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EXCLUSIVE UK REVIEW

DEVIL MAY CRY

ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE IN THE PS2'S BEST GAME YET! IT'LL BLOW YOU AWAY!

METAL GEAR SOLID 2 RETURNS!

New screens! **New** characters! **New** everything! Stop press info on the game of 2002!

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PLAYED IN JAPAN

We head to **Tokyo Game Show** for the scoop on **Onimusha 2**, **Virtua Fighter 4** and **more!**

PLUS!

- **JAK AND DAXTER**
- FINAL FANTASY NEWS
- **SSX TRICKY**
- ICO: HANDS-ON REPORT
- **JUDGE DREDD**
- GRAN TURISMO 3 TIPS
- **JAMES BOND 007**

And how to get a head in videogames...

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WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP/HALF-LIFE
AIRBLADE/SOUL REAVER 2/SPLASHDOWN
FIFA 2002/PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER/MORE

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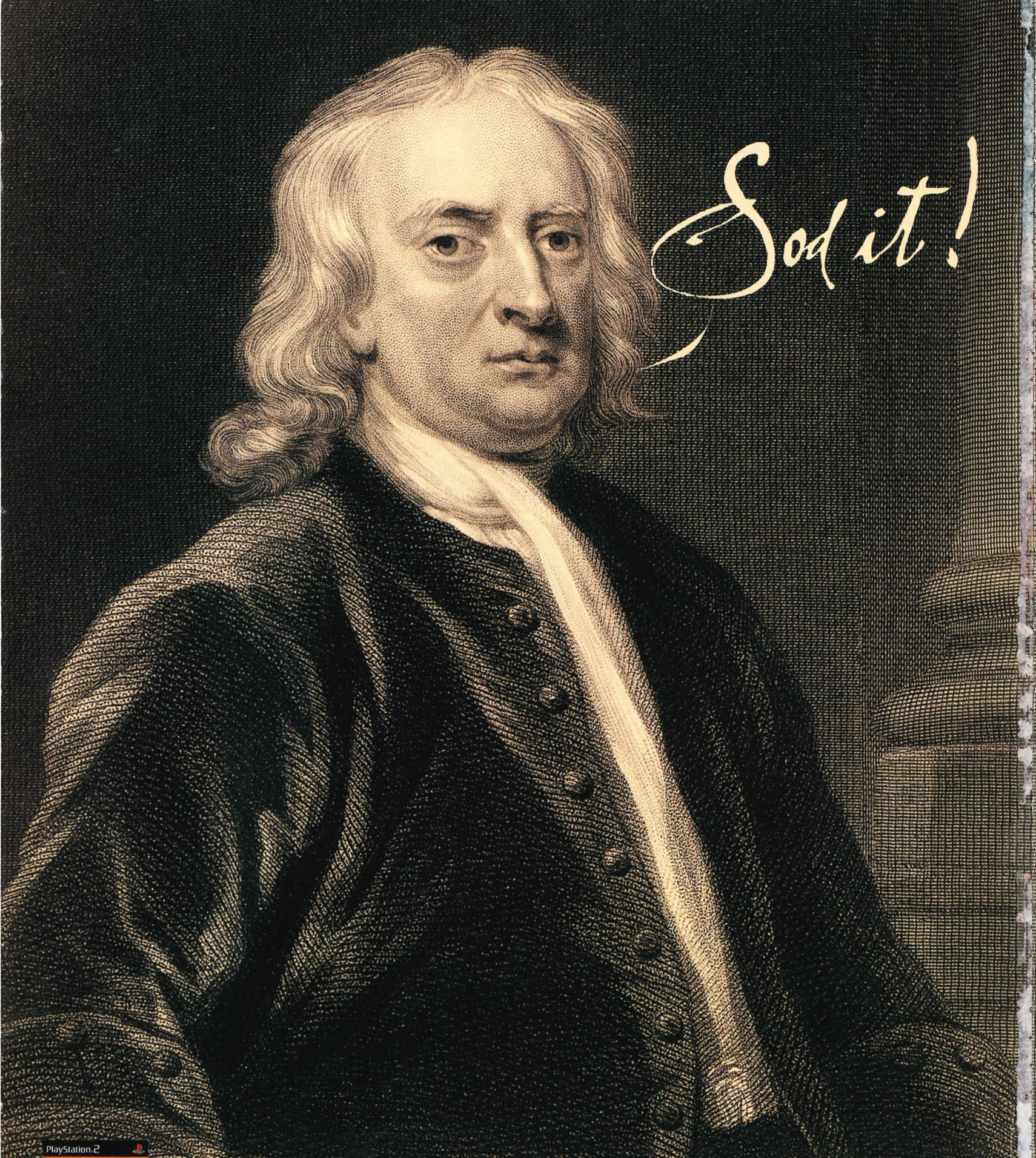
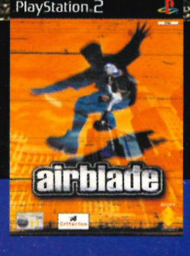
RESPECT IS DUE

Why Silent Hill 2 wouldn't have existed without Lara Croft

PlayStation.2
014
DECEMBER 2001/DEVIL MAY CRY: THE EXCLUSIVE UK REVIEW/METAL GEAR SOLID 2 RESURFACES/ON LOCATION WITH THE MAKERS OF HEADHUNTER/TOKYO GAME SHOW NEWS/PREVIEWED: JAK AND DAXTER/SSX TRICKY
JAMES BOND 007 N... AGENT UNDER FIRE/MOTO GP 2/MORE REVIEWED: DEVIL MAY CRY/HALF-LIFE/AIRBLADE/SOUL REAVER 2/PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER/WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP/FIFA 2002/SPLASHDOWN/MORE





Upset Sir Isaac Newton by defying the laws of gravity and pulling outrageous tricks up stairs and over buildings on your Airblade hoverboard. It's all in the attempt to rescue your kidnapped friend Oscar from the evil clutches of the GPC, a ruthless corporation determined to withhold anti-gravity technology in the year 2015.

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ON THE COVER
The devil you know: Dante, star of this month's exclusive lead review, Capcom's awe-inspiring *Devil May Cry*.

ISSUE 014/DECEMBER2001

GAME REVIEWS

92 **DEVIL MAY CRY**
Capcom's superb goth thriller – the best PS2 title yet?

98 **HALF-LIFE**
Making an artform of the first-person shooter

104 **WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP**
An intensely realistic rallying challenge

102 CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX
108 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER
110 NHL 2002
113 LOTUS CHALLENGE
114 SOUL REAVER 2
118 AIRBLADE
123 STUNT GP
127 SILENT SCOPE 2
128 SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE
130 FIFA 2002
132 ARCTIC THUNDER
133 NYR: NEW YORK RACER
134 18 WHEELER
135 NHL HITZ
137 TEST DRIVE: OFFROAD WIDE OPEN
138 GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE: AFRICA
140 SPLASHDOWN
142 DNA
144 TOP GUN
145 PENNY RACERS
146 BATMAN VENGEANCE
148 THE MUMMY RETURNS
150 THE WEAKEST LINK/ROBOT WARS
151 LEGO RACERS 2

THE MUMMY™ RETURNS

GOOD

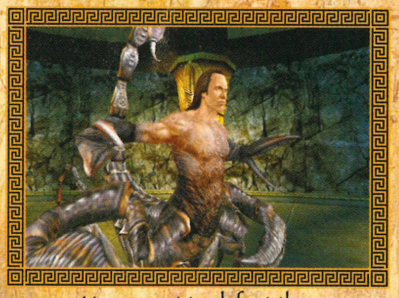
vs Or

EVIL

Go With Evil. You can hit restart When you get to hell.

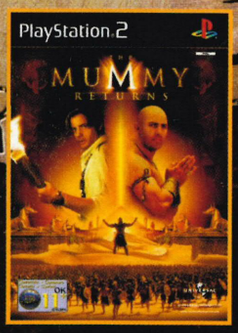
As Rick you'll have a cool arsenal of swords, shotguns and revolvers.

As Imhotep, you'll use brute strength and have the awesome power to cast spells.



Your quest to defeat the Scorpion King takes you to London, Cairo, and the Hamunaptra ruins.

Wanna be bad? Good. In the Mummy Returns video game, you can be heroic Rick O' Connell or evil Imhotep. But either way you'll be facing pygmy mummies, Anubis warriors and mummified baboons, bringing all the soul-sucking fun of the movie to life in eye-popping next-gen graphics. Survive all that, and you get to battle the Scorpion King. Pray there's an afterlife.



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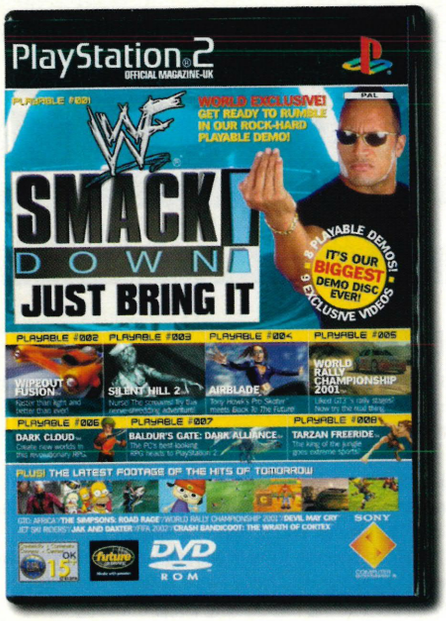


ON THE DVD

WWF SMACKDOWN! HEADS UP OUR EIGHT-WAY PLAYABLE DEMO TAG TEAM ON OUR BIGGEST DVD YET.

PLAYABLE DEMO ONE/
WWF SMACKDOWN! 'JUST BRING IT!'
Time to get all hot and bothered with our world exclusive rumble – it's WWF's finest grapple-fest yet. Game on!

PLAYABLE DEMO TWO/
WIPEOUT FUSION
Satisfy your need for speed with the blisteringly fast Kappa Challenge from SCEE's future perfect racer.

PLAYABLE DEMO THREE/
SILENT HILL 2
Give yourself a scare with this taste of pure evil.

PLAYABLE DEMO FOUR/
AIRBLADE
Be the first to get 'board' silly with this tricky game.

PLAYABLE DEMO FIVE/
WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP
Play the blinding rally sim.

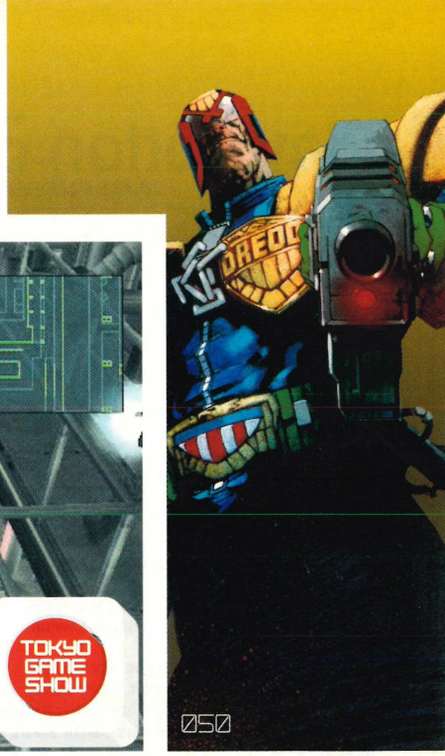
PLAYABLE DEMO SIX/
DARK CLOUD
A tasty bite of SCEE's huge genre-busting RPG.

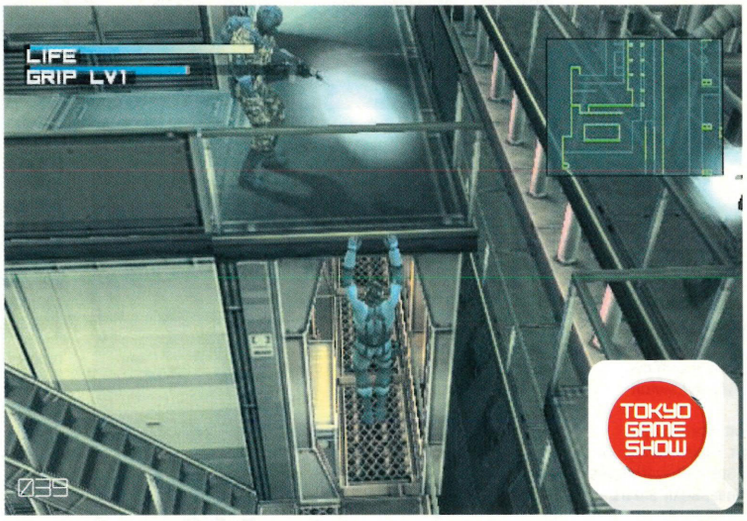
PLAYABLE DEMO SEVEN/
BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE
Get your goblin fix here.

PLAYABLE DEMO EIGHT/
TARZAN FREERIDE
Extreme sports with the Lord of the Jungle.

PLUS/**VIDEO PREVIEWS OF:**
Jak And Daxter, Devil May Cry, Crash Bandicoot, FIFA 2002 and more.

»**FULL DETAILS: PAGE 008**





FEATURES

068 **THE PS2 INTERVIEW: MARTIN KENWRIGHT**
The MD of Evolution Studios and the man behind supreme rally sim *World Rally Championship* speaks his mind to *OPS2*.

072 **ONE IN A MILLION**
We catch up with the developers of *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 2nd Edition* and find out how to get 'a head' in videogames.

078 **BJÖRN TO BE WILD**
We travel to Sweden to get the lowdown on *Headhunter*, the stylish action adventure gunning for Solid Snake.

084 **CREDIT WHERE CREDIT'S DUE**
MGS2 architect Hideo Kojima and a host of other developers talk about the videogames that influenced their greatest work.

GAME PREVIEWS

014 **JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY**
Something wonderful is about to happen to the platform genre. We get to grips with a pair of PS2 icons in waiting.

018 **SSX TRICKY**
The PS2's best launch title gets the full Hollywood remake. Is it ready for its close-up?

020 **MOTO GP 2**
Top motorbike racing sim heads down the straight for a second lap. Start your engines.

022 **ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE**

024 **THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE**

026 **JAMES BOND 007 IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE**

028 **BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE**

030 **POLAROID PETE**

033 **JET SKI RIDERS**

REGULARS

006 **Editor's Letter**

039 **Spy**
The Tokyo Game Show stops the press as we bring you a world exclusive update of *Metal Gear Solid 2*.

070 **Next Month**

090 **Reviews**
28 new games rated!

152 **PSone Reviews**
FIFA 2002 plus the latest PSone news.

156 **Media**
The Godfather Collection on DVD and an interview with *WipEout Fusion* contributors Plump DJs.

162 **HardCore**
Part three of our *Gran Turismo 3* guide and more.

166 **Subscribe**
Save 10% and have your copy of *OPS2* delivered to your door.

168 **Postal**
From you to us with words.

176 **Competitions**
Win a home cinema system.

178 **What If?**
Videogames were illegal?

ONE IN A MILLION

HOW A SLIDE PROJECTOR, A PC AND CHRIS TARRANT ARE REVOLUTIONISING VIDEOGAMES **PAGE 072**

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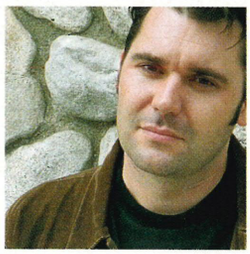

"If you've just bought a PS2 and this is your first issue of *OPS2*, welcome to our world"

THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS

Goldsmith-san on the five things you should turn to next...

