instant fun you're after, go for *Play 2*. If you want slightly longer-term joy from characters you'll recognise, then *Sega Superstars* is for you. Of course, in a perfect world the EyeToy faithful might want to consider buying both for a really happy Christmas. ■ **Michael French**

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK — EYETOY PLAY 2 VERDICT

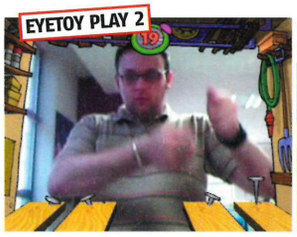
Graphics	06	Still basic, but they do the job
Sound	07	Good sounds and great effects
Gameplay	08	Rejigged with depth
Lifespan	08	These ones should go the distance

We are vindicated.* EyeToy Play *is better second time around and it's the best of the bunch this Christmas, but only just **8/10**

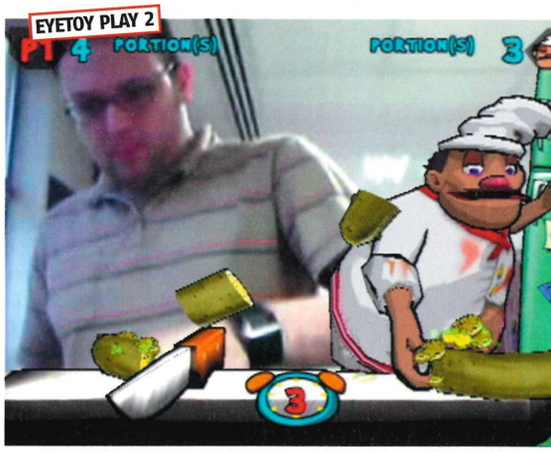
PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK — SEGA SUPERSTARS VERDICT

Graphics	08	It's like playing a 'proper' game
Sound	07	Worth it for Space Channel 5
Gameplay	08	Some great touches, if randomly fiddly
Lifespan	07	Depends how much you love Sega

It's a bit of a mixed bag, really. But the use of Sega's back catalogue of stars is definitely a stroke of genius **8/10**



■ **Hammering nails and monkeys in balls. Brill**



■ **Mr Chef will surely be the most popular mini-game**

■ **Fiddly controls aside, the Sega music is great**

PARTY WITH THE STARS

12 SUPERSTAR GAMES IN 1

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- Eurogamer

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OCTOBER 2004

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GAME www.game.net

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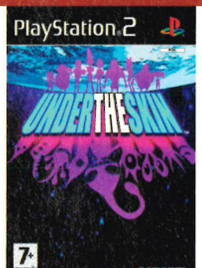
The targeting is the biggest problem

Bowling balls – the weapon of champions

This power-up turns Cosmi into a superhero

UNDER THE SKIN

There are no words. Well, none descriptive enough



DETAILS

PUBLISHER CAPCOM
DEVELOPER CAPCOM
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.CAPCOM-EUROPE.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

AT A GLANCE

Action adventure putting you in control of an alien that must disguise himself as a human in order to wreak havoc. Yep, it's another Japanese game that makes no sense at all.

If there's one major problem with *Under The Skin*, it's finding the right words to describe it – which isn't to say the words don't exist or that we can't find them – just that it sits in a weird place on the spectrum of games we test every month.

Under The Skin is strip kiss-chase, but with weapons instead of kisses – you control Cosmi, an alien who must fulfil his race's rite of passage by travelling to Earth and causing lots of trouble. This is done by stealing the appearance (or skin – hence the name) of civilians to make sure you go unnoticed as you lay traps. If all goes well, the stumbling masses will drop cash and your success is measured by the amount of coinage you collect. If it doesn't go to plan, the panicking masses get mad and notice you causing all the trouble. They'll then run after you, attacking you until your disguise falls off, leaving you to steal another skin and find a safe place to re-cloak yourself, lest you be marred by the mob.

So, it's a rather original idea for a game – and there's nothing we like more than new, shiny clever ideas. However, *Under The Skin* feels like just one single clever idea stretched out tighter than a single roll of cling film across the Grahd Canyon, making for a short-lived adventure. It lacks any major tactical elements, isn't very complicated and even on the harder difficulty levels, can be aced in under two hours.

Meanwhile, a floaty camera undermines proceedings. Oh, what we'd have given to have a fixed or higher viewpoint to help us lay traps, or a lock-on button for weapons deployment. Without these staples the game feels looser and more out of control than it should – which defeats the point when much of your actions rely on quick wits during panicky situations.

But despite the fact that this is a game that's desperately trying to be wacky (and consequently failing to be as off the wall as it wants to be), the madcap mugging is bizarrely captivating. It's not as manic as the mechanic suggests and it's not very challenging – but there are satisfying moments to be found. It's just a shame that although the game is chaotic, this is to its own detriment. Perhaps its shortcomings will be tightened up in, ironically, that most unoriginal thing of all... a sequel. ■ **Michael French**

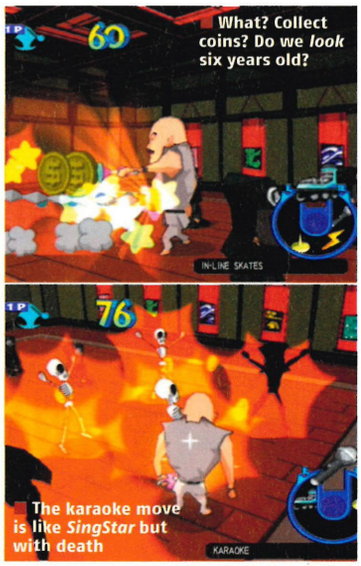
PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

Graphics	08	Nice, creative cartoon eye-candy
Sound	06	Half entertaining, half irritating
Gameplay	06	Fun, but marred by a duff camera
Lifespan	04	Finished in under two hours

Despite being massively original and fun while it lasts,* Under The Skin *is a game that eventually gets On The Nerves

6/10

Nakedness causes people to stare. Just like in real life



What? Collect coins? Do we *look* six years old?

The karaoke move is like *SingStar* but with death

"OOOH! HOW POST-MODERN"

Japanese publisher Capcom gets all self-referential again, with a *Resi*-inspired level

There must be something in the water at Capcom. Two months in a row the Japanese publisher has released games that poke cartoon-style fun at its established series. Last month Dante (who, as we're sure you already know, is the blonde-haired gun-toting hero from *Devil May Cry*) became a *Viewtiful Joe* character, and here we have *Resident Evil* characters Jill Valentine and Nemesis making an appearance in a Racoon City-styled level. Your mission is to trip Nemesis enough so he eventually drops all his money – a far cry from the grizzly and scary proceedings of *Resi 3*. It's still a whole load of big fun, though...

NEMESIS The villain of the piece. He's so dinky here, he's almost loveable. If it wasn't for the homicidal tendencies.

JILL VALENTINE And That Guy Who Piloted The Helicopter But Who No One Recalls The Name Of. They're the heroes.

RACOON CITY In all its cel-shaded glory. Hunt down Nemesis. Avoid his missile launcher. Repeat.

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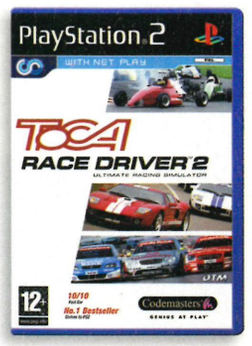

Battle your way through **31 Championships**, across **50 race tracks**, in **15 different racing series**. Hit the grid packed with **21 offline** and **8 online contenders**. When the competition is this personal, you'll find out just how "real" the race can get.

XBOX LIVE | PC DVD | PlayStation 2 WITH NETWORK PLAY | POWERED BY gamespy | 9/10 PSW | Codemasters GENIUS AT PLAY

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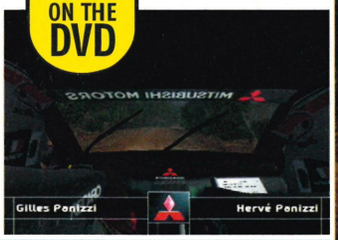
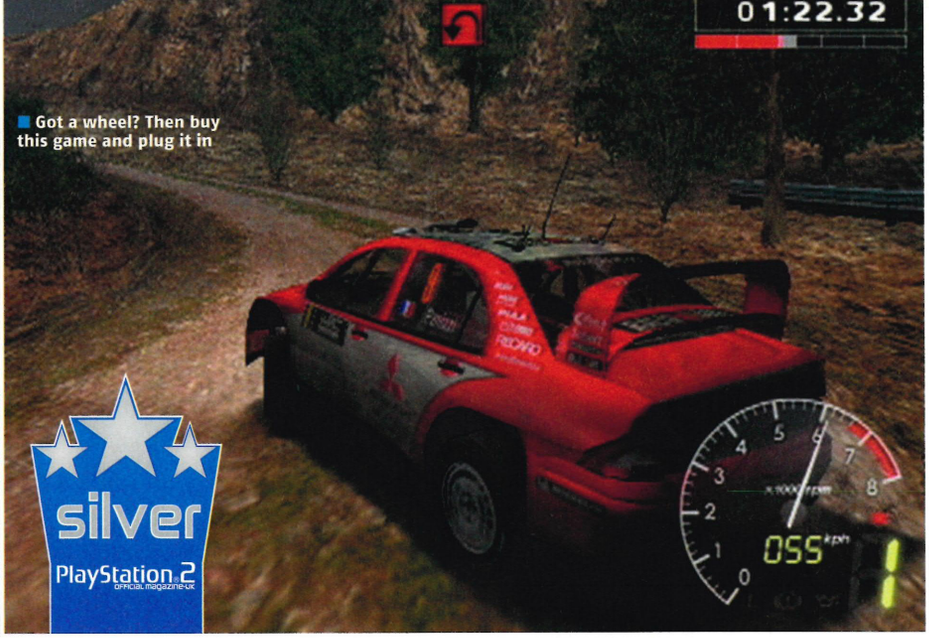
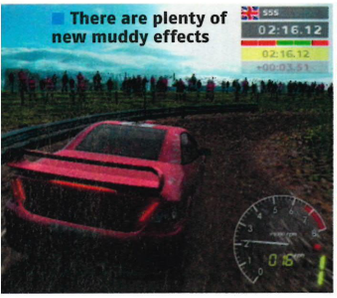
ON THE DVD

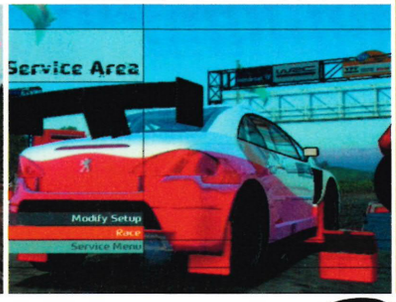




Got a wheel? Then buy this game and plug it in



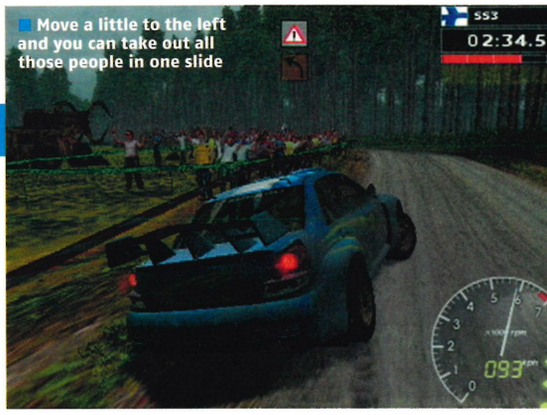
There are plenty of new muddy effects



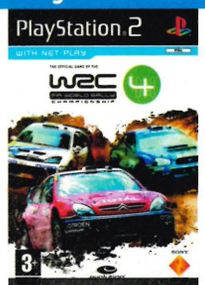
WRC 4

Buy this slick filth, you tart!

Hi, my name's Marco and I drive rally cars *really* fast, which is, like, the *coolest* thing



Move a little to the left and you can take out all those people in one slide



DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER EVOLUTION STUDIOS
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-16
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.EVOS.NET
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND NO

AT A GLANCE

Take any of this year's cars and drivers – or at least, the way they started the year – through championships and online events in an all-new version of the sport.

You probably don't realise just how passionate some game developers are. It's not always easy to tell, especially when licences limit what they can do and how they can present things. But when you meet them, then you know. Talking to *WRC 4* developer Evolution Studios, it's crystal: they love cars. That's like, looooooooove cars. And rallying. And they're pretty keen on technology, too. None of this would matter, of course, if they were keen without being capable, like teenage boys with their first handful of flesh.

WRC 4 is lush. Gorgeous. Smooth. If it was a girl, she'd ignore us, but we'd pine for years. The series has always looked good, but detail and draw distances have spiked towards the moon. Some of that extra is dynamic, too – more flying mud and gravel, more billowing dust, more collapsing scenery and sparks. Oh, and more helicopters – it's a driving game, it's got to have stuff in the sky and helicopters are the new hot air balloons. Fact.

Watch a replay and you can't help but be impressed, even if there is a chopper edging backwards into each shot like a local halfwit during a regional news report. But what impresses most is the motion of the car body; the slam and drop of the wheels. It's almost uncannily real. There's very little canny about it. 99% canny free. It's *un*canny.

Why? Because the impaled-on-a-cocktail-stick, twiddled-by-a-god style of *WRC 3* has been chucked – with a sigh of relief from Evolution, you sense – for a far more realistic creation. The angle, grip and motion of all four wheels matter now, and it requires far greater control from you. With the pad it's a little hard to achieve full finesse (though not hard to drive), but with a wheel it's fantastic. It's testing but not absurd – like *Richard Burns Rally*, but fun.

Naturally, every country and car of the WRC is available – though there are Group N, Super 1600 and some outrageous prototypes to fondle as well. Yes, but can you take it all online, you ask? Yes, we answer. Oh, you mumble, foolishly. Ghost racing, global ranking and everything else you could demand awaits, and it's engaging indeed. Complaints? We have a few, but then again, too few to mention... oh, go on then. Notes are still too slow (damn them) and we'd prefer a greater sense of acceleration, even though the speed is good. But more than this, use a wheel and you'll spank them all; use the pad and you'll still have fun, though. Quite an achievement, right? ■ **Steven Williams**

SMASHING, CHAPS

Okay, damage is really nothing new, but this is something quite special

The cars of *WRC 4* are modelled with almost obscene accuracy – not just the body shape, as in *Gran Turismo*, but in construction, too. Each major part is created individually, so can be damaged individually. Even the chance to dismantle the cars in a garage can't match the way they look out on the stage when, um, getting bent. So to speak. The new weighty physics help here, too. Stack it at speed and the results can make you wince. Not like *Burnout 3*. No. Like it would in *real* life.

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

Graphics	09	Spectacular detail and draw distance
Sound	07	Chunky, but engines are a little strained
Gameplay	08	Best enjoyed with a wheel
Lifespan	09	Countless events and online, too

Genuinely different from* WRC 3 – *it's way more realistic but still accessible – and great fun with a decent steering wheel. Quality

9/10

A straight road? That's not much of a challenge, is it?

EYE TOY Cameo

www.TIF2005.com

FUN FOR ANYONE?

PlayStation 2

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Plot points according to the instructions

Wait for your mask to be built

Use your head in the game

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ON THE DVD

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2

bronze
PlayStation 2 official magazine-UK

PlayStation 2

Bigger and better, but one less mark. How does that work?

DETAILS

PUBLISHER EA
DEVELOPER EA VANCOUVER
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-2 (OFFLINE)
OUT 19 NOVEMBER
WEBSITE NFSU2.EAGAMES.CO.UK/OK.HTML
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES

AT A GLANCE
Last year's big racing success story returns with more cars, more ways to modify them, more races to throw yourself into and a huge open city to race in – and, thankfully, it's still online.

Last year, *Need For Speed Underground* was the big story. Developer EA took a weak franchise in a difficult genre and added three things that turned *NFSU* into a blockbuster hit of enormous proportions. 1. Turning *NFS* into a tuner sim rather than a racing one. Getting into the mod culture was a smart move and not just because the chavved-up party game of turning a two-grand Astra into £12,000 of thick-wheeled, glistening kitted skid machine is pretty popular these days. No, because it meant an almost *Gran Turismo*-like career mode, where you just *had* to get the next car or body part before you could turn the thing off. 2. Getting the feel of speed to go along with the name. Racing down a rain-slicked road with neon lights flickering off it, there was a real sense that you were GOING REALLY FAST. 3. Coming out last Christmas when no other big racers were around. Neat trick that.

For *Need For Speed Underground 2*, the first two factors are now year-old news and the third has been blown out the water by the recent arrival of the monumental *Burnout 3: Takedown* and the imminent *Gran Turismo 4*. So for *NFSU2* to repeat the success – and the 9/10 it got last year – it needed to offer us something more than last year's game repackaged.

The squeaky new idea for the sequel is to have one big open city, where you drive around to find tuners to razz, hidden stuff and, perhaps, just because you like driving around. We say perhaps, because while it *could* certainly work like that – and the further you get into the game, the more it does – the random 'outrun' races (pull up to a racer coloured orange on your map and challenge them), hidden challenges (look for the giveaway big purple sign) and shops are only the side offerings to the main game's races. As ever, the meat of the game is you starting off as the new boy in town with a lowly car and having to win cash to improve it. But as it's open city racing, you drive from one race to the next using the map (and a big arrow) to get to the rendezvous. And it's here that the open city stuff doesn't quite work. Why bother driving? It doesn't mean anything and, at the start at least, is irritating because all you want to do get to the start point and make some loot. Also, when you get there, the car lot or shop front is always empty, but the resulting cut-scene has loads of people hanging around whooping. Where did they come from?

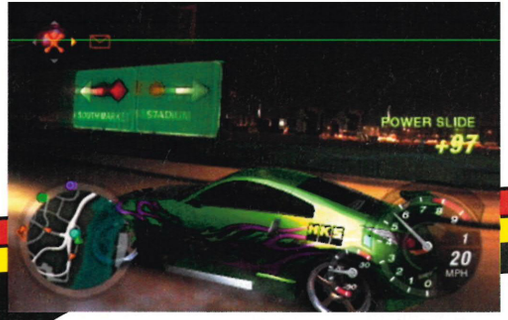
THE SQUEAKY NEW IDEA FOR THE SEQUEL IS HAVING ONE BIG OPEN CITY, WHERE YOU CAN FIND TUNERS TO RAZZ

OUT FOR A QUICK DRAG

But the fictional city of Bayview is enormous (five times the size of *NFSU*'s tracks), which means more – and for the most part better –

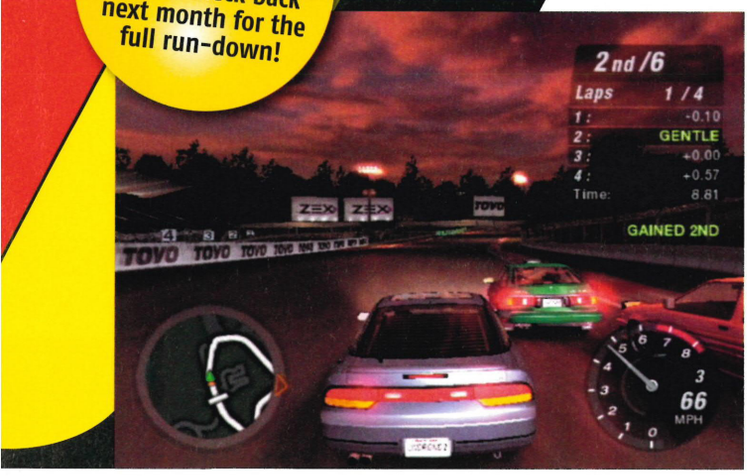
■ **The graphics, while admittedly impressive, aren't much of a step up from the first game**

A quick tap on the back of your opposition will send them off course



Look. it's Brooke Burke as, er, a cut-out 'cartoon' character. Where's Kelly?

Unfortunately we weren't able to test *NFSU2*'s online mode. Check back next month for the full run-down!



WHAT THE REAL MODDERS THINK

We know a bit about game racing, but we've never raced a Nissan Skyline round the ring road at 3am. So we talked to some guys who have and let them have a couple of hours on the game...

Stu 'Pot' Nottingham and the guys from CruiseSouthMids.co.uk

00.01: "Looks a lot like the first one"

00.08: "I'm in a 350Z and considering I've had my foot down all the way, I should be doing a lot more than 140mph"

00.13: "Should have damage." General nodding

00.17: Pleased about being able to "dyno" you car now and the expanded tuning and body part mods

00.23: "Feels nothing like driving a car – but that's why I like the first one. It's not realistic like *Colin McRae*"

00.33: "Road looks good, as does the car you're driving, but the background looks almost two dimensional and the cars you pass are just square blocks"

00.34: "The handling's a bit floaty – it was the same with the first one"

00.43: There was some debate over the realism of the relative top speed scores. "There's no way a Corsa is going to beat a 106"

00.51: Zooming around to find races annoyed them, as they wanted to go straight to the action

00.56: "The handbrake isn't responsive enough"

01.23: "You can't put an HKS exhaust on a Corsa!"

01.23-02.00: Racing, racing, racing... and trying to pimp up the Corsa

02.00: "It's still good but I think I expected more"

With thanks to the guys from www.CruiseSouthMids.co.uk for their help.

races. The drag mode now lets you steer – although you really don't want to touch the wheel because you'll skid all over the place (it automatically guides you anyway). The sprint and circuit races are all set within the city, but apart from a few mini shortcuts, you can only follow the path of the set course – you don't get lost, but it's more like a step back to the old game. Drift racing is pretty much the same, with bonus areas to drift through for extra points. And the new mode, Street X, is just dull, with lots of tight corners around ordinary tracks.

BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY

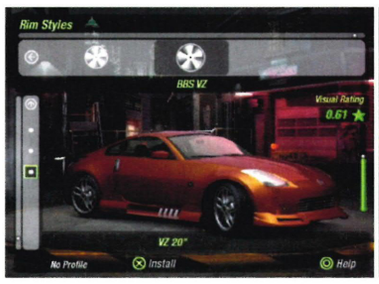
But the outrun races are the highlight – it's only really here that the open city works – and once you have the ride you want, you can flit around the city, tramping all over 'Johnny Come Last' in a tangerine Corsa. There are enough races, certainly, but you never actually see anyone else racing – are they *really* all just waiting for *you*?

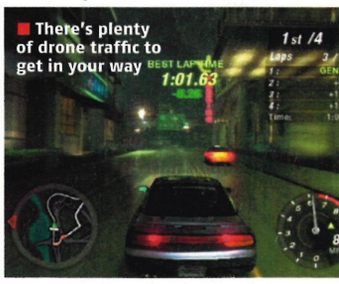
The sense of speed is still here. Racing along the highway you can sense the velocity – it's the best place for outrun victories – but when you come off it really hits you, like hitting a slow slip-road after thrumming up the M1 at over a ton. But the handling isn't quite up to it. Approaching a corner, it's too easy to get stuck with piles of understeer so you end up having to slow right down to make it without hitting the edge. But if you manage to slide out for a powerslide you lose a lot of speed.

Here, as elsewhere, it suffers badly from comparison with *Burnout 3*. Strip out all the career stuff from *NFSU2* and put these two racers on a track and there's no competition. The handling, the sense of continued speed, the AI cars and the tracks themselves; everything makes *Burnout 3* the superior racer.

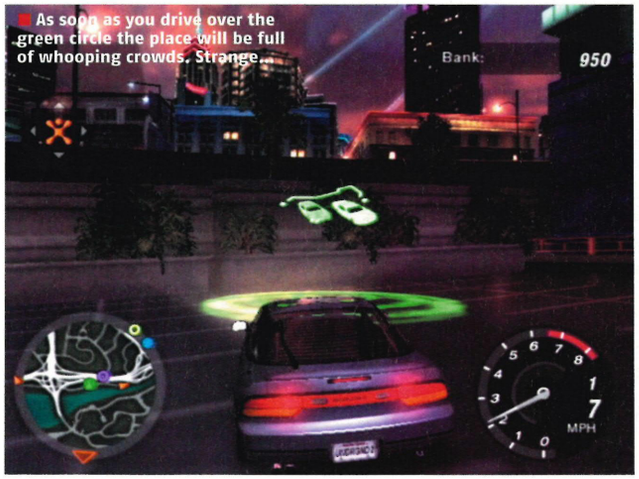
But that doesn't make *NFSU2* a bad game. Or pointless. For the driving enthusiast there's a place for *NFSU2* (and for the forthcoming *GT4*), because it does things *Burnout 3* doesn't try to do. The upgrading, the full city runs, the variety of the racing and Kelly Brook on the box are all enough of a hook in their own right. But if you only want one racing game, you've probably already gone and bought it and so in the end *NFSU2* loses a mark, despite improvements on last year's game. It's a tough place, this post-*Burnout 3* world. **Richard Keith**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK	VERDICT
Graphics	09 Slick, but little difference to last year
Sound	08 The throb of the engines is pure racing
Gameplay	08 The open city is flawed, but it's still solid
Lifespan	08 Huge, wide and satisfyingly deep
The open racing isn't entirely successful, but as an expanded version of last year's NFSU, it's an addictive, fast and thrilling racer	8/10





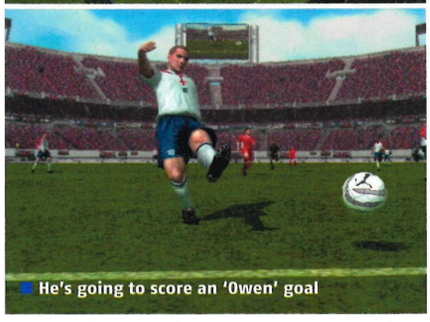
There's plenty of drone traffic to get in your way



As soon as you drive over the green circle the place will be full of whooping crowds. Strange...

ON THE DVD

Curl one in. Or curl one out?

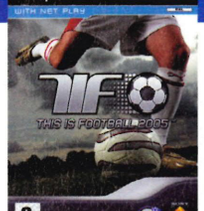

He's going to score an 'Owen' goal

Ignore Henry, there's no va-va-voom

Due to annoying logging-on issues, we were unable to try *TIF* online. As a result, the online features weren't taken into account for the overall score. As soon as we play *TIF* online, we'll give an amended score.

THIS IS FOOTBALL 2005

Actually more like *This Is Football 2004: EyeToy Edition*



DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER LONDON STUDIO
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1–8 (ONLINE AND OFF)
OUT NOW
WEBSITE PLAYSTATION.CO.UK
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND NO
PERIPHERALS EYETOY USB CAMERA, USB HEADSET, USB KEYBOARD

AT A GLANCE

The non-leaguer among the goal-'em-ups. Average ball skills are bolstered by an exhaustive player database, network play and a 'get-your-face-in-the-game' EyeToy feature.

How has Sony's London Studio managed to make any significant gameplay improvements in the short period since the release of *TIF 2004*? Simple. It hasn't. Sure, there's a smudging of polish to the overall aesthetic and some minor tweakage is evident – it's now much easier to connect with crosses and high balls, for example – but after playing both versions back-to-back, there really is no substantial difference between the two. In fact, besides the updated team and player database (by far the game's strongest feature), the core components have changed very little.

THIS IS DISAPPOINTING

Of course, if *TIF*'s interpretation of the beautiful game was, well, a bit more beautiful, it wouldn't be such a disappointment that the system has escaped mostly tinker free. But it's the same fundamental flaws apparent in the previous version that remain in the starting line-up. The controls are a struggle; teammates can be slow to react; players move with an unrealistic jerk; collecting loose balls is fiddly... the list goes on. But most critically of all, *TIF* fails to kindle any sort of emotive response. Matches simply feel too mechanical. There's no effortless flow, no intricate build-up play and no majestic touches to speak of.

So if the developers haven't been busy beavering away at the drawing board, what have they been doing? Well, they've concentrated their efforts into getting you – the player – into the game and onto the pitch via the mystical cables of the cycloptic EyeToy. Which is certainly nice of them – and they should be congratulated for doing a good job. However, while being able to create and play with an entire team of familiar faces is a great novelty, it doesn't alter the fact that *TIF* is still the third best footie game on PS2, and grafting on a peripheral gimmick isn't going to change that by a single jot.

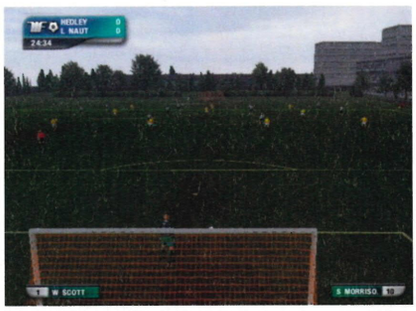
PES and *FIFA* aren't better football games because they've got some fancy doohickey bolted on. They're better football games simply because their football is better. While *TIF* certainly has the basic foundations of a decent kickabout in place already, the problems must be addressed if it's going to compete seriously in what, at present, is a two-horse race. As a demented football manager probably once said, "They should worry less about their hair and more about their feet!" ■ **Matt Cundy**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

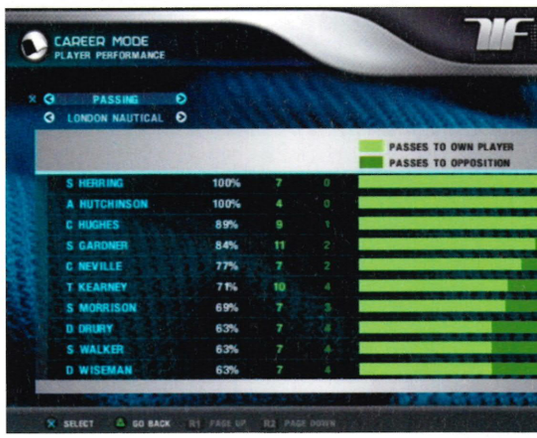
Graphics	06	Decent player likenesses. Jerky movement
Sound	05	Restrained crowd noise. Peter Drury's voice
Gameplay	06	Needs a squeeze from the magic sponge
Lifespan	07	Lots of modes – that are better elsewhere

***Smart EyeToy gimmickry isn't enough. This is insultingly similar to* TIF 2004 *and is, therefore, still inferior to* PES *and* FIFA**

6/10



The school pitch features authentic orange nets



New goalie animations make it harder to score

THIS IS TRANSMOGRIFICATION

Do you dream of playing alongside Henry, Rooney or Beckham, but know that it'll never happen because you kick a ball like a club-footed spazwacker? Well, thanks to the EyeToy Cameo feature, *TIF*'ll fix it for you...

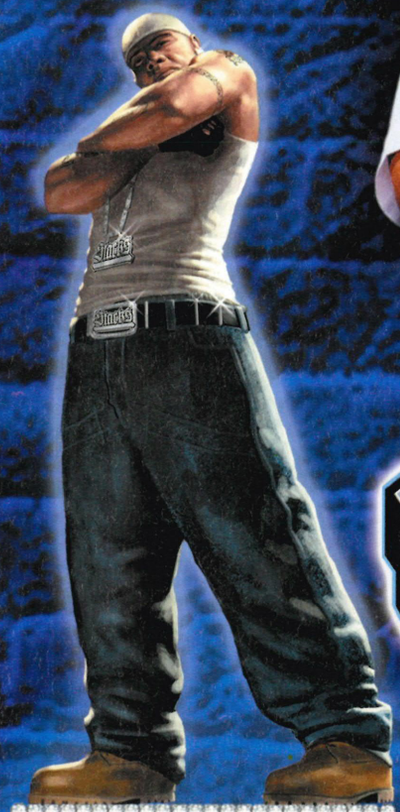
STEP 1
Look into the camera with an expression that suggests the prefrontal lobe of your brain has been severely damaged. Hit record and turn your head slowly to the side.

STEP 2
Plot the points on your mug, so that the stupidly intelligent smart chip inside the PS2 can sculpt you a virtual head from algorithms, bitmapping, mipmapping and electro playdoh.

STEP 3
Finally, you can live the dream. Wonder at the magic of technology as you weave yourself around the defence like a hot fox through margarine to score a wonder goal.

FREE MICROPHONE WITH GAME

GET ON DA MIC



INSTORE NOVEMBER

PlayStation 2

A2M

HWY 1 PRODUCTIONS

eidos

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RATCHET & CLANK 3

Set your phasers to fun, people... we're in love

silver PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

ONLINE

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER INSOMNIAC
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-4
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.RATCHETANDCLANK3.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES

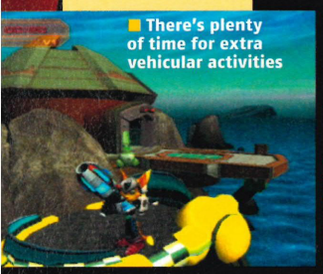
AT A GLANCE

They bicker like an old married couple, but a new adventure sees the duo caught up in another intergalactic escapade of H-bomb-sized proportions. Oooh! And there's multiplayer, too!