1. DEVIL MAY CRY
Our cover star – and for a damned good reason.....**092**

2. TOKYO GAME SHOW
Splattered all over Spy, come look through our eyes.....**039**

3. JAK AND DAXTER
Fitz gets to grips with next issue's cover game.....**014**

4. HEADHUNTER
Spying in Stockholm.....**078**

5. YABASIC COLUMN
DIY skillz from the dearly-departing Sefton (sniff).....**056**

EDITOR'S LETTER

"But will anyone know what E3 actually means?" It doesn't exactly rank up there with "Why is Tracy Shaw famous?" but it's a question we ask every time we cover a videogame trade show. Do you, our lovely reader, know what we're on about? A quick explanation then. All game shows are the same – a large hall, some leaflets, a lot of bad suits, some more leaflets and, thank God, the chance to play and report back on the best PS2 games around. That'll be why we go then.

Actually, ignore the above because there is one videogaming show unlike any other – the Tokyo Game Show. Held twice a year in Chiba City, TGS can only be described as an eye-burning, high-kicking, polygon-tossing, no-prisoners bag of sweet, sweet madness that makes E3 look like *Antiques Roadshow* and *Banzai* look like *Question Time*. And we've just been.

The reason we subject ourselves to this insanity twice a year? Because Japan is the homeland of PS2 development, because we can stock up on copies of *Piposaru 2001* while we're over there and because of the games on this issue's cover. It's at Tokyo Game Show where we first saw Shinji Mikami's *Devil May Cry* (exclusively reviewed on page 92). It's at TGS where we first played *Metal Gear Solid* (exclusive info on *MGS2* on page 39). It's at TGS where Konami first unveiled the PSone version of *Pro Evolution Soccer* (the PS2 version is reviewed on page 108). Every six months, TGS coughs up the biggest action games, the coolest cult titles and most importantly, an enthusiasm for games that knows no rival. Japanese gamers adore their PS2 and TGS gives them the chance to prove it. We'll be bottling and importing that passion over the next few issues – if we make it back.

TGS, ECTS, *Piposaru 2001*... It's often far too easy to slip into gamespeak, something not exactly helpful if you've only just bought a PS2 and this is your first issue of *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*. And if this describes you – welcome to our world. Each issue, we'll assault your eyes with exclusive news, we'll bring you the most respected reviews in the industry and we'll do something that no other PS2 magazine can do – we'll let you play the games for yourself. Every issue comes with an exclusive covermounted DVD filled with playable demos of the latest games for you to try before you buy. So read the magazine, play the games and then let us know what you think. We'll soon have you fluent in gamespeak in no time.

Anyone for *Forbidden Pet: Crazy Doctor's Experiment Island*?

MIKE GOLDSMITH
Senior Editor

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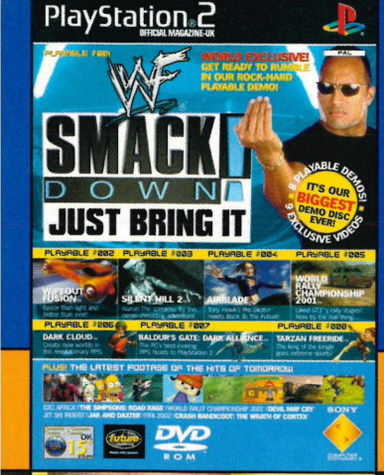

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»ON THE DVD

playable demos

Other magazines let you watch, *OPS2* lets you play...

The festive season is nearly upon us again and it's going to be rosy for PS2. At a low price of £199 and some truly great games on the release schedule, there should be millions of consoles under trees worldwide on Christmas Day. So take a look at our packed DVD and start compiling your wish list.

Our eight exclusive playable segments kick off with a two-player demo of the long-awaited wrestle-fest *WWF SmackDown! 'Just Bring It!'*. Then we delve exclusively into the sinister world of *Silent Hill 2* – we guarantee this one'll have you checking under the bed at night. SCEE has a quadruple-whammy this month with *WipEout Fusion*, *World Rally Championship*, *Dark Cloud* and *AirBlade* all ensuring this is another DVD just oozing with quality. For the Dungeon Masters among you there's *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance* and to top it all off we've hitched a ride downstream with *Tarzan Freeride*.

Once you've worn your fingers to the bone with that lot, settle back and enjoy a feast of videos. This month we bring you an exclusive new edit of Capcom's *Devil May Cry* plus *FIFA 2002*, *Jak And Daxter* and *Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath Of Cortex*, among others. Read on for the full lowdown. See you next time.

Adrian Lawton
Deputy PlayStation Producer

PS To use this disc, load it up on your PS2. Then scroll between games and rolling demos with the ↓ and ↑ keys. To choose within a section use ← and →. Press ⊗ to start up your choice. Please note, you may have to reset your PS2 after some demos.

»PLAYABLE DEMO ONE

WWF SMACKDOWN! 'JUST BRING IT!'

Publisher: THQ/Game type: Wrestling/Out: November/Players: 1-2 (Full game 1-4)

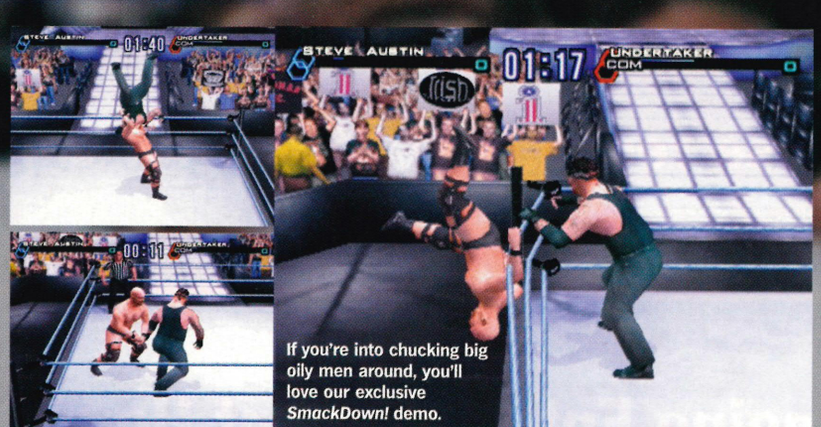
THE CONTROLS
D-PAD/ANALOGUE Movement
◎ Grapple
⊗ Attack
△ Run
□ Guard
L1 Smackdown move
R2 Taunt
START Pause

THE GAME

THQ's smash-hit WWF franchise is one of the most popular series ever to appear on PSone and its PS2 incarnation has been just as hotly anticipated as its predecessors. After months of waiting, *'Just Bring It!'* It is finally here and it's the best *SmackDown!* outing yet, looking all the better for the extra power afforded by PS2. The Rock, Kane, 'Stone Cold' Steve Austin and co are all back with new features including Six-man Tag, Royal Rumble and Nine Men In The Ring, along with all the old favourite options, like King Of The Ring, Hardcore and Survival.

THE DEMO

After the demo has loaded, choose Exhibition with ↑, ↓ and ⊗, then select Single or Tag for one or two players. Choose your choice of wrestlers from Steve Austin, The Undertaker, Kane, Triple H and Kurt Angle with ↑, ↓ and ⊗ again then it's time to layeth that smacketh down! Apart from one-on-one and two-on-two, our exclusive demo lets you wrestle in the crowd and features each of the superstars' unique entrances (on TitanTron screens).



If you're into chucking big oily men around, you'll love our exclusive *SmackDown!* demo.

You can't feel the speed from a picture... so go and play it! Now!

>>PLAYABLE DEMO TWO

WIPEOUT FUSION

Publisher: SCEE/Game type: Future racer/
Out: January/Players: 1 (Full game 1-2)

THE CONTROLS
LEFT ANALOGUE STICK Steer
R2 Right air brakes
L2 Left air brakes
△ Change view

THE GAME

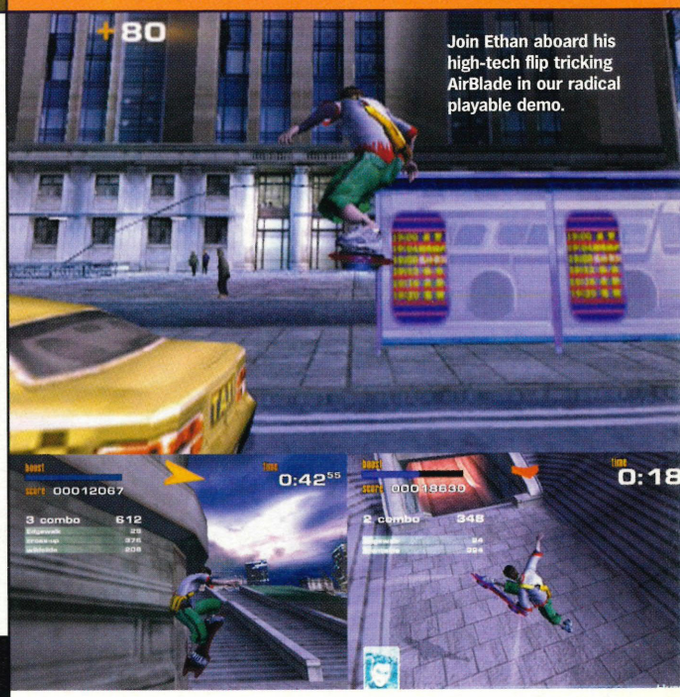
The fourth in the *WipEout* series but the first to appear on PS2, *Fusion* is one of PS2's most anticipated titles. It features 42 tracks of full 360° racing set across five incredibly detailed environments. Dizzyingly fast and gorgeous to look at, *WipEout Fusion* will be one of the must-have titles this Christmas.

THE DEMO

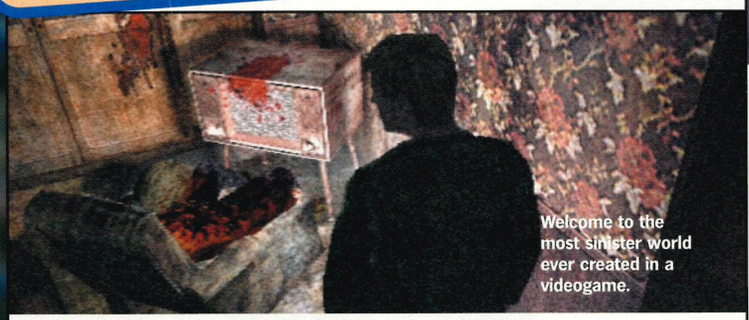
Read the info screen then click ⊗ twice to race. This demo features the game's new Zone mode, where your ship is propelled endlessly forward and you must steer it around the track through a series of 'zones'. If your shields deplete before you reach zone 30, your ship will explode; making it will earn you a medal.

BONUS COMPETITION!

If you record a good score on this *WipEout Fusion* Kappa Challenge demo, you'll notice that the game gives you a code on completion. Visit www.wipeoutfusion.com and you can enter yourself into a high-score table. The league leader come January will win a weekend clubbing in a glamorous European location!



Join Ethan aboard his high-tech flip tricking AirBlade in our radical playable demo.



Welcome to the most sinister world ever created in a videogame.

>>PLAYABLE DEMO THREE

SILENT HILL 2

Publisher: Konami/Game type: Horror/
Out: November/Players: 1

THE CONTROLS
LEFT ANALOGUE STICK move
⊗ Action
◎ Turn flashlight on/off
□ Run
△ Map
R1 Strafe Right
L1 Strafe Left
R2 Ready weapon
L2 Centre view
START Open inventory

THE GAME

Set in the same time frame as the PSone original, *Silent Hill 2* revolves around James Sanderland who receives a letter from his dead wife. Disturbed, James resolves to get to the bottom of the mystery.

THE DEMO

After loading, the demo gives you the option of either Prologue or Battle Mode, which can be chosen with ↑, ↓ and ⊗. If you choose Prologue, you'll begin James's adventure in some public toilets on the other side of the lake from Silent Hill. After the intro sequence a timer appears in the top right corner, so try to make it to the town before it counts down to zero. Choosing Battle will put you right in the action. Once more, you're against the clock so you can opt to solve some of the puzzles or just take hold of the pistol and head straight for the action.

>>PLAYABLE DEMO FOUR

AIRBLADE

Publisher: SCEE/Game type: Extreme sports/
Out: November/Players: 1-2

THE CONTROLS
LEFT ANALOGUE STICK Move
⊗ Jump (hold for boost)
◎ Grab
□ Trick
△ Grind
R1 Spin board right
L1 Spin board left
R2 Speed boost
L2 Brake
START Pause/Options

THE GAME

Criterion's *Tony Hawk's/Back To The Future*-style hoverboarder has been turning plenty of heads in the PS2 community with its quality graphics and interactive environments. Ethan has come into possession of an experimental hoverboard and is relentlessly pursued by a multinational corporation determined to get their hands on it.

THE DEMO

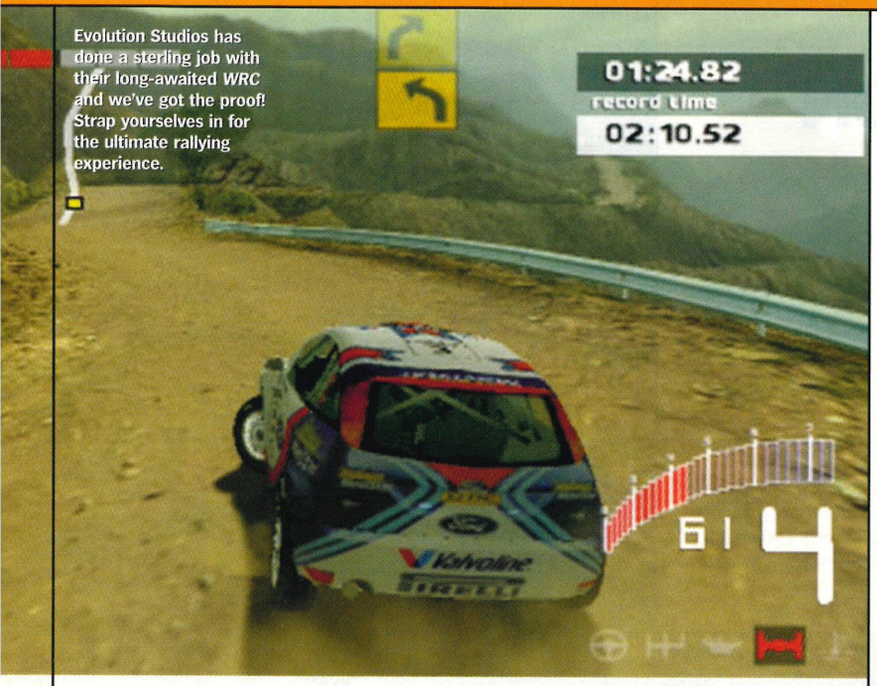
Once the demo has loaded, choose either single or multiplayer game with ↑, ↓ and ⊗ and choose to play as either Ethan or his mate Kat and press ⊗ again to begin the game in the Downtown area. In the Single-player mode you've got two and a half minutes to complete the objectives, while the Two-player game requires you to find the ribbon and hang onto it for as long as possible. Touch it to steal from the other player.

»ON THE DVD

MORE DEMOS

playable demos

Other magazines let you watch, *OPS2* lets you play...



Evolution Studios has done a sterling job with their long-awaited *WRC* and we've got the proof! Strap yourselves in for the ultimate rallying experience.

»PLAYABLE DEMO FIVE

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Publisher: SCEE/Game type: Racing/Out: November/Players: 1 (Full game 1-2)

THE CONTROLS

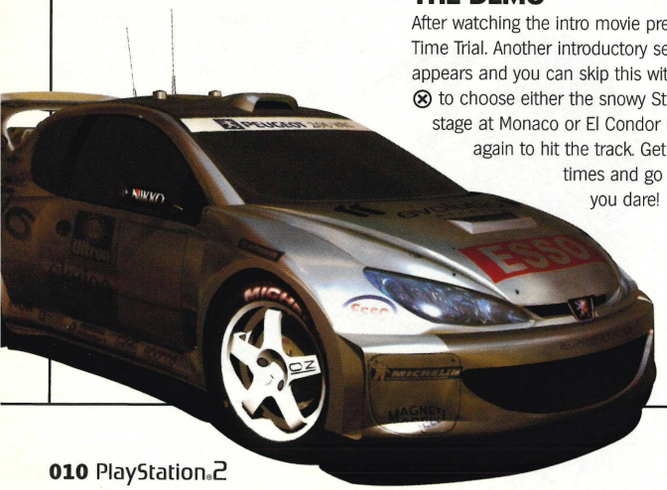
LEFT ANALOGUE STICK Steer
⊗ Accelerate
□ Brake
○ Handbrake
△ Change view
START Pause/Options

THE GAME

Evolution Studios' first venture into PS2 gaming is just about to hit the shelves and it's ready to give Mr McRae a run for his money. Set in 14 worldwide locations (including Monte Carlo, New Zealand and Britain) *WRC* features all the gritty realism of the event itself in terms of handling, sound and graphics while retaining the crucial playability of a great gaming experience.

THE DEMO

After watching the intro movie press ⊗ to choose Time Trial. Another introductory sequence then appears and you can skip this with ⊗. Use ↑, ↓ and ⊗ to choose either the snowy St Pierre-Entrevaux stage at Monaco or El Condor in Argentina and ⊗ again to hit the track. Get the best possible times and go for the in-car view if you dare!



»PLAYABLE DEMO SIX

DARK CLOUD

Publisher: SCEE/Game type: RPG/Out: Now/Players: 1

THE CONTROLS

LEFT ANALOGUE STICK Move
⊗ Attack (hold for jump attack)/Action
○ Lock-on target
△ Open menu screen
R1 Rotate camera right
L1 Rotate camera left
R2 Switch to 1st person perspective/Look around
L2 Centre view
SELECT Toggle between Diorama and Walking modes, Pause

THE GAME

Meet Toan, a man whose mission is to rebuild his world following its destruction by an evil genie and its masters. Delving deep into vast dungeons he must locate and retrieve the Atla, protective spheres in which the shattered components of his world have been placed, and rebuild them piece by piece. Sound strange? It is, but SCEE's diorama RPG is like no other you've played before.

THE DEMO

At the intro screen hit START twice, then press ⊗ to scroll through the story. After watching the Dark Shrine cut-scene we're off to Nolun Village where the Genie is about cause some bother. Your task from here is to conquer the Divine Beast cave and find Nolun's protector, Dran.

Dungeons & Dragons on your PS2! Swords and sorcery at it's finest.

»PLAYABLE DEMO SEVEN

BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE

Publisher: Interplay/Game type: RPG/Out: November/Players: 1 (Full game 1-2)

THE CONTROLS

LEFT ANALOGUE STICK Move
RIGHT ANALOGUE STICK Rotate camera
⊗ Attack
□ Action (talk/open)
○ Use magic/feat
△ Jump
R1 Block/Parry
R2 Drink health potion
L1 Auto map
L2 Drink Mana potion
D-PAD LEFT/RIGHT Toggle Weapons
D-PAD UP/DOWN Toggle spells
SELECT Open inventory
START Pause/Options

THE GAME

After a successful run on PC, this goblin-bashing RPG series arrives on PS2. Something is wrong in the city of Baldur's Gate and it's up to you to return normality to the region. With a Two-player co-operative mode, a huge gameworld, richly detailed visuals and enough depth to keep even the keenest D&D fans happy *BG: DA* is another firm favourite for Christmas.

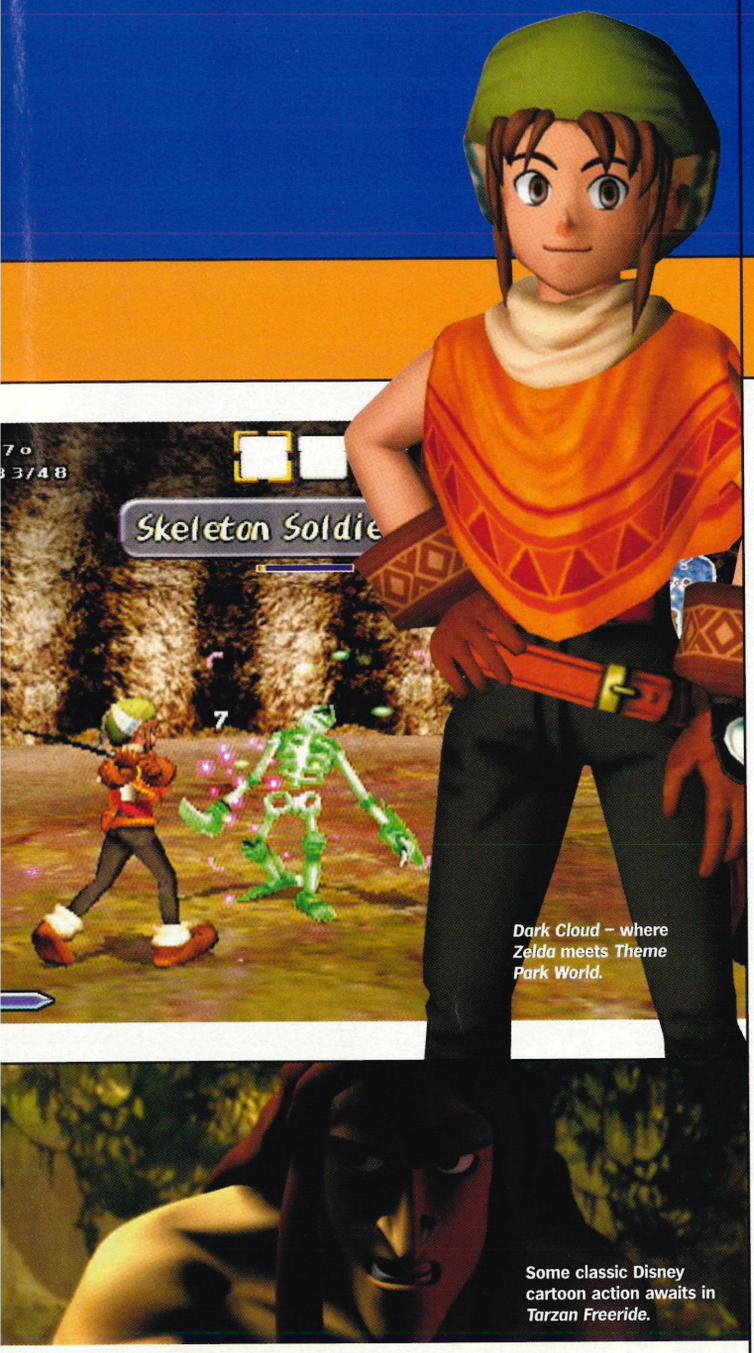
THE DEMO

Once loaded, hit START and to go straight into the action. Taking the role of an Eleven Sorceress your task is to rid the basement of its Rat infestation within the time limit.

Talk to us!

» Comments and queries about this DVD should go to me, Adrian, at PS2@futurenet.co.uk. Sorry, I can't answer your questions over the phone.
» If you have problems with your DVD, pop it in an envelope and send it to the following address. We'll test it and, if faulty, send you a new DVD. We're at *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Disc Returns, Customer Services, Future Publishing, Cary Court, Bancombe Road Industrial Estate, Somerton, Somerset TA11 6TB.

**Remember, this DVD will only work on a PS2.*



***Dark Cloud* – where *Zelda* meets *Theme Park World*.**

Some classic Disney cartoon action awaits in *Tarzan Freeride*.

>>PLAYABLE DEMO EIGHT

TARZAN FREERIDE

Publisher: Ubi Soft/Game type: Racer/Demo type: Playable/
Out: December/Players: 1

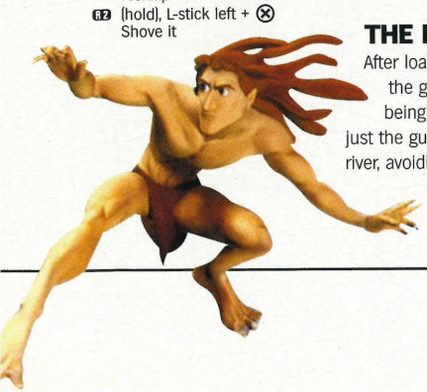
THE CONTROLS
LEFT ANALOGUE STICK Steer
⊗ Jump
L2 Interface
R2 Trick (in combination with buttons below)
R2 (hold), L-stick right + ⊗ Kickflip
R2 (hold), L-stick left + ⊗ Shove it

THE GAME

A mad professor has rudely interrupted the jungle's idyllic lifestyle by catching all the animals, so it's up to you to put a stop to him. Time to surf, bungee and water-ski your way through 15 levels assisted by familiar faces from the Disney movie including Jane, Terk and Tantor & Porter.

THE DEMO

After loading, click through with ⊗ to start the game. Terk has fallen into the river and being the primal hard-man type, Tarzan's just the guy for the rescue operation. Ride the river, avoiding the obstacles, and finish the level to save the hairy little blighter. Pull off tricks as you go to gain life bonuses and become king of the jungle.



video previews

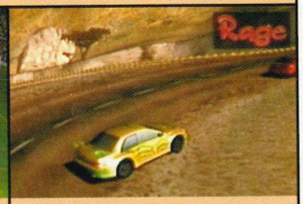
A glimpse of PS2's future...

>>VIDEO ONE
DEVIL MAY CRY
Publisher: Capcom
Our *Devil May Cry* coverage explodes this month with an exclusive new edit of Shinji Mikami's masterpiece. Check out Dante's incredible sword-slashing, a host of enemies and a very cool underwater sequence.

>>VIDEO TWO
JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY
Publisher: SCEE
Naughty Dog's latest creation demands your attention and here's the proof. *J&D* is looking to redefine the platformer and on this gorgeous evidence it might just succeed. Enjoy.

>>VIDEO THREE
JET SKI RIDERS
Publisher: Eidos
Against the backdrops of tropical islands and the Venetian canals we flip, barrel roll and jump our way through this fast-paced edit of Eidos' water-racer.

>>VIDEO FOUR
FIFA 2002
Publisher: EA
EA's massive FIFA franchise returns in the capable hands of Andy Gray and John Motson – we follow Man U and Liverpool through a typically bruising encounter.



>>VIDEO FIVE
GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE: AFRICA
Publisher: Rage
Bask in the beautiful African sunset of this gorgeous coastal track in Rage's *McRae*-meets-*GT* racing hybrid.

>>VIDEO SIX
CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX
Publisher: Universal
Join the madcap marsupial and friends for a breakneck ride through Crash's first PS2 outing. We hop aboard mine carts, planes, Jeeps and rockets in this excellent trailer.

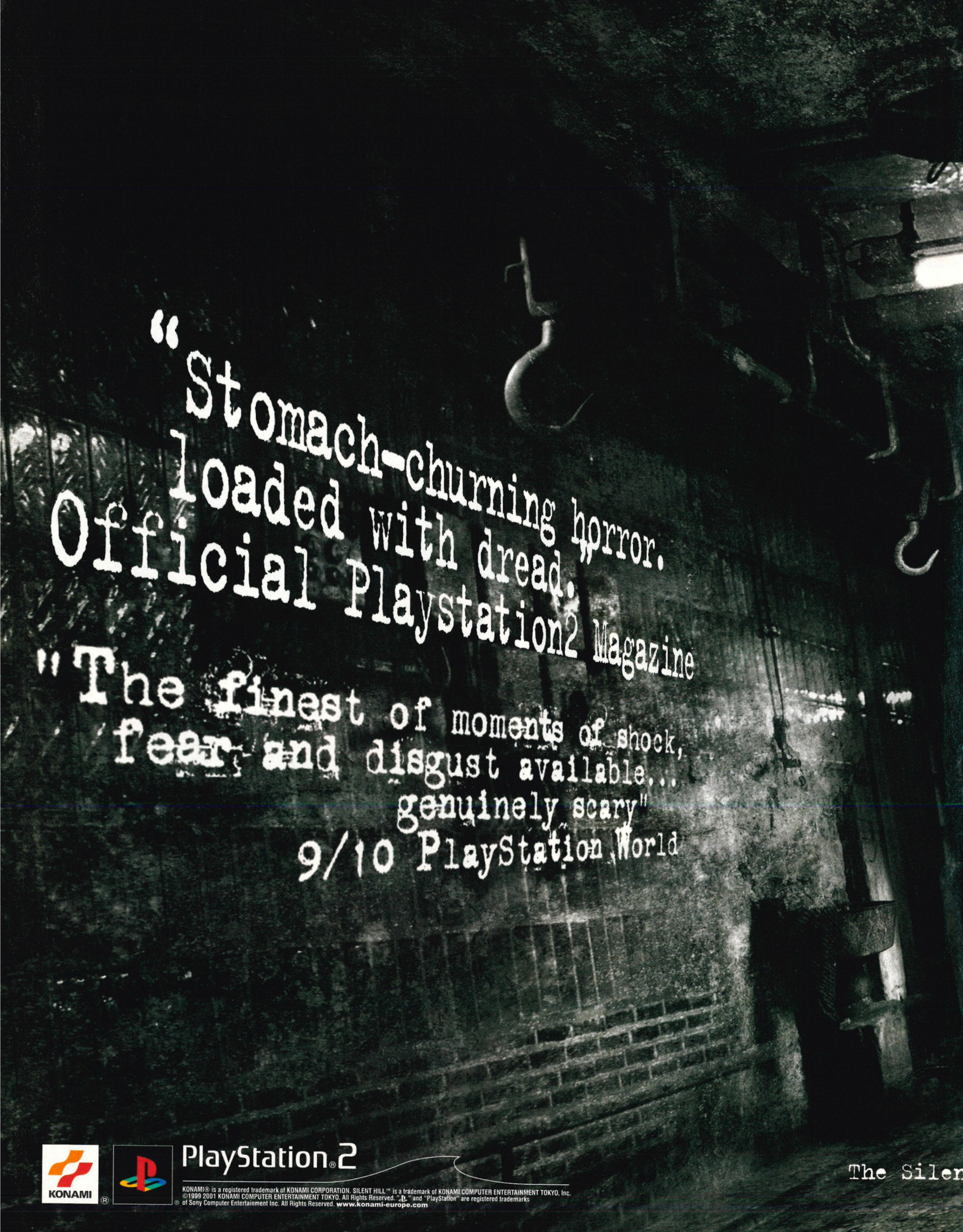
>>VIDEO SEVEN
PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2
Publisher: SCEE
The noodle-fixated hip-hop rapping hound and pals are back! This quirky rhythm action game combines lush cartoon visuals and addictive gameplay with hilarious results. And remember – you gotta believe!

video extras

And there's more...