Ratchet & Clank 3 poses a bit of a problem for us. It's not that we don't like the game (far from it, skip ahead to the score for proof) or that we don't have anything to say about it – indeed, it was halfway through playing the game that we decided to devote an extra page to it. The problem is pinpointing the exact happy spot in our brain that the game caresses and expressing the resultant joy on paper without a) spoiling the fun for you or b) over-cooking it to the point where you won't agree with us once you've played the game. We could just stop right here and let you ogle the screenshots, but there's a chance you'll turn the page and not come back, unknowingly discarding your chance to be coerced into sampling a slice of excellence. So give us a few minutes to convince you with an explanation behind the object of our desire.

Ratchet & Clank 3 is... the third and best game in the series. Which is possibly the biggest barrier for you, but also the biggest advantage. It's not a series known for topping the charts – sure it gets by, but let's be honest here, not enough of you have played *R&C*, despite our encouragement – and there was a nagging doubt that you'll need to have played the other games to get into this one. But it turns out the latter concern isn't an issue, so now's the chance to redress the balance by buying this instalment. It throws you headlong into the action, doesn't patronise you with a silly training level, keeps the action and the laughs coming and never bores. Levels are neither too short or too long and only occasionally knocked off kilter by moments where the difficulty level skyrockets the minute you go around a corner, only to dip back to baby-talk levels seconds later. The pace is almost perfectly balanced – there's always something new to do next, be it completing side quests at locations such as the deathmatch TV show, Annihilation Nation, to topping up your cash or forging on with the game's plot, which details the life-threatening designs of psychotic robot, Dr Nefarious.

A stand-out set piece, this level is a mini-planet to find



There's plenty of time for extra vehicular activities

SOARING SUCCESS

Ratchet & Clank 3 is... every game you've never played. The new *Ratchet* takes you on a tour of not only its intergalactic setting but also a mix of genres, as it cherry-picks styles for incidental mini-moments that include skydiving into levels (far smoother than the humdrum *Spy Fiction* we sampled a while back), taking control of vehicles (handled with just as much aplomb as *GTA*) or paying homage to retro games (a security system needs hacking via a *Tempest*-like shooting game, while Captain Quark's adventures are immortalised as a jokey side-scrolling platformer). The rest of the action is the usual platforming and shooting fare, but is presented with such style that it's difficult not to love it.

Ratchet & Clank 3 is... powerful enough to win you over. We'll admit that there was initial scepticism within us as the disc booted. We were worried that the series had become a bit stale and impervious for newcomers to access, but in playing the game from start to finish it's clear *R&C* is as fresh as ever. This is partly down to the arsenal of weaponry you get to play with – some are old favourites from the previous

The pretty explosions will blow your socks off

WEAPONS OF LANDMASS DESTRUCTION

We usually steer clear of this 'how many weapons in a game' malarkey, but *R&C3*'s arsenal needs to be seen to be believed. These are some of our favourite...

FLUX RIFLE
As favoured by assassins the world over, sniper guns are essential. Thank heavens, then, that this one is perfect.

INFECTOR
A quick blast of the murky green gas within turns enemies on each other, meaning you don't have to lift a finger.

LAVA GUN
It may be quite fiddly and a little weak, but squirting hot molten rock in the face of your enemies never gets dull.

QUACK-O-RAY
This gun turns people into chickens. That's pretty much it, but it's outrageously funny and quite useful.

SHOCKBLASTER
Like a shotgun, but with a massive spread of plasma. Great against crowds. Upgrades mean it just gets better as you go on.

We dare you to not be impressed by this lush level. Go on...

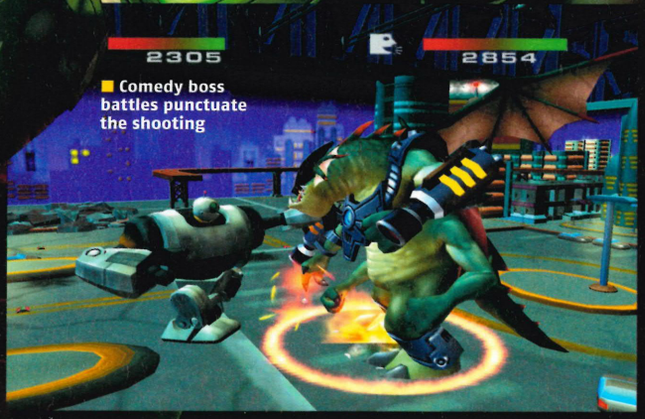
Clank's TV alter ego helps push the plot forwards

If you fail to see the majesty in these shots, you are dead inside

FANCY A FOUR WAY?

***R&C3* shows up the competition with multiplayer options...**

Along with recent releases like *Mashed*, *Pro Evo 4* and classics like *TimeSplitters 2*, *Ratchet & Clank 3* gives you another good excuse to purchase a multitap as, making use of its flagrantly OTT gunplay, the new game also propels itself into unchartered territory: multiplayer modes. Both online and offline modes are included, with up to eight players via broadband or four in split-screen mode. The online modes include team games such as capture the flag, or free-for-all deathmatches. There are vehicles to use and a handful of the game's top weapons, plus an in-game friends list and voice chat. Having managed to get in on the beta test, we can report that it's just as explosive and manic as the game proper, if a little shallow. A few maps seem much bigger than they really should be – a criticism we're also prepared to level at our beloved *'Splitters 2* – but overall it's a worthy and worthwhile addition to the game.



Comedy boss battles punctuate the shooting

games, others are new additions. The Shock Cannon is an early fave, helping clear the way through areas, but you'll soon learn to love the Plasma Whip for close combat and the N60 Storm Gun for more precise firing (used in conjunction with strafing and jumping). The more esoteric options – such as a brilliant lava gun that spills hot waxy magma or a mini turbine that slurps enemies in and spits them out as bullets – serve only to spice things up further. The only agonising problem comes when you have to add to your collection – do you blow the 150,000 bolts you've saved up on that awesome Annihilator or spend 40,000 and 60,000 respectively to add two less powerful – but just as pretty – Spitting Hydra or Agents Of Doom weapons to your collection? The rest of the gunplay is well balanced, with the automatic upgrades that boost your chosen weapon after extended use managing to not evolve it to an unwanted point of uselessness – something that at times upset the gameplay in the previous games.

Ratchet & Clank 3 is... like having sex with a box of fireworks. Graphically, the game is a treat, refining and building upon the previous games in the series. Those au fait with the *R&C* world over the last two titles may find nothing particularly new here, except the tighter designs and extra sheen, but new eyes will be amazed by the quirky and detailed landscapes and locations on offer. And if it's ever clichéd or predictable, it nevertheless handles things capably because...

Ratchet & Clank 3 is... a game that doesn't take itself too seriously. Tired of snotty stealth games? Pissed off by pompous tactical shooters? Bored of burning rubber, car races or realistic physics? Then this is the perfect popcorn game for you to munch on between epics such as *San Andreas* or *Killzone*. *R&C3* knows that it's sheer, overblown nonsense, and takes the idea and runs with it, throwing in visual gags, film references and well-scripted banter between the lead characters. Sure, it's shallow and a little repetitive – but who cares when the gunplay is so satisfying, the details are so charming and the overall effect is one of a well put-together piece of pure entertainment.

Love is... *Ratchet & Clank 3*. It's wonderful. Trust us and buy it. ■ **Michael French**

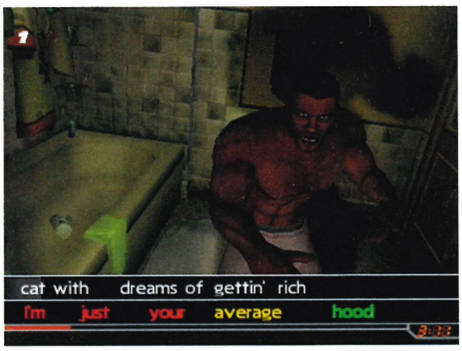
PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK VERDICT

Graphics	09	Distinctive, crisp and easy on the eye
Sound	08	Fizzles, crackles and a stirring score
Gameplay	09	Immediately satisfying, never boring
Lifespan	08	A good 20 hours with lots of side quests

A love-bullet to the brain, this is filled with an incredible amount of detail. Clearly put together with proper care and attention

9/10

Pity the game doesn't provide a dictionary to explain legal terms



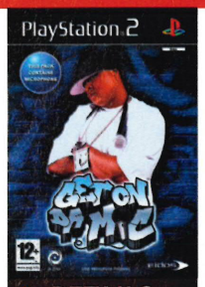
WHASSUP, SCHOOLY T?

Meet the coolest Tim in UK hip-hop. What... Westwood who?

Really want to live the dream? Don't just stand there rapping in your jeans and ironic Atari T-shirt – get ur freak on with some XXL track pants, an old-skool hoody and... what's that? Yeah, you're right, he does look like the whitest man in Britain.

GET ON DA MIC

Don't hate the playa', hate the game...



DETAILS

PUBLISHER EIDOS
DEVELOPER ARTIFICIAL MIND & MOVEMENT /HIGHWAY 1 PRODUCTIONS
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-4
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.GETONDAMIC.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

AT A GLANCE

Think *SingStar* meets *Def Jam: Fight For New York*, with over 40 urban tracks to stammer your way through as your character makes a desperate bid for hip-hop glory.

See if this sounds familiar: you're driving along listening to the radio and enjoying the ecstatic genius that is Beyoncé's *Crazy In Love*. It's so damn good that when Jay-Z phones in his rap you actually join in. Suddenly the car goes through a tunnel and the signal dies, leaving only the sound of lyrics being mumbled arhythmically at least a second off the beat. Yeah son, flowin' like a dusty Saharan riverbed.

Fortunately, in a car there are several inches of glass and steel preventing accidental exposure to our crazy skillz. No such luck with *Get On Da Mic*, which seems expressly designed to makes us look like fat-tongued idiots. Before we get any further, we should make it clear that Wu Tang Clan's *Enter The 36 Chambers* is a regular magazine deadline album around here. The problem with *Get On Da Mic* isn't that we don't like hip-hop, but simply that it doesn't work in a karaoke context.

GAMES DON'T KILL PEOPLE, RAPPERS DO

SingStar succeeds because the songs are so familiar that when you stumble on a lyric, the melody is always there to guide you back. But unless you're already a prodigiously talented rapper, *Get On Da Mic* can be an excruciating experience. Even with the better-known tracks, like *Ante Up*, *Get Ur Freak On* and *Don't Believe The Hype*, trying to keep pace with Busta, Missy and Chuck proves impossible. When we handed da mic (which comes included – you can also use da *SOCOM* headset, but *SingStar* microphones aren't compatible) to Ms *OPS2*, she soon gave up and started replacing lyrics with random swear words. She's filthy like that.

A huge part of the problem is the awkward graphical interface, which makes timing your rambling delivery incredibly hard. Another downer is the fact that some songs are performed by sound-a-likes (and indeed sound-a-nothing-likes), presumably because the originals were too pricey to licence. NWA's *Express Yourself* is a particularly bad culprit, with the imposters even pretending to be Dre and Eazy-E during the introductory skit. Bizarrely, a lot of tracks don't let you join in with the chorus. Instead you're left mumbling, 'Long Beach, in the house... ugh... yeah... Westside!' Meanwhile, Tupac's corpse spins a little faster.

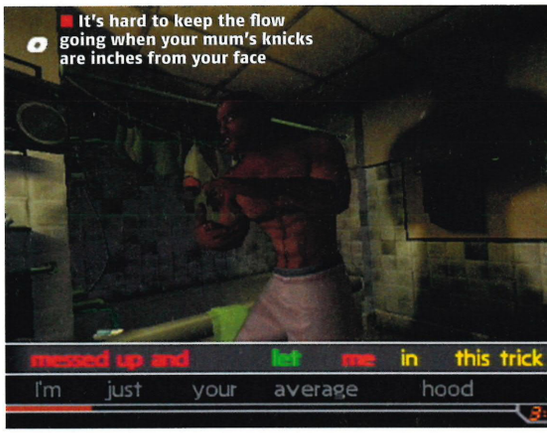
Shame, because *Get On Da Mic* could've been a contender. The structure of its career mode (which takes you from singing in front of the bathroom mirror right through to eventual superstardom, buying bling, rides and Rocawear along the way) desperately wants to be *8 Mile*, and you can sort of see how it *could* work. But for our Benjamins, the voice recognition technology lacks sophistication and the interface is all kinds of wrong. It's sad to say, but *Get On Da Mic* is a real playa' hata. **Tim Clark**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

Graphics	07	Predictably clichéd urban look, but fun
Sound	06	Good, barring the crappy cover versions
Gameplay	05	Staggeringly tough to sound halfway cool
Lifespan	04	Technical failings brutally limit the appeal

Rap wannabes might get some joy out of this, but trying to rhyme with the likes of Missy and DMX is likely to end in some harsh dissin'

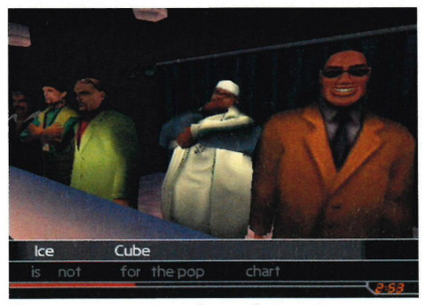
5/10



It's hard to keep the flow going when your mum's knicks are inches from your face

You start out rapping in the bathroom, safely hidden from the public's cruel, *cruel* disses

This dude's in no way supposed to be Eminem. Oh no



To succeed you're going to have to impress a whole bunch of industry playas

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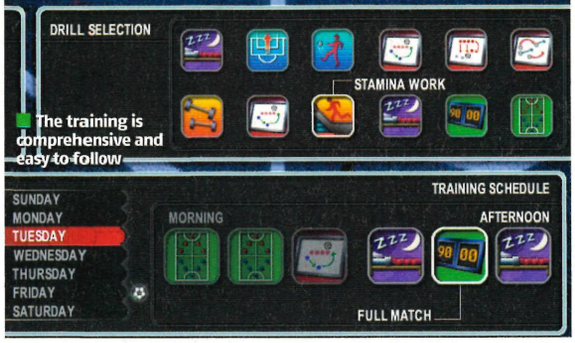
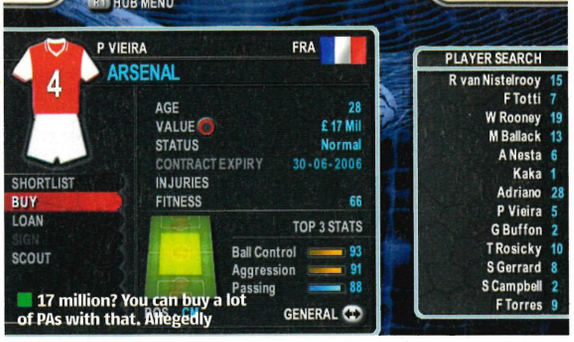
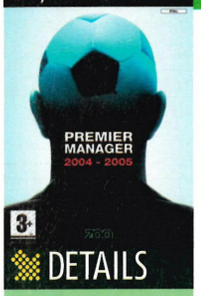




PREMIER MANAGER 2004-2005

PlayStation 2

Is the game finally ready to be worthy of its name?



DETAILS

PUBLISHER ZOO DIGITAL
DEVELOPER ZOO DIGITAL
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.PREMIER-MANAGER.INFO
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

Would it be terribly obscure to compare *Premier Manager 2004-2005* with the PSone game, *Ridge Racer IV*? The reason is their similar styles of ultra-lite RPG which wrap around the main gameplay, adding a fun element of extra involvement.

Overhauled since last season, the aim of creating a more user-friendly interface has worked for the most part. It's also easy to access team stats and the transfer market, though organising training takes a little more time and patience. Top players are valued modestly, and it was no hassle offloading those troublesome skillmeisters Henry and Vieira. In fact, having offered Vieira on the market at a knockdown £10m to facilitate the purchase of a certain Gascoigne, Real Madrid offered his original game-set value of £17m. Spanish generosity or a slightly flawed system? The latter, surely.

As for our ideal squad, both Vieira and Henry left with realistically scathing comments regarding their confusion at having been sold. Little did they know that Gazza was on his way for a transfer fee of seven grand, to link up with Redknapp and hopefully feed David Bellion, who left Man United without a backward glance.

Sadly Gazza's silky skills were limited by the awful match screen, which consists of little dots and looked like a Smarties versus Skittles grudge match. It's an unbefitting way to enjoy the fruits of your managerial labour and ultimately what keeps this one in the Coca-Cola Championship of management sims. ■ **Paul Roundell**

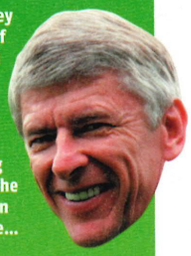
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK		VERDICT
Graphics	05	Awful match screen is a real let down
Sound	05	Not a lot of it to comment on
Gameplay	06	Clear menus and easy transfer system
Lifespan	08	As long as you like, mate

An improvement on last time, but solid – if bland-looking – management fare is let down by dodgy game graphics

6/10

THE ARSENAL DREAM TEAM

Boring, boring, Arsenal. All they ever do is win and score lots of goals and play really beautiful football. Well, let's see if we can't shake them up a little. The aim? To become the anti-Wenger. We took both games through their paces by playing them with the aim of having the following new-look Gooners in place by the end of season one...

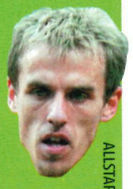


DAVID JAMES
Could bring some much needed instability to the all-inportant last line of defence

GARY NEVILLE
Would surely love the chance to wear a new red shirt

SOL CAMPBELL
Sol can stay, we're not total nutters

ARTHUR GNOHERE
The Burnley defensive 'rock' will fit right in with Campbell with a name like that



PHIL NEVILLE
Because where Gary goes...

PAUL GASCOIGNE
What could possibly go wrong?

JAMIE REDKNAPP
A quick trip across the city for the Spurs wonder-crock

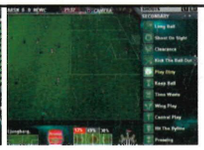
ROBERT PIRES
Can't be totally without Frenchmen!

JAY JAY OKACHA
Because it's funny when players do whatever they like

ROBBIE FOWLER
Arsenal score too many goals... here's the remedy

DAVID BELLION
Pires needs someone to talk about cooking with

ALLSTAR



■ **The whole game is enamelled with EA's typically professional gloss**

TOTAL CLUB MANAGER 2005

Hey big spender! Is the title a foregone conclusion?

Oh, it's slick. You can't say it isn't. If *Total Club Manager 2005* was an *actual* manager, it would be a Sven/El Tel hybrid – icy cool demeanour with an air of flamboyance and the occasional whiff of cheese.

Everything, from its classy intro to the glossy menus, smells of money, and an option to safeguard yourself against the sack by choosing a 'One Club Game' smells of a development team keen to please less hardcore fans. Furthering this aim is a hard or easy option, where half a million quid (hard) or up to £25m (easy) can be added to the existing, pre-set transfer kitty of whichever club you choose to manage.

But on to our test of assembling a team of honed players... and Sol Campbell's only worth £3.5m? Good job he's not for sale, because that would hardly cover the cost of bringing in Phil Neville. Inevitably, Arthur Gnohere hitched a ride, although Gazza decided to stay put at Boston! He's 37 and didn't want another contract, and you can't argue that the decision makes sense in terms of reality, though reality is hardly his thing. Less sensible were Robbie Fowler's demands, so the Scouser stayed put, while teammate David James packed his bags.

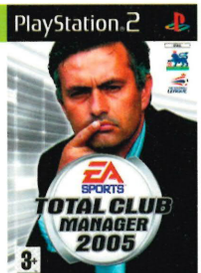
Vieira and Henry were tricky to offload, though, thanks to a fiddly transfer menu which saw the season start before we'd worked out how to use it. Once gone, the new boys pulled together and there was something majestic about the action unfolding like a proper *FIFA* match, complete with commentary from Motty. Like Madrid and Blackburn, EA knows from experience that money buys success. ■ **Paul Roundell**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK		VERDICT
Graphics	07	Crisp interface and lovely match screen
Sound	07	Licensed music and Motty, too
Gameplay	06	Hardly innovative, but perfectly adequate
Lifespan	08	It'll run and run

Pips* Premier Manager *to the title, thanks mostly to a superior overall experience, friendlier options and much better graphics

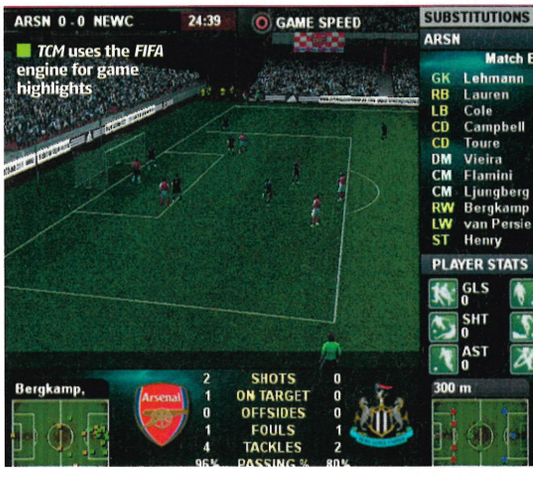
7/10

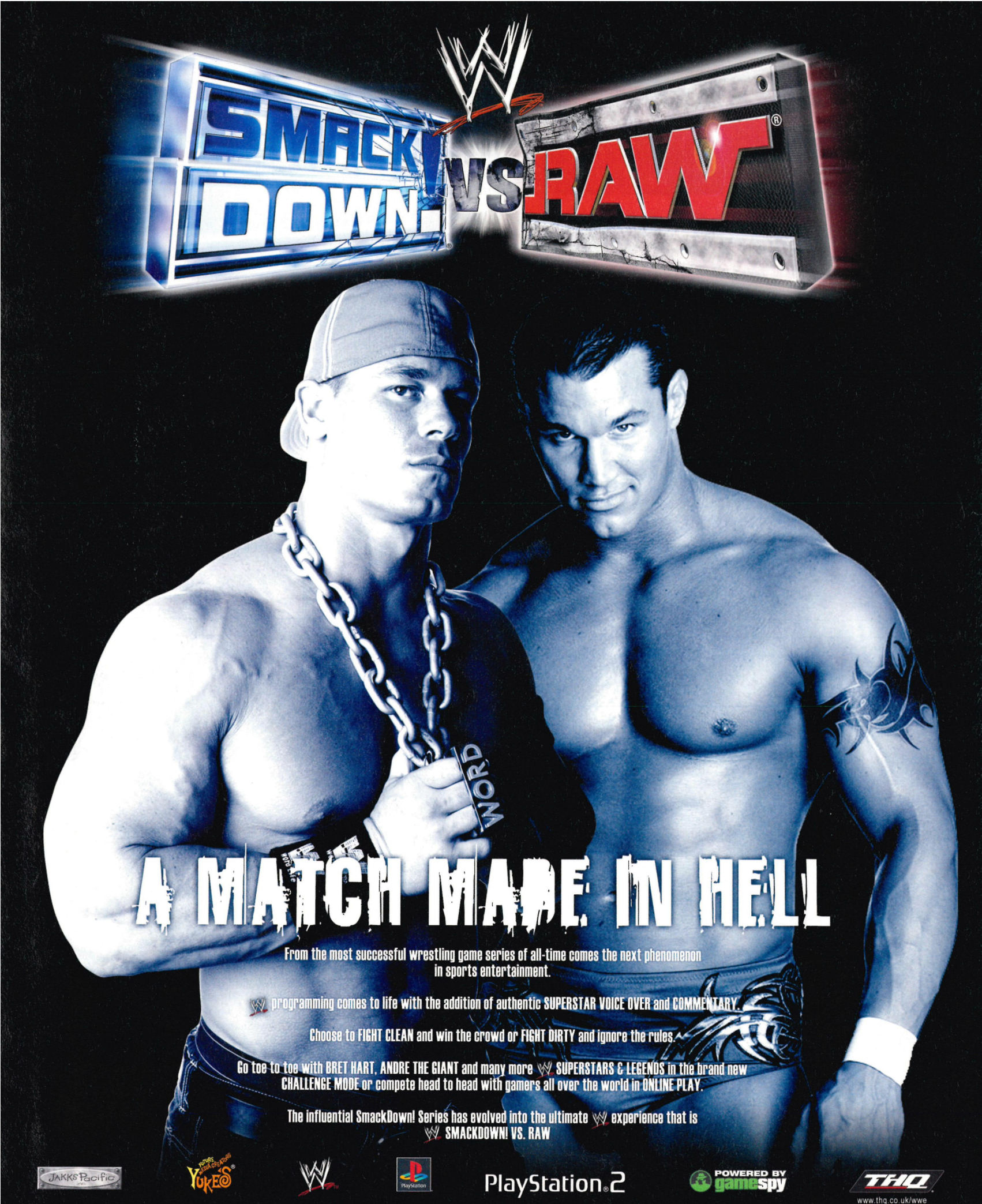
PlayStation 2



DETAILS

PUBLISHER EA
DEVELOPER EA CANADA/ GERMANY
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.EA.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO





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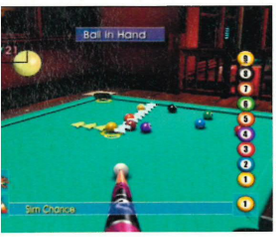
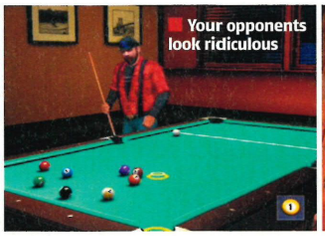
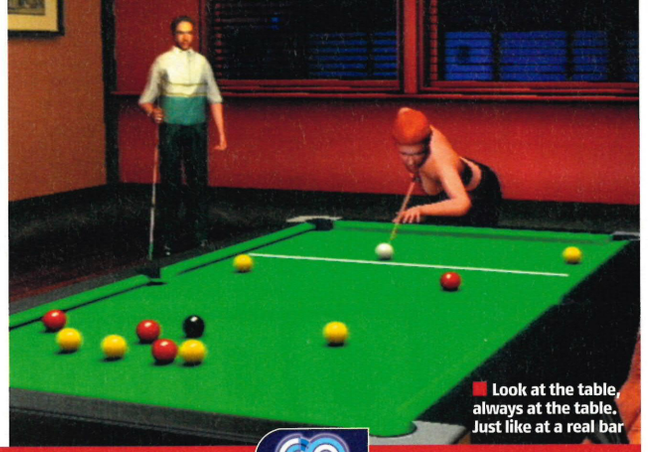
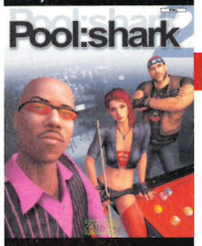



Your opponents look ridiculous


Look at the table, always at the table. Just like at a real bar

PlayStation 2



POOL SHARK 2

A short measure of undemanding baize grazing, please barman

ONLINE

DETAILS

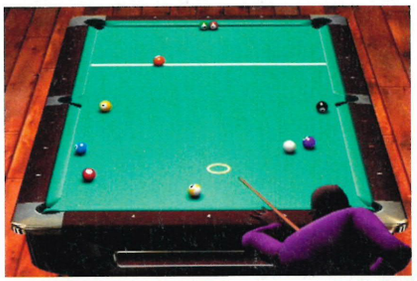
PUBLISHER ZOO DIGITAL
DEVELOPER BLADE INTERACTIVE
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1-2 (ONLINE AND OFFLINE)
OUT 12 NOVEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.ZOO DIGITALPUBLISHING.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND NO

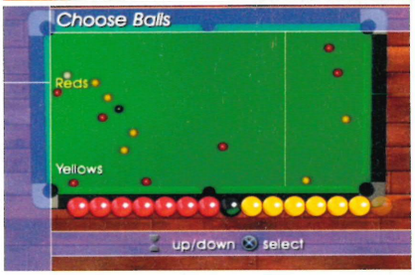
If you're reading this, it's safe to say that you're probably not *that* drunk. After all, why read a magazine when there are plenty of other things to do while necking a pint of wife beater... like dancing like a goon, 'charming' the opposite sex, developing the perfect crime, discussing the merits of plastic surgery or playing a 'friendly' game of pool. And should you need to practise your half-cut cue-stroking then we may have the answer.

Pool Shark 2 isn't a terrible pool game. It looks decent enough – you can mess about with trick shots, hustle bets with other 'sharks' or rack up one of the many different styles of game – but playing it is like experiencing the result of a few pints without actually having to sup your lager of choice. Aiming is twitchy like the hands of a Tennent's Super drinker, yet mindlessly easy, with guidelines predicting the path of your ball. Adding spin and angle of cue-approach is simple, but who has more than a beer-confident idea of what this does anyway?

Finally, the toddler-friendly power gauge (no 'swingometer' or *Pool Paradise* analogue control – just select exactly how much power you want and hit ⊗) exudes the disconnected 'hit and hope' sensation best experienced during your fourth round of intoxicating beverages.

Pool Shark's blandness and almost total lack of ambition – a goodish online mode doesn't make up for old hat controls, awful music and dodgy voice acting – means you'll be needing a bellyful of booze to enjoy it. **Ben Richardson**

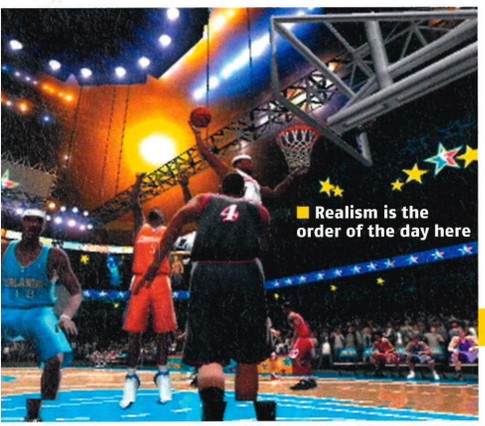




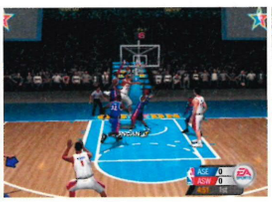
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK	VERDICT
Graphics	07 Performs an unspectacular job
Sound	04 Horrible, horrible, horrible. Turn it off
Gameplay	05 Sink a few bevvies and you might enjoy it
Lifespan	06 Lots of unlockables, but they're all dull

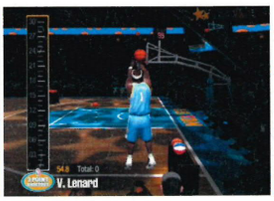
Imprecise and uninvolving, even the well-constructed online mode isn't enough to make it worth missing a trip to the pub for

5/10


Realism is the order of the day here

Yes, it's an odd sport and possibly utterly pointless, but the Americans love it. Bless them





NBA LIVE 2005

EA's latest aims for the slam-dunk but comes off the paint...

Good news for channel-hopping insomniacs and Yankee ex-pats missing one of their illogical home-grown sports, as the tenth anniversary *NBA* game's the best simulation of the sport yet. It fits the EA template perfectly – blank-cheque licensing combines with buttery-slick production values for a game that feels more like 'proper' basketball than anything else out there. Shaq dominates on offence, Kobe Bryant hogs the ball and Chinese behemoth Yao Ting slaps down jumpers like a meat-fisted kangaroo, with individual player animations and AI that rivals *PES* for authenticity. The flow's spot on – it's much tougher to pull off three-pointers and skill moves than in last year's game – and the commentary's probably the best anywhere, *ever*.

But, and it's a big one – you may have spotted it a few sentences ago, just below that enormous letter 'G' – it's a simulation. And, even once you've switched off the more tedious rules (Goaltending and Back Court Violations? Who thought those up?) it just hasn't got that bombastic sparkle that makes *NBA Ballers* and *NBA Street* such a hoot to play. There is a brilliant Slam Dunk challenge, but it's just a sideshow to the main game, where safe, sensible blocking's the order of the day.

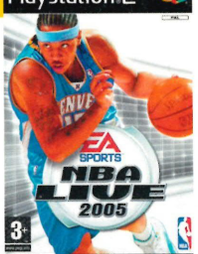
The animation's average, slowdown ruins the baseline cam, and the camera system on the whole is pretty unsatisfying – amazingly, there's no basic side-on view. Fantastic if you understand the intentional fouls rule, but casual 'ballers might want to wait for *Street V3*, which should be far more playable. **Joel Snape**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK	VERDICT
Graphics	08 Nice animations, but short on sparkle
Sound	09 Glorious commentary, tunes and effects
Gameplay	06 Sim basketball, as opposed to the fun kind
Lifespan	06 It'll last fans until *2006* comes out...