>>EXTRA ONE
THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE
Publisher: EA
Oh dear, Homer's taken up cab driving! Fox's *Crazy Taxi* clone is an amusing combination of *The Simpsons* humour and arcade gameplay. Here, we take a sneaky peek.

>>EXTRA TWO
WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP
Publisher: SCEE
Take a look at the real-life WRC competition in our exclusive film. Check out all the drivers, motors, environments and thrills of this top rallying event.



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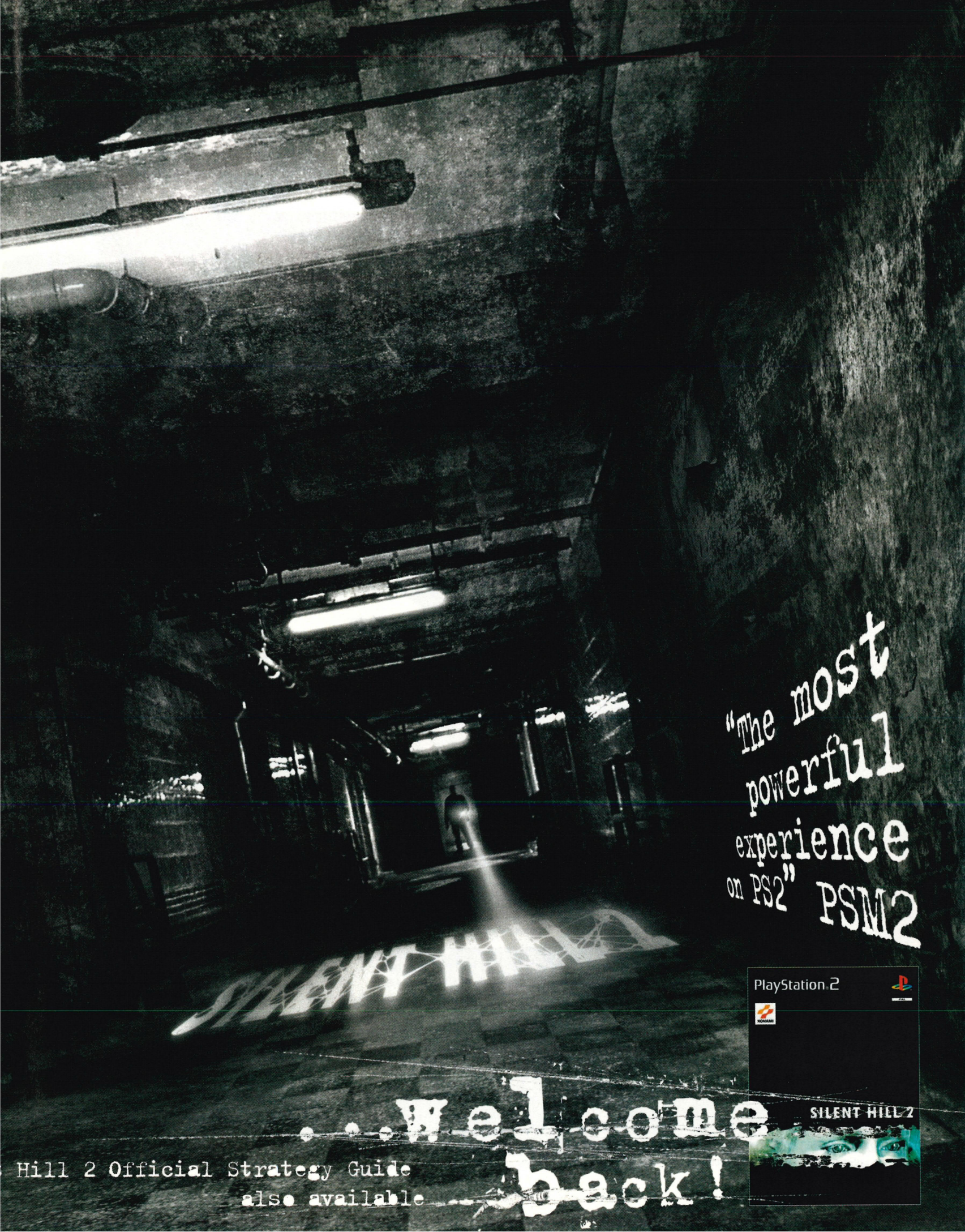

"The most powerful experience on PS2" PSM2
SILENT HILL
...welcome back!
Hill 2 Official Strategy Guide also available
PlayStation 2
KONAMI
SILENT HILL 2

PREVIEW CONTENTS

14 **Jak And Daxter**
Two new stars emerge from Naughty Dog's kennel in a 3D free-roaming platformer.

18 **SSX Tricky**
This snowboarding sequel promises to be bigger and better with two new courses.

20 **Moto GP 2**
High-powered motorbike racing with TV-realistic replays.

22 **Ecco The Dolphin**
The bottlenose mammal jumps from Dreamcast to PS2 with continued serenity.

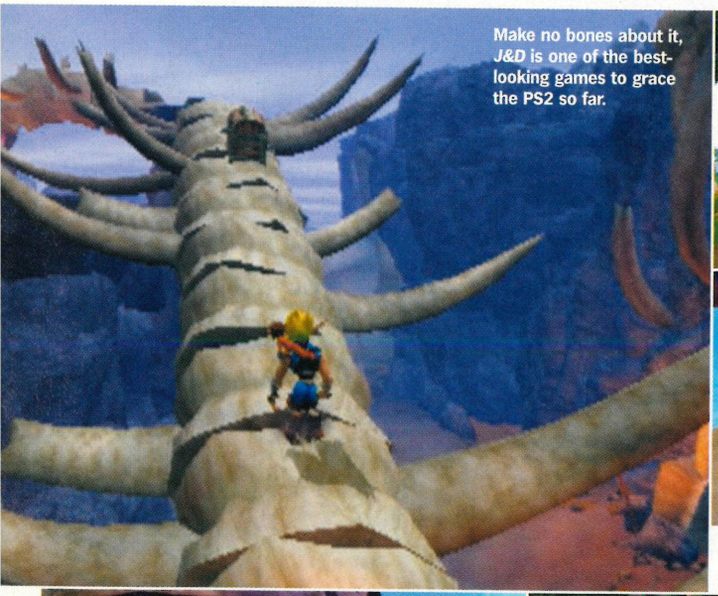
24 **The Simpsons: Road Rage**
Homer gets behind the wheel in this *Crazy Taxi* homage.

26 **James Bond 007 In... Agent Under Fire**
Finally, it's PS2's answer to *GoldenEye*.

28 **Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance**
Dungeons & Dragons-style sorcery in a series that started life on the PC.

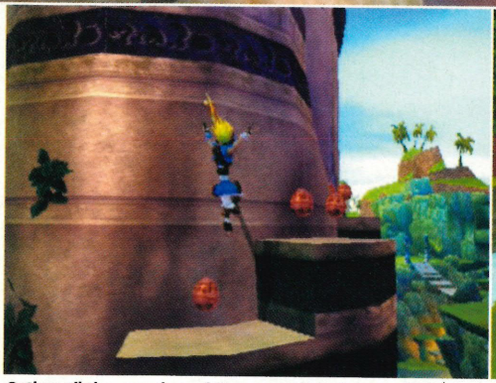
30 **Polaroid Pete**
The voyeuristic pleasure of the candid camera is all yours in this Japanese oddity.

33 **Jet Ski Riders**
Racing without a brake pedal. Mount a Kawasaki and cause mayhem on the wake.



Make no bones about it, *J&D* is one of the best-looking games to grace the PS2 so far.

***J&D*'s first-person view lets you get better acquainted with some peculiar beasts.**



Gather all the egg-shaped Precursor Orbs for popularity.

All your favourite platform perils are in evidence.

WORDS: PAUL FITZPATRICK

JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY

ON THE DVD

Project Y, Jak And Daxter. Whatever you call it, the *Bandicoot* crew are preparing a rare gem of a game.

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Naughty Dog
Players: 1
Release: December

How do you know when you're playing an outstanding game? There are many parameters to note, features to assess and telltale signs to look for. But few can beat being ushered out of the office 90 minutes past quitting time having failed to notice your colleagues heading for the nearest hostelry at the end of the day. When a game does that you know it's a winner.

Hold on. That's the introduction to a review. You see, that's the problem with *Jak And Daxter.* Not even finished and it's already such a profoundly satisfying experience that it's hard to believe there's much in the way of improvement possible.

Regular readers of *OPS2* with an eye for the next big thing will already be in the *J&D* loop, but for newbies a quick introduction is in order. Developed by Naughty Dog, the architects of all of *Crash Bandicoot*'s PSone adventures (bar *Crash Bash*), *Jak And Daxter* is an epic, free roaming adventure that's targeting the often overlooked platformer/puzzler/kart-racer/shooter/fish-catching mini-game fan demographic. It's set on a stretch of coastline in a fictitious world where the humanoid inhabitants live their low-tech lives cheek by jowl with remains left by an ancient alien civilisation known as The Precursors.

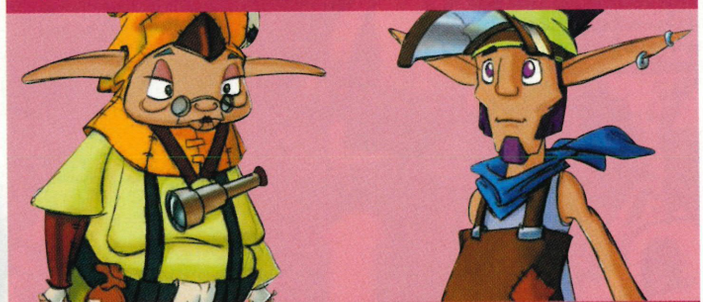
The Precursors' advanced technology was built around and powered by Eco, a gloopy, elemental force secreted by the planet, but most of their machines have long since fallen into disrepair. Jak and Daxter live in this world. But when wisecracking Daxter falls into a pool of Dark Eco (a malevolent form of the goo) he's transformed into a rodent-like creature with his wiseass personality very much intact. Daxter needs to be transformed back, but in searching for an expert to help them, our heroes gradually uncover a plot to flood the land with Dark Eco. If that's not enough to occupy the daring duo, the only way they'll see success involves helping out villagers with a mass of tasks.

VILLAGE PEOPLE

Jak and Daxter's very own village has more than its fair share of needy oddballs. Here's a handful.

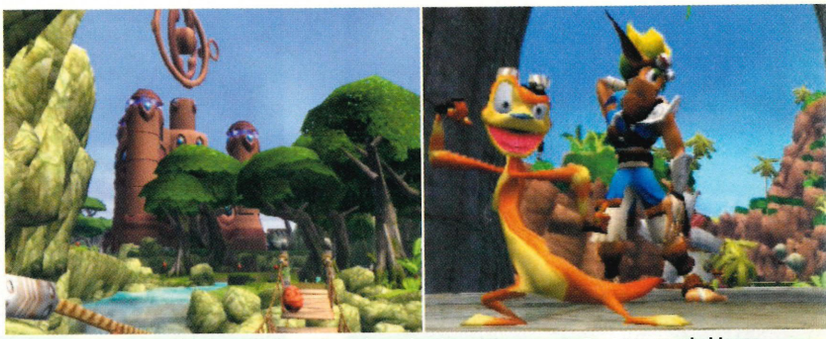
THE ARTIST
What's Up? This guy's a sculptor, but his muse has left him and caused a bad case of chiseller's block.
What can you do? Re-capture his muse (who looks like a hyperactive, yellow squirrel as it happens).

THE MAYOR
What's Up? He needs someone to fix the diverted Eco beam and restore power to the village. He also needs campaign funds.
What can you do? Do what he says and on the way pick up enough power cells to make a tidy campaign contribution.

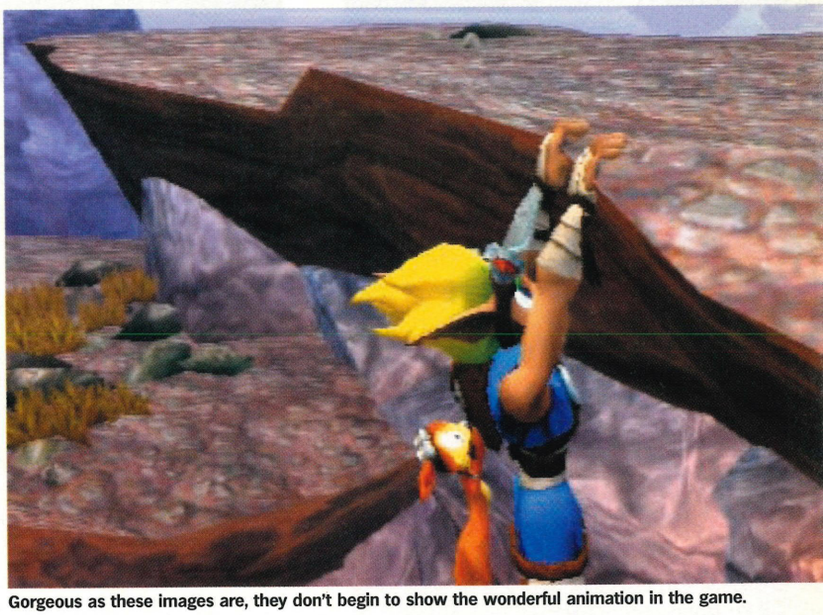


THE TWITCHER
What's Up? She's spotted an egg on an outcrop and wants you to push it off.
What can you do? Get climbing. When the egg hatches you've got yourself a useful new friend.

THE FARMER
What's Up? He's getting on, and his dozy cattle have escaped their enclosure.
What can you do? Chase after the wandering cows and use your lunge attack to whip them into action. You should have them back in their pen in no time, right?

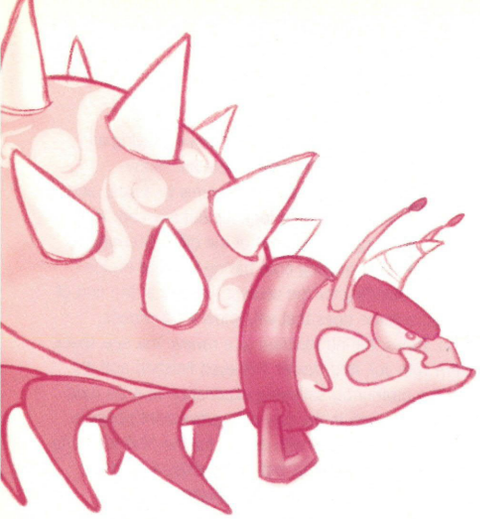


Jak and Daxter's world is beautifully realised from the tips of the trees to Daxter's weedy biceps.



Gorgeous as these images are, they don't begin to show the wonderful animation in the game.

JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY



If you could shear the game of its obvious good looks and organic loveliness, the nuts and bolts beneath would reveal that *Jak And Daxter* has 15 levels set around five village hubs, each containing seven main tasks and a smattering of mini-games. Cleverly disguising the platformer's habitual and obviously linear 'you-must-go-here-to-get-there' aesthetic, progression through the game earns currency in the form of Power Cells and Precursor Orbs. It works like this: Helping the village's beatnik sculptor to retrieve his muse (a hyperactive yellow squirrel) will win you a Cell, while mechanically-minded boffin Keira needs a number of Cells to power her Z-GraV Zoomer hoverbike. The Mayor is after Orbs for his re-election fund, but also needs your help to sort out the village's recent power blackout. He'll pay you handsomely for your help, of course, and thinks that the source of the problem is out amongst the ruins of an abandoned Precursor city. As it happens, on the way there you'll meet a farmer who needs help herding his dozy cows into their pen. Lend a hand and you'll get an Orb for your trouble... And so the game unfolds.

Since Orbs and Cells can be either payment for you or a desired object for a third party, the type of tasks can be (and are) incredibly varied. Catching 200lbs of fish? Check. Herding blind Lightning Moles into their burrow before sunrise? Check. Disabling a cannon firing on your village from the foreboding Misty Island? Why on earth not? Certain tasks will merely stock up your supply of Orbs and Cells while others will prove pivotal to your progress through the game. Remember Keira's Z-GraV Zoomer hoverbike? Supplying it with the necessary fuel allows you to pilot the eccentric vehicle through a valley of molten rock to the hitherto unreachable second village. And as you'd expect by now, the journey itself is a superb and challenging mini-game in its own right.

The order in which you complete tasks is largely up to you, and with no loading times at all, the sense of immersion in the game's world is surprisingly profound. This seamless approach to gameplay also helps to knit together the wide variety of tasks and mini missions on offer into an endlessly inventive whole rather than the disparate patchwork of elements that could so easily have resulted from the developer's overstimulated imaginings. Whether these artfully implemented strategies that draw a veil over *J&D*'s necessarily linear structure (it's a story-driven game, remember) will retain their bewitching effect over the full 15 village hubs is impossible to say at this stage, but on the evidence presented the signs are very encouraging indeed.

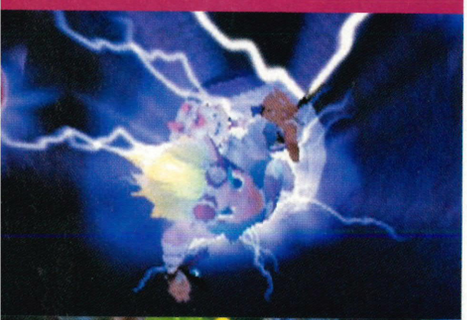
COMEDY DUO

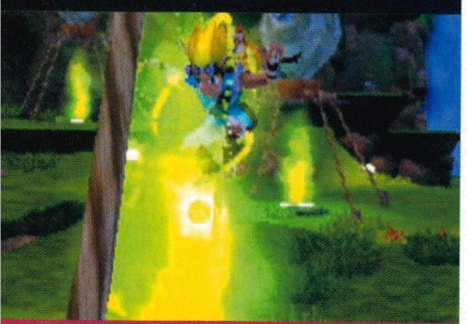
Of course, it doesn't hurt to have a couple like Jak and Daxter around whom to hinge the action. Theirs is a curious relationship and pivotal to the game's appeal. Making Jak, the physical half of the duo and the one you control, the strong, silent type while giving the diminutive, shoulder-clinging Daxter all the sarcastic, motor mouth charm of a New York cabbie is inspired. Jak's amiably mute status not only prevents gamers from feeling excluded and overwhelmed by a crossfire of wisecracks but allows you to increasingly identify with him. Now this may sound like inconsequential tosh, but play the game and you really do start to feel a growing affinity with your acid-tongued partner in crime and a personal stake in his salvation. As ever, it's the subtle things that make all the difference between free-time filler and gameplay addiction.

As for the graphics, well, glance around these pages. *Jak And Daxter* looks this good all of the time. Exposition scenes and other FMV are indistinguishable from the regular in-game graphics. The overall look sits surprisingly comfortably between Disneyesque rosy cheeks, and the sexier, streamlined aesthetic of Japanese anime. In this way the game meets traditional expectations of how a platformer should be drawn but undercuts all that wholesomeness with a dash of disquietude. What's more, the game's movie-quality animation adds a sharp-edged humour that further prevents cuteness from solidifying

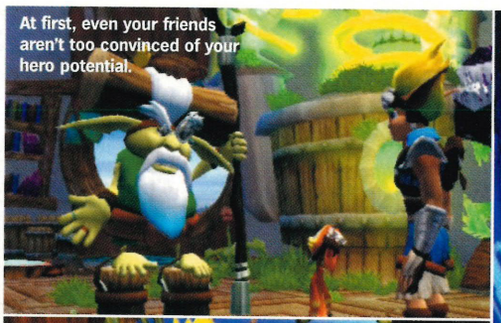
ECO WARRIOR

What is this Eco stuff and what does it have to do with our heroes?

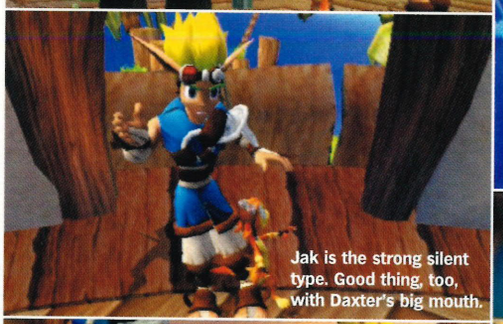




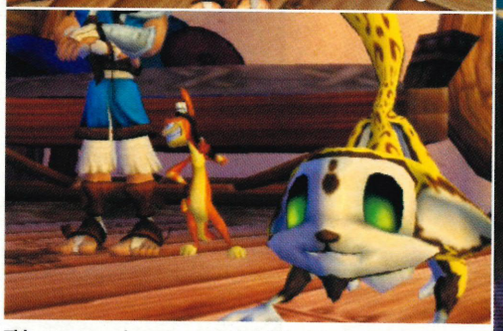
Eco is the game's elemental energy source and can be good or bad. The Dark form of the stuff turned Daxter into a rodent-like creature, while the good stuff comes to the surface all over the place and has several uses. It powers Jak and Daxter's village for one thing, but that's not all. Jak is able to absorb Eco for a limited period. Green Eco boosts his health, Red increases his attack strength while Blue Eco means he's able to activate long dormant Precursor machinery. Jump pads spring into life, sealed doors open and crates of Power Cells open automatically. Could it be there's more to this Jak fellow than meets the eye?



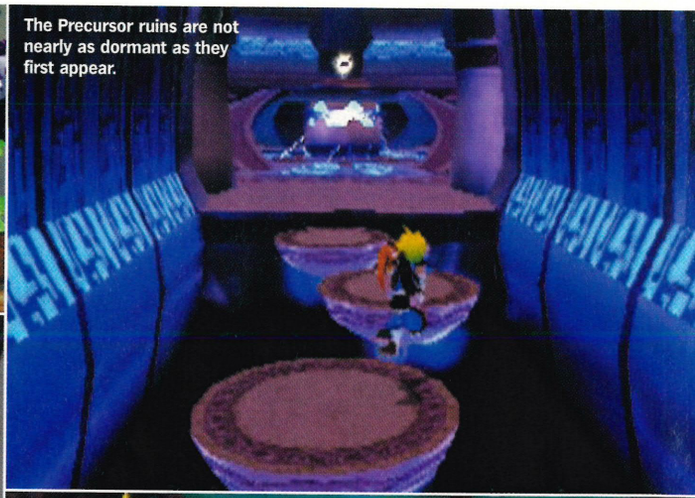
At first, even your friends aren't too convinced of your hero potential.



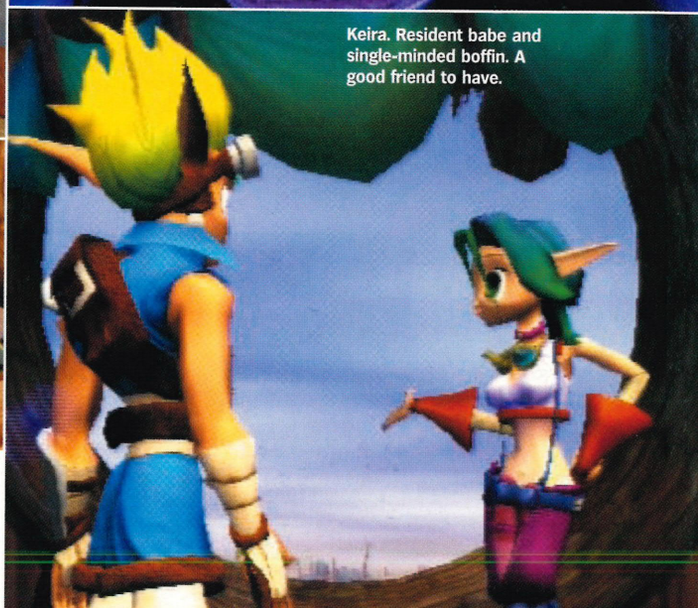
Jak is the strong silent type. Good thing, too, with Daxter's big mouth.



This green-eyed, goatee-bearded little fella is the artist's lost muse. Who would think it could be an an inspiration?



The Precursor ruins are not nearly as dormant as they first appear.



Keira. Resident babe and single-minded boffin. A good friend to have.

into stomach-turning schmaltz. Special mention must also be made of the game's subtle soundscape. From footfalls on wet sand to the spitting electrical discharge of the Precursor's ancient machinery there is always some sonic subtlety adding to the on-screen experience. Even when next to nothing is happening in the game world there is an almost palpable atmosphere that alters with the sinking sun and the approach of evening. Let's just hope that this attention to detail isn't lost behind chugging theme music when the game comes to review.

Of course it wouldn't be a fully functioning preview if there weren't at least a handful of areas in the game that were underperforming or that required some developer attention before the release date. Alright then: Jak could stand to be an inch taller and the trees could be a darker shade of green. Will that do? Okay, okay, so *Jak And Daxter* isn't perfect, but if Naughty Dog keeps going in the direction it's headed there really isn't a whole lot that's going to stand between them and a Bandicoot-trampling, landmark game. And you don't need to wait for the review to hear that. □

ON TARGET? JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY

Crash Bandicoot was the closest thing PSone got to a mascot. Will Jak and Daxter become the friendly faces of PS2?

GRAPHICS
Stylish, with enormous attention to detail. Looking very good.

LEVEL DESIGN
So expansive, it's easy to forget there are levels at all.

SIDEKICK QUALITY
Lippy and very funny with it, Daxter is the star of the game.

//Jak is the strong silent type, while Daxter has the sarcastic charm of a New York cabbie//

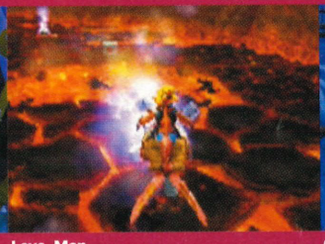
TASK MASTER

Five standout tasks in *Jak And Daxter*.

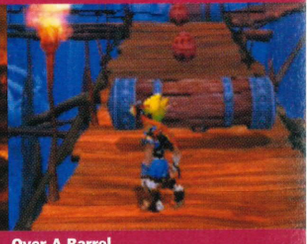
Net Profits
Help the fisherman to net 200lbs of fish from a fast moving river without scooping up any poisonous ones. Harder and more addictive than it looks.

Muse Hunt
Chase the sculptor's muse (a hyperactive, sparkling yellow squirrel) around the bone strewn wasteland of Misty Island. Catching it is no mean feat.

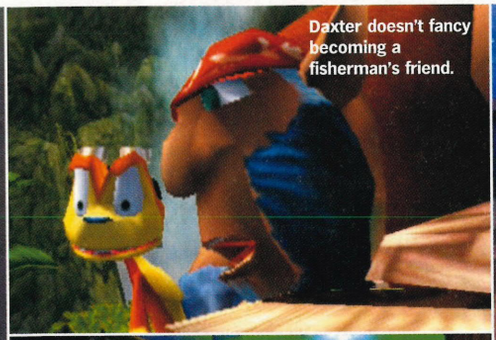
Flower Cower
Your first big boss is an oversized pot plant with a big appetite and a bad attitude. Wait until he's snoozing to get close enough to hit him.



Lava, Man
Using Keira's Z-GraV Zoomer, make your way across the molten lava with only a few coolant bubbles to keep the bike (and you) from total meltdown.



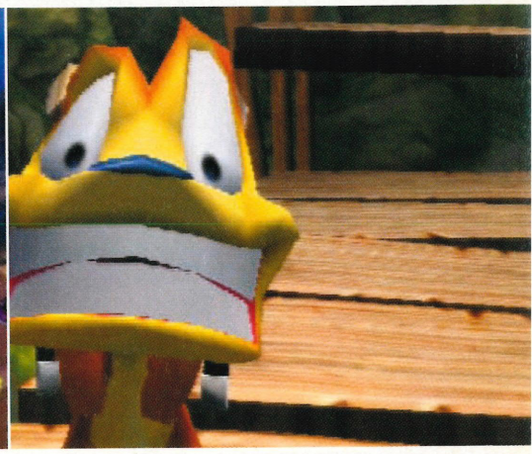
Over A Barrel
On Misty Island head up a narrow pathway ducking and jumping a ceaseless succession of rolling and bouncing barrels.



Daxter doesn't fancy becoming a fisherman's friend.

Game characters are hugely likeable, and more than that, damn funny.

Surrounded by nasties, Jak and Daxter get a boost of attack energy with some newly discovered Red Eco.



Meet Daxter. Falling in a vat of Dark Eco may have turned him into a rodent, but it's done nothing for his manners.

WORDS: STE CURRAN

SSX TRICKY

SSX was PS2's first big game, taking snowboarding one step further. Now it's back and looks to be even bigger.

Publisher: EA Sports Big
Developer: EA Canada
Players: 1-2
Release: 23 November

She's back. Oh, she's back. And that brings anxiety, trepidation, nerves and outright panic. As far as PlayStation 2's concerned, *SSX* was our first love, and when you revisit your sweetheart, you tend to feel some degree of fear. What if it's not as beautiful? What if it doesn't feel as good as you remember? What if you can't remember how?

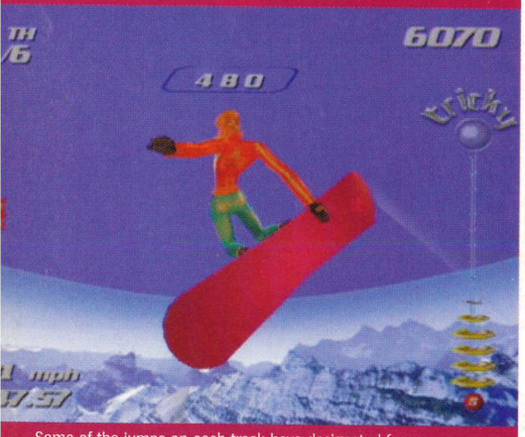
Relax. It turns out that returning to your snowboard for *SSX Tricky* is like riding a bike – you never forget. Actually, it's like riding a bike around the estate you grew up on. You feeling every piece of Tarmac, every bump you used to thrill to as a kid – it's natural, instinctive. It's simple, and then you decide to show off, do a trick off the incline that used to be just around the corner. Except the corner's not there any more – there's a neon-plastered snow-covered skyscraper instead – and *wham*, suddenly, you realise you've got to relearn *everything*.