As good a five-on-five game as you'll see anywhere, but Street *fans might miss Off The Heezays and 360° layups*

6/10

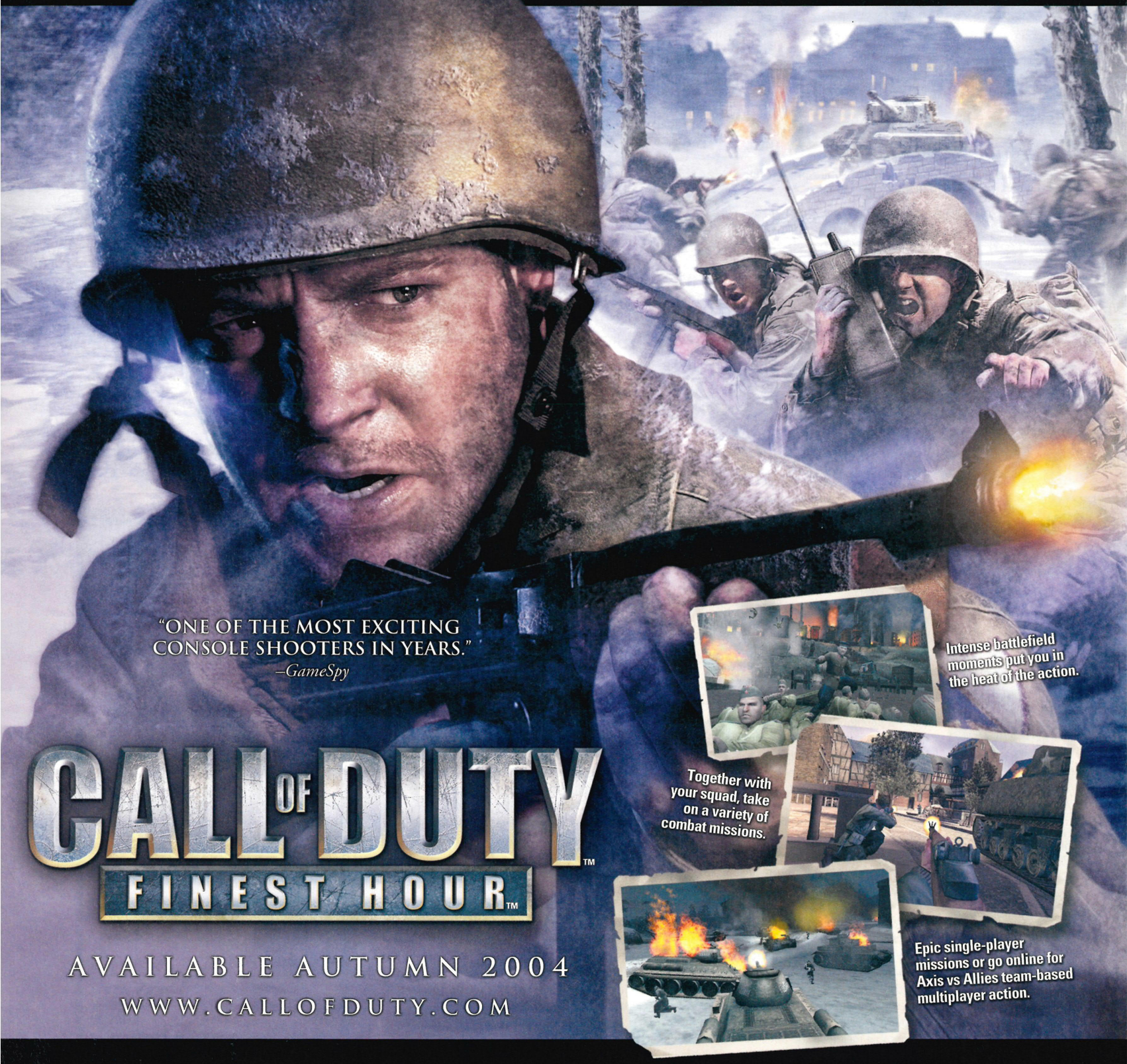
PlayStation 2



DETAILS

PUBLISHER EA
DEVELOPER EA CANADA
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-4
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.EASPORTS.COM/GAMES/NBALIVE2005/HOME.JSP
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES

THE WORLD'S DARKEST HOUR SHALL BE YOUR FINEST.



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–GameSpy

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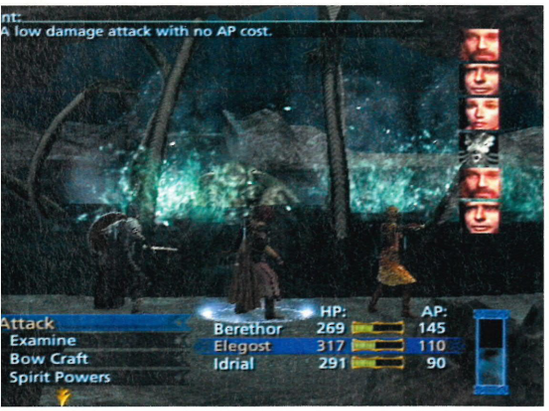
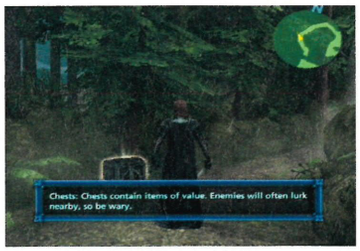
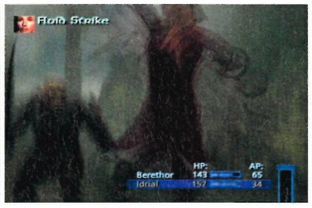


■ The combat is all turn-based. Yep, like *Final Fantasy*. If that didn't put you off you better read the review

■ "Venessa Phelps? Is that you? C'mon love, let's go home..."





■ The story takes you deeper into Middle-earth than the movies

■ "My bow is better than yours, because mine glows green"

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE THIRD AGE

More Rings on page 142!

Can Tolkien run rings around *Final Fantasy*? Of course not... he's dead

DETAILS

PUBLISHER EA
DEVELOPER EA
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE HTTP://LORDOFTHERINGS.EAGAMES.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES

AT A GLANCE

Lord Of The Rings goes roleplay. Lead a cosmopolitan band of humans, dwarves and elves against Sauron in Tolkien's imaginary world, collecting stuff from boxes and getting into fights.

Before we started playing *The Third Age*, we were feeling a bit Ringed-out. Don't worry, it's not as painful as it sounds. We just mean that after the onslaught of *The Lord Of The Rings* games and films over the last few years, we weren't really up for another Middle-earth adventure. It's over, we thought. Hobbits are, like, *so* last year.

We shouldn't have been so hasty. *The Third Age* may have missed the peak of *Rings* frenzy, but the possibilities offered by the RPG gameplay are such a good match for Tolkien's detailed imaginary world that it doesn't matter. It's the first PS2 title to attempt anything like a comprehensive treatment of Tolkien's work, incorporating the events of all three films and cramming in background information and history besides.

The Third Age does a fantastic job of absorbing you into the culture, legend and history of *The Lord Of The Rings*. You play as Berethor, Sean Bean's character from *The Fellowship Of The Ring*. As you get to grips with the gameplay – basically consisting of exploration punctuated by short bursts of combat – you'll notice that the sights and sounds of the films have been captured perfectly. Everything buzzes with detailed accuracy and the game leads you into the most memorable locations the films have to offer – the Mines Of Moria, Helm's Deep, Gondor – all of which retain the scale they had on the big screen. You even create your own Fellowship as you hook up with various companions.

The most involving feature of *The Third Age*, though, is the guidance given to your character by Gandalf during his quest. This takes the form of a huge series of gorgeously cinematic cut-scenes, lent some dramatic weight by Ian McKellen's hushed tones. These sequences build up into a grandstanding portrayal of Middle-earth's history. Not even the films offered this kind of detail – it sucks you right in.

THIRD'S THE WORD

But while use of the RPG gameplay certainly adds depth, it isn't without its problems. *The Third Age* is inevitably much slower than EA's previous *Rings* titles, mainly because of the turn-based combat. Yes, you heard that right – turn-based. We're talking health points, attack points, level-ups; the works. If Middle-earth for you is all about the action, this could be a deal-breaker. That's not to say that the combat doesn't have its moments – it's surprisingly rewarding, once you understand what you're doing – but it's inaccessible at first and incredibly frustrating.

With this in mind, we'd have to say that *The Third Age* falls a little way short of its potential. The ambition, the vision and the scope are all in abundance, but the game lacks something compelling in the gameplay that could have made it a standout title. Not the one game to rule them all, then. In the end it feels like a fairly standard RPG with really nice cut-scenes. A beautiful shame. ■ **Nathan Ditum**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

Graphics	08	Gorgeous, authentic recreation of the film
Sound	08	Deep, brooding music and good effects
Gameplay	06	Ordinary – lots of walking, slow fighting
Lifespan	07	Huge, but interest may wane too soon

Goes deeper to reach the places other Lord Of The Rings games can't reach, but lets itself down with samey gameplay

7/10

BORED OF THE *RINGS*?

Can't decide whether you've got enough *Rings* love left in you to fork out for *The Third Age*? We've devised a quick questionnaire to help make up your mind...

QUESTION 1
WHAT DOES THE RELEASE OF *THE RETURN OF THE KING* SPECIAL EDITION DVD BOXSET MEAN TO YOU?
1. My Dad wants it for Christmas. How did you know?
2. A greed-driven, exploitative waste of cardboard.
3. Hot Diggity Doodle! 50 extra minutes of hot sword-swinging action! And I get to see how Grima Wormtongue dies. Whooo!

QUESTION 2
WHAT ARE YOUR PRINCIPLE FEELINGS ON THE SUBJECT OF MEN WHO WEAR TIGHTS?
1. Please, stop asking me questions about my Dad.
2. It's all a bit childish, isn't it?
3. Tights are cool! Chainmail is cool! Look at me... I'm a Ranger! Whoosh!

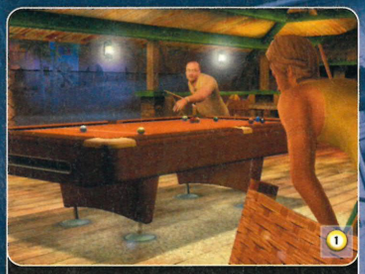
QUESTION 3
LIV TYLER – WOULD YOU, EVEN WITH HER ELF EARS ON?
1. Yes
2. Yes
3. Yes. Whooo!

RESULTS
If you have answered any of the questions on this test, you have wasted unrecoverable seconds of you life.

Pool:shark 2

GO HUSTLE

20 ADVANCED AI OPPONENTS



UP THE STAKES WITH THE HUSTLE MODE

GO ONLINE AND WIN REAL CASH PRIZES

OUT 12 NOVEMBER

ZOO Digital Publishing

XBOX XBOX LIVE ONLINE ENABLED PlayStation 2 WITH NETWORK PLAY PC CD POWERED BY gamespy

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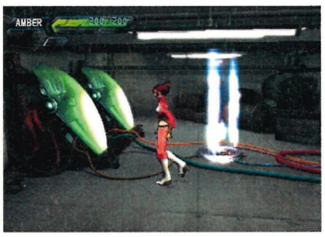
"No, I hate clothes, too"



Look! Pods! Just like out of *Alien*!

Armoured-up guard verses girl in her trollies... Who do you think'll win?

CRIMSON TEARS

The Japanese have released a strumpet-filled game? Sorry, just don't believe it. No way

Pop quiz, hotshot: It's the year 2049 and planetary spatial dimensions have become distorted. What do you do? C'mon, we don't have all day... No idea? Really? Nah, us either, but apparently if you're a biomechanical female fighting machine who lives in a garage in the greater Tokyo metropolitan area, you dress like a strumpet, enter another dimension and go toe to toe against myriad foes, including – but not limited to – weird beasts that look like those pinata donkeys that are filled with sweets and Mexican people batter with sticks. Hey, it beats sitting around on your hands.

Christ, she's hit him right in the EX01. That's gotta hurt

This is a button basher with RPG aspirations. Weapons, powers, potions and semi-useful tips are acquired from the city folk and used by one of your three mech-poppets in the Dimension Maze (add your own dramatic echo) to hopefully, y'know, sort the planet out and that. Fights come thick and fast against a huge array of increasingly tough (like, really hard) opponents. Hand-to-hand combat is rudimentary but rewarding, two buttons taking care of the kicky-punchy business, with weapons and special attacks at your disposal should things get heavy.

Hordes of enemies swarm the levels and satisfyingly vicious combos can be built pretty much from the beginning of the game, bad guys (and pinatas) dropping like flies as your lady spins around the place – not gracefully perhaps, but engagingly nimbly. More than occasionally, though, the fixed camera poses a problem of its own, and the weedy weapons mean return trips to the city for more supplies and, therefore, excess repetition. Were it not for that, this unpretentious 'what you see is what you get' effort would be surprisingly decent. As it is, though, it's just plain good. **Paul Roundell**

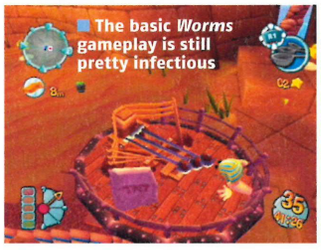
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	08	Dark but largely luscious
Sound	06	Hi. Hiyee! Hiii-YEE! Etc
Gameplay	07	Nice mix of hand and weapon combat
Lifespan	07	Repetition might lead to boredom

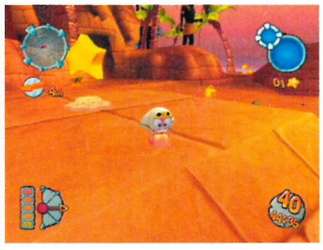
This is another impressive and engaging effort from Capcom that's worth a closer look, despite offering few real surprises

7/10

DETAILS

PUBLISHER CAPCOM
DEVELOPER SPIKE
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.CAPCOM-EUROPE.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND YES


The basic *Worms* gameplay is still pretty infectious

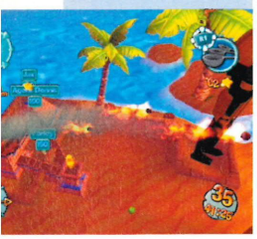


Is your worm flagging? We can help

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SEGA
DEVELOPER TEAM 17
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-4
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.SEGA-EUROPE.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

Go into a games shop and say, "Have you got *Worms*?" again and again until they throw you out...



WORMS: FORTS UNDER SIEGE

We can't let this little wriggler off the hook

When is a worm like a shark? Well, neither of them can ride a bicycle of course, but that's not the thing. No, like the *Jaws* film series, *Worms* endured a tricky transition to 3D, needed a great comeback to restore our faith in what it's all about... and has failed to provide it.

The invertebrate genocide central to previous efforts takes a back seat to the titular concept of laying siege to – broadly speaking – forts. Construction is now just as important as destruction, and it's when your buildings are flattened that the game is now up.

This is no minor change, as it adds a bulging layer of strategy onto what has always been, basically, cartoon carnage. While the bonkers weapons (gotta love the 50-stone canary. No, really) remain, using them to blast bricks and mortar dilutes the fun, and the fact that buildings are, at the end of the day, tougher than worms means games are more drawn out. Longer games with less fun? You do the math.

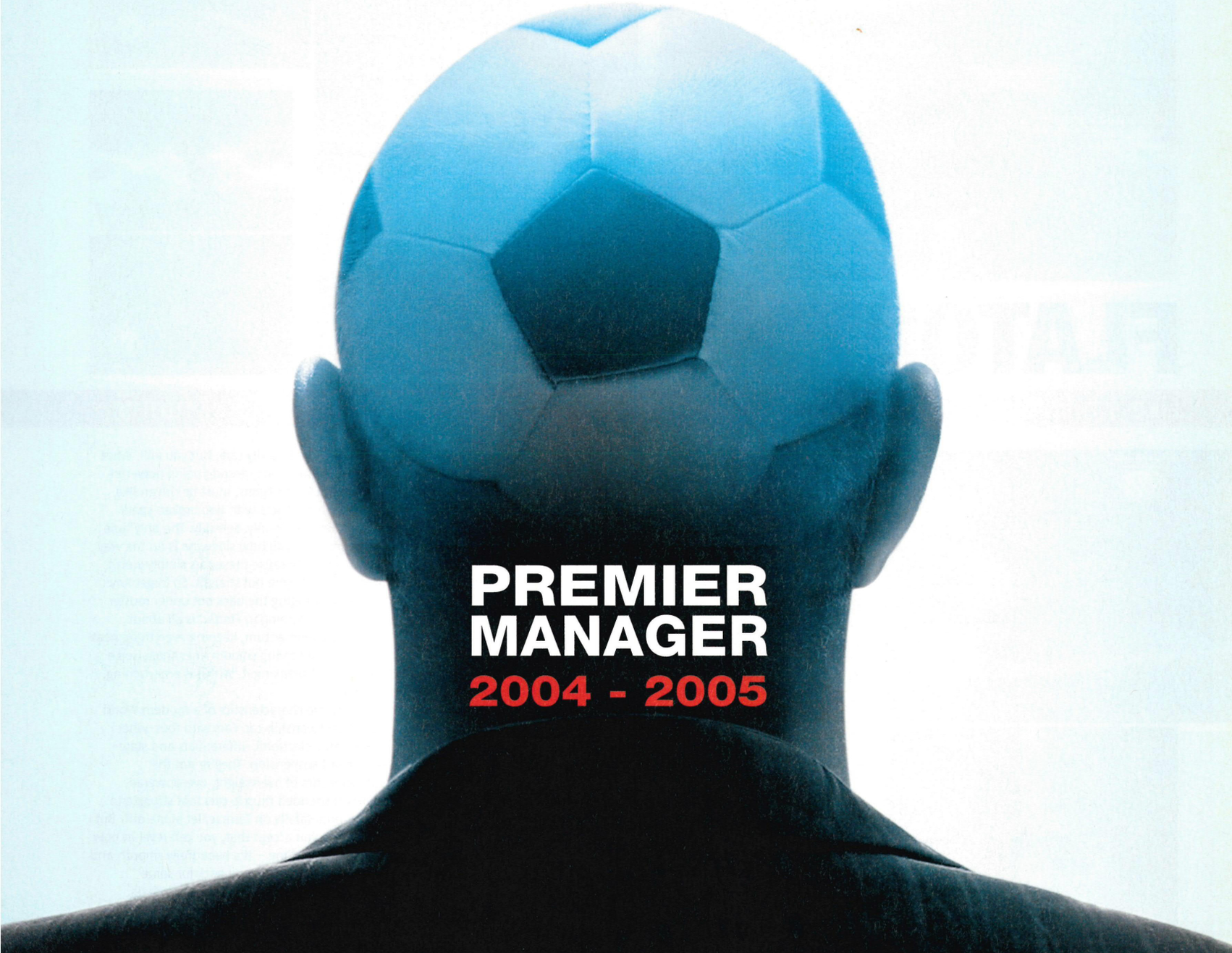
The 3D aspect remains awkward, too. Targeting and range finding is too fiddly and the asthmatic camera struggles to keep up with the worms' more athletic moves. There's more here for the single player than in previous efforts, though, and with human opponents, that familiar chucklesome satisfaction is still obtainable; it's just harder to come by. It all feels rather budget-priced, frankly. **Paul Roundell**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	06	Hardly pushing the envelope
Sound	06	Comedy clarion calls still amuse
Gameplay	05	Screams "take me back to two dimensions!"
Lifespan	06	As long as you pick the multiplayer mode

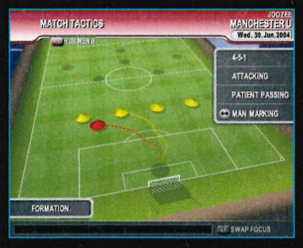
This worm has chanced its luck on the super gaming highway once too often and is consequently now rather flat

5/10

THINK YOU CAN MANAGE?



PREMIER MANAGER 2004 - 2005



OUT OCTOBER 29/2004

www.premiermanager.info

PlayStation®2 GAME BOY ADVANCE™ PC CD-ROM

ZOO Digital Publishing

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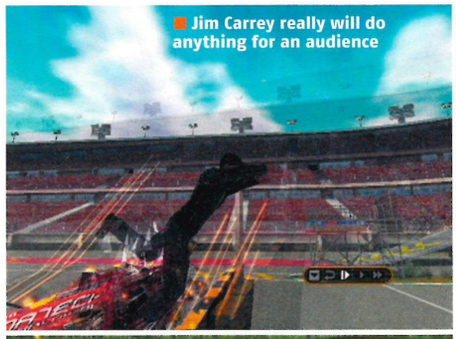
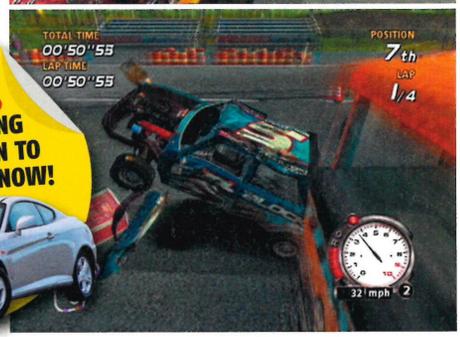
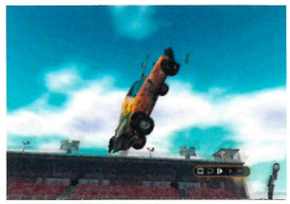
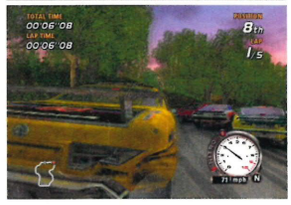
Shortcuts can have tragic results. A life lesson, there


Jim Carrey really will do anything for an audience



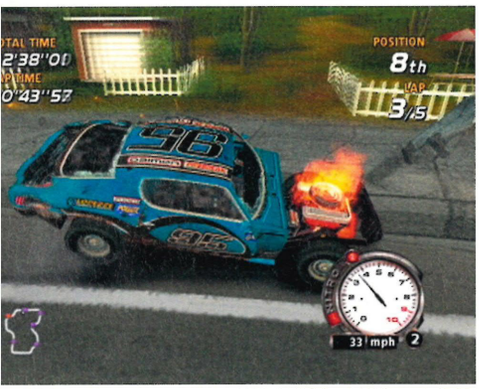


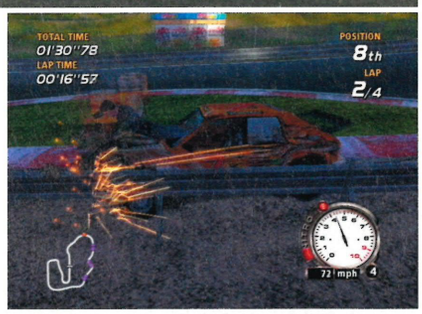


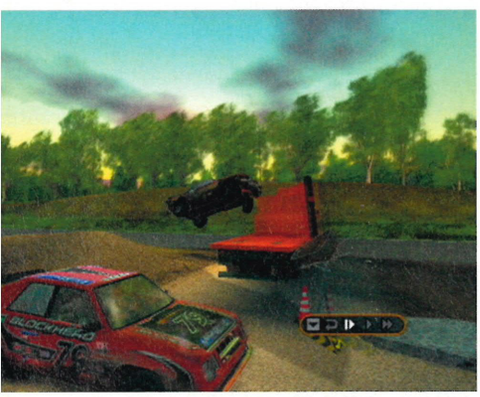
WIN! FANCY WINNING THIS CAR? TURN TO PAGE 20 RIGHT NOW!

FLATOUT

Like a hillbilly family's shared tooth... it certainly works, but it tastes kind of funny






At times you race on circuits, but they're not really finished... watch out for roadworks!

DETAILS

PUBLISHER EMPIRE
DEVELOPER BUGBEAR ENTERTAINMENT
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-4
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.FLATOUTGAME.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

AT A GLANCE

Race through towns, woodlands and unfinished racetracks, smashing almost everything. Or throw your driver through the windscreen for chuckles and financial reward.

We all know what rednecks do in the woods. They make moonshine from twigs and leather, penetrate livestock with banjos and install complex electronic traction control systems on rusted-out clunkers. And they're called Cooter – yes, all of them. They do this in special white-painted, static-free 'clean rooms' in Pappy's pig and cow barn. Yes they do.

No they don't. The bit about the twigs wasn't true, and *FlatOut* is a mass of contradictions. In it, you race American V8s (mostly, bar the odd 'hilarious' Fiat-style tiny thing) with some serious 1970s horsepower. And they've got traction control. What? The slightest hint of steering causes your driver to audibly lift his foot, despite you remaining crushed on the throttle button. This... [sounds of thesaurus pages fluttering] sucks.

RIPSNORTING

Look at those cars. You're thinking wild oversteer, *Dukes Of Hazzard* drifts, crazy jumps and heavy-contact racing that'll have you laughing pig-like through your nose, like you are your own goddam cousin or something. And *FlatOut* has all those things. Except it doesn't. No.

It has oversteer, but it doesn't come from too much throttle; it's all done on the steering – you might think you hardly care, but you will. What it means is these cars, despite being powerful *Driver*-style loonwagons, must be driven like a ten-year-old Micra with two broken spark plugs. Carefully. Calmly. Sensibly. The only time you want to be (slightly) sideways is on the way into a corner, because these cars simply won't accelerate if they're not straight. So forget any dreams of hanging the back out under rooster tails of dirt. Winning in *FlatOut* is all about conserving momentum, keeping everything neat and tidy and carving smooth lines that stretch grip without breaking it. Which is entertaining. And sucks.

Those are characteristics of a modern World Rally Championship car. Cars with four-wheel drive, three electronic differentials and state-of-the-art suspension. They're not the characteristics of overweight, overpowered, poorly suspended muscle cars that struggle to corner non-fatally on Tarmac, let alone dirt. But okay, once you accept that, you can revel in how well it's been done – it's beautifully smooth and finely judged – and settle back for some carefully driven, but still hectic crash-fests.

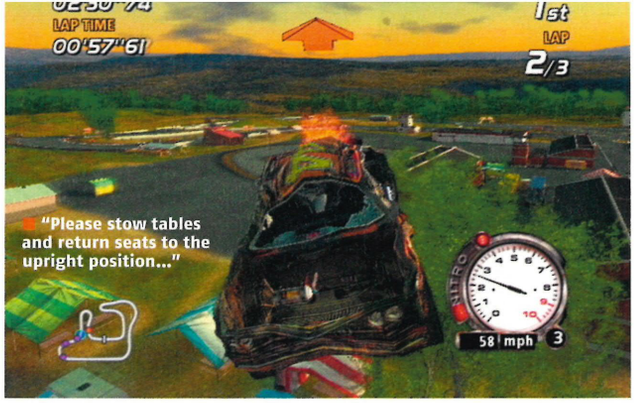
No you can't. Crashes look gorgeous, sound utterly devastating and are not here to be enjoyed. Not if you care about the race, anyway. *FlatOut*'s physics are massively impressive – tyre barriers disintegrate into individual pieces,

The replays are fine, but the ability to watch other cars with more cameras would have made them excellent

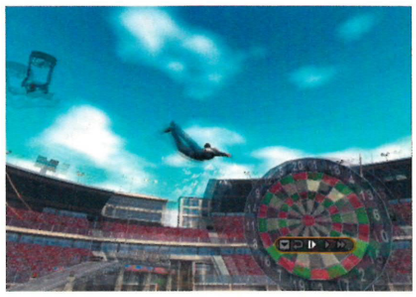
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES? OR NO FUTURE?

Jumps. Should be hilarious, but are just a risk. Sums it all up, really...

Occasionally you'll find some tempting leaps, but you'll soon learn to avoid them. Why? Because there's no reward for pulling them off, but there's plenty of punishment for getting them wrong. It's also much easier to get them wrong than anything else. Take this one, for instance. Get too far left and you'll hit a digger and crash. Get too far right and you'll roll in the air and crash. Go too fast and you'll hit the bridge and... oh, you know. And unless you're on the first lap, chances are you'll never catch up, especially as you've probably respawned next to the hole and immediately been smashed into it. And got stuck. Three times. And so you deliberately avoid something fun... sigh.



■ "Please stow tables and return seats to the upright position..."



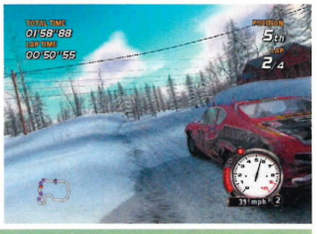
■ The damage really does look incredible – as do the crashes

■ Shunt others into crashes, hear them scream as they fly...

bridges collapse when you hit the supporting struts and fences clatter apart in ways that are simply so realistic you hardly even notice it happening. There's an astonishing amount of things to hit, too, and the changing debris fields really can affect you from lap to lap. Bigger objects at best slow you down, at worst launch you into a barrel roll, so it's worth swerving – though you may well just start another accident by doing so. Ha! C'est la vie. There are also far fewer solid objects (such as telegraph poles and tiny tree stumps) littering the track-edges than in the preview code, which is a) surprising and b) very encouraging. Obviously some sense prevailed, as those things did nothing but annoy.

As the shortcuts still do. There aren't nearly as many as there seem to be, and straying too far results in an order to return to exactly the point you left. Obviously, such laborious meanderings make the race pointless, while hitting 'reset' can put you so far back – motionless and in neutral – it has the same effect. So it's not long before you daren't even try what looks like a shortcut, just in case it isn't one. Hiss. Add unforgiving boundaries to unforgiving handling and you have a rally game that rewards precision and learning, while punishing exuberance and spontaneity. But *FlatOut* doesn't look like a rally game. And *FlatOut* does indeed look like an exuberant, spontaneous destruction derby-style slice of fried chaos. Someone's got the wires twisted somehow.

FLATOUT LOOKS LIKE AN EXUBERANT, SPONTANEOUS DESTRUCTION DERBY-STYLE SLICE OF FRIED CHAOS



■ Flame paint jobs are just so two-dimensional

■ "Look at me, I'm Jesus!" He's not, but he's going to die for our sins. Our record was actually 118 metres... oh, how he screamed

FAST LOVE

Play sensibly and the brief main game – 36 races in an excruciatingly underdeveloped 'bronze, silver, gold' structure that merely unlocks the next event – becomes entertaining about halfway through. Why? Speed. Spend winnings on upgraded parts and eventually your car becomes what it should have been all along: stupidly, stupidly fast. Fast enough to take your mind off the unresponsive throttle, at least. Squash the inevitable boost button long enough and it's almost frightening – *Burnout* in an MOT failure. Sadly, the stadium games aren't integrated at all, and lurk in a separate section. Throw your driver into dartboards, clowns, skittles, long jumps, high jumps... it's diverting, but, like the rest of the game, it could have been so much wilder. Should have been. Yet! Yet no. It's not. C'est la vie, Cooter. ■ **Steven Williams**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	09	Attractive, detailed. Amazing physics
Sound	08	Vapid 'rawk' tunes but brutal engines
Gameplay	06	Demanding and sometimes antagonising
Lifespan	06	Main career brief, multiplayer limited
It looks like a destruction derby game, plays like a rally sim and punishes the behaviour it incites. It's fun, but not like you'd expect	**7** /10	

The grenades are great for escaping sticky moments

There's no time to stop and think. Just keep shooting!

METAL SLUG 3

There's nothing spineless about this classic

Remove the financial risk of having to pay for one more go on an arcade game and what have you got left? Without the need to keep chugging 20p pieces into *Metal Slug 3*, for instance, you can finish it in two hours or so without a problem. But is it still worth shelling out for something that napalms the gaming candle at both ends? Let's have ourselves a closer look at those two hours and see what's what...

5 SECS

CLICK-CLUNK! You parachute into battle with the opening sound effect ringing in your ears and immediately your pistol-packing commando is assaulted by waves of flesh-eating crabs.

Seconds later, you grab a power-up and realise you're smiling... this is an exciting experience.

10 MINS

Right, so you've taken a dip underwater and pummelled a giant, artillery-laden crab, only to end up facing the living dead. Cop a face full of zombie sick and you're a walking corpse yourself. Being dead isn't all bad though – you've gained a mega-powerful puke attack.

20 MINS

Exhausted, you hit the end of level two. What next? How about floating aliens and laser-guided monoliths? No, really. Then you realise all your credits are free, you stop worrying about dying and *Metal Slug*'s razor-edged difficulty curve is in pieces...

40 MINS

A short while later and things are looking up – it's time to hop in the *Metal Slug* jet and fight a whole mission travelling at Mach 3, dodging missiles, strafing tanks and gunships. It's tense, and another example of how the game persistently ups the excite-o-meter.

1 HOUR 55 MINS

Then, almost two hours later... it's over. There's emptiness, and a sore thumb. A sense that you've done something worthwhile, but quite what that was you couldn't say. Probably time for a cup of tea.

2 HOURS

Five minutes later you're hankering after 'just one more go'. Sure, it's no gaming revolution, but this is an instant and constantly explosive sugardrop of gaming – perfect for a few hours of digit-drumming action, and there are few games around that can claim such pleasurable 'pick up and play' enjoyment. ■ **Ben Richardson**

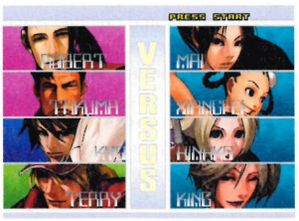
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	07	Crisp, old-skool cartoon 2D
Sound	07	Suits the aural requirements nicely
Gameplay	08	Relentless twitch-gaming action
Lifespan	06	Finish in hours, replay at leisure

There's a very good reason why arcade machines collect so much money, you know, and SNK's* Metal Slug *is one of them

7/10

DETAILS

PUBLISHER IGNITION ENTERTAINMENT
DEVELOPER SNK
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.IGNITIONENT.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO



KING OF FIGHTERS 2000/2001

A place where analogue sticks are part of the future

DETAILS

PUBLISHER IGNITION
DEVELOPER SNK
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOVEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.IGNITIONENT.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

If humans had evolved in the same manner as 2D beat-'em-ups, we'd still be monkeys, except we'd have laser guns. We'd be exactly the same, only with one flashy new upgrade. And so it is with SNK's *King Of Fighters* series – the Pepsi to the Coke of Capcom's *Street Fighter* – whose sixth and seventh instalments have been bundled here into one low-cost game hamper. The series may be getting long in the tooth, but this is the first chance for PAL PS2 gamers to sample it. Like, wow!