SSX Tricky's revamped front-end indicates the changes, but it's when you get on the snow that the differences really start to hit home. Ignore the new courses for a moment, and focus on your old turf. Snow Dream is practically unrecognisable, still based on a gradual incline but evolving from a 90-second training scoot into a more challenging experience. Mesa Blanca, the Wild West ride, is covered in skybound twisting railroads for railslide experts. The Tokyo Megaplex pinball table has been entirely reworked, covered from start to finish in a lattice of translucent green pipes that provide massive short cuts for those daring enough to reach them and skilful enough to stay within them. It's not all old made better though, *SSX Tricky* will also include two completely new tracks, Alaska and Garibaldi.

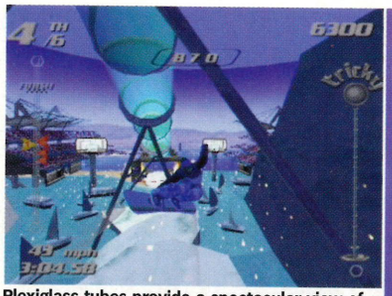
Just as striking are the subtler differences. Sharp left turns have been moulded into gradual rights, inclines become drops, clumps of trees block previous short cuts while their branches hide new ones from view. What really strikes is the sense of scale, easily seen in just how much more time it takes to

ICE SPY

SSX Tricky **jumps on the the overloaded bandwagon that is the freeze-frame camera moment.**



Some of the jumps on each track have designated freeze-frame points. Manage to perform some kind of trick off a peak, and the game freezes, the camera swooping around you and capturing your in-flight elegance in full. It's cute, especially when you're caught upside down and unable to right yourself, and pleasantly cinematic, but it's also more than a little irrelevant.



Plexiglass tubes provide a spectacular view of the snowscape, particularly when you fall.

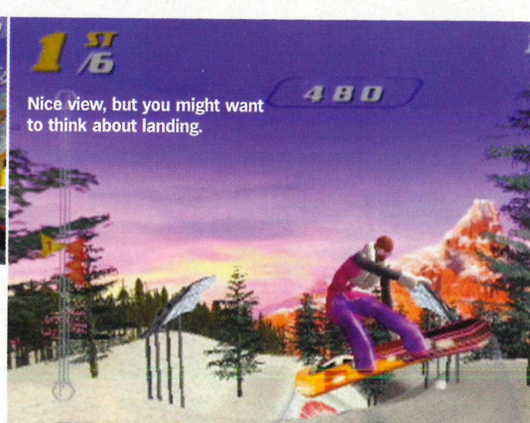
On the run from new admirers, Marisol finds herself heading towards the big city.

Tricky**'s new rival system can work in your favour – your friends may move out of the way and help you out. Enemies aren't likely to be so gracious.**

Races are still often undecided until the last few moments.

Trees block old short cuts, and Marisol finds herself lost.

The Megaplex has been completely revamped too, though the flippers remain.



Nice view, but you might want to think about landing.

complete each course. Each snowscape is larger and longer than its predecessor, to the extent that on your first run through you might wonder if you've missed the finish line.

Also reinvented are *SSX*'s cast. Boring Hiro and fatboy Jurgen are gone, and there's a plot to the soap opera now thanks to the simple rival system. Having friends and enemies within each race might seem secondary to the action, and if you choose to ignore it, it can be. But once you've got used to the new riders and worked out where their souls lie in the exaggerated *SSX* universe, it makes more sense. Partly pre-programmed and partly depending on how you treat them, personalities clash; some of the characters step aside, and some head straight for you. Being beaten to the line by a fraction of a second has always hurt, but when it's by someone who you've grown to despise, it really smarts.

So as you may have gathered, in *SSX Tricky* everything's bigger: bigger courses, bigger rivalry, bigger emotion. It's just the same, but there's more. It might have been feared that, with the celebrity attachments (see Star Quality) and the signs of a fractionally changed appearance, *SSX* was going down the route of EA's other annual brands. It hasn't. The second date nerves disappear. She's back, and she looks brighter than ever. □

//In *SSX Tricky* everything's bigger: bigger courses, bigger rivalry, bigger emotion//

ON TARGET? SSX TRICKY

Powder is white, ice is blue, and *SSX* is as good as ever. Solid, fast and as spectacular as it was the last time. Only more…

SOUND
Slicing through powder has never been so sweet.

HANDLING
Not the most realistic, but that's not the point.

VISUALS
Gorgeous snowscapes and stunning vistas.

STAR QUALITY

The celebrities behind the voices of *SSX Tricky*'s characters.

PHOTOS: ALLSTAR [3]

Elise: Lucy Liu
Sexy, sassy, and adorable, and everything the clichéd valley-girl should be. Well done Lucy, but why no place for lovely Drew, Cameron D, or, for that matter, Beyoncé?

Eddie: David Arquette
Expect a fine performance from the *Scream* star, though whether it'll live up to his superlative 1994 cameo in *D2: The Mighty Ducks* remains to be seen.

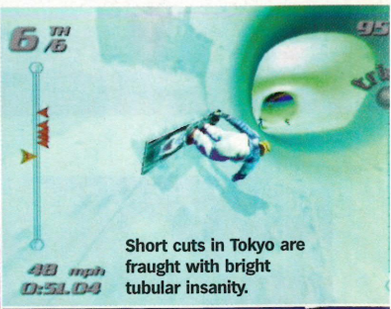
Luther: Oliver Platt
How can you argue with the ability of man who's starred in both *Dr Doolittle* and *The Bicentennial Man*? His appearance in comedy dog-romp *Beethoven* only adds to his reputation.

Seeiah: Macy Gray
She shouts, she growls, she squeals, she chokes. Just like one of her albums then, and one reason to be thankful for *SSX*'s excellent volume controls…

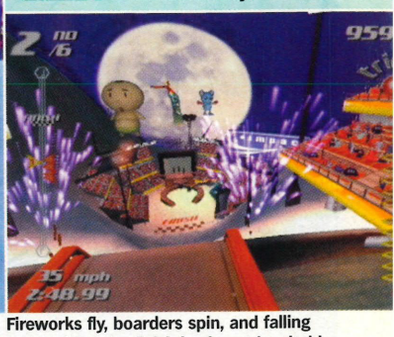
Macy Gray's snowy alter ego. Not quite as annoying as the singer, but only because she doesn't have an album.

While short cuts are fine for those with the nerve, beginners might want to concentrate on staying upright.

Tricks equal boost, boost equals speed. It's the *SSX* mantra, repeated often in *Tricky*, although thankfully the commentator has some new over-excited stock phrases.



Short cuts in Tokyo are fraught with bright tubular insanity.



Fireworks fly, boarders spin, and falling inches from the finish is almost inevitable.

MOTO GP 2

WORDS: MARTIN KITTS

Namco's ultra-realistic motorbike sim gets a sequel barely one year on, so what's different about the ultimate 'serious' racer?

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Namco
Release: February
Players: 1-2

The original *Moto GP* was a much misunderstood title. Applauded for its graphical finesse and realism, yet derided for a physics model so highly detailed that it was almost impossible to complete a lap in Simulation mode without wiping out, the real reason that so few people took a shine to the game is simple: It's full of motorbikes.

A shame, because once you got past the whole 'cars are better than bikes' stigma, *Moto GP* proved to be arguably a more thrilling experience, in terms of authentic racing, than any of the *Gran Turismo* titles. Finely tuned balance and handling provided a rock-solid base for a blindingly fast, hair-raising jaunt around some of the world's most challenging race circuits. It was difficult and rewarding, and in an attempt (presumably) to give the game the recognition it deserves, Namco has tarted it up with a new lick of paint and sent it out on the road again, as *Moto GP 2*.

This sequel is essentially identical to its predecessor, updated in much the same manner as EA's annual reworking of *FIFA Soccer*. There are new teams and riders, additional gameplay modes (including two-player versus) and a few minor bits and pieces, but take it out on the track and you'd be hard pressed to spot any difference between *Moto GP 2* and last year's version. The things that made the original game so great, particularly the feeling of actually being involved in a competitive race, appear to be unchanged.

The other bikers drive like demons on the higher difficulty settings. It's slightly harder than before if you race at anything above the standard level, and a little easier to beat in Normal mode. Unfortunately the bikes are still extremely skittish in Simulation mode, and unnaturally prone to sliding out of control if you don't have any experience of riding the real thing.

There's a new set of 72 challenges to complete, with rewards ranging from photos of the development team to extra, hidden characters. Legends mode offers the chance to race against a selection of all-time greats, but until you've mastered the standard Arcade mode, the only time you'll see any of those famous names is when they're zooming off into the distance shortly after the start.

Other changes are largely cosmetic. As you approach other racers in the pack, their faces appear above their bikes to let you know who you're about to overtake. The colour scheme is brighter and clearer than before, and the new weather effects are gobsmackingly good.

Hardcore bike fans will undoubtedly enjoy this as much as the first game, but it remains to be seen whether the subtle changes and new modes will be enough to tear the rest of us away from *GT3*. We'll don overalls and strip it down to its greasy two-stroke engine before bringing you the review next year. □

ON TARGET? MOTO GP 2

Bike racing for enthusiasts, and gorgeous graphics for everybody. The two-wheeled answer to *Gran Turismo 3*.

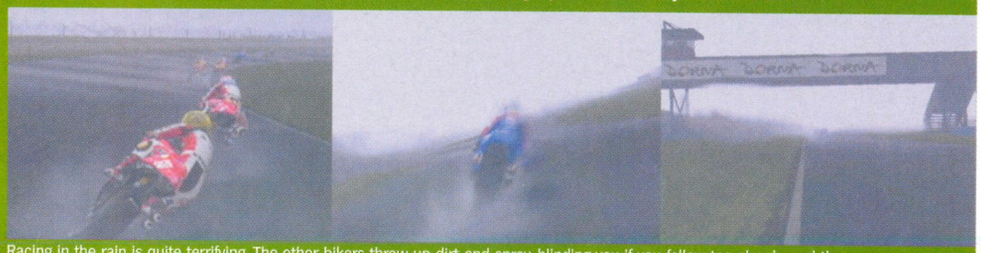
HANDLING
As close to riding a bike as you could get using a joypad.

LOOKS
Fantastic rain effects and sumptuous, TV-style replays.

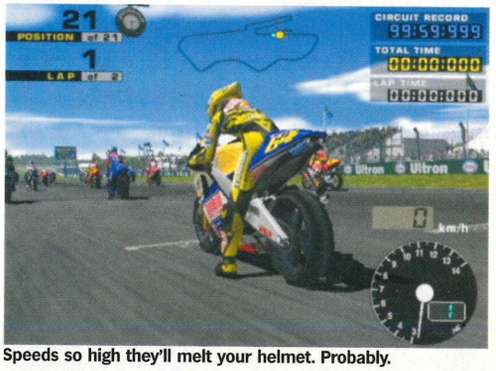
CHALLENGE
It's as big and tough as they come. Not for the faint-hearted.

WET WEEKEND

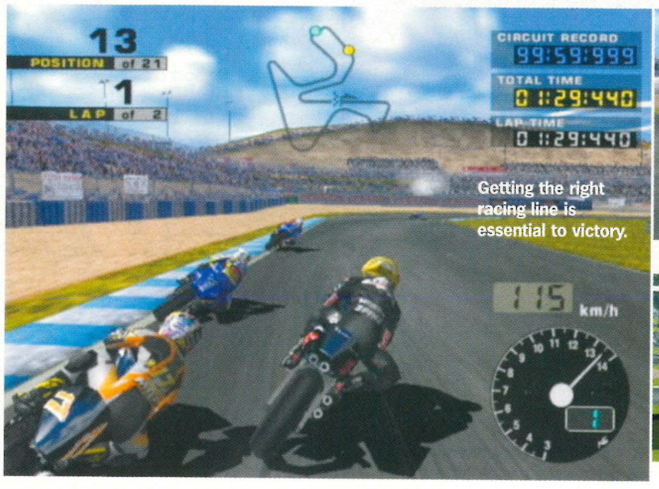
If you're looking for streaky and blurred graphics you've come to the right place. Don't worry. It's deliberate...



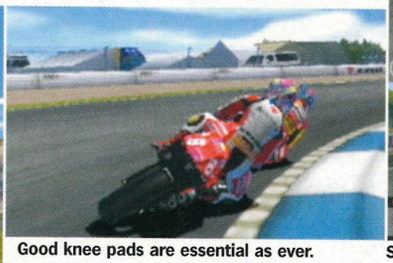
Racing in the rain is quite terrifying. The other bikers throw up dirt and spray, blinding you if you follow too closely, and the track becomes a hazardous skidpan. Stick it in the first-person camera view, switch off the on-screen displays, and you've got a truly authentic recreation of riding in the rain. The way the water splashes up onto your visor and distorts your vision is an extremely well-implemented special effect, and a testament to Namco's mastery of the PS2's video hardware.



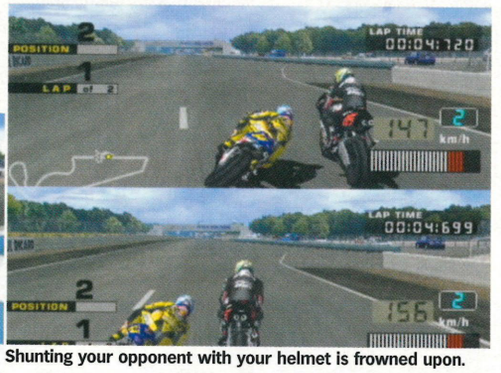
Speeds so high they'll melt your helmet. Probably.



Getting the right racing line is essential to victory.



Good knee pads are essential as ever.



Shunting your opponent with your helmet is frowned upon.

As in the original *Moto GP*, the replays are a real feature, boasting all the reality enhancing camera angles.

'CHICKEN'
The Art Of Driving #3
(November 2001)

BURNOUT

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PSM2

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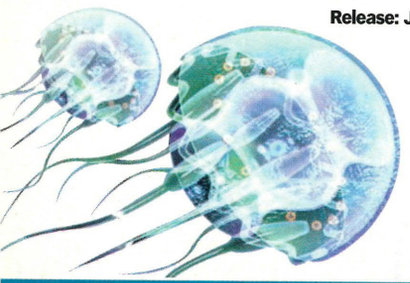
PlayStation®2

WORDS: JAMIE SEFTON

ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE

Swim with the fishes as Sega's bottle-nosed underwater icon makes a splash on PlayStation 2.

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Appaloosa/Sega
Players: 1
Release: January 2002



Sega's recent decision to go multi-platform is continuing to send ripples of excitement across release schedules, with *Ecco The Dolphin: Defender Of The Future* the latest quality game to make the leap upstream from Dreamcast to PlayStation 2.

Developed by Appaloosa, creator of the original 16 bit MegaDrive hit in 1995, the next-gen *Ecco* update stunned Dreamcast owners with its beautiful 3D underwater visuals and enchanting gameplay at its launch last year. Featuring a mythical Atlantis-inspired story line created by sci-fi author David Brin (*The Postman*) *Defender Of The Future* pits Ecco against a race of evil aliens known only as The Foe, dedicated to the destruction of dolphin and humankind. To save the world and restore the power of the sacred Guardian crystal, Ecco must make his way through 30 submerged levels, solving puzzles, making alliances and learning new abilities from his dolphin brethren.