King Of Fighters 2001 is by far the better of the two games, as it offers a more instant and wide-ranging strategic combat option. From your team of four fighters, up to three of them can be reserved as 'strikers' to be called on for explosive backup when things are tight, but it does mean that you've fewer characters to actively wield in a fight. Both of the games, however, feature the same classical, dynamic mixture of ultra-demanding finger gymnastics, and offer some dizzying depths for anyone willing to put in the hours needed to tease it out, via a combination of intensely honed reactions and good old-fashioned memory.

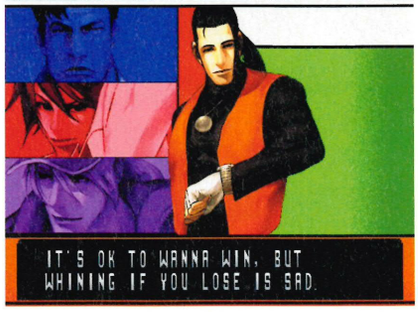
You know how when someone tries eating an exotic new animal meat for the first time, and they say it 'tastes like chicken'? Well, *King Of Fighters 00/01* plays like chicken. It's familiar two-dimensional fighter territory, refined but not redefined, and you probably already knew before you read this review whether you'd like it or not. Your move. ■ **Steven Bailey**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	06	Not-so-sprightly sprites, but good artwork
Sound	06	Funky geetar wails and repetitive yells
Gameplay	06	It's déjà vu, but in a nice way
Lifespan	07	Deep, but demandingly so

More flamboyant than* Street Fighter 2, *but it requires real effort to get at the meat of the depths on offer

6/10

Sure, it's 2D, but the gameplay's as sharp as it ever was



Settle scores.

Humiliate your mates online or with a Multitap using 15 all new upgradeable weapons, 7 cutting-edge gadgets and combat vehicles, now available for the ultimate destruction.

INSOMNIAC For more ideas on how to settle your scores see www.ratchetandclank3.com

FUN ANYONE?

PlayStation 2

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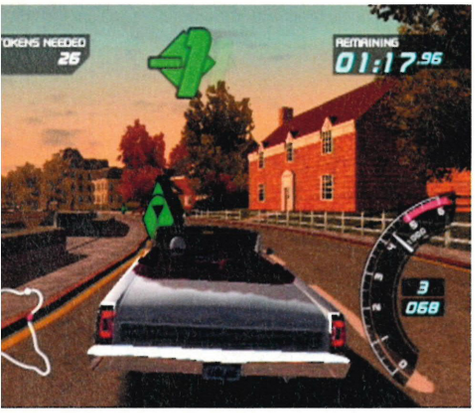
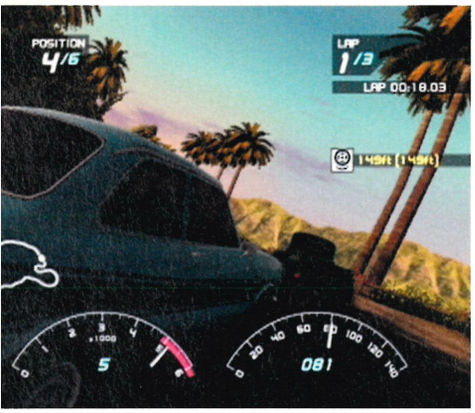
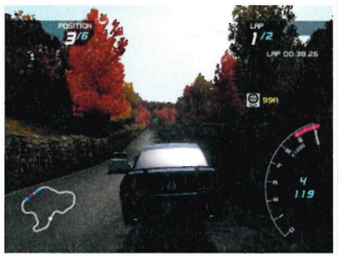


Last year the *GT*-lite feel seemed quaint, with *Burnout 3*, *NFSU2* and *GT4* about it just seems rubbish



Plenty of – Ford – cars but not nearly enough difference between them



Speed lines? This isn't *Burnout 3*!

FORD RACING 3

If this is realistic then it's time to sell those Ford shares

Many of the cars in *Ford Racing 3* are vintage, but the game could be compared to a vintage itself. Not a fine wine though. No, this is vintage like a year-old egg discovered at the back of the fridge – it might look okay, but a taste of it reveals emphatically otherwise.

The cars, for example, are good – faithful-looking recreations of such US and British icons as the Capri, T-Bird, Mustang and Focus. But the physics is appalling: models vary a little in terms of handling, but none feel as if they're actually on the road, and with ultra-bouncy barriers and forgiving walls, rarely is it necessary to use the brake. An early trip through a ford (of the small stream kind, not the car) made not one jot of difference to the handling: there was no sound to indicate passing through water and a similar absence of graphical evidence.

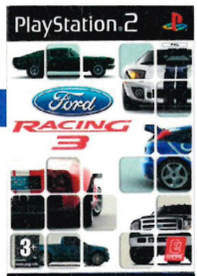
The environments are nice but the tracks that run through them are unimaginative and dull to race. Night driving proves slightly more exciting, but only because the cars' headlamps fail to light up the road. There's little connection between pressing the accelerator and the noise a vehicle makes, arbitrary revving and skidding sounds being the developers' aural choice. Which is a bit of a shame because with its varied, multi-branching main game mode there's the skeleton of a good game here. It's just a shame it grew so much putrid flesh on its bones. **Paul Roundell**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

Graphics	07	Good looking cars and scenery
Sound	04	Curious response from dull engines
Gameplay	05	Press ⊗ and steer
Lifespan	04	Quickly becomes tiresome

A half-hearted attempt at a racing game, not pardonable just because it's offered at half the normal price

5/10



DETAILS

PUBLISHER EMPIRE INTERACTIVE
DEVELOPER RAZORWORKS
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.FORDRACING3.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES

Please. Not cel-shading. Not again

X-MEN: LEGENDS

The kinetic world of superheroes never seemed so slow

DETAILS

PUBLISHER ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER RAVEN
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-4
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.ACTIVISION.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

Welcome to the breathtakingly ordinary peak of formulaic gaming. *X-Men: Legends* mixes the RPG, exploration and combat gameplay from *Baldur's Gate* with the brightly-coloured hero types from Marvel Comics to form a game slightly more mundane than either of its constituent inspiration. There are very few original ideas on display here – the game amounts to just a quick fix of repetitive entertainment.

A promising opening drops you straight into the action, but the overall experience is quite simple – roam fixed pathways and knock out a string of samey three or four-button combos – but it's fast enough to be initially enjoyable.

After a while, though, it soon feels like a limping pace rather than a breakneck one. The X-Men's School For Mutants serves as a hub for the action, with missions doled out alongside fighting tutorials and character bios. But the mix of combat and RPG elements feels clumsy. *X-Men: Legends* simply doesn't make its main elements gel well, and key flashback missions covering the X-Men's heyday serve only as fan fodder, being a bit dull for the rest of us.

Up to four players can play some missions – frustratingly this isn't an option open to you from the off – and the points-based, level-up system offers some customisation. But the RPG sections of the game, which really only amounts to a geeky spreadsheet back-end, work out as lengthy tedium breaks in-between the action, rather than giving it depth and variety. Unless you like your comic heroes slow and wordy, *X-Men: Legends* is not for you. **Nathan Ditum**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

Graphics	06	Colourful and solid but unimaginative
Sound	06	Not even Patrick Stewart can save the *X-Men*
Gameplay	07	Repetitive, but deep for the patient
Lifespan	06	Shifts of pace make it hard to stick with

As a budget game this would be worth checking out, but at full price it's underwhelming. We suggest* Baldur's Gate *instead

6/10

The team mechanics is a nice idea – you can switch between your four X-Men to tackle different tasks

SLY AND THE "DIAMOND OF TUXMAL"

BACK AT HQ...

FUN, ANYONE?

PlayStation.2

TO BE CONTINUED...
www.sly2game.com/diamond

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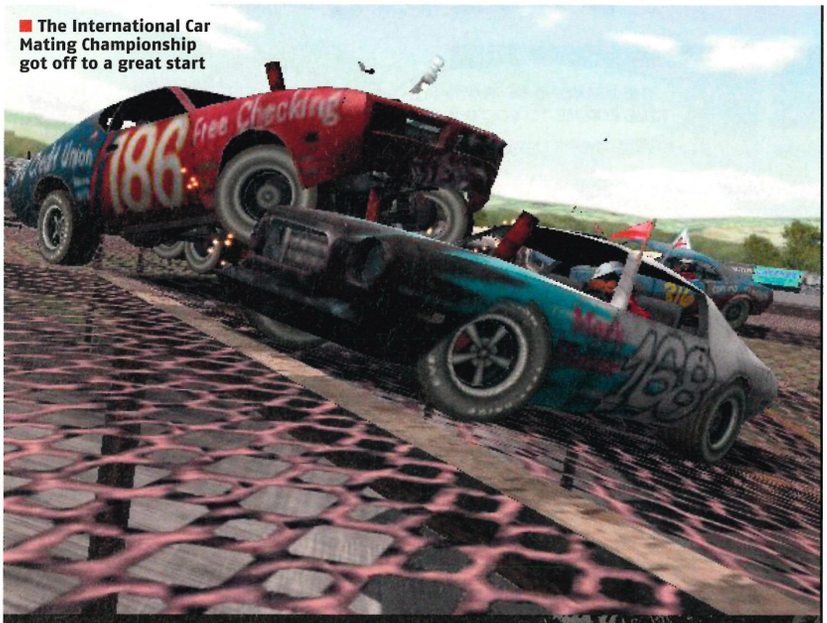
ROUND-UP

We sift through the under-the-radar releases in search of must-buys...

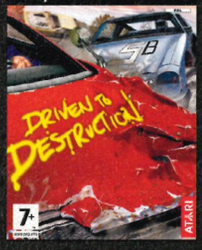


The International Car Mating Championship got off to a great start

DRIVEN TO DESTRUCTION

If you haven't got a mullet, you ain't getting in...

PlayStation 2



Carving out a career is where the single-player jollies lie – racing a succession of upgradeable scrappers around dirt tracks in races that range from the bizarre to the even more bizarre. Drag other cars, enter destruction derbies, race around flagpoles and against opponents going the opposite way. And, if you're lucky, drive a coffined-up hearse without being destroyed by the malevolent competition. Get a mate round, though, and it becomes personal head-to-head war.

However, there's so much on-track carnage – huge collisions in the figure-eight jump race, cars spinning through hay bales and smashing side-on – it becomes something of a lottery. Acceptance of that determines whether this fun, but ultimately short effort is for you. ■ **MF**

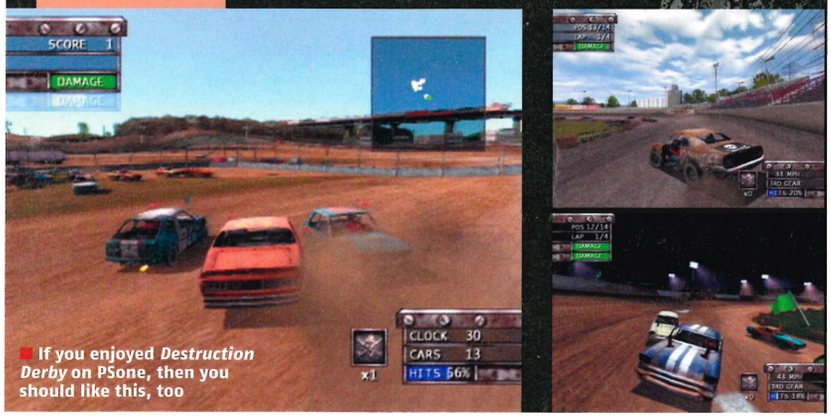
DETAILS

PUBLISHER ATARI
DEVELOPER MONSTER GAMES
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.UK.ATARI.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES

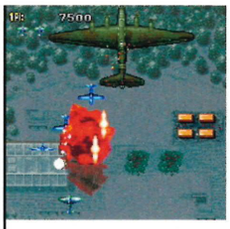
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK **VERDICT**

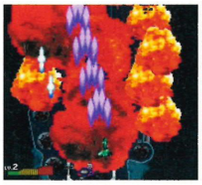
Basic, frantic and forgettable, but still huge amounts of fun. **Driven To Destruction** *is the gaming equivalent of a pulp novel*

7/10



If you enjoyed *Destruction Derby* on PSone, then you should like this, too





Look away... there's nothing to see here

This retro thing's getting out of hand

1945 I & II THE ARCADE GAMES

What? We *still* haven't won the war?

Is this really what we were playing in the '80s? Stood in new-fangled arcades throwing coins into a huge cabinet as its faded screen offered up a top-down view of a plane going over 2D environments destroying tanks, planes and ships and getting power-ups that give you hefty firepower? Yes it was. And it was good.

Now, however, it is far from good. No subtlety, no art, no humour, no looks – nothing but hold down fire and dodge incoming craft. Sure it's a classic, but that's the thing about old classics: play them now and they're just old. ■ **RK**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK **VERDICT**

Laughable old-skool graphics, sound that's the very best 1983 had to offer and gameplay that's about as basic as it gets

4/10

PlayStation 2

DETAILS

PUBLISHER PLAY IT
DEVELOPER TAKARA
PRICE £9.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE JUSTPLAYIT.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

The hunt for the perfect *Terminator* game continues...

TERMINATOR 3: THE REDEMPTION

Old red eyes is back...

PlayStation 2

DETAILS

PUBLISHER ATARI
DEVELOPER PARADIGM
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.UK.ATARI.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES

Based on the *T3* film, *Redemption* is a blend of third-person shooter and driving, where the former is well implemented but often rather dull and the latter is mostly fun.

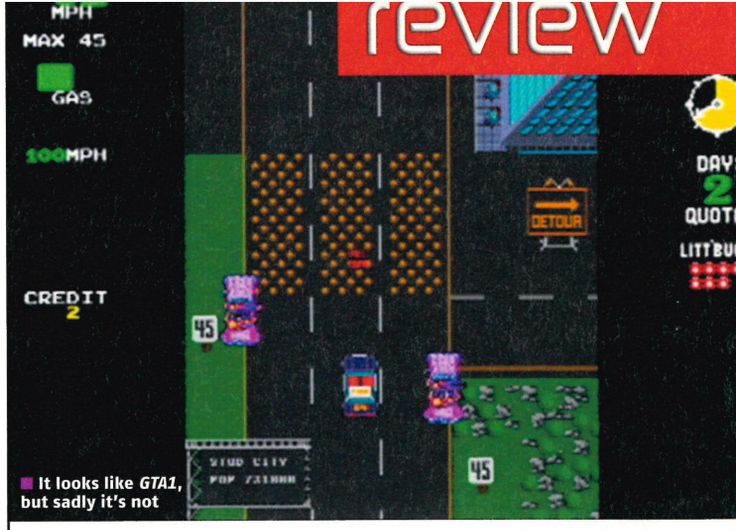
Developer Paradigm has tried hard to capture the essence of the Governor's final movie and it's partly successful. Perversely, it's in some of the really good bits that it feels most unlike the *Terminator* 'experience' and more akin to a 'game'. Not a big problem, but the mix of styles eventually renders *The Redemption* nothing more than a half-decent shooter. ■ **PR**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK **VERDICT**

Has a genuine **Terminator** *feel to it, but suffers as a result of the mix of styles and an inability to do any of them really well*

6/10

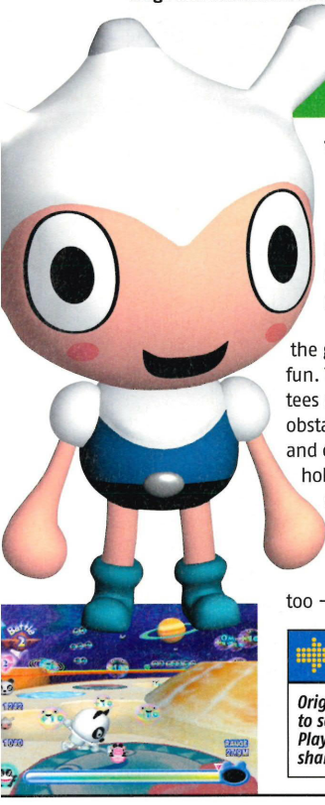
■ It's like golf, right, but with frogs and hammers. Lovely



■ It looks like *GTA1*, but sadly it's not

RIBBIT KING

Frogs and golf... together at last



Yes, it's golf with frogs. Frolf, actually and it's set in space with different courses on different planets. You play as Scooter, a citizen of planet Ribbetopia, sent by your king to play frolf around the galaxy in order to restore the power supply to your planet.

The plot may be incomprehensible, but the gameplay is straightforward and, crucially, fun. The frogs the frolfers launch from catapult tees are diverted by a range of planet-specific obstacles – trees, rivers, etc – some which help and others which hinder your progress to the hole. Most courses are too long to drive through, so you'll need to take advantage of these environments to score a frog-in-one.

More complicated than the visuals initially led us to believe, and more fun, too – *Ribbit King* is well worth a look. ■ **ND**

DETAILS

PUBLISHER ATARI
DEVELOPER BANDAI
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.RIBBITKING.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

Original but childish. It's good to see something new in the PlayStation 2 world. It's just a shame it isn't that successful

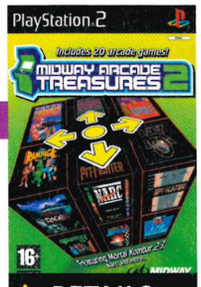
6/10

MIDWAY ARCADE TREASURES 2

Proving that retro gaming is arse

Imagine the innocent joy in our eyes as we fondly recalled the arcade multiplayer japes of yore and raced to engage in four-player *Gauntlet 2*, only to have our happy faces rapidly dissolve amidst the harsh light of the 21st Century. Retro games, eh? They're rubbish.

Okay, so that's a little harsh. At times this compilation works, and the punchier games are great, but the slower, patchier ones whose graphics look like pixellated puke merely betray the 'treasures' title. If you really want to go back in time, invent a time machine. ■ **PR**



DETAILS

PUBLISHER MIDWAY
DEVELOPER DIGITAL ECLIPSE
PRICE £14.99
PLAYERS 1-4
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.MIDWAY.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

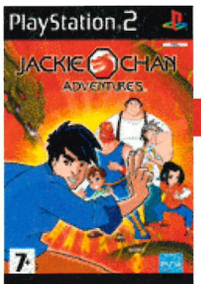
PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

Treasure? Not quite. This lot are better left buried – they're little more than evidence in the case against retro games

5/10

JACKIE CHAN'S ADVENTURES

'Adventures' really is pushing it



In this desperately bad game of Chan's spin-off cartoon, nothing is okay, not even the most loveable martial arts star in the world. It's ostensibly a 3D action game, sort of like a badly cel-shaded *Prince Of Persia*, except, you know, for kids. The blocky graphics and dull artwork are the perfect accompaniment for the clumsy Prince-a-like acrobatics and time manipulation. And the whole thing seems orchestrated to be as frustrating as possible – even the story's rubbish. Just don't, okay? ■ **ND**

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER ATOMIC PLANET
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.PLAYSTATION.CO.UK
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

Spectacularly fails to capture any of Jackie's charm or charisma – and it's arguable that he's got that much to catch

3/10

■ Sadly it plays about as well as it looks

■ Chasing red balls? That's what we want

TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER 2: BUSH RESCUE

Ty's back. Well, did *you* invite him?

Ty The Tasmanian Tiger 2 has put us in a bad mood. It's clear that a lot of work has been put into dragging the Oz-flavoured platformer sequel into *Jak II* territory. It's got trad leaping and gem collection, a huge open world, vehicles and a whole kart-racing sub-game that can be played as a stand alone option. So why risk flushing all that goodwill down the dunny with a difficulty level that gives you candy one moment and then spanks you the next? Shame. ■ **PF**

DETAILS

PUBLISHER EA
DEVELOPER KROME STUDIOS
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.EAGAMES.CO.UK/PRODUCTS.VIEW.ASP?ID=487
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

A likeable Jak II *clone that should be a bargain for younger gamers. Inconsistencies in the difficulty level scupper higher scores, though*

6/10

Does this make your heart flutter? Then you may well ignore the review...

DRAGONBALL Z 3: BUDOKAI

The ball that keeps on rolling...

In the eyes of fans, *DragonBall Z* games are coated in the kind of criticism-resistant gaming Teflon that most games would kill for. Twice. No matter that previous *Budokai* beat-'em-ups were victories of style over substance – that hasn't stopped them shifting more units than the North Korean army on full alert.

Disciples will be psyched to know that '*3* enables you to power up the Sayians to Super Sayian 4, that the game introduces characters from the *DBZ GT* series, and you can now make teleporting a part of your combos. Everyone else, however, will find it hard to see beyond the uninspiring beat-'em-up dynamics. Pity. ■ **PF**

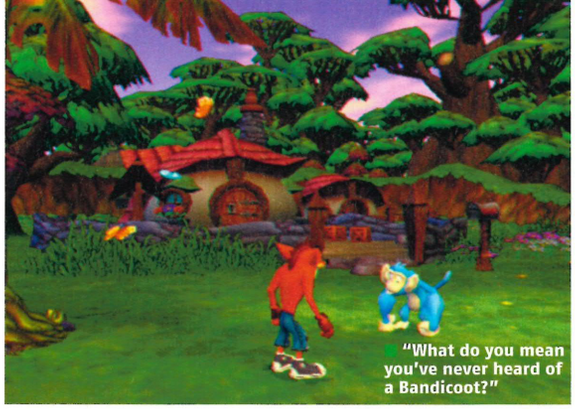
DETAILS

PUBLISHER ATARI
DEVELOPER FUNIMATION
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT 12 NOVEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.ATARI.COM/US/GAMES/DBZ_BUDOKAI3/PLAYSTATION2
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

As ever, DBZ possesses style and fan-pleasing touches but is let down by beat-'em-up dynamics that don't make the grade

6/10


"What do you mean you've never heard of a Bandicoot?"

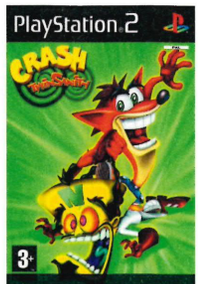
CRASH TWINSANITY

Bandicoots are headed for the extinct list

To freshen up its flagship furball, publisher Vivendi has hired *Ren & Stimpy* creator, Jordan Reichek as writer for Crash's latest outing. The gagscribe's duties have turned a simple plot (Crash teams up with Cortex to thwart alien invasion) into a fast-paced platformer where there's never a dull moment. That doesn't, however, mean that there's never a moment of sheer frustration. Far from it. In fact, gags aren't enough to compensate for the game's problems.

Twinsanity mixes gameplay styles but the results are a mess. The set pieces are marred by sudden deaths and awkward pitfalls – and the unskippable cut-scenes may be funny the first time around...

It's just too annoying – and with *Ratchet* and *Jak* around, there's no reason to buy this. ■ **MF**



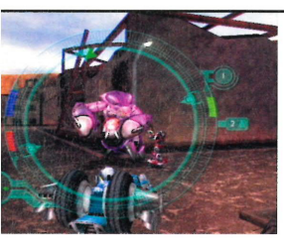
DETAILS

PUBLISHER VIVENDI UNIVERSAL
DEVELOPER TRAVELLERS TALES
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.VUGAMES.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

The script is there, but, while concentrating on being entertaining, Twinsanity has forgotten to be actually playable

5/10



ROBOTECH: INVASION

Much less than the sum of its parts...

In the depressing tradition of western adaptations, *Invasion* discards everything that makes the *Robotech* brand what it is. There are no robot 'mecha' transforming into rocket-packing jets, and no distinctive comic-book looks. Instead, it's lightweight *Halo* meets *Starship Troopers*. But nowhere near as good as that sounds.

Levels are huge but you run slowly, and although control is fluid, fighting the alien behemoths is uninteresting thanks to puny-feeling weapons. ■ **BR**

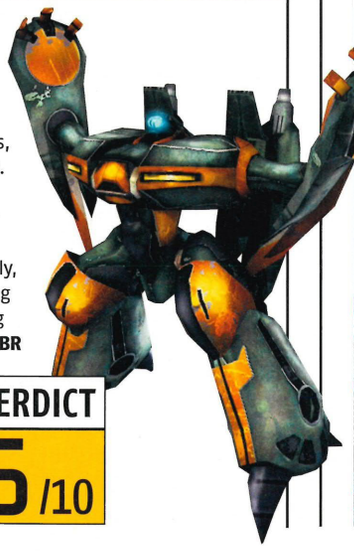
DETAILS

PUBLISHER TAKE 2
DEVELOPER VICIOUS CIRCLE
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1-2 (1-8 ONLINE)
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.GLOBALSTARSOFTWARE.COM/ROBOTECHINVASION
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND NO

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

Robotech: Invasion has done itself no favours in ditching its rich Japanese history. Disappointingly average

5/10



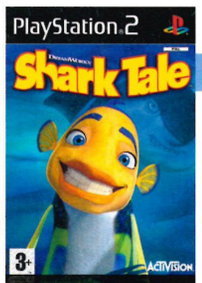
SHARK TALE

Not the catch we were expecting

Turning *Shark Tale* from film to game was apparently no easy task. To have no game at all, of course, is unthinkable, hence this 'new adventure' for Oscar, which is more like a series of strung together mini-games.

These mini-games encompass elements of fighting, platform, racing and rhythm action. But they hardly form a coherent whole: each aspect has its own control system and some levels appear to have been included just to flesh out what is a very short and lightweight affair.

It's not really bad, but like sharks, it's best avoided in favour of something else. ■ **PR**



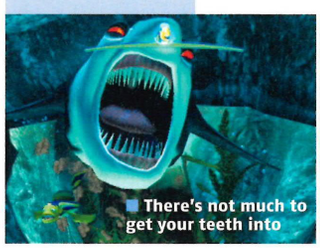
DETAILS

PUBLISHER ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER EDGE OF REALITY
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.ACTIVISION.CO.UK
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND YES

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

High on production and low on creativity – your typical inoffensive, uninspiring, movie tie-in. Don't take the bait

6/10


There's not much to get your teeth into

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1722	Jo Jo *Leave*	9119	Britney Spears *Toxic*
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1965	Eric Prydz *Call on Me*	9874	Rachel Stevens *Some Girls*
9596	Usher *Burn*	2302	Girls Aloud *Love Machine*
5533	Maroon 5 *This Love*	6789	Britney Spears *Everytime*
6663	Eamon *Don't Want You Back*	4253	McFly *Obviously*
1627	Nelly *My Place*	1178	Maroon 5 *She Will Be Loved*
7165	50 Cent *In Da Club*	2954	Robbie Williams *Radio*
4435	Usher *Yeah*	5872	Scooter *The Logical Song*
8400	Ultrabeat *Pretty Green Eyes*	7687	Avril Lavigne *My Happy Ending*
8809	Busted *Thunderbirds Are Go*	6454	Christina Aguilera *Dirrty*
4443	Frankee *F*U*R*B*	2956	Danzel *Pump It Up*
6718	D12 *My Band*	2977	The Streets *Blinded By The Light*
9109	D-12 *How Come*	8808	Shapeshifters *Lolas Theme*
9006	DJ Casper *Cha Cha Slide*	4364	Cassidy Ft R Kelly *Hotel*
9563	Mario Winans *I Don't Wanna..*	2304	McFly *That Girl*
8098	XTM *Fly on the Wings of Love*	9603	O Zone *Dragostea Din Tei*

FAVOURITES

8121	AFI *Girls Not Grey*	6788	Lost Prophets *Wake Up*
5519	Ash *Orpheus*	8836	Lost Prophets *Last Train Home*
3381	Auf Der Maur *Taste You*	1279	Lynyrd Skynyrd *Sweet Home..*
8728	Black Sabbath *Paranoid*	3764	Manic Street Preachers *The Love..*
7470	Blink 182 *Feeling This*	0602	Marilyn Manson *Sweet dreams*
9152	Blink 182 *I Miss You*	2952	Marilyn Manson *Personal Jesus*
8166	Darkness *Growing On Me*	0659	Metallica *Enter Sandman*
8370	Darkness *A Thing Called Love*	0662	Metallica *Nothing Else Matters*
1272	Deep Purple *Smoke On The Water*	8141	Motorhead *Ace of Spades*
2965	Dirty Vegas *Walk Into The Sun*	2645	Muse *Butterflies and Hurricanes*
8838	Funeral For A Friend *Escape..*	2979	Muse *Plug in Baby*
9919	Goldie Lookin Chain *Guns Don't..*	6368	Muse *Hysteria*
3273	Good Charlottes *Predictable*	0414	Papa Roach *Last Resort*
2317	Green Day *American Idiot*	5818	Puddle of Mud *Blurry*
1275	Guns N' Roses *Sweet Child..*	6448	Queens..Stone Age *No One..*
6719	Him *Solitary Man*	6668	Rasmus *In the Shadows*
8638	Him *The Funeral of Hearts*	7946	RATM *Killing in the Name..*
3289	Hundred Reasons *How Soon is..*	2646	Razorlight *Vice*
8840	Incubus *Megalomanic*	6010	Red Hot Chili Peppers *By The..*
4137	Iron Maiden *Run to the Hills*	6994	Slipknot *Duality*
6995	Killswitch Engage *Rose Of Sharyn*	9913	Soil *Redefine*
7255	Korn *Here to Stay*	3006	System of a Down *Chop Suey*
3766	KoRn *Word Up*	5044	The Distillers *Drain The Blood*
2649	Lacuna Coil *Swamped*	9915	The Killers *Mr Brightside*
0550	Led Zeppelin *Kashmir*	2002	The Music *Freedom Fighters*
8333	Limp Bizkit *Break Stuff*	3292	The Network *Teenagers From..*
9911	Linkin Park *Breaking The Habit*	9242	The Strokes *Reptilia*
1189	Lost Prophets *Last Summer*	7842	Velvet Revolver *I See You Baby*

HIP HOP & RnB

7137	50 Cent *21 Questions*	2974	Armand Van Helden *My My My*
9121	Black Eyed Peas *Anxiety*	1962	Darren Hayes *Popular*
7878	Dr Dre *Still Dre*	1243	Dj Otzi *Hey Baby*
7877	Dr Dre *Next Episode*	0619	Dj Quicksilver *Belissima*
0175	Eminem *Marshall Mathers*	7874	Dj Sammy *Heaven*
5633	Eminem *Without Me*	0621	Faithless *I Want More*
4250	J Kwon *Tipsy*	7012	Faithless *Mass Destruction*
8140	Ja Rule *Clap Back*	0339	Fragma *Tocas Miracle*
6465	Jennifer Lopez *Jenny from the..*	1998	Prodigy *Girls*
1433	Joe ft GUnit *Ride Wit U*	0208	Robert Miles *Children*
7764	Justin Timberlake *Rock Your..*	5872	Scooter *The Logical Song*
7947	R Kelly *Ignition Remix*	2733	Stonebridge *Put Em High*

ROCK

8837	80s Matchbox *Mr Mental*	9283	Jet *Look What You've Done*
5519	Ash *Orpheus*	7909	Jet *Are you Gonna Be My girl*
7687	Avril Lavigne *My Happy Ending*	1082	Keane *Everything Is Changing*
4357	Avril Lavigne *Don't Tell Me*	2367	Libertines *Can't Stand Me Now*
7016	Bellx1 *Eve, The Apple of My Eye*	5533	Maroon 5 *This Love*
7470	Blink 182 *Feeling This*	8894	Snow Patrol *Run*
4334	Blink 182 *Down*	5526	Snow Patrol *Chocolate*
1444	Buck 65 *4-6-3*	6828	The Charlatans *Up At The Lake*
9278	Darkness *Love Is Only A Feeling*	9915	The Killers *Mr Brightside*
9150	Fountains Of Wayne *Stacys Mom*	9931	The Rasmus *Guilty*
1530	Fountains Of Wayne *Mexican..*	6668	The Rasmus *In the Shadows*
1344	Franz Ferdinand *Matinee*	9937	The Stills *Still in Love Song*

FOOTBALL

3734	Arsenal FC *One Nil To Arsenal*	0819	TV & Film *Matrix*
3735	Chelsea FC *Blue Is The Colour*	0029	TV & Film *Beverly Hills Cop*
3735	FC Barcelona *Cant Del Barca*	5150	TV & Film *Phoenix Nights*
3737	Glasgow Celtic FC *Celtic Song*	8559	TV & Film *Kill Bill*
3738	Glasgow Rangers *Follow Follow*	8561	TV & Film *Lord Of The Rings*
3739	Liverpool FC *Never Walk Alone*	1486	TV & Film *Knight Rider*
3740	Manchester City FC *Blue Moon*	8488	TV & Film *Starksy and Hutch*
3741	Man Utd *Glory Glory Man Utd*	0076	TV & Film *The Muppets*
3743	SunderlandFC *Daydream Believer*	1483	TV & Film *James Bond*
8322	Tv UEFA *Champions League*	0091	TV & Film *The Simpsons*

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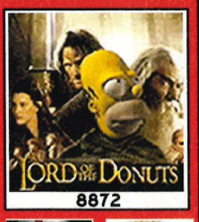

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1096	Del Boy	1159	Ozzy Osbourne
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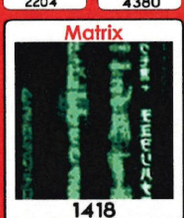

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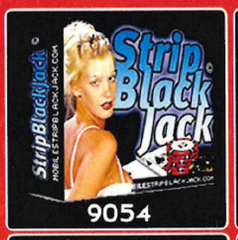

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The First Review

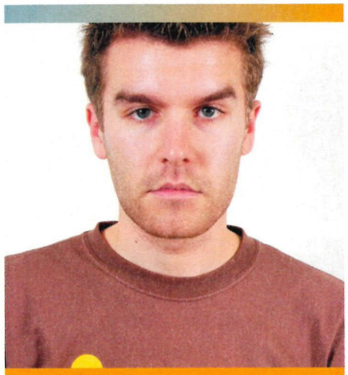
On Sale 29th October

replay

A GAME IS A PRECIOUS THING: KEEP PLAYING AND IT'LL KEEP ON GIVING

WELCOME TO REPLAY

Stand back people – here comes the man they call Mental Ben...



Doesn't the time fly by? It seems like only yesterday I was struggling to contain my excitement after hearing that *Burnout 3: Takedown* would be online. In fact, I'm still excited – our networking sessions are the highlight of my week – and not least because we get to challenge you, our readers. I've also found time to practice what I preach and enjoy a gem from PS2's glittering history, *Ico*. Taken me long enough, right? Well, it was worth the wait, as five minutes into the game I was hooked. Just goes to show, age doesn't matter in games, as this particular two-year-old classic bumped several recent releases off my weekend playlist.

So, what have you been playing recently? Found any neat touches in a game we've already reviewed? Got a beef with one of our scores? Or perhaps you just need some cheats? Well, Replay is where it's at, my friends, and it's all yours. So keep sending us your reviews, tips and problems. It's what we're here for.

Ben Richardson,
Staff writer

DEF JAM: FIGHT FOR NEW YORK

ALL THE WINNING STRATEGIES YOU NEED TO MAKE YOU THE KING OF BLING

122

120 **...REVIEWED EARLIER**
Why *Second Sight* kept us gripped right to the end and how to get even more out of *'Splitters 2*

121 **YOUR SHOUT**
Why *Drakengard* is better than *San Andreas* (or something like that) and *'Splitters* gets some love

122 **CHEAT**
The fight's on, with winning tips for *Def Jam: Fight For New York* and *Rocky Legends*

124 **SURGERY**
Dr Carey cures some gaming problems – for the rest of you there's a pretty lady to look at

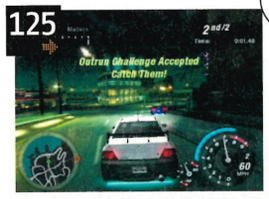
125 **CHALLENGES**
Although you *think* you're good at games, there's only one way to prove it – take our challenges

126 **NETWORK GAMING**
OPS2's online warriors take on the masses at *Burnout 3* with, er, mixed results...

128 **CHARTS**
What's top of the table, plus your chance to win Keira Knightley (in a DVD) with our spine compo

128 **SAVE POINT**
There may be a sly reference to *GTA: San Andreas* in here somewhere. See what you think...

132 **HOT 100**
The ever-changing line-up of the best century of games released on PS2

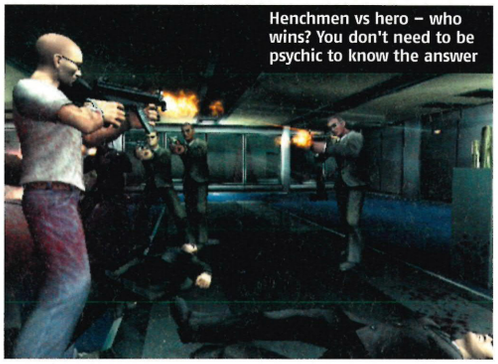


here's one we reviewed earlier...

STILL PLAYING EXTRA TIME IN GAMES WE THOUGHT WE'D ALREADY CALLED THE FINAL WHISTLE ON

ORIGINAL REVIEW: *OPS2#50*
SCORE: 8/10

"For my next trick, I'll levitate your friend and shoot him, too"



Henchmen vs hero – who wins? You don't need to be psychic to know the answer

The game's brilliance lies in its mix of story *and* gameplay

SECOND SIGHT

So good we played it till our brains started bleeding. Then stopped, obviously

Few things have split the team like the debate over which PS2 psychic thriller's best. At one point George *almost* raised his voice. We can now look back with level heads and say this: *Psi-Ops* is better for exploding brains and comedy incinerations, but our collective heart belongs to *Second Sight*.

The game shares art elements and sound effects with *TimeSplitters* – which doesn't hurt. But it's more than that. The story is beautifully told, deftly jumping between past and present. One particularly cool device occurs when Vattic is ordered to help two soldiers set up a radio link. As you arrive they're moaning about what a Captain's pet you are, but then one coughs and changes the subject. So subtle you barely notice it. These moments are layered to create a tangible sense of being there. Also ace is the way you have to use computers to unlock doors and knock out CCTV cameras – clicking windows, dragging files and so on. And in addition to eavesdropping on messenger conversations, you can also find and play retro games. We've discovered *X-Space '92* (use telekinesis to drag it off a locker near the reception desk in the Madness level) and *Earth Impact* (play the arcade machine on the Reliance level). A stiff reminder of how rubbish the older generation had it, and how lucky we are to be mind-spazzing guards through plate glass windows in 3D gloryvision.

You can find and play retro games *X-Space '92* and *Earth Impact*

'Splitters is reborn via LAN functions

TIMESPLITTERS 2

Us still talking about *'Splitters* (below) plus the reader debate on the issue (right)

ORIGINAL REVIEW: *OPS2#25*
SCORE: 10/10

To others, our near-fetishistic love of *TS2* may seem misguided. But we like to think that real gamers understand what it's about. It's fast, smooth, complex and takes years to master. At *OPS2*, if you're good at *'Splitters* you might get a game. If you're really good, you might occasionally win. If you're the best, you're God.

And now we have a new way to prove who's God – *TimeSplitters 2* online (well, sort of). With two copies of the game, two Network Adaptors and two spare Internet ports we can play it over a LAN. The crux of this new, state-of-the-art arrangement is simple: two separate TVs and no more screen watching. In two-player battles, that equates to camping out, sniping, hiding and sadistically slow-paced stalking. In multiplayer it's a truly relentless eight-player holocaust. In short: this game just got *even more* interesting.

Now we'll see who's the *'Splitters* daddy.

...and your shout

STOP SHOUTING AND WRITE IT DOWN... WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

Did your favourite game take a beating? Have we mis-scored a golden opportunity or over-praised a dullard? Then write your own review, take a nice picture of yourself and send it to the following address, and you might even get something for your troubles...

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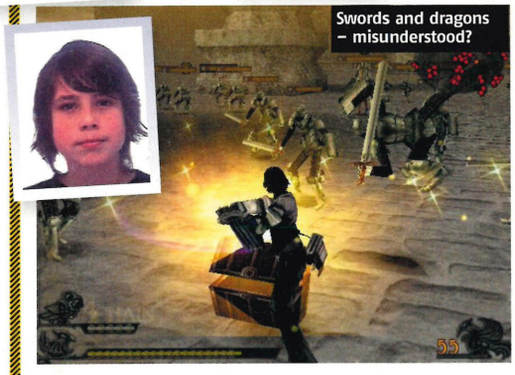
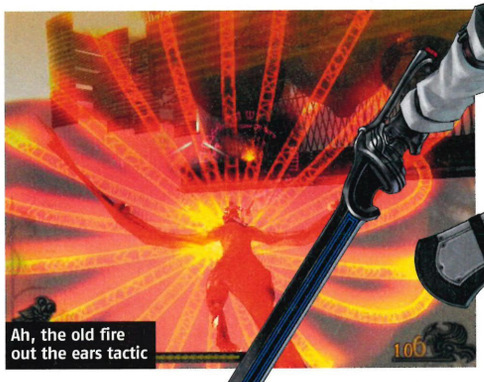




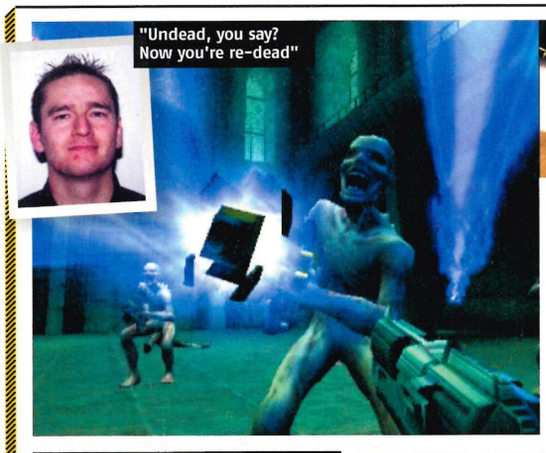
DRAKENGARD

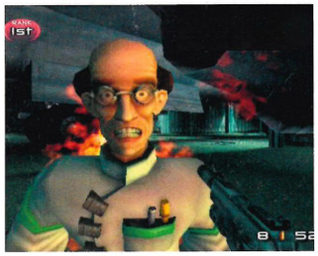
You got it all wrong guys. A 6/10 for *Drakengard*? Are you completely mad? The game rocks – with 65 weapons to collect, three allies to fight, four dragon levels and multiple endings it'll last you for months. And it never gets boring.

Is there anything more fun than slashing down several hundred enemies, jumping on the back of a dragon and burning the rest to a crisp? True, it's quite annoying to have the enemies suddenly pop up, but when there are so many of them fighting you on screen you hardly notice. I own some good games, including *TimeSplitters*, but *Drakengard* has been ruling my PS2 for three straight months. Buy this game and kick some Empire butt now! It's a 9/10!

Gary Higgs, Holt

TO GET YOUR SHOUT IN THE MAG YOU MUST SEND A PASSPORT PIC OF YOURSELF





TIMESPLITTERS 2

I'm assuming that Dan from Eastham was joking when he told you in July's issue that it didn't deserve 10/10. But it isn't justified in receiving such a score. IT NEEDS TO BE 11! *'Splitters* is the Rolls Royce of PS2 gaming, its huge, even before you unlock all the special stuff. I don't think it's possible to be bored by this game – I've sat for hours just playing on the Atari emulator games – and the multiplayer is just brilliant. If Dan doesn't want to play, then fine, leave *TimeSplitters 2* to the serious gamers, who appreciate how fantastic it really is.

J Kirkman, Leyland

offcuts

Mini-opinions ricocheting into our inbox

How could you give *Formula One 04* 7/10? It's an insult to the sport. Didn't you hear the annoying commentary?
Paul Rouse, Newark

I really disagree with your 8/10 *Prince Of Persia* score – it's the best game I've ever played and is well worth a 9/10.
Cayle Hotene, Colchester

Spider-Man 2 is a MAJOR letdown - I can't believe you gave it 8/10. The lack of bosses left me cold and it makes Mary Jane look like a chimp.
Adam Norman, Nuneaton

I bought *Soul Calibur II* because you gave it 10/10. But after ten minutes I was bored of killing the same fat guy again and again.
Charlie Harbot, Cumbria

To my horror you reviewed *Rainbow Six 3* and ONLY gave it 8/10. A bit harsh. A slight improvement on the score would make me happy...
Deve Jefry, via Email

cheat

NO ONE'S GOING TO TAKE A URINE SAMPLE HERE...

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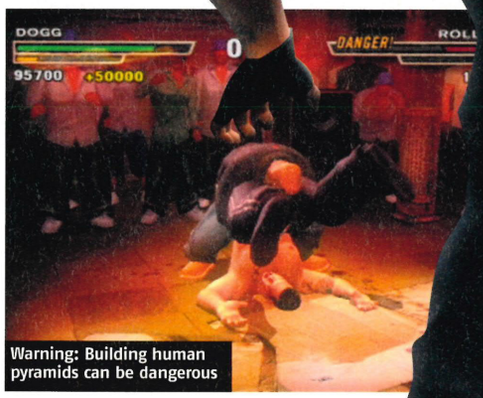
FULL GUIDES for *Def Jam* and *Tiger Woods* in your free *Killzone* book!

ATTACK

The beginning of a match is always tricky because any half-decent fighter will have the presence of mind to reverse a grapple or block a strike. Your opponents will behave in different ways as the bell sounds, from immediately taunting you (run straight at them and attack) to rushing at you (trickier to deal with as you need to block a running strike or disrupt a running grapple – it's best to simply get out of the way if you have a speedy character).

Equally, some fighters block very effectively; some are rubbish at it. Test the waters with a combo or two, but DON'T execute the last hit – it's always slower to recover from and leaves you open to a counter. The quickest way to soften up an opponent is by grabbing a weapon of some kind, usually from the crowd, and battering them. It's unblockable, but they can still reverse it – a very bad thing, because the weapon ends up in their hands. If you're in a venue with climbable scenery (such as The Terror Dome), try getting yourself up there with a weapon and performing a flying weapon attack. Nasty.

Running attacks are a great way of knocking down opponents suddenly – you can use a punch, kick or grapple depending on the strength of your style. It's more likely to take a human opponent by surprise than a computer-controlled one, but still works pretty well. It also works on downed opponents if you want to get in a sneaky hit, but you should always hit them when they're down as a matter of habit.



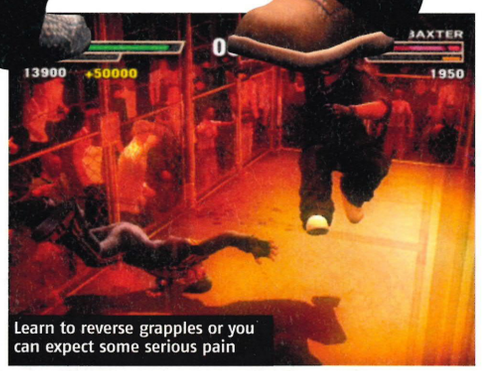
Warning: Building human pyramids can be dangerous

DEFENCE

Countering a grapple couldn't be easier... in theory, that is. Simply punch or kick your opponent during their grabbing animation and it will be interrupted. Not only that, but they will take a moment to recover, which gives you the opportunity to come back at them with a move of your own. The speed of your character is important when it comes to timing this kind of move – it's important that you get it right, because you won't be able to disrupt their grab if you're dizzy.

Reversing a strike is slightly harder to time, but consists of pressing the block button and pushing towards them just as they try to hit you. You'll end up blocking them and pushing them away, or possibly even knocking them down. If you shove them, they usually end up out of normal punch/kick/grapple range, so use a powerful attack by holding L1 and pressing ○ or △, or a running attack.

Those aren't the only defensive techniques, of course. For the speedier characters, stepping back just out of range is a very useful way of avoiding damage without relying on those tricky button presses. As you play through the game you'll gradually develop a better instinctive feel for the distances various attacks cover, but probably the most satisfying example is ducking just out of range of your opponent's grapple then stepping in and grappling them in return as they struggle to recover.



Learn to reverse grapples or you can expect some serious pain

You can use the venue's scenery to dish out the hurt

STUCK?

Are you hopelessly stuck? Tearing your hair out? Throwing your bling out of the pram? It's possible, even expected, that you will hit a brick wall at some point. For example, it took us ages to get past Trejo the first time! Check the following list and it should help you out of trouble...

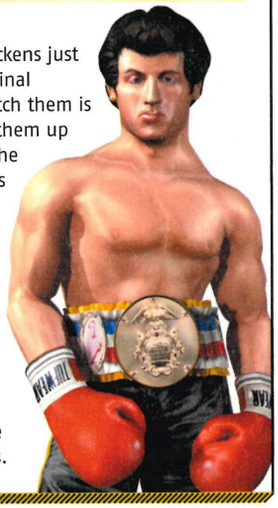
- Are you using the best strategy for your particular style?
- Have you scouted out your opponent's skills? Which particular stat is causing you the most trouble? Strength? Speed?
- Have you spent all your points on upgrades or new and more powerful Blazin' moves?
- Have you tried an easier fight in a different venue just to get more Development Points to maximise your power?
- Have you used every possible aspect of the environment to your advantage?
- Did you pay attention to the in-game tip displayed when you lost to the fighter and didn't ask for a rematch?

ROCKY LEGENDS

There are two mini-games for you to unlock in the shop. Check 'em out

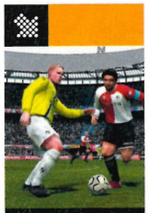
CHICKEN CHASE

Run around and catch chickens just like Rocky does in the original movie. The best way to catch them is to chase them and scoop them up when they're running in the same direction as you. This has no effect at all on the career path, but it's a right laugh.

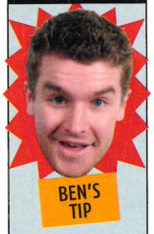


SURVIVOR MODE

Not too far removed from the survivor mode in *Tekken*. This mode is very good for building up your cash funds to unlock more boxers and more locations.



PRO EVO 4



BEN'S TIP

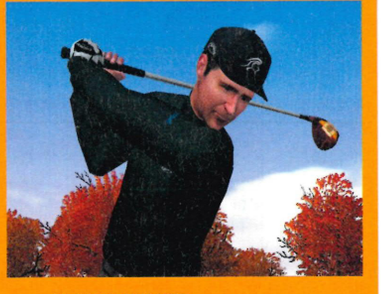
PERFECT CORNERS

Use someone like Becks (if you're taking from the left) or Roberto Carlos (from the right) who'll get a sharp kick into the box. Aim close to the line and, as you kick, hold up and towards the goal and take the bar to about 30-40%. Then, while the ball's moving, hold ⊗ and towards the goalmouth. The ball will probably hit a post, enabling you to pounce and score. That or it'll hit the goalie and go right in.

CHEAT OF THE MONTH

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005

The cream of all the courses is for the taking, you lucky cat



EXTRA COURSES

At the start of the game there are a generous 11 courses already unlocked and available to you, but there are even more for you to open up and get your swing around. Here's how to get them...

COURSE	HOW TO UNLOCK
Greek Isles	Earn $1,500,000
Paradise Cover	Earn $2,000,000
Emerald Dragon	Earn $1,000,000
Legend Compilation #1	Defeat Hogan in Legend Tour
Legend Compilation #2	Defeat Player in Legend Tour
Legend Compilation #3	Defeat Ballesteros in Legend Tour
Legend Compilation #4	Defeat Palmer in Legend Tour
Legend Compilation #5	Defeat Nicklaus in Legend Tour
Tiger's Dream 18	Defeat Woods in Legend Tour
The Hustler's Dream 18	Defeat The Hustler in Legend Tour
EA Sports Favourites	Earn $5,000,000
Mean8teen	Earn $10,000,000
Fantasy Specials	Earn $15,000,000

CHEATS UNLIMITED

A SIMPLE CALL AND YOU'VE GOT THE CHEAT

CHEATS & WALKTHROUGHS

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A = 01
Ace Combat 4: Shat. Skies
Age of Empires 2
Alias
Aliens vs Predator:Extinction
America's 10 Most Wanted
Arc the Lad:Twilight of Spirit
Army Men: Sarge's War
B = 02
Backyard Wrestling
Baldur's Gate: D. Alliance 2
Batman Vengeance
Battlestar Galactica
Beyond Good and Evil
Blade 2
BloodRayne
Broken Sword 3: S. Dragon
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Burnout
Burnout 3: Takedown
C = 03
Champions of Norrath
Clock Tower 3
Club Football
Club Football 2005*
Colin McRae Rally 4
Conflict Zone
Conflict: Desert Storm 2
Conflict: Vietnam
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
Crazy Taxi
D = 04
Dark Angel, J. Cameron's
Dark Cloud 2
Def Jam Vendetta
Def Jam: Fight for New York
Devil May Cry
Die Hard: Vendetta
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 2
DRIV3R
Dynasty Warriors 4
E = 05
Enter the Matrix
Escape from Monkey Island
Evil Dead: Fist. of Boomstick
F = 06
FIFA 2004
FIFA Football 2005
Fight Night 2004
Final Fantasy X
Final Fantasy X-2
Fire Warrior
Formula 1 2004
Freedom Fighters
Freestyle Metal X
G = 07
G1 Jockey
Getaway
Ghost Hunter
Ghost Master
Ghost Recon: Jungle Storm
Gran Turismo 3
Gran Turismo 4 Pro.Edition
Gran Turismo 4*
Grand Theft Auto 3
GTA: San Andreas*
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City
Gravity Games
Gregory Horror Show
H = 08
H.Potter & Chamber of Sec.
H.Potter & Philosopher's St.
H.Potter & Pris. of Azkaban
Headhunter
Headhunter: Redemption
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hitman 3: Contracts
Hoodlum Havoc
I = 09
Indiana Jones: Emp.'s Tomb
I-Ninja
J = 10
Jak 2: Renegade
Jak 3*
James Bond 007: Nightfire
James Bond: E. or Nothing
Jurassic Park: Op. Genesis
K = 11
Kill.switch
Kingdom Hearts
L = 12
Lara Croft: Ang.of Darkness
Largo Winch
Legacy of Kain: Defiance
Legaia: Duel Saga
LMA Manager 2003
LMA Manager 2004
LMA Manager 2005*
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Lord of the Rings: T. Towers
M = 13
Mafia
Man. United Manager 2005*
Manhunt
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2
Max Payne
Max Payne 2
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Metal Gear Solid 2
Miami Vice*
Midnight Club 2
Mission Impossible:O.Surma
Monkey Island, Escape from
Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.
N = 14
Naval Ops:Warship Gunner
Need for Speed Undergr'nd
O = 15
Onimusha 3: Demon Siege
P = 16
Prince of Persia: S. of Time
Pro Evolution Soccer 3
Pro Evolution Soccer 4*
Project Zero
R = 18
Ratchet and Clank
Ratchet and Clank 2
Ratchet and Clank 3*
Red Dead Revolver
Red Faction
Red Faction 2
Res. Evil: Code Veronica X
Resident Evil: Outbreak
Return to Castle Wolfenstein
Ricky Carmichael's MX 2002
Rise to Honor
Risk: Global Domination
Roadkill
Robot Wars
Rocky
Rocky Legends*
Rom. of Three Kingdoms 8
R-Type Final
Run Like Hell
S = 19
Scooby Doo: Night of 100 F.
Second Sight
Secret W. Over Normandy
Shadowman 2
Shellshock Nam '67
Showdown: L. of Wrestling
Shrek 2
Silent Hill 2
Silent Hill 3
Silent Hill 4: The Room
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Simpsons: Skateboarding
Sims
Sims: Bustin' Out
Smackdown! 3: Just Bring It
Smackdown! 5: H.C.T.Pain
Smugglers Run
SOCOM 2: US Navy Seals
SOCOM: US Navy Seals
Sonic Heroes
Soul Calibur 2
Soul Reaver 2
Sphinx & Cursed Mummy
Spider-Man: The Movie 2
Splinter Cell
Splinter Cell 2: Pandora T.
SSX 3
Star Wars: Battlefront
Star Wars: Jedi Starfighter
Starsky & Hutch
Starsky and Hutch 2*
Suffering
Summoner 2
Syphon Filter: Omega St.
T = 20
Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven
Terminator 3 R.of Machines
Terminator: Dawn of Fate
The Getaway
The Italian Job: L.A. Heist
The Sims
The Sims: Bustin Out
The Suffering
The Thing
Thirteen (XIII)
This is Football 2004
Tiger Woods Golf 2004
Tiger Woods Golf 2005
Time Splitters 2
TOCA Race Driver
TOCA Race Driver 2*
Tomb Raider: Angel of Dark.
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Tony Hawk's Underground
Tony Hawk's Undergr. 2*
Total Club Manager 2004
Transformers
True Crime: Streets of LA
V = 22
Van Helsing
Vice City, Grand Theft Auto
Viewtiful Joe
W = 23
Warhammer: Fire Warrior
Wolfenstein,Return to Castle
World Champ. Snooker '04
Worms 3D
WWE Smackdown v Raw*
WWE Smackdown! 5: HCTP
X = 24
X-Files: Resist or Serve
XIII (Thirteen)
X-Men 2: Wolverine's Rev.
X-Men Legends
Y = 25
Yu-Gi-Oh! D. of Roses
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surgery

Write to:
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OFFICIAL PS2 MAGAZINE,
FUTURE PUBLISHING,
30 MONMOUTH STREET,
BATH BA1 2BW

email:
ps2surgery@futurenet.co.uk

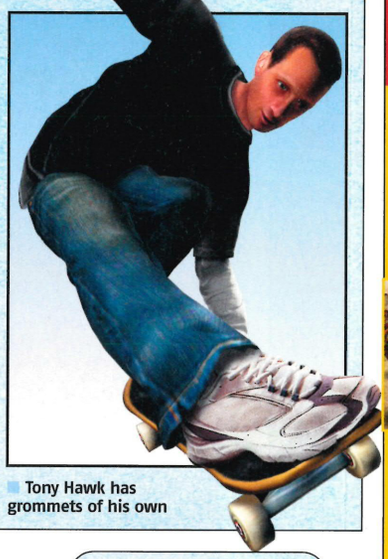
PROBING THE GAMING ORIFICE WITH COLD, STEEL INSTRUMENTS

DOCTOR'S ORDERS
Unfortunately, we can't reply in person to letters or emails, and cannot answer your questions over the phone

CASE ONE:

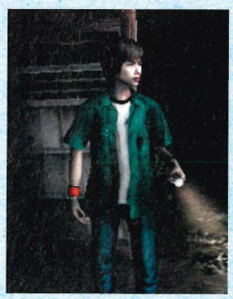
AMANDA PRICE, EMAIL
Patient: Help me Doctor. I need to find my grommet.
Doctor: Are you trying to get me struck off, woman? Find your own grommet.
Patient: No, I'm trying to do the last of Rune Gilfberg's Pro Specific Challenges in ***Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4.*** I'm being told to 'one-foot blunt the grommet on the water tower" but I have no idea what to do or where to do it.

Diagnosis: *The grommet in question is the sparky young lad on top of the water tower in Alcatraz. To complete the challenge you'll have to boneless up to him and then do a one-foot blunt on the board he's holding. Sick. In a good way.*



Tony Hawk has grommets of his own

CASE TWO:



Japanese children are innately scary

ANNIE LEMPREIRE, EMAIL
Patient: I need to find a way to fend off the Police.
Doctor: Get a bucket of soapy water and a sponge. Apparently Sting doesn't wash any more. He likes the smell of his own body.
Patient: No one will get that. Anyway, I'm stuck on the first level of ***Forbidden Siren.*** How do I escape from the policeman?

Diagnosis: *Hide from the cop in the metal shack. Inside you'll find the car keys. Watch through the window until the policeman turns away, then head out of the shack and turn right. Stick to the wall, using the metal crates for cover. You'll end up by a truck – get in and drive away. Job done.*

CASE THREE:

ANTHONY BEYNON, EMAIL
Patient: Help me. I keep turning into a hedgehog.
Doctor: You should keep your eyes on the road, mate, and try to stop making jerking movements with the steering wheel.
Patient: I'm having trouble on the Hang Castle level of ***Sonic Heroes.*** Once you pass along the second hidden path you get to a door and have to find a switch to open it, but I can't do it. Any ideas?

Diagnosis: *Once you've defeated the robots and the magician, fly to the next platform. Find the invisible path indicated by the torchlights. Travel along it and defeat the searchlight enemy at the end. The switch should now appear.*

BLUPA

Don't want to wait in line? Need a quick cheat fix? Then you need to go private...

FINAL DYNASTY
I want some cheats for *Dynasty Warriors 3*. And please could you give me something that actually works!
Alex Harwood, Email

Cure
Here's a cheat for an alternative ending. Go to 'options' in the main menu, then select 'opening edit'. Highlight 'replay' and hold R1, L1, R2 and L2 and press ⊗.

PSI DEVIL
Could you tell me some passcodes for *Psi-Ops*? Such as how to get all the powers?
Jimmy Munn, Rutland

Cure
In the main menu, highlight 'extra content' and press L2 to bring up a keypad. Then type in:

SUPER PSI
456456

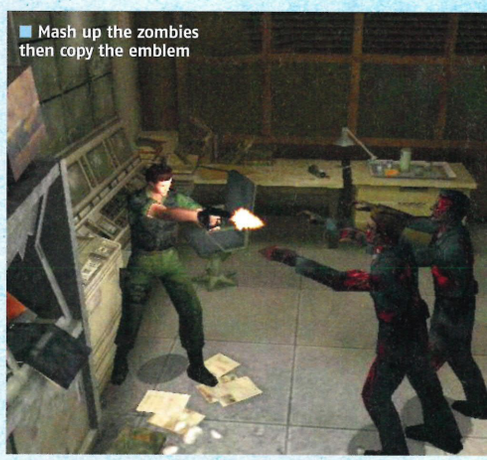
ALL POWERS FROM START
537893

BULLETPROOF
548975

UNLIMITED AMMO
978945

NO HEAD
987978

CASE FOUR:



Mash up the zombies then copy the emblem

AHSAAN RAZAQ
Patient: How do I get the Eagles?
Doctor: The Napoleonic wars were over long ago, son. Sharpe's still on TV every now and again though.
Patient: You sound desperate. What I mean is I've been playing ***Resident Evil Code: Veronica X*** for weeks, and I can't get out of Prison B1F. I've found the eagle thingy to open up the main gate but I can't take it with me because of the metal detector. Help me please!

Diagnosis: *You'll have to use the 3D replicator at the end of the passage with the detector. Put the Hawk Emblem inside and then go and find the material to replicate it. You'll need the TG-01 stuff, which you can find in the briefcase in the graveyard. Good luck.*

Home Remedies

QUACK: AMANDA PRICE
Red Dead Revolver. I've found a really handy way of lasting longer against your enemies. In the mine level, save the woman in the prison cell and then talk to her. Once you've finished talking to her, go back and talk to her again, and this time she'll sell you an 'increase your health max' for $1. Cheap as chips!

challenges

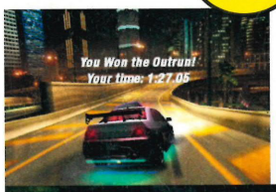
DON'T LET YOUR GAMES BULLY YOU INTO SUBMISSION... FIGHT BACK!

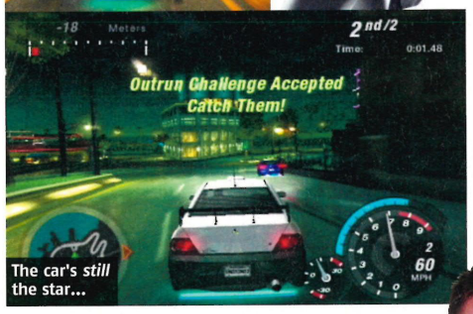
NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2

Don't be a loser, baby, hit the streets at speed...

ON THE DVD

NFSU2 is a game that causes some of us (Gentle, since you ask) to reminisce at length about nights spent cruising the country roads of Oxfordshire in a Nova, looking for 'chiefs' to race. But we just ignore his outbursts and concentrate on enjoying the excellent free-roaming action. To get in our challenge this month, get into an Outrun pursuit with one of the other drivers (shown as dark orange triangles on the map) and beat our best win time of 1:27.05. The five fastest will get their names in the mag and an *OPS2* T-shirt in the post. Get those engines running!





The car's *still* the star...

CHALLENGE
WHAT: Win an Outrun mode race in the fastest time possible
HOW: Take a picture of the screen showing your result
WHEN: By 1 December
WIN: The best five get an *OPS2* T-shirt

DEF JAM FIGHT FOR NEW YORK

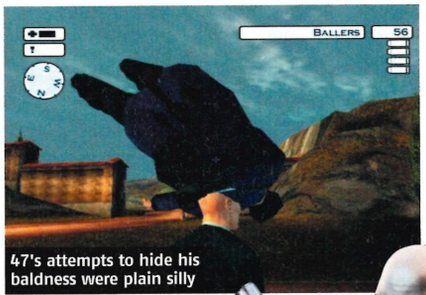
Listen up! It's bling to win...

There's massive opportunity in this rap-'n'-scrap title to create your own hip-hop-ified Frankenstein's monster. Get creative and piece together a fighter for us – then take a pic and send it to *OPS2 Def Jam* Challenge, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2NA. We can't wait to see the results.