Often criticised for throwing gamers in at the deep end too early, *Ecco* has since gone through a significant overhaul to make the PS2 version more accessible and enjoyable. The major change has been to further assist players with the various tasks throughout the adventure by providing revealing cut-scenes, hints from fellow dolphins and access to a small compass that pops up in the corner of the screen. Therefore puzzles, such as the rescuing of a baby whale from a rockfall that requires the help of two other dolphins, can now be completed without a frustrating time-consuming trawl around the level.

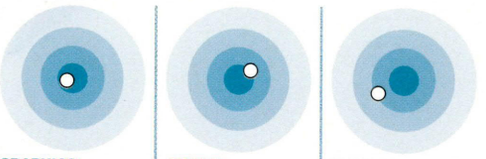
Graphics are now even more impressive, presenting an ocean kingdom alive with shoals of small fish, eels and other creatures swimming amongst brightly coloured coral, dappled with reflected sunlight shimmering through the constantly-moving water – all available in-game with both widescreen and 60hz options for PS2 owners with top-of-the-range TVs.

However, it's the smoothly animated Ecco who remains the game's enigmatic star, rolling and darting through the water before leaping spectacularly above the surface to take valuable breaths of air and survey the environment. The heroic dolphin can collect special 'gifts' littered around the level to increase his strength while health damaged by enemy attacks can be restored by catching and eating fish.

Ecco The Dolphin: Defender Of The Future is shaping up to be a welcome break from the usual blood-splattering action fare, providing a tranquil, immersing aquatic adventure. If Appaloosa can just temper *Ecco*'s tendency to drift towards 'New Age' shores teeming with ambient music, dream catchers and crystallised dragons, PS2 gamers could soon be smitten with underwater love. □

ON TARGET? ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE

One of the finest adventures on Dreamcast should deliver even more sea-soaked flipper festivities on PlayStation 2.



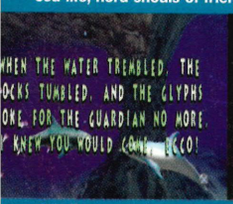
GRAPHICS
Scenes of watery bliss viewed through a PS2 porthole.

SOUND
Authentic water effects and calming New Age noodlings.

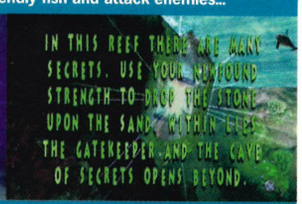
PUZZLES
May drown gamers' initial enthusiasm with obscure tasks.

DOLPHIN TALK

Ecco's ingenious sonar can be used to chit-chat with other sea life, herd shoals of friendly fish and attack enemies...

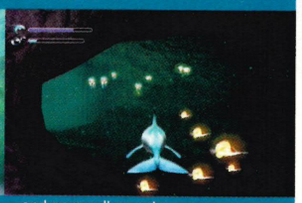


"See the match last night?" Ecco can happily converse with his sea-dwelling chums via the sonar, which emits high-pitched dolphin screeches and wails.

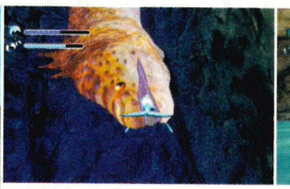


Using Ecco's sonar with the coloured crystal glyphs found scattered on the ocean floor reveal cryptic riddles, puzzle-solving movies and hidden clues.

Help other dolphins during the game to complete tasks and they reward you with a 'song'. These can be used for many tasks including the stunning of sharks...



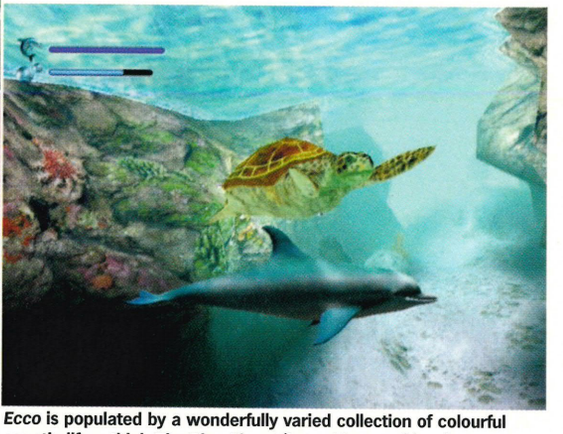
...and persuading various underwater creatures to follow you – pretty essential when there's a dingy cave to explore and a shoal of glow-in-the-dark fish nearby.



A dolphin unfriendly giant eel helps itself to a hearty snack.

Swim upright above the water's surface to spot areas to explore.

A red Ecco means death is imminent – poison from a jellyfish can only be cured by eating a fish. Hmm.



Ecco is populated by a wonderfully varied collection of colourful aquatic life – think *The Blue Planet* (but a bit more hippy).

Gentle ambient sounds wash over you as Ecco explores his watery domain.

A new gallery for the PS2 version provides movies, screens and credits.

Boss sea creatures include this octopus that squirts blinding purple ink. Cheers.

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THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE

WORDS: ADRIAN LAWTON

Everyone's favourite dysfunctional family takes to the roads. We suggest you stay indoors...

ON THE DVD

Publisher: EA
Developer: Radical Entertainment
Players: 1-2
Release: November

We join Bart Simpson who is yelping "It wasn't me! I didn't do it!" while smashing his way through the suburbs of Springfield in his rocket-powered go-cart, knocking all and sundry flying. Meanwhile Bart's grandpa is mumbling, "I sure hope I don't fall asleep at the wheel," through toothless gums as he veers across both carriageways. Elsewhere Homer J Simpson dribbles "Mmmm, lard..." while pulling handbrake turns headlong into oncoming traffic.

You know where you are. These well-known characters and catchphrases are the stars of *The Simpsons Road Rage*, another cash-in featuring Matt Groening's cartoon family. A marketing coup if ever there was one – take one part most famous TV series ever and meld with the ever-popular car racing genre. Well, EA has never been known for its subtlety...

Road Rage's formula is simple: take Sega's *Crazy Taxi*, ditch the cartoon cabbies and stick the cast of *The Simpsons* in instead (using 3D graphics given that authentic cartoon feel by what has been branded the Radical Toon Rendering engine). It offers arcade thrills with as much depth as a half-empty paddling pool but, like its inspiration, it's a laugh-a-minute experience.

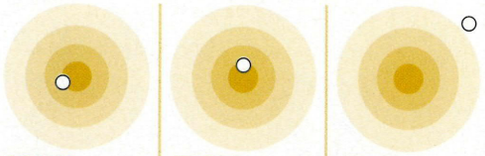
In order to access all six of the game's available districts (including Springfield Dam, and the Nuclear Power Plant) you'll need to tackle the Road Rage mode. In this you pick up fares (all of whom are familiar *Simpsons* faces) and take them to their destination as quickly as you can before the clock runs down.

It doesn't matter which route you take – through windows, across gardens, even under water – just get there and get there fast. Tearing around in the game's 18 cartoon motors, you'll see plenty of familiar landmarks: the Kwik-E-Mart, Monty Burns' mansion, Moe's Bar, the Simpson residence – they're all here – and each vehicle comes complete with a familiar face too. Apart from the Simpson clan itself you can take Ned Flanders' station wagon for a spin, wreak havoc in Otto's school bus and cruise the streets in Chief Wiggum's police car. Road Rage aside, the game offers other modes, which add a little more longevity. Sunday Drive lets you coast around the different levels, Head-to-Head mode has you and a friend fighting it out for customers, while Challenge mode has each character performing different set tasks in a time limit.

While *Road Rage* is a blatant *Taxi* rip-off, Radical looks to have done a good job of combining *Taxi*'s addictive gameplay with the humour of the series to create a title with huge appeal. Like many other big name licenses it could easily have fallen on its face but assuming the finished game addresses the pop-up that riddled our preview version, *Road Rage* should be deserving of *The Simpsons* name. One thing's for sure: it's better than *The Simpsons Wrestling* on PSone. ☐

ON TARGET? THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE

Crazy Taxi gameplay combined with *Simpsons* humour for an entertaining, if somewhat shallow experience.



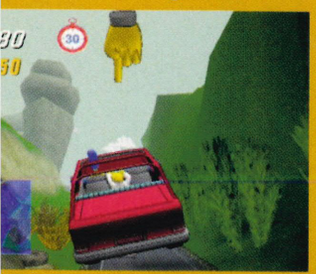
HUMOUR
Stays true to *The Simpsons* universe. Fans will love it.

GRAPHICS
A bright, colourful and appealing cartoon world.

ORIGINALITY
Crazy Taxi with a face-lift. Two-player is a bonus though.

HAVEN'T WE MET BEFORE?

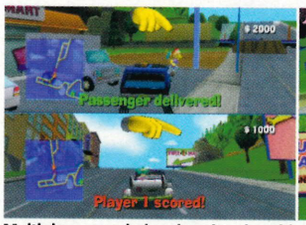
Not that it's a bad thing, but *Crazy Taxi*'s 'influences' are obvious in *Road Rage*. Check these out.



1. See the big pointer there? Looks kind of familiar don't it?

2. You obtain time bonuses if you get your fares to their destinations quickly. Now where have we seen that before?

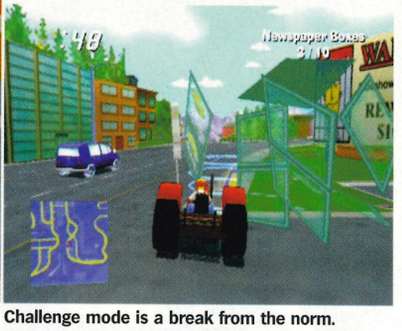
3. Here's another one! Your customers have even got the glowing rings around them. Déjà vu is definitely setting in.



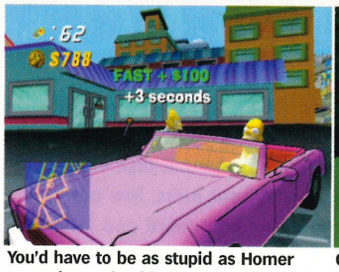
Multiplayer mode is a head-to-head battle to nab the most customers.

The Downtown district is one of the game's best looking areas and littered with fares.

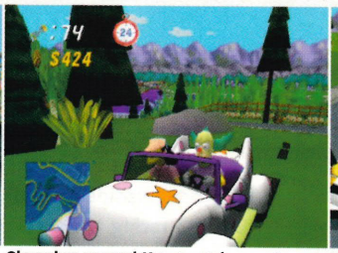
Apu definitely shouldn't give up the day job with mad skillz like this...



Challenge mode is a break from the norm.



You'd have to be as stupid as Homer to get in a cab with Homer. Doh!



Clowning around Krusty-style – not your usual sideshow antics.

Monty Burns pops up all over the place trying to nick your fares. N'excellent...

RUn
FOR COVER

THINk
TO SURVIVE

SHOOt
TO KILL

LIVe
TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY

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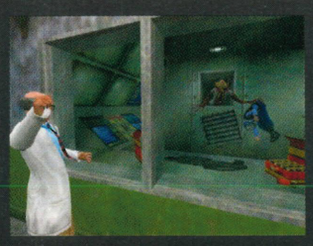

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"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo" are registered traderparks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies. *Half-Life awarded 'The Best Game Ever'. PC Gamer, September 2001

WORDS: PAUL FITZPATRICK

JAMES BOND 007 IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE

Send in the clones! There HAVE to be clones. Bond is back in a brand new adventure and this time he's gunning for *GoldenEye*.

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Electronic Arts (Redwood Shores)
Players: 1-4
Release: 30 November

The man 007 has had some pretty narrow escapes over the years. The family jewels-threatening laser beam in *Goldfinger* springs to mind. As does the free-falling plane catch-up that opens *GoldenEye*. And who can forget the worldwide sigh of relief the moment Roger Moore hung up his dubious flared safari jacket for the last time? However, when James Bond's final story is told (if the series ever ends) there is one escape that may well end up eclipsing them all.

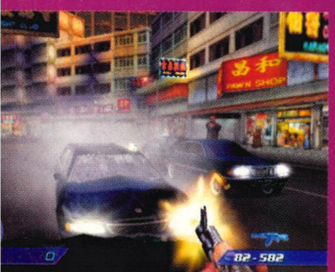
It seemed natural following his multiplex mission *The World Is Not Enough*, that the great tuxedoed one would make a next-gen showing. Sure enough development of a PS2 tie-in was announced, but then Bond went deep cover. Very deep cover. And as *TWINE* the movie slipped further into the public's past, it seemed increasingly unlikely *TWINE* the game would ever see the light of day. But just as it looked like all was lost, EA announced that true to form, Bond would be back, but this time in a totally original adventure. *TWINE* was retired with extreme prejudice and a new file was opened: *Agent Under Fire*.

What's it like? In a word, *GoldenEye*. But make no mistake, for possibly the first time it's a flattering comparison. Shorn of its reliance on the movies, *Agent* bristles with confidence right from the opening screen, complete with silhouetted honeys and shuffling trip-hop 007 theme. The game is, naturally, a first-person shooter with a handful of vehicle-based missions spread out over international destinations from Hong Kong via Bucharest to a secret, underwater base. And tying the whole caboodle in megalomaniacal knots is an encouragingly sinister plot centred on cloning and (naturally) world domination.

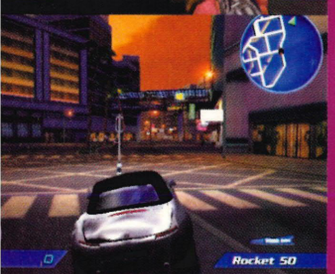
The first-person missions are not only looking fantastic but are populated with smart opponents. Meanwhile the pacing of the game is superb – back to the wall shoot-outs and stealthy infiltrations are both required. However, a devil-may-care guns-blazing approach will only get you so far here. Weapons range

DEATH ON WHEELS

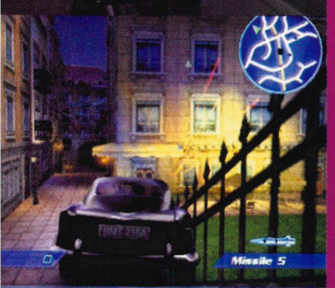
Drive around famous cities picking off the bad guys.



1. Location: Hong Kong
Vehicle: BMW 750IL
Task: While CIA Agent Zoe Nightshade drives, you dispatch the pursuing baddies from the car's sunroof.

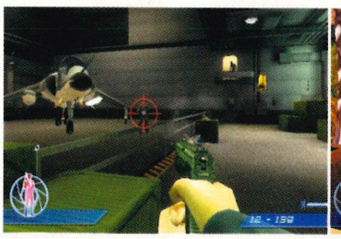


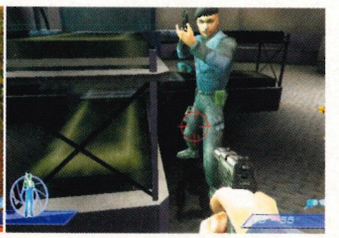
2. Location: Hong Kong
Vehicle: BMW Z8
Task: Chase an armoured van carrying biological samples through the busy streets of Hong Kong. Don't let it escape.



3. Location: Bucharest
Vehicle: Aston Martin DB5
Task: Locate a vitally important computer chip hidden somewhere on the streets of Romania's capital while fending off a host of enemy vehicles.