CHALLENGE
WHAT: We want you to send us a picture of your best-looking created character
HOW: Just take a picture of your character from any point in the game
WHEN: By 1 December
WIN: Our favourite fighter will win an *OPS2* T-shirt

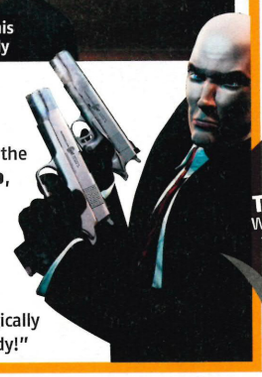
SNITCH THE GLITCH

Caught a bug? Take a picture and show us...



47's attempts to hide his baldness were plain silly

James Baker from Tarporley, has written to point out that: "In *Hitman 2* you can use the low-grav cheat (R2, L2, ↑, ↓, ⊗, L2, L3) on any level. Now drag a body around. If you swing them one way then the other, you'll see that the body magically spins through 47's body!"



THE FINISHER

TOCA RACE DRIVER 2

With more championships than we can remember, only true Finishers will win every race and become the world's best driver. Are you up to the challenge?

OPS2 TEAM CHALLENGES

GameTrak: Dark Wind

When Ben first played this he sweated so much he needed to shower and change... That's the sort of out-and-out dedication we want for our challenge. Play against any opponent and try to beat Gentle's fastest punch of 14mph.

Mortal Kombat: Deception

Surprisingly, we want you to use your grey matter for this one. Can you combine tactics with fighting skill to win a Kombat Chess match without losing more than two pieces?

Gradius

This game is tougher than tempered steel and about as old skool as it gets, so here's a test to match – imagine you're back in the Arcades, and finish the game using less than three credits to beat our record.

THE LIST

Your name here? It should be...

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005
Challenge Colin!

Neil Cheshire, Brixham	2:59.11
Will Shipton, Brixham	3:03.70
Jim Bainer, Oxford	3:08.21
Ian Orlingford, Birmingham	3:10.85
Bill Harnil, Dundee	3:10.90

NBA BALLERS
Did you bounce into our top five?

1. Andy Sufters, London	55,650pts
2. Harold Ferry, Liverpool	51,500pts
3. Tom Hancock, Cheltenham	50,250pts
4. Roy Banal, Milton Keynes	49,000pts
5. Federico Alud, Luton	41,250pts

GOAL OF THE MONTH

What with such a packed DVD this month, we've had no room for GOTM. So we'll take this chance to start our new season of goal fever with *Pro Evolution Soccer 4*.

Send your entires to the usual address (*PES4* goals only please).

Get your *PES4* boots on and start sending us your new screamers. As usual, every winner of Goal Of The Month gets a T-shirt and we'll be doing a proper prize for our favourite Goal Of The Season.

technical stuff

To video your goal, race or anything else, you'll need to set up your VHS between your PS2 and the telly, and then tune the video into the PS2's channel. Also, make sure your goal is at the start of the tape. And please note that we can't return your VHS tapes. Sorry.

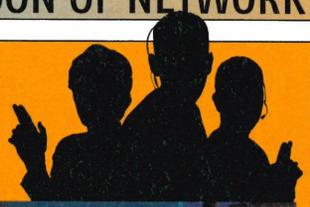
If you send in your memory card with a save on it, make sure you put your name on the memory card and include an SAE with it or we can't return it. All entries to: *OPS2* Challenges at the usual address. Full terms and conditions can be found on page 141.

playstation.co.uk

SPINNING A WARM AND WELCOMING COCOON OF NETWORK GAMING JOY

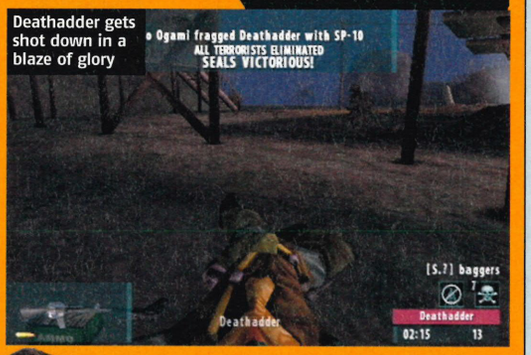
ONLINE DIARY

SHAPE UP YOUR ONLINE SKILLS OR SLIP OUT OF THE SERVER IN SHAME – *OPS2* AWAITS YOUR CHALLENGE

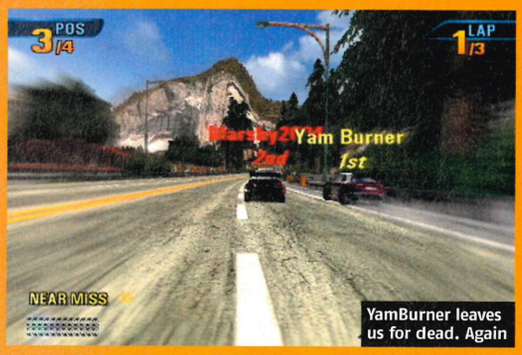


Burnout 3: Takedown

4pm We're online and loving it – apart from the fact that everyone has nicer cars than us. Ho hum.
4.15pm–4.35pm Come on people! The server is full of players like odiedodie, who'd rather trade their limp gaming boasts than race our wagon. Huff!
4.40pm In our last race we were 20secs behind the winner.
4.58pm Spying a comically-named server room, 'DRIV3R rules!', we jump in and have our first win over ClintPoppy2.
5.05pm Our next victory is over CloakKid – by five seconds.
5.25pm Battered, shattered and trailing sparks, we shuffle over the line, a full 28 seconds behind VeryFast89.
5.30pm–6pm Wheelalloy shows us the meaning of speed; Mackay05 shows us how to crash and Aambei9 gifts us a win.
***OPS2* burnt up:** Aambei9, Mackay05, CloakKid, ClintPoppy2
Took out *OPS2*: Aambei9, VeryFast89, Wheelalloy, YamBurner



Deathadder gets shot down in a blaze of glory



YamBurner leaves us for dead. Again

SOCOM II: US Navy SEALs

4pm–4.15pm Our first kill comes quickly. We spray bullets through Godskitchen as he reloads in vain. But further kills are denied by sharper shooters, like baggers.
4.30pm We're behind the enemy. Levelling our rifle we run towards the doorway they're standing in... and get iced by a mine laid by [C:K]jjs – who's on our team!
4.50pm After falling foul to another mine, we watch in awe as Deathadder takes on the opposition with a pistol. And wins.
5.20pm We switch servers. While oudja and orrich dance the 'strafe pirouette', we wait for the victor – and gun him down.
5.50pm It's us and SuperKat against the entire enemy team. It doesn't go well. We retreat from the web to lick our wounds.
***OPS2* capped:** oudja, [C:K]jjs, Godskitchen
Executed *OPS2*: xlittiebabex, baggers, Tx, |Sephiroth|

COME SEE US ONLINE

HAVE SOME!

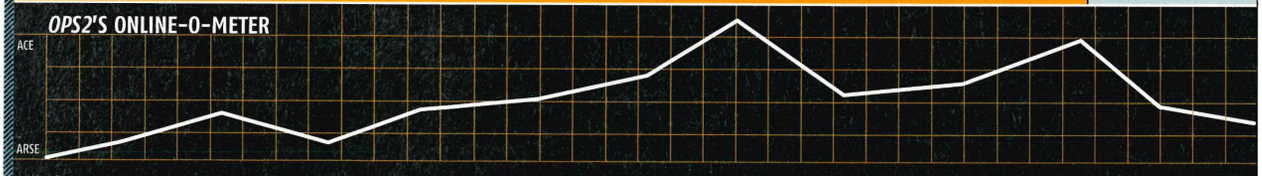
Burnout 3: Takedown
– 5 November
– 4.00–6.00pm

Splinter Cell 2: Pandora Tomorrow
– 12 November
– 4.00–6.00pm

Burnout 3: Takedown
– 19 November
– 4.00–6.00pm

Hardware: Online Arena
– 26 November
– 4.00–6.00pm

OPS2'S ONLINE-O-METER



We sit down to play *Burnout 3: Takedown* online, then realise that we've lost our game save and all the unlocked cars. Arse.

With only the basic compacts, we're no match for the network challenge. Beating after beating is served up. Very, very cold.

Hours of playing the game at home (it's a hard job, this) mean we're back on track with some awesomely fast rides. The next race is a cert.

Nothing compares to spinning your opponent out and watching as his car spirals out of control, with his pubescent voice echoing over the headset. Cruel? Us?

Unfortunately the racing has dulled our skills in *SOCOM II* and we're on the receiving end of a very heavy loss of life.

How do you get to Carnegie Hall? Practice, practice, practice. But we haven't got the patience, so it's more *Burnout 3* for us!

forum frolix

This month: Did *OPS2* actually do any work on the mag today?

bLiZZaRdZ: Nathan's nickname should be Nat The Prat, or NTP for short. What do you think?

NathanOPSM: Nice. I just wish I had a name as cool as bLiZZaRdZ. No, really.

emilythestrange: My sister fancies you. She cut out your photo eating cake in issue 50.

NathanOPSM: I can safely say that's never happened to me before.

Schmoke: Did any of you do any stuff in the mag today?

OPS2Tim: I wrote some news about the new shape PS2 and a game about fish. Not massively productive, but better than yesterday.

Ghost: I tell you what'd be sexier than Helen in a raincoat: A poster edition of *OPS2*.

Vasi: It's this kinda thing that gets into the mag...

We're on the forum every Wednesday between 5 and 6pm. See you there!

playstation.co.uk

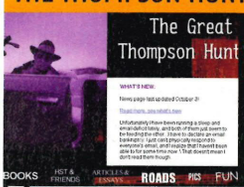
cool sites PANNING THE INTERNET FOR WEBSITE GOLD

VICELAND.COM

A rather wild, gonzo (read some Hunter S Thompson) take on all things in general. We particularly liked the deconstruction of Van Halen's *Hot For Teacher*.

www.viceland.com

THE THOMPSON HUNT



Actually, tell you what, check out this site dedicated to the inventor of the word 'gonzo'. It's got links to his books and articles, as well as tons of pictures.

www.gonzo.org

SCARFACE

The official site for the *Scarface* game. There's a bit of info and a link to a busy forum about the game. Think you know how it ought to be made? Get on here and tell someone.

www.scarfacegame.com

SHOW-OFF CORNER

Big up yourself
Name: Andy Thornton
Online Handle: roguetrooper
Location: Preston, Lancs
Favourite Network Game: SOCOM II
Likes: Haribo Tangfastic
Dislikes: Hype

[z] zeal

"Watch it, James.
She is one of the bad guys!"

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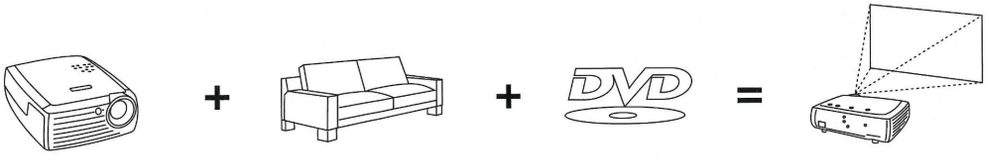

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charts

WHERE YOU SEE WHAT EVERYONE ELSE IS PLAYING

READ THE SPINE NOW!

LONDON IS *SO* OVER!

We want to know why your home town should be the setting for *The Getaway 3*

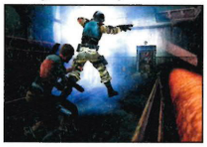
After two stonking adventures in London – or Lahhndon if you're in character – we think it might be time for *The Getaway* to get out of the capital and head into the rest of the UK. So to help Sony out we want you to nominate your home town/city/village/young offenders institute and then tell us why it would make a great setting for the next slice of *The Getaway*. We're looking for smart, witty and different answers than, say, "Glasgow, 'cos it's really big and there's lots of crime." That would be dull, and you wouldn't win. Best five get copies of *King Arthur* on DVD, starring the very lovely Keira Knightley. Send your entries to: 'Getahtavitgeezer', *OPS2*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Or ps2compo@futurenet.co.uk. Full terms and conditions on page 141. *King Arthur* is available on DVD and video from 29 November.

FORGET THE REVIEWS, IT'S GOT KEIRA IN IT!

Buena Vista Home Entertainment, Inc

"I KNOW"

The power of *Star Wars* takes the almost-great *Battlefront* to the top of the chart, possibly on the back of the DVD release of the original trilogy but also because it so nearly delivers what we've all been waiting for: the authentic *Star Wars* experience on your PS2. Nearly, but not quite.



NO, YOU *DO* WANT THIS GAME?

After a delayed release the excellent *Psi-Ops* breaks out and edges its way into the charts. Action, mind-tricks and lots of invention, we're hoping to see it levitate up the charts in the next few weeks – it certainly deserves to.

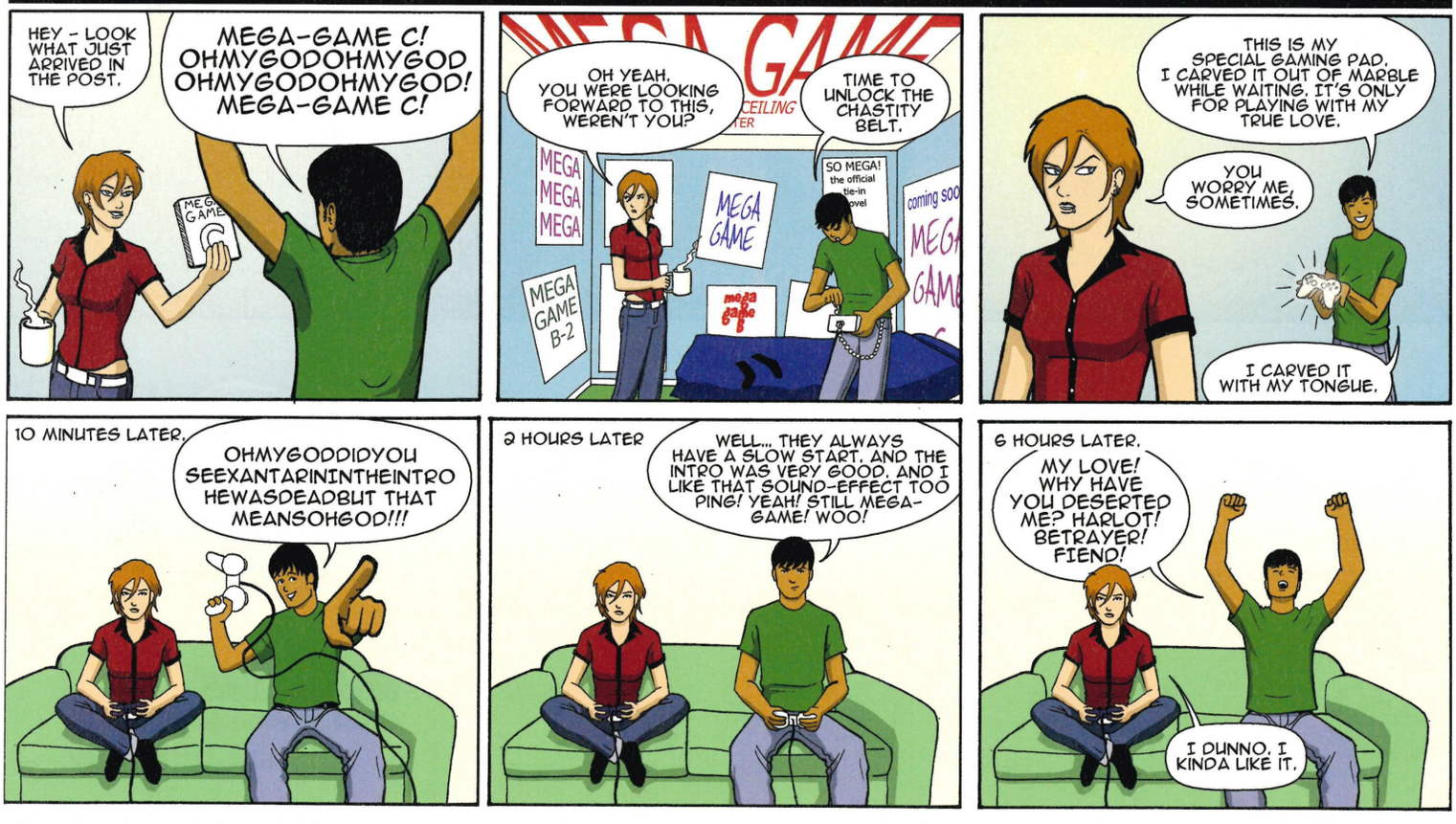
THE TOP 20

ChartTrack | ELSPA Entertainment and Leisure Software Publishers Association

	Game Name	Publisher	Score
1	STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT	LUCASARTS	7/10
2	BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN	EA	10/10
3	TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005	EA	8/10
4	RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK	CAPCOM	7/10
5	DEF JAM: FIGHT FOR NEW YORK	EA	8/10
6	COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005	CODEMASTERS	9/10
7	CONFLICT: VIETNAM	SCI	5/10
8	DRIV3R	ATARI	6/10
9	SPIDER-MAN 2	ACTIVISION	8/10
10	STAR OCEAN: TILL THE END OF TIME	UBISOFT	7/10
11	ROCKY LEGENDS	UBISOFT	8/10
12	SHELLSHOCK: NAM '67	EIDOS	8/10
13	THIS IS FOOTBALL 2005	SONY	6/10
14	SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM	KONAMI	7/10
15	ATHENS 2004	SONY	5/10
16	SONIC HEROES	SEGA	8/10
17	AMERICA'S 10 MOST WANTED	PLAY IT	–
18	PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY	MIDWAY	8/10
19	SHREK 2	ACTIVISION	6/10
20	HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN	EA	7/10

SAVE POINT TAKING THE LESS TRAVELLED ROUTE TO GAMING WISDOM

WORDS: KIERON GILLEN ART: JAMIE MCKELVIE



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Speed across various terrains in a high-powered rally car. Have you got what it takes to be Colin?

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KAMASUTRA S.E.

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The masterpiece which taught the world the art of lovemaking now comes to your mobile phone.

SEXY POKER 2004™

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DRIV3R™

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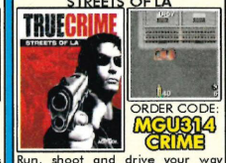
DRIV3R on your mobile! Play as Tanner on the city streets of Miami, Istanbul & Nice.

TRUE CRIME™ STREETS OF LA



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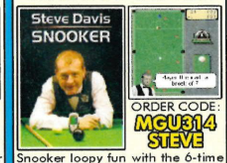
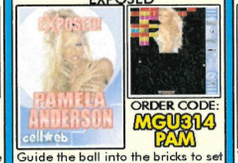
STEVE DAVIS SNOOKER



ORDER CODE: **MGU314 STEVE**

Snooker loopy fun with the 6-time world champ. Try to get the No.1 rank or just play Steve's trick shots.

PAMELA ANDERSON EXPOSED



ORDER CODE: **MGU314 PAM**

Guide the ball into the bricks to set Ms. Anderson free, then she'll give you some pictures of herself.

JORDAN UNCOVERED

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 JORDAN**

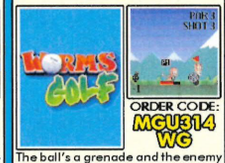
You'll have to work hard to see all of Jordan. Uncover the screen whilst avoiding the evil energy.

WORMS

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 WORMS**

Creepy crawly warfare comes to your mobile. Can you lead your squad of armed annelids to victory.

WORMS GOLF



ORDER CODE: **MGU314 WG**

The ball's a grenade and the enemy Worm's tied to the pin, get the ball in the hole to see what happens.

FOX SPORTS BOXING

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 BOXING**

Bob and weave, duck and move, float and sting. Can you become the World Heavyweight Champ?

SHARK HUNT

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 SHARK**

Hunt the five deadliest sharks on the planet. Select your bait, wait for a bite and then fight to reel it in.

SUMMER GAMES

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 GAMES**

A classic multi-event game with Hurdles, 100m, Long Jump, High Jump, Discus, Shot Put and Javelin.

BLOCK BREAKER DELUXE

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 BLOCK**

Destroy all the blocks through 30 levels of intense arcade action.

SOLITAIRE

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 SOL**

The cards are on the table, and it's up to you to take them all off again. Can you deal?

TOM CLANCY'S® SPLINTER CELL

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 SANDS**

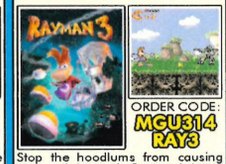
As Sam Fisher, you'll have to use all your skill to take down the terrorists, just don't get caught.

TOM CLANCY'S® SPLINTER CELL PANDORA TOMORROW

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 PAN**

A terrorist threat is looming over the world, so once again Sam Fisher is sent to do what no one else can!

RAYMAN® 3



ORDER CODE: **MGU314 RAY3**

Stop the hoodlums from causing too much havoc in Rayman's latest adventure.

ANNO 1503

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 ANNO**

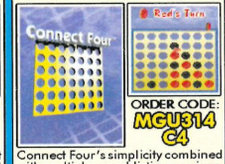
Enter the world of strategy hit Anno 1503. As pirate or explorer embark on the adventure of your life.

PUB DARTS

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 180**

Step up to the oche and test out your darts skills. Have you got what it takes to score 180?

CONNECT FOUR



ORDER CODE: **MGU314 C4**

Connect Four's simplicity combined with multiplayer addictiveness is an unmissable gaming experience.

CHESSMASTER™

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 CHESS**

Pit your wits against a devious opponent and see if you can become a grand master

PRINCE OF PERSIA: SANDS OF TIME

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 TOM**

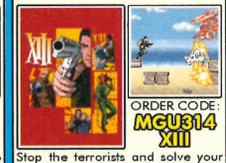
Control the movement of time and save the day in this update of the classic platform adventure.

PRINCE OF PERSIA® HAREM ADVENTURES

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 POP**

The classic platformer comes to your mobile. Battle your way past deadly traps and fiendish puzzles.

XIII



ORDER CODE: **MGU314 XIII**

Stop the terrorists and solve your own personal identity crisis, in this high action shooter.

SKATE & SLAM™

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 SK8**

Feeling a little board? Get this game on your mobile, and start busting some gnarly tricks

FRUIT MACHINE

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 SLOT**

An amazing fruit machine simulator giving you the thrill of gambling without losing your shirt.

ATARI® ASTEROIDS®

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 ASTER**

Supremely addictive retro action. Blast the rocks from your path with your triangular spaceship.

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THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 TOM**

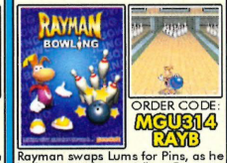
You're in Central Park, right in the middle of the climactic havoc. Try to survive until rescue teams arrive!

THE ITALIAN JOB

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 JOB**

Get in, get out and get even. Join Charlie and the rest of the gang in this Mini adventure.

RAYMAN® BOWLING



ORDER CODE: **MGU314 RAYB**

Rayman swaps Lums for Pins, as he looks to make a strike. Can you 'spare' him a hand?

CALL OF DUTY

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 COD**

Make your country proud by killing the enemy menace, in this exciting World War II game.

THE INFERNAL GATE

ORDER CODE: **MGU314 GATE**

25 levels of demonic terror and special effects are waiting for you in this ace 3D First Person Shooter.

SIBERIAN STRIKE™

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Get in the cockpit and place your hand firmly on the joystick, as you aim to rule the skies.

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PREDATOR

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You are a Predator and have the honour of being the first Predator sent to hunt the humans!

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Step into Lister's shoes and try to save Starbug from an onslaught of Simulant Smegheads.

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Based on the movie, the game is full of twists & turns in a fight to stop a robot from overthrowing mankind.

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YOU'VE READ THE REVIEW

The Getaway: Black Monday

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Just got a PS2? You'll need...

HOT 100

The 100 best PS2 games reviewed!

PLUS 12 amazing playable game demos!

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the hot 100

WANT THE BEST GAMES ON PS2? HERE'S THE ONLY LIST YOU NEED

THIS MONTH

It's that time of the year again. It's getting colder, the games are flowing like wine and it's time to clear out the cobwebs and welcome some fresh faces. First off we've four new scorchers to usher in, with *PES4*, *FIFA 2005*, *Madden 2005* and *TOCA Race Driver 2* all replacing their forebears. Then we've got a trio of new entries – *Def Jam Fight For New York* knocks out *WWE SmackDown! Here Comes The Pain*; *Viewtiful Joe* uppercuts *Chaos Legion* off the list; and *Obscure* axes *Headhunter*. Breathe in that new game freshness...

YOUR KEY TO THE TOP 100

GOLD
Reserved exclusively for games that scored the elusive 10/10

SILVER
Only awarded to games that scored a mighty 9/10

BRONZE
Lovingly given to games that scored an impressive 8/10

DVD#53
Want to try before you buy? Here's the issue where we ran a playable demo

ARMORED CORE 3
Mech madness that's bigger and better than previous outings.
REVIEWED *OPS2#36* / **OVERALL** 07

BEYOND GOOD & EVIL BRONZE
Not quite *Jak II* but still an engaging platformer.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#39**

BROKEN SWORD: THE SLEEPING DRAGON BRONZE
The classic point 'n' click adventure series gets a classy makeover.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08

BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN GOLD
Shockingly speedy and so gorgeous it'll move you to tears.
REVIEWED *OPS2#51* / **OVERALL** 10

CAPCOM VS SNK 2 BRONZE
Sublime 2D beat-'em-up from two arcade masters of yore.
REVIEWED *OPS2#15* / **OVERALL** 08

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005 SILVER
Looks great, and the new career mode makes for massive fun.
REVIEWED *OPS2#51* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#51**

COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE BRONZE
WW2 real-time strategy, with sublime attention to detail.
REVIEWED *OPS2#21* / **OVERALL** 08

CONFLICT: DESERT STORM II BRONZE
The sequel to the team tactics shooter, still battling in the '90s.
REVIEWED *OPS2#38* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#39**

DANCING STAGE MEGAMIX
Much like Michael Flatly, this is truly the lord of the dance(mats).
REVIEWED *OPS2#34* / **OVERALL** 07

DARK CHRONICLE SILVER
Gorgeous and engrossing role-player. A ray of PS2 sunshine.
REVIEWED *OPS2#35* / **OVERALL** 09

DEAD OR ALIVE 2
Blistering, buxom 3D beat-'em-up with an emphasis on tactics.
REVIEWED *OPS2#02* / **OVERALL** 07 / **DVD#06**

DEF JAM VENDETTA FIGHT FOR NEW YORK BRONZE
Gorgeous like Carmen Electra, must-have rap-scrap mayhem.
REVIEWED *OPS2#52* / **OVERALL** 08

DEUS EX SILVER
Multi-genre hybrid FPS that can still hold its head up high.
REVIEWED *OPS2#20* / **OVERALL** 09

DEVIL MAY CRY SILVER
Ultra-cool survival horror romp from master arcadester Capcom.
REVIEWED *OPS2#14* / **OVERALL** 09

DYNASTY WARRIORS 4 XTREME LEGENDS
Samurai strategy gaming, with the greatest depth and detail yet.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 07

EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES BRONZE
Beardy? Maybe. But beards are definitely 'in' this season.
REVIEWED *OPS2#39* / **OVERALL** 08

EYETOY: PLAY BRONZE
The future of PS2 gameplay? Like nothing you've ever seen.
REVIEWED *OPS2#36* / **OVERALL** 08

FIFA FOOTBALL 2005 BRONZE
More licences, tighter play and the brilliant new First Touch system.
REVIEWED *OPS2#52* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#42**

FINAL FANTASY X-2 SILVER
FF meets *Charlie's Angels* for a narcotic dose of the familiar RPG.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 09

FORBIDDEN SIREN SILVER
Hard as nails, scary as hell, stealth-based horror adventure.
REVIEWED *OPS2#44* / **OVERALL** 09

FREEDOM FIGHTERS SILVER
Tactical battling in Russkie New York. Insanely addictive.
REVIEWED *OPS2#37* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#38**

FREQUENCY BRONZE
Hypnotic rhythm-action game for gamers and clubbers alike.
REVIEWED *OPS2#21* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#21**

GITAROO MAN BRONZE
PaRappa meets Van Halen in this guitar-playing adventure.
REVIEWED *OPS2#21* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#22**

GRAND THEFT AUTO DOUBLE PACK GOLD
Two superb games in the same box for just £40!
REVIEWED *OPS2#41* / **OVERALL** 10

GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC SILVER
GT3 is the greatest driving game in the world. You need this.
REVIEWED *OPS2#09* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#05**

HALF-LIFE SILVER
The superb PC FPS arrives on PS2 in majestic form.
REVIEWED *OPS2#14* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#18**

HERDY GERDY BRONZE
Ultra-inventive and rewarding cartoon-herding 3D adventure.
REVIEWED *OPS2#18* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#18/#33**

HITMAN: CONTRACTS BRONZE
Deeper, darker and bigger than its predecessor.
REVIEWED *OPS2#46* / **OVERALL** 08

ICO SILVER
Beautiful, inventive... *Ico* is an adventure unlike any other.
REVIEWED *OPS2#18* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#19/#35**

I-NINJA BRONZE
Fun and frisky comedy cartoon kill-fest for kids and adults alike.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#43**

JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY SILVER
Great free-roaming platformer from the makers of *Crash*.
REVIEWED *OPS2#15* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#15/#35**

JAK II: RENEGADE SILVER
Jak returns; older, wiser and – crucially – better.
REVIEWED *OPS2#39* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#39**

JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING SILVER
Bond finally gets the game he deserves. SPECTRE-tacular stuff.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#40/#44**

KILL.SWITCH BRONZE
Superior shooter with relentless gunplay and neat use of cover.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#44**

KILLZONE SILVER
Visually amazing FPS that'll rock your game world every time.
REVIEWED *OPS2#51* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#52**

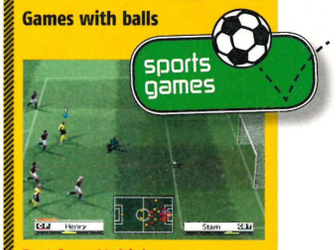
KINGDOM HEARTS BRONZE
Disney partners with Square for the ultra-cute RPG crossover.
REVIEWED *OPS2#27* / **OVERALL** 08

LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE BRONZE
The best instalment yet of this vampiric blood feast.
REVIEWED *OPS2#41* / **OVERALL** 08

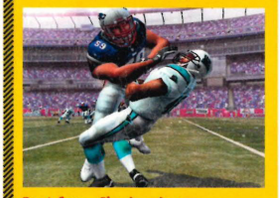
MADDEN NFL 2005 SILVER
Tactically solid and polished update to the minutely faithful series.
REVIEWED *OPS2#52* / **OVERALL** 09

GENRELY SPEAKING

Games with balls



Best for... Multiplayer
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4
Gather your friends, stick in the requisite amount of pads and kick off with the best footie game on PS2. Nothing beats the feeling of teaming up with a long term *PES* partner. You know their style, you can read their runs, even finish their sentences. Matches are rife with 'playful' mocking, foul-mouthed banter and barely restrained violence. Magic.



Best for... Single-player
MADDEN NFL 2004
There's a reason American Football appears incomprehensible at first glance – it's one of the most tactical games in the world. And although we have no interest in the sport itself, it makes for a great videogame – mixing tactics, action and face-busting violence into one amazingly slick and deep game.

Best for... Post-pub
SMASH COURT TENNIS PRO TOURNAMENT 2
You're the worse for wear, unable to tell ◎ from ⊡ and can't concentrate on anything too demanding. This is the answer. Especially enjoyable when a group of four team up for some doubles action, *Smash Court* is immediate and simple enough to be played through half-lidded red eyes. The perfect après-drink choice.

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MANHUNT — SILVER
A dirty, grisly, filthy but *brilliant* game experience.
REVIEWED *OPS2#42* / **OVERALL** 09

MASHED — SILVER
Got friends? Get the brilliant party racer *Mashed*. No excuses.
REVIEWED *OPS2#48* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#48 / DVD#49**

MAXIMO VS ARMY OF ZIN — BRONZE
A welcome second helping of sword-wielding platform antics.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#43**

MAX PAYNE — SILVER
Noirish third-person shooter, boasting *Matrix*-style bullet time.
REVIEWED *OPS2#18* / **OVERALL** 07

MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE — SILVER
War at its most raw in this brilliantly executed first-person shooter.
REVIEWED *OPS2#21* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#21**

MEDAL OF HONOR: RISING SUN — SILVER
Since when was war allowed to be this much fun?
REVIEWED *OPS2#39* / **OVERALL** 09

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY — GOLD
A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage stealth-a-thon.
REVIEWED *OPS2#17* / **OVERALL** 10 / **DVD#17/#37**

MIDNIGHT CLUB II — BRONZE
Gorgeous street racer gets a turbo boost from online gameplay.
REVIEWED *OPS2#34* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#29**

MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE — BRONZE
Brutal and bloody martial arts action with a stylish edge.
REVIEWED *OPS2#29* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#30**

MOTO GP3 — BRONZE
Quality racer with plenty of depth. On yer bike, my son.
REVIEWED *OPS2#33* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#33**

MUSIC 3000 — SILVER
A virtual recording studio for £30? Can anyone say no to that?
REVIEWED *OPS2#33* / **OVERALL** 09

NBA BALLERS — BRONZE
At last, a b-ball game that combines playing and bein' a playa.
REVIEWED *OPS2#50* / **OVERALL** 08

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND — SILVER
The new 'fastest' racer on PS2 claims its crown.
REVIEWED *OPS2#41* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#40**

NHL 2004 — BRONZE
Men who skate and wear thigh pads. Decent game though.
REVIEWED *OPS2#38* / **OVERALL** 08

OBSCURE
Entry into this school of survival horror won't disappoint chillseekers.
REVIEWED *OPS2#52* / **OVERALL** 07

ONIMUSHA 3 — SILVER
Saving the best till last, this is near faultless adventure gaming.
REVIEWED *OPS2#48* / **OVERALL** 09

PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2
Top rhythm action that's become a bit of a cult hit.
REVIEWED *OPS2#17* / **OVERALL** 07 / **DVD#17**

PRIMAL — BRONZE
Deep, dark, fantasy adventure with one girl and her gargoyle.
REVIEWED *OPS2#30* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#30/#33**

PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME — BRONZE
Glittering, exotic and superbly acrobatic. Pity about the camera.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#39**

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4 — GOLD
Endorsed by God and played by all. The cream of footie gaming.
REVIEWED *OPS2#52* / **OVERALL** 10

PROJECT ZERO — BRONZE
Genuinely disturbing survival horror, dripping with menace.
REVIEWED *OPS2#24* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#23**

RAINBOW SIX 3 — BRONZE
Squad-based shooter with a realistic edge and online missions.
REVIEWED *OPS2#45* / **OVERALL** 08

RATCHET & CLANK: LOCKED AND LOADED — BRONZE
Lacking the surprise of the original, this is still huge and witty.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#40**

RED DEAD REVOLVER — SILVER
Wild West shooter that's like a cool breeze in Death Valley. Yeehaw!
REVIEWED *OPS2#47* / **OVERALL** 09

RED FACTION II — BRONZE
More anti-authority action but this time it's set on Earth.
REVIEWED *OPS2#27* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#26**

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X — SILVER
Curious about all this survival horror lark? Then play this classic.
REVIEWED *OPS2#10* / **OVERALL** 09

ROCKY — BRONZE
Boxing sim, faithfully based on the Italian Stallion's career.
REVIEWED *OPS2#27* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#29**

SECOND SIGHT — BRONZE
Slick thriller touched with psychic powers from the *'Splitters* boys.
REVIEWED *OPS2#50* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#50**

SHELLSHOCK: NAM '67
Loud, lethal and brutally vivid shooter offering brilliant action.
REVIEWED *OPS2#49* / **OVERALL** 07

SILENT HILL 3 — SILVER
Wet-the-bed scary survival horror. We dare you to play it.
REVIEWED *OPS2#33* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#34**

SINGSTAR — SILVER
Addictive singing party game that's as accessible as it is fun.
REVIEWED *OPS2#46* / **OVERALL** 09

SMASH COURT PRO TENNIS TOURNAMENT 2 — BRONZE
A new career mode makes the top tennis seed even better.
REVIEWED *OPS2#47* / **OVERALL** 08

SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS — BRONZE
Move in for the commander-in-chief of online tactical shooters.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 08

SONIC HEROES — BRONZE
Old skool platforming, but blistering fast and beautifully done.
REVIEWED *OPS2#44* / **OVERALL** 08

SOUL CALIBUR II — GOLD
A tale of swords and souls. Officially the best fighting game. Ever.
REVIEWED *OPS2#37* / **OVERALL** 10 / **DVD#38/#42**

SPIDER-MAN 2 — BRONZE
Free-roaming, superhero adventure fun with loads to see and do.
REVIEWED *OPS2#49* / **OVERALL** 08

SPLINTER CELL — SILVER
Superior stealth action. Could possibly even smoke out Snake.
REVIEWED *OPS2#32* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#37**

SSX 3 — SILVER
Super-long, fast races make this an essential PS2 purchase.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#43**

STARSKY & HUTCH
One shoots. One drives. Grab a mate and bust baddies '70s style.
REVIEWED *OPS2#36* / **OVERALL** 07 / **DVD#36/#42**

STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER — BRONZE
Sequel to the LucasArts 3D shooter with a few new tricks.
REVIEWED *OPS2#19* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#21**

STUNTMAN — BRONZE
Car-flipping, bus-skidding, bike-crashing addictive mayhem.
REVIEWED *OPS2#23* / **OVERALL** 08/ **DVD#23**

SWAT: GLOBAL STRIKE TEAM — BRONZE
Rock-hard, noisy FPS that dispenses justice the American way.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08

SYPHON FILTER: THE OMEGA STRAIN — BRONZE
Supremely playable tactical shooter both off and online.
REVIEWED *OPS2#47* / **OVERALL** 08

TEKKEN 4
A great but ambitious addition to the beat-'em-up series.
REVIEWED *OPS2#25* / **OVERALL** 07 / **DVD#26/#36**

TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN — BRONZE
Fine ninja-flavoured stealth-'em-up set in ye olde Japan.
REVIEWED *OPS2#31* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#32**

THE GETAWAY — SILVER
Mockney mayhem that manages to live up to the hype. Geezer.
REVIEWED *OPS2#28* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#28**

TLOTR: THE RETURN OF THE KING — BRONZE
Well-crafted version of the film, huge battles and great extras.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08

THE MARK OF KRI
Fantasy adventure with a big barbarian and his raven sidekick.
REVIEWED *OPS2#31* / **OVERALL** 07 / **DVD#31**

THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT — BRONZE
The sims grow up and learn how to party.
REVIEWED *OPS2#41* / **OVERALL** 08

THE THING — SILVER
Top-class survival horror meets John Carpenter's ET nasty. Ace.
REVIEWED *OPS2#25* / **OVERALL** 09

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005 — ON THE DVD — SILVER
Go clubbing with the Tiger that's far from extinct.
REVIEWED *OPS2#51* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#53**

TIME CRISIS II — BRONZE
Namco's arcade lightgun game gets a graphical polish for PS2.
REVIEWED *OPS2#13* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#13**

TIMESPLITTERS 2 — GOLD
As vital to PS2 as your central nervous system is to your brain.
REVIEWED *OPS2#25* / **OVERALL** 10 / **DVD#25/#31**

TOCA RACE DRIVER 2 — ON THE DVD — BRONZE
Plot-driven racer that handles beautifully and looks great.
REVIEWED *OPS2#52* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#53**

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND — SILVER
Taking skating seriously skyward. Brilliant and addictive.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 09

VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 — BRONZE
Complex yet fast-moving beat-'em-up that rewards the patient.
REVIEWED *OPS2#19* / **OVERALL** 08

VIEWTIFUL JOE — BRONZE
Cartoon caper that'll shred your thumbs but keep you coming back.
REVIEWED *OPS2#52* / **OVERALL** 08

VIRTUA TENNIS 2 — BRONZE
Smooth, slick and the best tennis sim for your PS2.
REVIEWED *OPS2#28* / **OVERALL** 08

WAR OF THE MONSTERS — BRONZE
Monster-themed homage to '50s B-movies.
REVIEWED *OPS2#32* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#31**

WRC 3 — SILVER
Mud-crusted thrills and spills challenge *Colin* again.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#42**

XIII — BRONZE
Gorgeous PS2 version of the comic-book hero. Play this now.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#42**

ZONE OF THE ENDERS: THE 2ND RUNNER — BRONZE
The strikingly impressive robo scrapper returns. Awesome.
REVIEWED *OPS2#38* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#38** □

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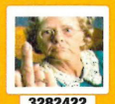
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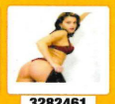
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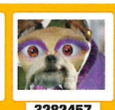
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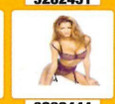
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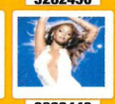
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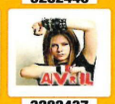

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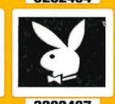
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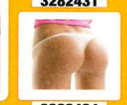
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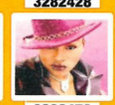
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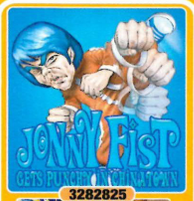

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This fantastic new beat em up is set to blow away all others! fight an army of evil enemies and become the master

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stevie wonder tt	3282142	joey friends tt	3282154
simon cowell vm	3282143	happy birthday tt	3282155
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richard and judy vm	3282145	frodo and gollum tt	3282157
oasis tt	3282146	bullseye tt	3282158
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520/4352

comedown

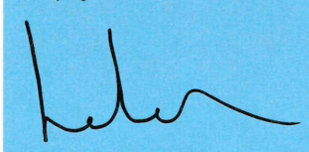
BACK FROM THE GAMING COALFACE AND SOAKING AWAY IN THE TUB

WELCOME TO COMEDOWN

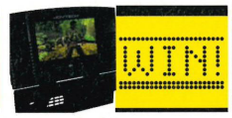
Gently massaging your brain's relaxation nodes 'til you dribble

I'm not sure if you know this but I've won awards for my filthy looks. Not *that* kind of filthy (although if there were awards for those I reckon I'd be in medal contention). No, I'm talking about the busy production editor's weapon of choice, the withering stare. The kind of face-projected malice that can freeze a stroppy reviews editor in his tracks and reduce flim-flamming games PRs to tears at 150 paces.

I'm telling you this because my filthy look got a work out recently when Rich asked, "How can you be stressed? You're in charge of the most relaxing and seductively laid-back part of the mag." Doesn't he realise the work that goes into gathering together the very best DVD and music reviews? Does he think it's easy organising the best competitions this side of forever? It's a labour of love, for sure, but child's play it ain't. Then again, perhaps Rich has a point. When the dust settles, there's nowhere else I'd rather be than Comedown. I hope you feel the same...



Helen Prior,
Production editor



■ "I just put my hand like this and stuff shoots out, and it sticks to stuff... What's not to get, love?

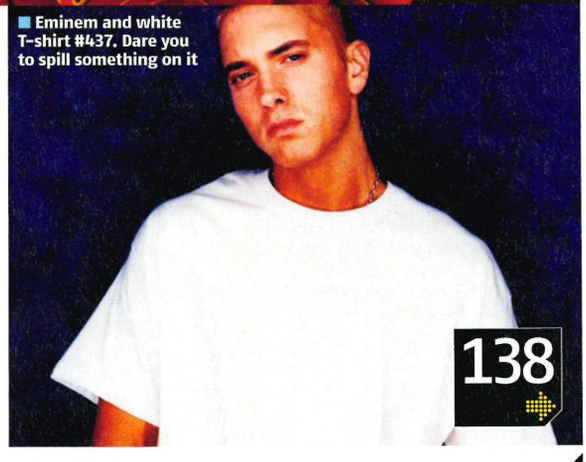
136 **DVD REVIEWS**
Over the page: A man of Spider, a six-foot elf, Brad Pitt in a leather skirt and a breakout from Azkaban

138 **MUSIC REVIEWS**
Special delivery ear parcels from Eminem, The Manics, Britney Spears and The Donnas

140 **INCOMING**
If you don't acknowledge the conveyor belt of gaming approachment it'll grind to halt. Hurry!

141 **WIN A DAY OF COMBAT!**
Where else could you win a day cowering in a foxhole with twitchy eyed ex-SAS instructors?

142 ***OPS2* INVESTIGATES**
We send Sir Nathan of 'Why Me?' off to a *Lord Of The Rings* convention. He still hasn't returned...



■ Eminem and white T-shirt #437. Dare you to spill something on it

SPIDER-MAN 2

THE WEB-SLINGER SWINGS AGAIN, THIS TIME WITH FEELING

DIRECTOR
Sam Raimi
STARRING
Tobey Maguire, Kirsten Dunst, James Franco, Alfred Molina, Rosemary Harris, JK Simmons
DISTRIBUTOR
Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment
OUT
26 November
PRICE
£24.99
EXTRAS
Trailers, previews, *Woman In Spider-Man* featurette, bloopers, quiz, commentaries.

FILM: It's rare that you come across a movie franchise as blatantly set up to be a franchise as *Spider-Man*. The summer 2002 box office moneyspinner spent so much of its multi-million dollar running time setting up the web-slinger's genesis, there was no way a sequel wasn't in the offing. In fact, they started on this one before the celluloid was dry on its predecessor – but here's the rub: it's actually good.

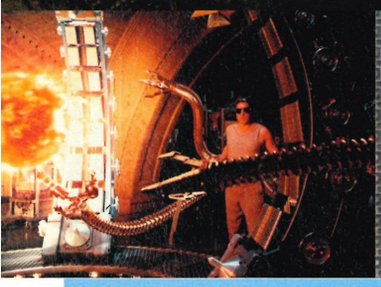
Two years after he became a mutant spider version of himself, Peter Parker (Tobey Maguire) is – of course – at university and working as a pizza delivery boy. That and hiding his arachnid-superpowered crimefighting ways. And still being in love with Kirsten Dunst's Mary Jane, whose acting career is going great guns – and who has a new man in tow.

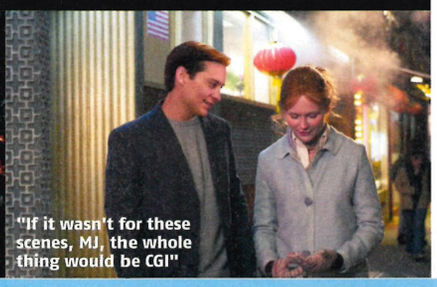
And so when a new ubervillain arises in the guise of Alfred Molina's metal-tentacled Dr Ock, the result of a 'good' experiment gone wrong, Spidey is once again thrust into the forefront, fighting his inner demons alongside the evildoers, saving Mary Jane from harm and trying not to let his secret identity be discovered, all culminating in a genuinely thrilling battle through Manhattan's high-rise cityscape. **8/10**

All culminating in a genuinely thrilling battle through Manhattan's high-rise cityscape

EXTRAS: Bloopers, commentaries, trivia quiz, online featurettes, trailer, previews, Peter Parker overview, Dr Ock overview, *Women In Spider-Man* featurette, tech look at action sequence, gallery, Easter Egg, web link. **8/10**

VERDICT: Director Sam Raimi has clearly understood that Spider-Man's appeal lies as much with his emotional struggles as with his physical ones, and as comic-book adaptations go, this is probably the best ever. Spidey number three is already in the pipeline. ■ **JD**





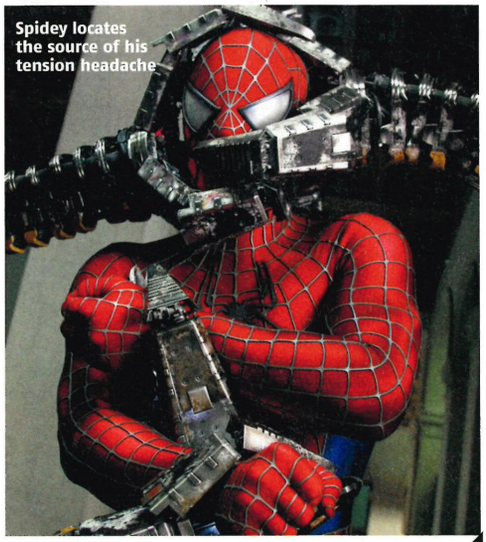
"If it wasn't for these scenes, MJ, the whole thing would be CGI"

SUPERHEROES HAVE FEELINGS TOO

Spider-Man's throbbing emotional core laid bare

This is a prime example of what to use DVD for. *A Hero In Crisis: A Look At Peter Parker's Personal Battles* not only fleshes out what is a genuinely complex and conflicted character, it also presents the audience with a sense of why *Spider-Man 2* was scripted in the way it was. But the thing is: if Kirsten Dunst was your secret crush – and you'd kissed her, ferchrissakes – you'd have 'issues' too, no?

The calamari salad disagreed with Doc Ock something rotten



Spidey locates the source of his tension headache

Starving, the troops started eating their shields for nourishment

TROY

SKIRTING AROUND ISSUES IN ANCIENT GREECE

DIRECTOR
Wolfgang Petersen
STARRING
Orlando Bloom, Diane Kruger, Brad Pitt, Eric Bana, Julie Christie
DISTRIBUTOR
Warner Bros
OUT
Now
PRICE
£22.99

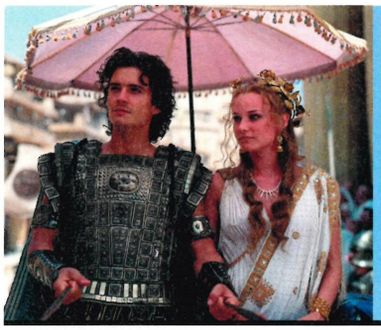
FILM: As literary adaptations go, choosing to recreate Homer's Illiad on Hollywood's terms must rank up there with taking the Arsenal model and applying it to your five-a-side team. But with *Gladiator* grossing almost half a billion dollars, the testosterone-heavy historical epic has a fine recent pedigree.

Paris (Orlando Bloom) heads to Sparta with his brother Hector (Eric Bana) on a peace mission from their father King Priam Of Troy. Unfortunately, Paris falls for the king's wife, Helen (Diane Kruger) and the two slope off. King Menelaus does not take this in his stride and recruits his brother, Agamemnon, to wage war on Troy. And he comes hard – with a huge army and the ultimate warrior, Achilles (Brad Pitt), in tow.

Achilles' mum, Thetis (Julie Christie) wisely counsels him that he won't return from battle this time, and so after his love interest is swiped by Agamemnon, he stands idly by as the Greeks' first assault fails. But when his young cousin is butchered by Hector, he finally grows a pair and steps onto the bloody battlefield. **6/10**

EXTRAS: Battle featurette, Archaeological History Of Troy featurette, Effects featurette, trailer, Easter Egg. **5/10**

VERDICT: Russell Crowe made *Gladiator*. Sadly, no one character fills in that central role here and as a result the film never comes to life – even given the obviously epic battle scenes. Okay, so the ladies can see any number of pretty boys sporting skirts, but bear this in mind: Pitt was insistent he would not wear open-toed sandals as he has 'ugly feet'. Can you really see that washing in Sparta? ■ **JD**



BACK TO THE OLD SKOOL

Troy brings DVD buyers back down to Earth

Frankly, the DVD extras for *Troy* are dull. Largely, it must be said, because the subject matter is so worthy and there are too many principal actors, none of whom are renowned for taking themselves anything less than seriously. As for the archaeological dig feature – all very well at 5am on *Open University* if the disco biscuits are firing on all cylinders, but would you really pay good money for this stuff?

THE COOLER

Director *Wayne Kramer* / Starring *William H Macy, Alec Baldwin, Maria Bello* / Distributor *Tartan Video* / Out *Now* / Price *£19.99*

FILM: Bernie Lootz is an unlucky man. So unlucky that he's employed at an old-skool Las Vegas casino as a cooler – the person introduced into a winning environment to slow a gambler on a hot streak. But Bernie is almost out – he's paying off a longstanding gambling debt to manager Shelley. Then Natalie comes into his life, and with her comes love and that elusive partner, Lady Luck. Which can surely spell no good, especially as the casino's under threat of reinvention as a 21st Century gambling mall. **7/10**

EXTRAS: Director-cinematographer-composer commentary. **3/10**

VERDICT: *The Cooler* is a laudably low-key look at a life of vice. More love story than gangster flick, the characters are all too real, if left a little underdeveloped due to a surfeit of sub-plots presumably introduced to up the pace. ■ **KK**

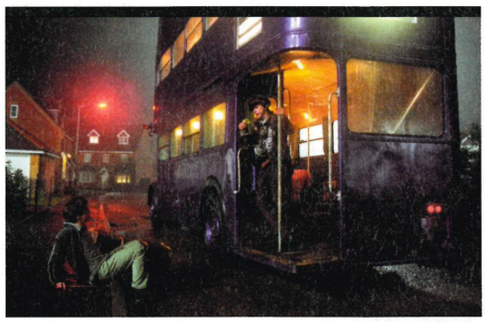
ELF

Director *Jon Favreau* / Starring *Will Ferrell, James Caan, Bob Newhart* / Distributor *Entertainment In Video* / Out *8 November* / Price *£19.99*

FILM: Buddy was given up for adoption by his parents. A chance encounter with Santa saw him off to the North Pole and raised by one of the Big Guy's toymaking elves. And all was well, until he started growing. He soon reaches six-foot, and it becomes clear that he has to move on. So he returns to New York to trace his natural father, a crotchety man with no time for his wife or new son – or for a stranger clad in a funny hat. But it's Christmas and everyone can change. Can't they? **6/10**

EXTRAS: Commentaries, fact track, deleted scenes, Christmas featurette, behind-the-scenes footage, kids' film school featurette, Elf Jukebox and more. **7/10**

VERDICT: While not a patch on the forthcoming *Bad Santa*, this is suitably amusing and surprisingly touching fare. ■ **JD**



HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN

Director *Alfonso Cuaron* / Starring *Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint* / Distributor *Warner Home Video* / Out *19 November* / Price *£24.99*

FILM: Harry Potter is getting older and this instalment of the wizard's tale is infused with some much-needed substance – not to mention darkness and fear. Running back to school after a dramatic incident with his Aunt Marge, Harry finds out that his parents' murderer has escaped from Azkaban prison and he is probably his primary target. **7/10**

EXTRAS: Previously unseen footage, tour through Defence Against Dark Arts classroom, the making of key scenes, gallery, animal trainers interviews, cast interviews, trailers and more. **7/10**

VERDICT: Alfonso Cuaron (director of Mexican breakout coming-of-age film *Y Tu Mama Tambien*) was perhaps a surprise choice for this project, but his vision has breathed much-needed new life into the Harry Potter story. ■ **RK**

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coming soon REGIONS 1+2

KING ARTHUR hits North America from 7 December, starring Clive Owen and Keira Knightley. One question: how, oh how has Keira cracked Hollywood? Discuss... ***HERO,*** *(30 November) on the other hand, needs no introduction in the US – this tale of a Chinese assassin was the first Asian film to top the box office charts...* Jason Bourne returns in ***THE BOURNE SUPREMACY*** (7 December). This time Jason sees his attempts to leave his murderous past behind wiped out when he's tracked to India by a hitman... *In region one we've got just the tonic to allay those dreams of summer holiday bliss,* ***OPEN WATER*** *(27 December) is the tale of a couple left stranded in the middle of the ocean...* But then comes a trip through South America on a vintage motorcycle, as undertaken by Che Guevara and friend Alberto Granado in ***THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES*** *(27 December).*

"Neo. I have absolutely no idea what we're doing"

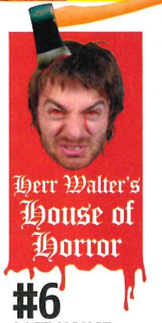
THE ULTIMATE MATRIX COLLECTION

Directors *The Wachowski Brothers* / Starring *Keanu Reeves, Carrie-Anne Moss* / Distributor *Warner Home Video* / Out *6 December* / Price *£59.99*

FILM: *The Matrix* has to rank as one of the most exciting cinematic happenings of the past decade. It's fiendishly clever, genuinely cool and damned exciting to boot. You know the story: Neo is humanity's last hope against the onslaught of the machines. He and others plug into *The Matrix* – an 'alternative reality' powered by human batteries living a waking dream – in a bid to find the system's weak point. **9/10**

EXTRAS: This baby is ten discs thick. You do the math. The shops say: "Stuffed full of everything *Matrix* you could ever want to know and see." Sadly does not contain the key to Monica Bellucci's heart. **9/10**

VERDICT: *The Matrix* is flat genius. So the latter two instalments had the seductive rough edges of the first polished out, but the sheer density and rigorous logic of the script can only be admired. ■ **JD**



#6 LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT

The first of the true 'video nasties', known affectionately as the Big 60, banned in 1984 by the BBFC for obscenity. In fact this is Wes '*Scream*' Craven's first horror film, a disturbing low-budget revenge shocker. Now unbanned you can finally see where the money to make *Nightmare On Elm St* came from. Sequel count: 0

tv... quick! TV in your TV but this time from your DVD

SEINFELD: SERIES 1, 2 AND 3 BOXSET

Starring *Jerry Seinfeld, Julia Louise-Dreyfus, Michael Richards*

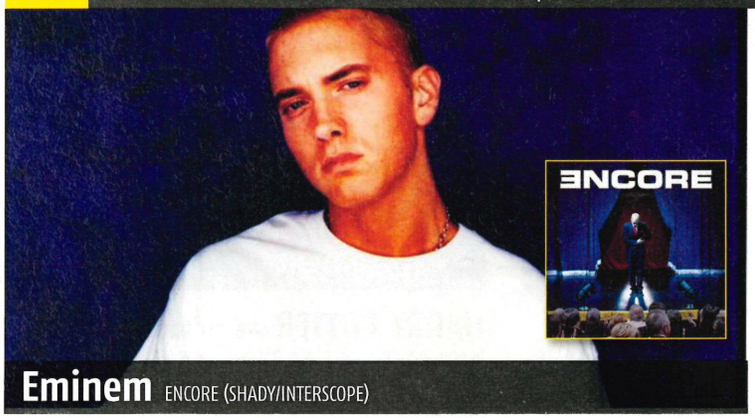
Jerry, George, Kramer – Kramer! – and Elaine revolutionised the situation comedy genre and this is your chance to revel in 'the show about nothing' for nigh on 15 hours.

This boxset contains 39 episodes, and because of the scope of what's on offer in each episode, frankly it would be churlish to draw a single one out as comment worthy. Suffice it to say that the lives of a New York stand-up, a guy who 'works for the Yankees', a woman who 'does fashion' and, well, Kramer, are worth every last second of your precious time. Raw, hilarious, painfully well observed and all-too-human genius. With 'lost footage' too. Hooray!

CHANNEL HOPPING

Get yourself a big slice of classic Brit humour on 8 November, as ***RED DWARF SERIES FIVE*** gets stuffed into a DVD boxset... If time-travel is more your thing, catch ***THE COMPLETE SEASON 1 QUANTUM LEAP*** boxset out on the very same day... Otherwise, if you'd like to see David 'Bill' Carradine fighting the good fight, watch out for the ***KUNG FU – SEASON 2 BOXSET,*** again hitting a shelf near you on 8 November.

music LIKE A LISTENING POST, BUT WITH US DOING THE LISTENING BIT



Eminem ENCORE (SHADY/INTERSCOPE)

WHO? Are you serious? Only the biggest, baddest celebrity rapper on the planet, back to trigger off another six dozen lawsuits and cuss his mum.

HIGHLIGHTS: The explosive *Mosh*, a vitriolic rock-rap assault on the Bush Administration that proves Marshall Mathers ain't afraid to pin his colours to the radio mast. The title track, with a little help from Dr Dre and 50 Cent is another winner.

LOWLIGHTS: On first listen, lead single *Just Lose It* – a relentlessly childish assault on Michael Jackson – sounds a little like a cheap remake of *Without Me*. But fear not, it's a grower.

VERDICT: Slim Shady's ability to shock might have diminished since the days of *My Name Is*, but he remains one of the most devious and talented rappers hip-hop has to offer. Long may his show continue. **9/10**

MANIC STREET PREACHERS

LIFEBLOOD
(Sony)

WHO? Faintly ludicrous Marxist rockers with a taste for the epic.

HIGHLIGHTS: Tracks like *Empty Souls* and *Cardiff Afterlife* reveal some of the Manics' most affecting songs yet.

LOWLIGHTS: *The Love Of Richard Nixon* never improves on its title.

VERDICT: Proof that even in this older, wiser incarnation, the Manics rock out with a certain grace and aplomb. **8/10**

BRITNEY SPEARS

GREATEST HITS: MY PREROGATIVE
(Jive)

WHO? Troubled pop princess releases a Best Of... that charts her career from virgin to scantily-clad woman.

HIGHLIGHTS: The sizzling *I'm A Slave 4 U* and *Baby One More Time*.

LOWLIGHTS: *My Prerogative*, which she seems to find a bit of a mouthful.

VERDICT: She might be muckier than Colin McRae's mud-flaps, but Britney's pop career remains something of a clean sheet. Well done that girl. **8/10**

THE DONNAS

GOLD MEDAL
(Atlantic)

WHO? Feisty, Californian girl punks, from the wrong side of the tracks and proud of it. Like, how can you resist?

HIGHLIGHTS: *I Don't Want To Know (If You Don't Want Me)*, a mix of punk snarl and runny-eyeliner heartbreak.

LOWLIGHTS: The Donnas have hit on a formula. It's dumb, and it rocks.

VERDICT: Like Green Day's pouty sisters, The Donnas prove the three-chord formula still has legs. **7/10**

ALSO RELEASED THIS MONTH

Kylie Ultimate Kylie (Parlophone)/**U2** How To Dismantle An Atomic Bomb (Island)/**A Perfect Circle** eMOTIVe (Virgin)/**Daniel Bedingfield** Second First Impression (Island)

ON THE *OPS2* STEREO

Television Adventure (Warner)/**Interpol** Antics (Matador)/**The For Carnation** The For Carnation (Touch & Go)/**The Legend Of The Wu-Tang** Greatest Hits (BMG)/**Sugar** Copper Blue (Creation)

Killzone

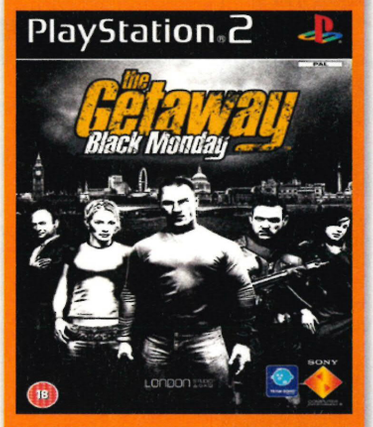
Killzone is a squad-based, first-person shooter, set in the near future during a period of planetary colonization. Drawing inspiration from classical military conflicts of the 20th century, Killzone captures the intense reality of warfare between the ISA Command and a ruthless, militaristic separatist faction called the Helghast.

~~RRP: £39.99~~ **£29.99**

FlatOut

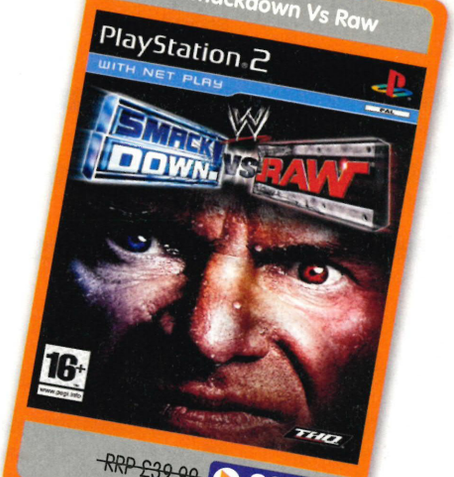
~~RRP £39.99~~ **£27.99**

The Getaway: Black Monday



~~RRP £39.99~~ **£29.99**

WWE: Smackdown Vs Raw



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Tony Hawks Underground 2

~~RRP £39.99~~ **£29.99**

Prince of Persia : Warrior Within

~~RRP £39.99~~ **£29.99**

LMA Manager 2004

~~RRP £39.99~~ **£29.99**

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FREE DELIVERY
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incoming

What's hot (and not) and is coming your way...

DECEMBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Call Of Duty	FPS	Activision
Disney Movin'	EyeToy	Disney
Fight Club	Fighting	Vivendi Universal
GoldenEye: Rogue Agent	FPS	EA
Gran Turismo 4	Driving	Sony
Guilty Gear X2	Fighting	Zoo Digital
The Urbz	Simulation	EA
Urban Extreme	Racing	Data Design

JANUARY	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Blood Will Tell	Action	Sega
EyeToy Chat	EyeToy	Sony
Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition	Racing	Rockstar
Samurai Warriors: Extreme Legends	Strategy	KOEI

FEBRUARY	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Ace Combat 5	Action	Namco
Area 51	FPS	Midway
Constantine	Action/Adventure	SCi
CT Special Forces	Action	Hip
Killer 7	Action/Adventure	Capcom
Project Snowblind	FPS	Eidos
Rumble Roses	Sport	Konami
Shadow Hearts: Covenant	RPG	Midway
Sonic Mega Collection	Platformer	Capcom
The Punisher	Action/Adventure	THQ

MARCH	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Astro Boy	Adventure	Sega
Brothers In Arms	FPS	Ubisoft
Cold Fear	Horror	Ubisoft
Destroy All Humans!	Action	THQ
Devil May Cry 3	Action/Adventure	Capcom
Enthusia	Racing	Konami
Far Cry Instincts	FPS	Ubisoft
Final Fantasy XII	RPG	Square
Guilty Gear Isuka	Action	Sega
Hitman Blood Money	Action/Adventure	Eidos
Kingdom Hearts II	RPG	Square Enix
Mercenaries	Action	Activision
Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater	Adventure	Konami
Monster Hunter	Adventure	Capcom
Playboy: The Mansion	Sim	Ubisoft
Resident Evil Outbreak File 2	Action/Adventure	Capcom
Shadow Of Rome	Action/Adventure	Capcom
Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory	Action/Adventure	Ubisoft
Stolen	Adventure	Hip
Tak 2: Staff Of Dreams	Platformer	Vivendi Universal
TimeSplitters Future Perfect	FPS	EA

SPRING 2005	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
25 To Life	Action/Adventure	Eidos
Aquanox	FPS	Koch
Big Mutha Truckers 2	Racing	Empire
Champions: Return To Arms	RPG	Ubisoft
Championship Manager 5	Sport	Eidos
Cold Winter	FPS	Vivendi Universal
Death By Degrees	Action/Adventure	Namco
FIFA Street	Sport	EA
Karaoke Revolution 2	Music	Konami
Kessen 3	Strategy	KOEI
Legends Of Kay	Platformer	Koch

RADAR

Keeping track of the hottest stuff on the horizon

OUT NOW

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

You really need a reminder to buy this? Didn't think so

OUT SOON

GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT

He's got an eye, right, and it's made of gold... the anti-Bond blasts in next month

MILES OFF

METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER

A recent replay of the early level excited us greatly. We're already practising CQC moves on the cleaners – for they are weak

Ben hearts...

Mercenaries

"Waiter, there's a fly in my coup! This one is perfect, from its graphics – so crisp I thought they'd cut my eyes out – through to great gunplay."

Nanobreaker	Action/Adventure	Konami
Neighbours From Hell	Strategy	Koch
Nightmare Before Christmas	Adventure	Capcom
Notorious: Die to Drive	Racing	Ubisoft
Predator	Action	VUG
SAS: Against All Odds	Action	Oxygen
Scarface	Action/Adventure	VUG
Super Monkey Ball Deluxe	Skill	Sega
Tenchu: Fatal Shadows	Action	Sega
The Movies	Sim	Activision
Viewtiful Joe 2	Action	Capcom

SUMMER 2005	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
24	Action/Adventure	Sony
Altered Beast	Action/Adventure	Sega
Battlefield: Modern Combat	FPS	EA
Battlestations: Midway	Sim	SCi
Brian Lara International Cricket	Sport	Codemasters
Everybody's Golf	Sport	Sony
Fahrenheit	Adventure	Vivendi Universal
Gametrak: Real World Golf	Sport	Bigben
Ico 2	Action/Adventure	Sony
Juiced	Racing	THQ
LA Rush	Racing	Midway
Lego Star Wars	Action/Adventure	Eidos
Mark Ecko's Getting Up: Contents Under Pressure	Adventure	Atari
NARC	Action/Adventure	Midway
NBA Street V3	Sport	EA
Neo Contra	Shooter	Konami
Okami	Adventure	Capcom
Red Ninja	Adventure	Vivendi Universal
Rise Of The Kesai	Action/Adventure	Sony
Sega Rally 2005	Racing	Sega
Star Craft: Ghost	Action/Adventure	VUG
Star Wars Episode III: Revenge Of The Sith	Adventure	Activision
Starsky and Hutch 2	Racing	Empire
Tekken 5	Fighter	Namco
The Fast And The Furious	Racing	VUG
Tomb Raider Next	Adventure	Eidos
Ultimate Spider-Man	Adventure	Activision

AUTUMN 2005	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Carmageddon	Racing	SCi
Conflict Desert Storm 3	Action	SCi
Final Fantasy VII: Dirge Of Cerberus	Activision	Square
Iron Man	Action	Activision
Madagascar	Action	Activision
Rogue Trooper	Action/Adventure	SCi
Roll Call	FPS	SCi
The Godfather	Action	EA
The Warriors	Action/Adventure	Rockstar
True Crime 2	Action	Activision

TBC	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Batman Begins	Action/Adventure	TBC
Black	FPS	EA
Black9	Action	Vivendi Universal
BloodRayne 2	Horror	TBC
Burnout 4	Racing	EA
Dead To Rights 2	Action	Namco/Sony
Dynasty Warriors	Action	KOEI
FIFA Football 2006	Sport	EA
Haunting Ground	Horror	Capcom
Jaws	Action	TBC
King Kong	Action	Ubisoft
Madden 2006	Sport	EA
New Shrek title	Action	Activision
Pro Evolution Soccer 5	Sport	Konami
Siren 2	Adventure	Sony
Sniper Elite	FPS	TBC
The Regiment	Strategy	Konami
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2006	Sport	EA

KEY

BUY ME!

TRY ME!

AVOID ME!

Tim hearts...

24

"A deep and neverending passion for Keifer coupled with a passing interest in saving the world from terrorist attack means this game is all but made for me."

Michael hearts...

Batman Begins

"It's not actually announced yet, but the rumour gremlins say it's in the works. If they manage to get The Dark Knight right, I'll be sold for life."

WIN!

competition

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Question: *Purple Haze* is a track by which guitar god?
A Jimi Hendrix
B Ralph McTell
C Matt from Busted

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1 x SAS Red Letter day for you and two friends
1 x JOYTECH Ultimate Travel Pack, including Portable TFT Monitor, In-Car/jeep/tank Adaptor and Mobile Infantry Carry Case, and JOYTECH Wireless Analogue Controller
1 x *Vietcong: Purple Haze* T-shirt
1 x *Vietcong: Purple Haze* poster
1 x Copy of *Vietcong: Purple Haze* game
1 x *Vietcong: Purple Haze* sticker
1 x Solid silver dog tag

TEN RUNNERS-UP:

1 x Copy of *Vietcong: Purple Haze* game
1 x *Vietcong: Purple Haze* sticker
1 x *Vietcong: Purple Haze* poster
1 x *Vietcong: Purple Haze* T-shirt

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GATHERING

* For a day. Kind of...

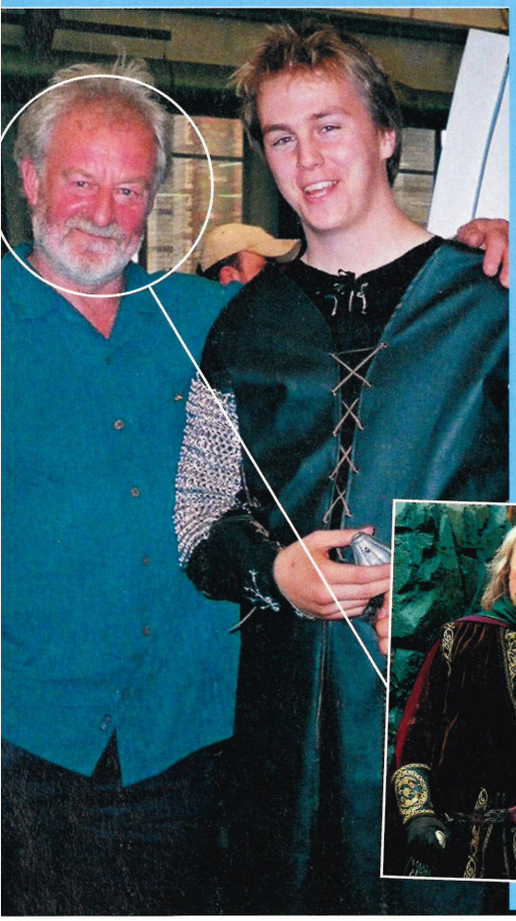
Terms and conditions

Send your answers to 'Purple Haze all in my brain', *OPS2*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW, or via email to ps2compos@futurenet.co.uk, remembering to put 'Purple Haze all in my brain' in the subject line. Entries to reach us by 1 December 2004. No purchase necessary. Entrants must be 16 or over. Competition only open to UK residents. No correspondence will be entered into. No employees of Future Publishing, Take Two, Sony or any affiliated company may enter. No cash alternative is offered to these prizes. If prizes become unavailable, we reserve the right to replace them with others of equal value. Multiple entries will be disregarded. We will not advise non-winners of the result. Normal competition rules apply. We will accept no responsibility for entries lost in the post. The editor's decision is final.

No transport is given to or from SAS site in Banbury

Oh, sweet Lord, only the loons are still here

WE SENT CLOSET FANBOY NATHAN TO A *LORD OF THE RINGS* CONVENTION TO INFILTRATE THE GEEKS AND INVESTIGATE WHY THEY LIKE TO DRESS UP FUNNY. WILL HE DISCOVER THEIR SECRET? OR RUN AWAY IN TEARS?



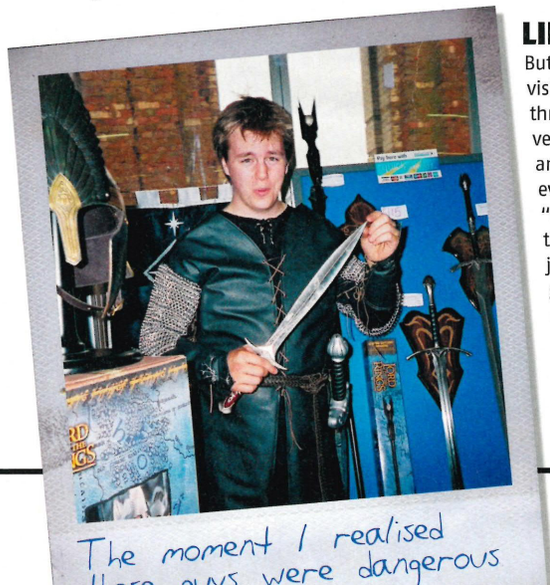
Me and Bernie. Best mates, we are

ALLSTAR

"I've arrived. Jesus, it's bleak. It's like the end of time and only geeks have survived." The first thing I do when I reach the Festival Of The Fellowship at the Alexandra Palace in London is text Timberlake, essentially in the vague hope that he'll tell me I can turn round and go home. The festival is a *Lord Of The Rings* convention, an excuse for everyone who *really* likes the books/films to get together and revel in a delightful explosion of all things Middle-earth. Problem is, what's actually happening is a handful of lonely, awkward obsessives are shuffling about nervously while a half-arsed array of gaudy, Tolkien-branded tat is shoved in their faces. So can I get out of here?

Not a bit of it. "Sorry dude," Tim replies, "the bleaker the better I'm afraid."

So you're probably wondering the same thing I was as I took my first brave steps out of the disabled toilets dressed from head to toe in leather and chainmail, with a three and a half-foot plastic sword tucked into my belt (fearing arrest, I didn't change 'til I arrived). What the hell am I doing here? The original idea was to send me out to see what makes convention-goers tick, to uncover the mysterious wonders of their insular world, and to ask them why they dress up like loonies. Ideally, I envisaged myself fitting in seamlessly with the fanboys, drifting inconspicuously among the sea of bodices and leather jerkins: becoming invisible.



LIKE A SORE THUMB

But now I'm here I've never felt more visible. I arrive on the second day of the three-day event to find the convention verging on deserted. There's hardly anybody here, and even fewer of them are dressed up. "OK," I text back to Tim, "I see how this thing's gonna work. Car crash journalism, eh? Got the gear on, gonna take some pictures and be out of here in 20."

It's a brave front. In reality, hot, burning shame threatens to physically paralyse me as I begin exploring. Basically, the event is divided into two large rooms. One

That's right, she's made of cardboard, but she's still the prettiest one here

It all looked so much more fun on the big screen

Check out my ladeez. Or don't

Bernard shows what a quality bloke he is

is a darkened hall filled with chairs with a stage at the far end for guest speakers – wig-fitters from the film, someone who took the trash away on set, that guy who played the seventh orc from the left in that scene, you know, near the end, he was really scary, remember? The other room is smaller but has far more going on, with stalls selling *Lord Of The Rings*-related paraphernalia lining the walls and a set of tables seating some less obscure acting talent signing autographs.

It's obvious after a quick look around that my original brief has gone to the dogs – this place is like some awful Dungeons & Dragons-themed wilderness. With grim determination I find some people to talk to. I run into a couple of girls also in costume – it's somehow less humiliating to approach people who're dressed up themselves – but it's not the happy encounter I was hoping for.

"Alright, girls? Having a nice time?"

"Yes, thanks. We like your chainmail. Did you make it yourself?

"Er, no. What are your names?"

"Eldrith and Pamila."

"They're not real names, are they?"

"No, they are our roleplaying aliases."

Within minutes they attempt to induct me into their online fantasy community, and I quickly move on.

I find Kev, selling reproduction weaponry on one on the festival's stalls. His merchandise looks the business, and he's letting kids pose with the coolest-looking swords. "Can I have a go, Kev?" I ask. He nods cheerfully. It's only when I get my hands on a short Elvish sword that I realise many of the blades on show are fully sharpened; that Kev's letting dozens of children play with lethal weapons. He's clearly mad. "Thanks, Kev," I say, "I have to go now."

HORSE PLAY

By the time I get to meet the biggest star present at the festival, Bernard Hill (king of the horse people himself – he played Theodin, ruler of Rohan in the film), I'm in a bad way. Sweaty, humiliated and broken, I stagger up to him and announce myself, grinning desperately.

"Hi Bernard, my name's Nathan, I work for *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*."

"Oh, hello. Nathan, you say?"

"That's right."

He clearly hasn't a clue what I'm talking about, but he's very nice all the same. My semi-rabid garble continues.

"I liked you in the film, Bernard, can you sign this piece of paper please?"

"Absolutely. Who should I address it to?"

"*OPS2* please."

Bernard doesn't blink. He doesn't even ask 'Why am I addressing this autograph to a series of letters and a number?" Then, when I ask for a photo, he puts his arm over my shoulder when a lesser man may have called for security. Professionalism, thy name is Bernard.

After this the convention's all over for me. I've peaked. I ditch my medieval garb and head outside for an ice-cream. Sitting on a picnic table overlooking the Palace grounds, I reflect on what has just happened and try to think of things I could possibly have learned by being here. Apart from the fact that weaponsmiths don't mix well with children? (This should have been obvious.) Basically, I've just experienced the cheerless reality of a cultural phenomenon, 12 months after the event. These people – the truly hardcore – are the dying embers of the *Lord Of The Rings* fire, the trash-heap left behind when the circus leaves town. It's hard not to admire their determination, their efforts to keep it all alive. But, hot damn, they sure act funny. Can I come home now?

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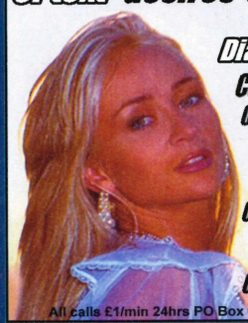

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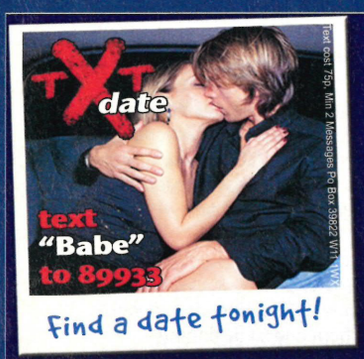

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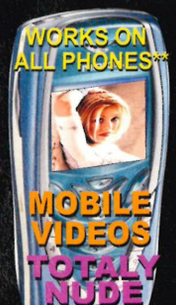

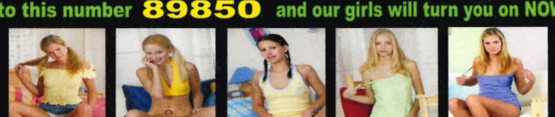

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TOP TEN

MOST OVERLOOKED MOVIE LICENCES

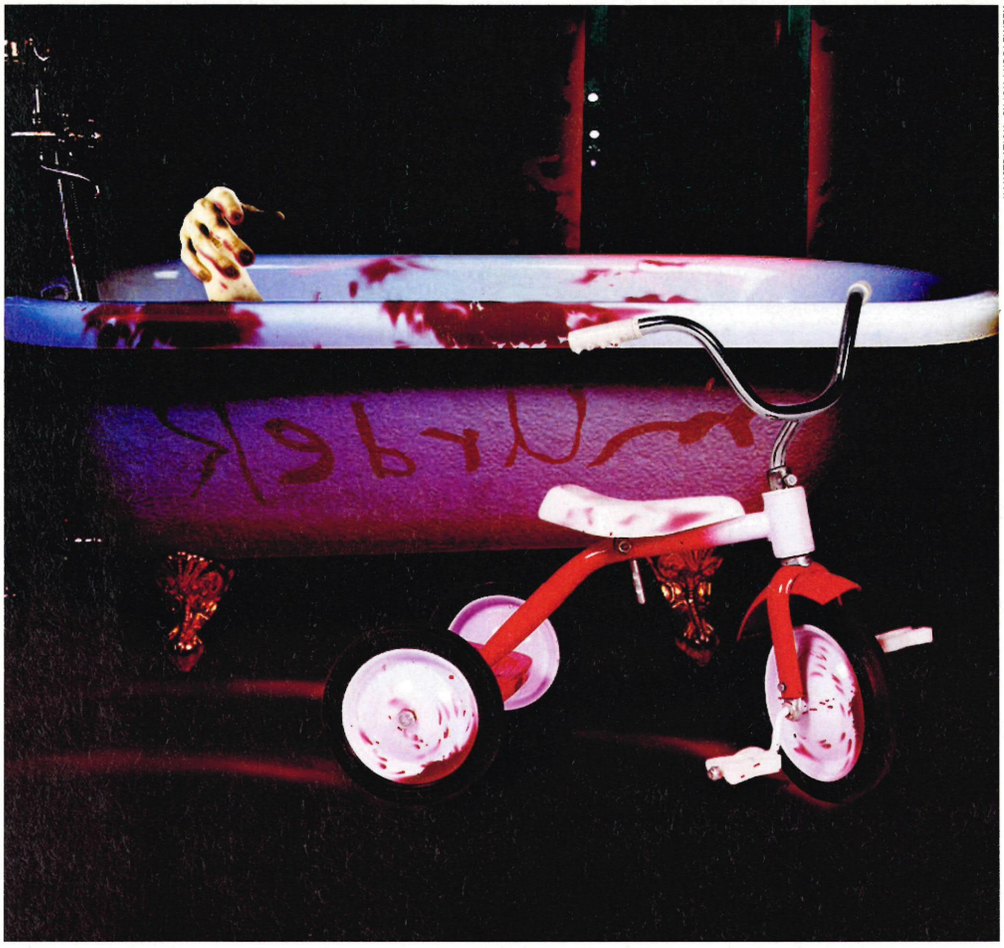

ILLUSTRATION: SIMON MIDDLEWEEK

10 Bowling For Columbine (Shooter)
An ideal licence for a company unafraid of controversy, players would stalk the hallways with a range of weaponry seeking out those who'd bullied and marginalised them. Meanwhile, a fat unkempt man continually pops up, haranguing you for giving £2 to Greenpeace, thus linking yourself to that man who tied himself to the rudder of a GM crop freighter and several illegal war efforts launched by the United States.

09 This Is Spinal Tap (Karaoke)
If you're going to look like an idiot, you might as well do it properly. The classic comedy 'rockumentary' would make an ideal base for a karaoke game, and students would love the option to ripely yell all the lines as they're spoken. "This one goes up to eleven! Ah ha ha!" Etc.

08 Steel Magnolias (Survival horror)
The will to live flooding away like water from a colander; the melodramatic voices; the meaningless drivel for a plot; the waves of disease and weeping disappointments; the true banality of horror...

07 Free Willy (Platform)
The box would look great, and then, once you'd switched on the game, it'd bear almost no resemblance to the film. Nevertheless, it'd be a fantastic idea, as the world has yet to see a platforming game based around an aquatic mammal. You could collect glowing orbs for no obvious reason and talk to a small boy who curiously bears no resemblance to the one in the film. Maybe Davilex would be interested? You've got our number...

06 The Shining (Driving)
What's in room 237? Jump on Danny's little three-wheeled chopper and pedal like a demented duck to find out! With one huge rubber tyre at the front and two small plastic ones at the back, tail-out action is assured as you dodge your psychopathic dad, skitter through corridors avoiding girls who want to play with you forever and herniate yourself trying to outrun the blood roaring from the lift. Watch out for the dead girl in the bath.

05 Donnie Darko (Dancemat)
What better way to explore the surreal, downbeat and life-threatening world of *Donnie Darko* than by prancing on a brightly coloured plastic mat while drunk? The almost inevitable trip to casualty as you stumble when the rabbit appears, falling and slicing your head on the coffee table, would be a perfect backdrop to your increasing confusion, depression and lights-before-your-eyes headaches. Genius? We'd bet your nuts on it.

04 Midnight Express (Real-time strategy)
Just as Alan Parker's harsh, excellent film proved there was entertainment to be found in Turkish prisons even if you weren't a homosexual sadist, any game of *Midnight Express* could prove there's much to be said for Draconian treatment at the hands of zealous torturers in gamesville. As such, it's got to be ideal for EA. Can you survive? Can you escape? Can you beat that man to death with a sink? If it's in the prison, it's in the game.

03 The Phantom (Action 3D)
Become the world's worst superhero – half-man, half-ghost, wholly pointless. *The Phantom* would be a 3D actioner with the emphasis entirely on the '3D', as you'd spend the whole game in ghost form and pass through all solid surfaces on every level. It's for the best. It'll be over quicker this way.

02 Memento (Puzzle)
A puzzle game with a difference. It works in reverse, from end to beginning, making it impossible for any player to conceive the aim of the puzzle, and also randomly rearranging itself every three minutes to replicate the effects of short-term memory loss. Taking Polaroids and scribbling on your arm may help, but for how long?

01 Frankenstein (EyeToy)
Play as the misunderstood monster of Hollywood legend, battling with the enormity of existence and morality. *Frankenstein* would be EyeToy compatible – you can reach out to touch the beautiful, delicate humans whose love you crave so dearly, but with your clumsy brute hands you mash their soft skin to a bloody pulp as you try to hold them. WHY, GOD... WHY? ■

WHAT'S IN ROOM 237? JUMP ON DANNY'S LITTLE THREE-WHEELED CHOPPER AND PEDAL LIKE A DEMENTED DUCK TO FIND OUT!

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HOTTEST TONES	MONO	POLY
COMMON PEOPLE - w. shatner vs j jackson	114720	124720
BABY CAKES - 3 of a kind	114427	124427
CALL ON ME - eric prydz	114436	124436
LOVE MACHINE - girls aloud	114506	124506
BETTER THAN LIFE - ultrabeat	114377	124377
NOTHING I WON'T DO - special d	114411	124411
MORE MORE MORE - rachel stevens	114661	124661
CONFESSIONS PART 2 - usher	114219	124219
OOPS UPSIDE YOUR HEAD - dj casper	114656	124656
HAPPY PEOPLE - r kelly	114184	124184
I LOVE THEM HOES - eamon	114088	124088
HOW YOU DO - frankee	114398	124398
MY PREROGATIVE - britney spears	114715	124715
SAND IN MY SHOES - dido	114504	124504
MILLIONAIRE - kelis	114458	124458

HOTTEST TONES	MONO	POLY
RADIO - robbie williams	114717	124717
BLINDED BY THE LIGHTS - the streets	114718	124718
LOSE MY BREATH - destiny's child	114703	124703
NEVER REALLY WAS - mario winans	114405	124405
YOURS FATALLY - big brovaz	114592	124592
TRIPLE TROUBLE - the beastie boys	114625	124625
GHETTOMUSICK - outkast	114635	124635
I WANT MORE - faithless	114561	124561
DJ - jamelia	114680	124680
THE NEW WORKOUT PLAN - kanye west	114724	124724
NOBODY'S HOME - avril lavigne	114700	124700
GOOD FOOT - justin timberlake	114707	124707
MY BOO - usher and alicia keys	114730	124730
UNWRITTEN - natasha bedingfield	114771	124771
WELCOME TO MY TRUTH - anastacia	114721	124721

CHART	MONO	POLY
LOVE IS A MATTER OF DISTANCE - w young	114617	124617
THESE WORDS ARE MY OWN - n. bedingfield	114346	124346
LEAVE (GET OUT) - jojo	114198	124198
LEFT OUTSIDE ALONE - anastacia	113616	123616
SICK AND TIRED - anastacia	114205	124205
SOME GIRLS - rachel stevens	114213	124213
REAL TO ME - brian mcfadden	114495	124495
EVERYTIME - britney spears	114022	124022
DRAGOSTEA DIN TEI - o-zone	114098	124098
OUTRAGEOUS - britney spears	114430	124430
THAT GIRL - mcfly	114462	124462
SUMMER RAIN - slinkee minx	114487	124487
YOU HAD ME - joss stone	114521	124521

HIP HOP	MONO	POLY
MY PLACE - nelly	114500	124500
JESUS WALKS - kanye west	114266	124266
HOW COME - d12	114169	124169
TIPSY - j-kwon	113648	123648
WELCOME BACK - mase	114709	124709
SHE WANTS TO MOVE - n.e.r.d	113539	123539
P.I.M.P - 50 cent	112599	122599
GANGSTERS PARADISE - coolio	111128	121128
LETS GET IT STARTED - blk eyed peas	113232	123232
SUNSHINE - twista	114310	124310
HEY YA - outkast	113176	123176
MY BAND - d12	113795	123795

ESSENTIAL	MONO	POLY
SATISFACTION - benny benassi	112751	122751
IN DA CLUB - 50 cent	112440	122440
HEAVEN - dj sammy	112229	122229
CASTLES IN THE SKY - ian van dahl	111270	121270
THE LOGICAL SONG - scooter	111965	121965
BECAUSE I GOT HIGH - afroman	111454	121454
CASTLES IN THE SKY - ian van dahl	111270	121270
CRAZY IN LOVE - beyonce knowles	112707	122707

R 'N' B	MONO	POLY
BURN - usher	113800	123800
YEAH - usher feat ludacris & lil jon	113546	123546
F*** IT (I DON'T WANT YOU BACK) - eamon	113519	123519
I DON'T WANT TO KNOW - mario winans	113805	123805
MOVE YA BODY - nina sky feat jabba	114218	124218
HOTEL - cassidy feat r kelly	113514	123514
F.U.R.B - frankee	113917	123917
NO DIGGITY - blackstreet	111211	121211
DIP IT LOW - christina milian	113802	123802
YOU SHOULD REALLY KNOW - the pirates ft shola ama	114622	124622
FREE - estelle	114632	124632
SOUTHSIDE - lloyd feat ashanti	114403	124403
LOCKED UP - akon	114747	124747

FOOTBALL	MONO	POLY
YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE - gerry & the..	111351	121351
SOCCER AM CATWALK - jean knight	112559	122559
MATCH OF THE DAY - match of the day	111126	121126
THE GREAT ESCAPE - s wednesday	111354	121354
WOO HOO - the 5 6 7 8's	114166	124166
3 LIONS - baddiel & skinner	111494	121494
VINDALOO - fat les	111349	121349
MARCHING ON TOGETHER - leeds	111350	121350

DANCE	MONO	POLY
COME WITH ME - special d	113678	123678
LOLA'S THEME - shapeshifters	114192	124192
TAKE ME TO THE CLOUDS ABOVE - lmc vs	113456	123456
PUT EM HIGH - stonebridge	113747	123747
AIN'T NO LOVE (AIN'T NO USE) - soda club	114613	124613
LOVE IS GONNA SAVE US - benny benassi	114768	124768
PUSH UP - freestylers	114152	124152

ROCK	MONO	POLY
SWEET CHILD O MINE - guns n roses	111258	121258
SHE WILL BE LOVED - maroon 5	114236	124236
NOVEMBER RAIN - guns n roses	112596	122596
BAT OUT OF HELL - meat loaf	111286	121286
BLACK BETTY - spiderbait	113761	123761
LIVING ON A PRAYER - bon jovi	111376	121376

REGGAE	MONO	POLY
TURN ME ON - kevin lyttle	113100	123100
I'M STILL IN LOVE.. - sean paul feat sasha	113410	123410
ANGEL - shaggy	111114	121114
GET BUSY - sean paul	112634	122634
DUDE - beenie man feat ms thing	113702	123702
MR LOVERMAN - shabba	114612	124612
GHOST TOWN - the specials	113941	123941

THEME	MONO	POLY
ROCKY	112481	122481
ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES	111369	121369
GOOD BAD AND THE UGLY	111181	121181
GREASE - frankie valli	114757	124757
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE	111121	121121
THE SIMPSONS	111132	121132
DIRTY DANCING	111249	121249
MUPPETS	111134	121134
TOP GUN	111860	121860
THE A TEAM	111115	121115
PINK PANTHER	111133	121133
AXEL F - beverley hills cop	111601	121601
BENNY HILL	111139	121139
ALWAYS LOOK ON THE BRIGHT.. - m. python	113865	123865
PHOENIX NIGHTS	112364	122364
JAMES BOND	111119	121119
THUNDERBIRDS ARE GO - busted	114239	124239
SEX AND THE CITY	111673	121673
THE ITALIAN JOB	111622	121622
EXORCIST	111871	121871
HALLOWEEN H20	111858	121858
CHARMED	114270	124270
THE OFFICE	112363	122363
FRIENDS - I'LL BE THERE - rembrandts	111152	121152
KNIGHT RIDER - knight rider	111127	121127
BIG BROTHER - big brother	111342	121342
THE OC - CALIFORNIA - phantom planet	113967	123967
ROCKY - main theme	111141	121141
FOOTLOOSE - title music	113937	123937
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BURN	173800	SATISFACTION	172751	ROSES	173806
TURN ME ON	173100	I DON'T WANT TO..	173805	CHA CHA SLIDE	173506
HOW COME	174169	P.I.M.P	172599	RHYTHM IS A DANCER	172485
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LOLA'S THEME	174192	SICK AND TIRED	174205	IN DA CLUB	172440
BABY BOY	172933	BREATHE EASY	173599	HEAVEN	172229
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MANDY	173228	LETS GET IT STARTED	173232	WHERE IS THE LOVE	172890
CRASHED THE WEDDING	173151	HEY YA	173176	BAT OUT OF HELL	171286
I DON'T WANT ..	173519	NOVEMBER RAIN	172596	F.U.R.B	173917
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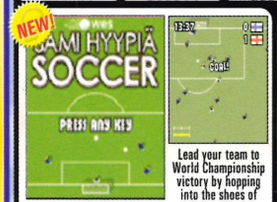

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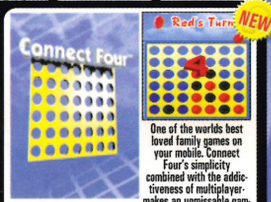
Lead your team to World Championship victory by hopping into the shoes of "giant Finn" Sami Hyypiä



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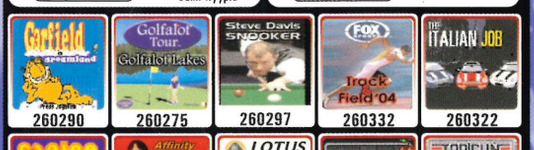

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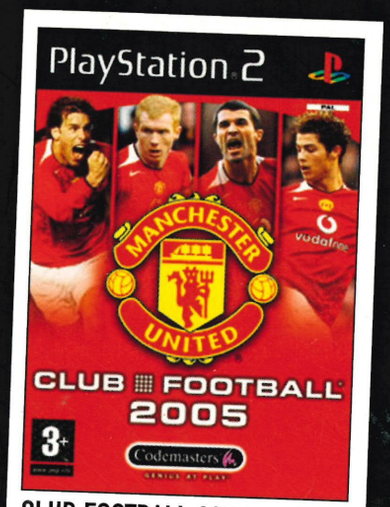

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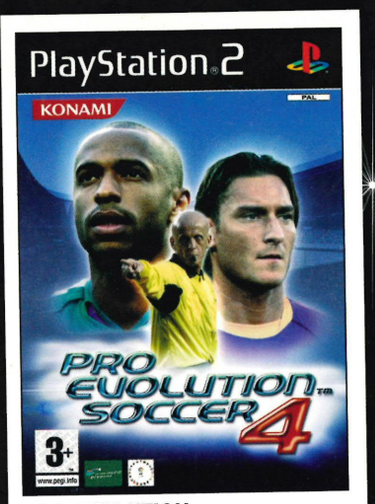

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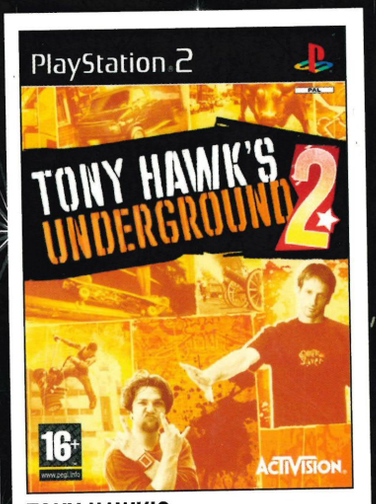

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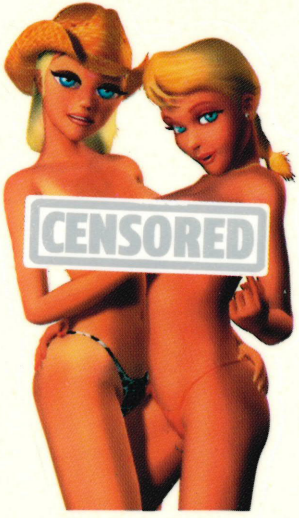

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