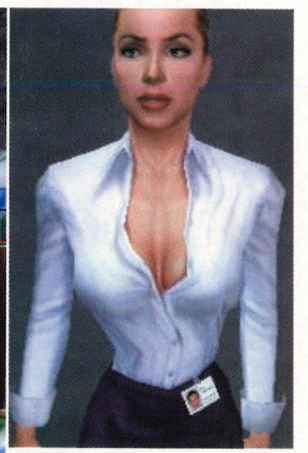
4. Location: Bucharest
Vehicle: Sodding Great Tank (Manufacturer and marque unknown).
Task: Get out of Dodge with the help of heavy artillery and a turret-mounted chain gun.



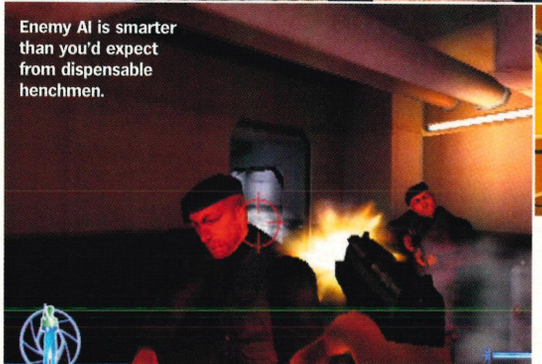


Stealth or speed? the choice is yours. **Level design is thoughtful throughout.** **No time for introductions. Shoot him!**

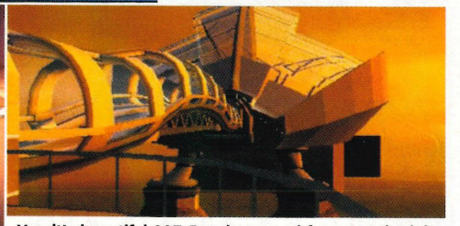
Firing rockets at close range is not recommended. It crumples the tux.



Zoe Nightshade is a firm ally etc...



Enemy AI is smarter than you'd expect from dispensable henchmen.



Yes, it's beautiful 007. But do try and focus on the job.

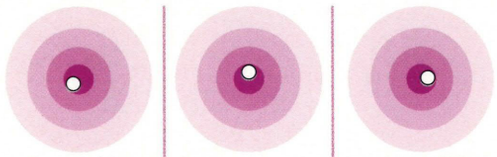
from the Wolfram P2K (replacing the Walther PPK) to shotguns, automatic rifles and a particularly devastating rocket launcher. And where would any self-respecting FPS be these days without the increasingly de rigeur sniper rifle?

Q Branch is also on hand (and in the case of your laser cutter, on wrist) with a number of useful gadgets, including an electronic lock-picking Decryptor and a short-range jetpack. Pick of the bunch however has to be the Q Claw hidden in a mobile phone. This little wonder shoots a wire tethered claw that will grip to grilles and ledges enabling Bond to access all sorts of previously unreachable areas.

The vehicle-based missions are also looking very promising. They range from on-rails efforts in the manner of the boat chase from *Time Crisis 2*, to a satisfying missile-assisted drive around the streets of Bucharest (see Death On Wheels) where the classic Aston Martin DB5 has a central part to play. So far it's all looking very good indeed for everyone's favourite secret agent. Throw in a collection of cracking multiplayer games set in purpose-built arenas and *Agent Under Fire* could not only end up being Bond's great escape, but maybe his finest videogame hour as well. □

ON TARGET? JAMES BOND 007 IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE

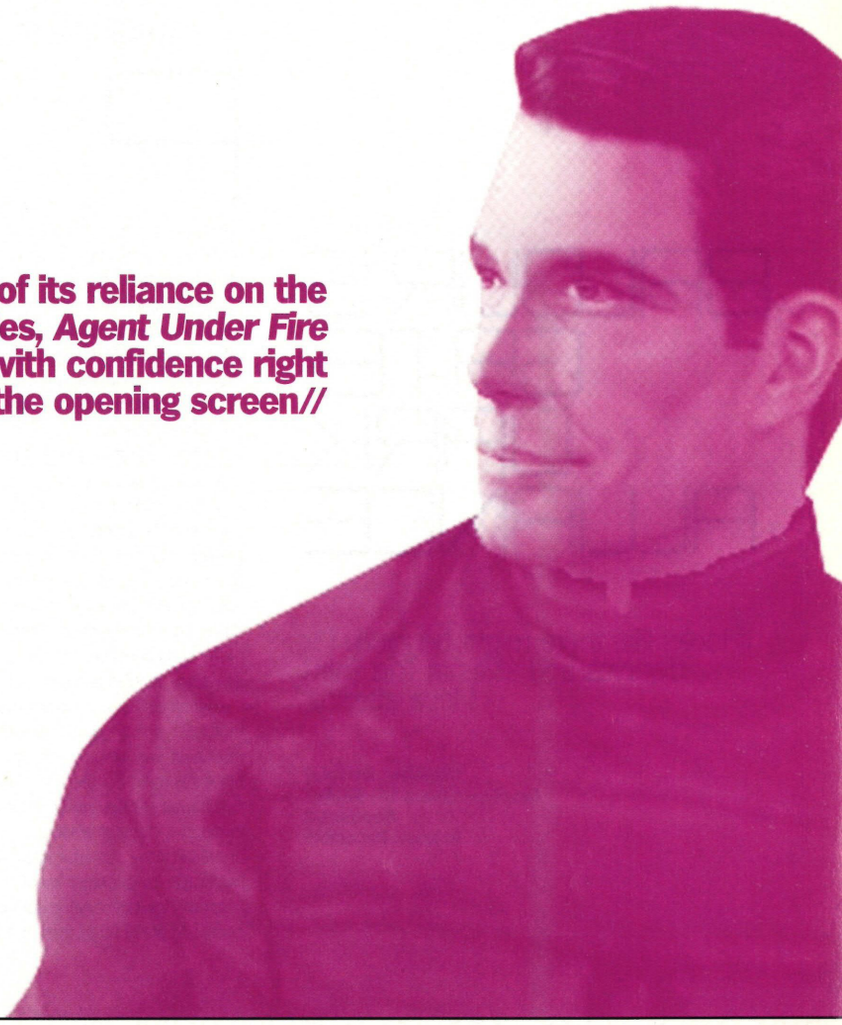
At last EA seems to be making a 007 game worthy of the licence. It is, dare we say it, potentially the best Bond game ever.



HARDWARE
Q Branch has obviously been working overtime.

PLOT
Pay attention 'Bond 20' scribes. This is vintage 007.

SECRET BASES
With a baddie called Malprave what do you think?



//Shorn of its reliance on the movies, *Agent Under Fire* bristles with confidence right from the opening screen//

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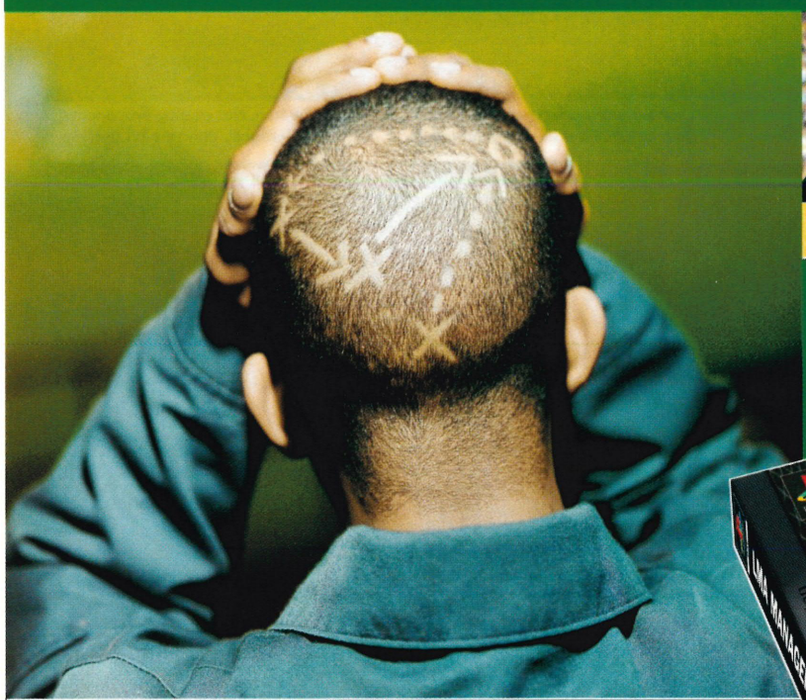

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WORDS: DAVE McCARTHY

BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE

It looks like there might be room for dwarves and elves in The Third Place after all.

Publisher: Interplay
Developer: Black Isle Studios
Players: 1-2
Release: December

PC owners have already had a chance to take in the sights offered by the port city of Baldur's Gate. Over the course of two full episodes, and a number of add-ons, they've been able to wade through the statistical intricacies of the Dungeons & Dragons Forgotten Realms universe. Assembling a party of paladins, sorcerers, clerics and thieves, they've chopped their way through swarms of kobolds, vampires, dragons and extra-planar beings on the way to completing an epic adventure that offers a fortnight's continuous gaming – assuming that they didn't stop to eat, drink or sleep.

It's unlikely that the average PS2 owner would have the sort of patience required to comprehend the Byzantine ruleset, or to navigate a control system that is complicated and unwieldy by console standards. Cast your prejudices aside, because the arrival of recent preview code suggests that *Dark Alliance* has been created from the ground up. Eschewing the convoluted mechanics of its PC predecessors while maintaining its epic narrative sweep, it delivers an experience that is at home on Sony's hardware. And despite the niche appeal of the subject matter, there's a game here that boasts gameplay sophisticated enough to appeal to anyone.

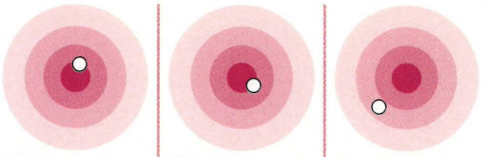
Technically, it is a worthy rival to any of the PS2 titles that have recently wowed onlookers. With sharp resolution and lighting, and liquid effects that are breathtaking to behold, it's unrecognisable next to the PC chapters in the *Baldur's Gate* series – the attention to detail is staggering. Indeed, considering its console immediacy, the addictive hack 'n' slash dynamic, and a two-player co-operative mode, it's a title that resembles a suitably next-generation spiritual successor to coin-op classic *Gauntlet* more than its PC brethren.

After choosing one of three characters you're thrown into your first mission – freeing the city sewers of a monstrous menace. Whereas the PC games put you in control of every simulated dice throw, *Dark Alliance* takes care of all of the headache-inducing number crunching, leaving you to concentrate on crushing the skulls of a diverse ecology of evil dungeon dwellers. Which isn't always easy, particularly when your character is outnumbered, ill-equipped and exhausted. As the narrative unfolds you'll eventually find yourself exploring a number of exotic locales surrounding the eponymous city, interacting with the local folk and obliging them with the odd errand here and there.

In terms of structure it's more linear than the PC games, but it still manages to retain the sense that you're operating in a living, breathing, world. The developer has managed a delicate balance between the accessibility demanded by console gamers and over-simplicity. In short, *Dark Alliance* won't be a dumbed down version of the PC classic, and it looks like maintaining the heritage of the series for PS2 owners. ☐

ON TARGET? BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE

There's much here to reward those who put aside their prejudices – it's not all orcs and goblins.



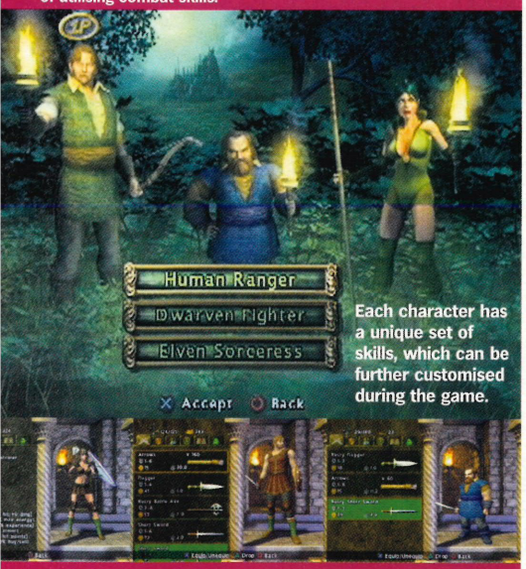
DETAIL
Gory innards, heat hazes over torches – no detail is spared.

WENCHES
Buxom barmaids, sorceresses – it's all too much to take.

BEARDS
There's certainly a lot of them, but is that a good thing?

SPELLBOUND

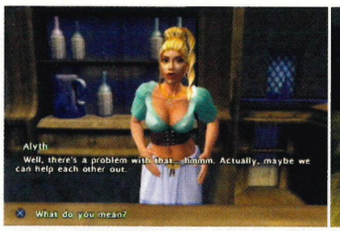
With the three character classes come three different ways of utilising combat skills.



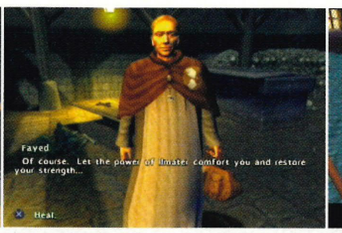
Each character has a unique set of skills, which can be further customised during the game.

Each of the three characters which you can choose from in *Dark Alliance* demand a different style of play. There's the upfront and personal approach of the Dwarf Fighter, for example, which is in stark contrast to that of the Elven Sorceress, who can afford to keep her distance from dungeon denizens due to her arsenal of long-range spells.

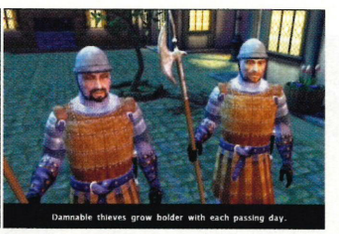
Falling somewhere in-between these two methods, the Ranger is weaker in close combat than the Dwarf, but is more proficient with long-range weapons, and gains access to spells later in the game. Throughout the course of the game the abilities of each character can be personalised. Don't worry though – there's no dice rolling. Instead, a handy and intuitive menu gives you the choice of painlessly augmenting your character's strengths or compensating for their weaknesses.



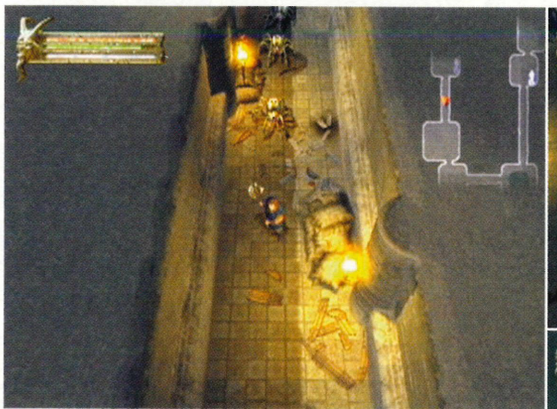
It just wouldn't be swords 'n' sorcery without a buxom serving wench...



...or a friendly priest, who can heal your wounds if it all gets a bit much.



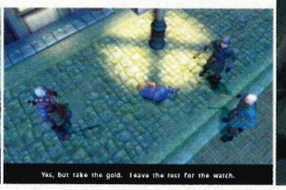
The city watch. Not exactly proponents of 'zero tolerance', they're a bit useless.



Even in the relatively benign surroundings of a tavern cellar, danger lurks around every corner. Here it's in the form of a giant spider.

The Burning Hands spell – great for short-range attacks.

The Bugbear Chieftain is the first of the game's mini bosses.



Having been set about by rogues, your adventure begins.

Early in the game, one of the most important spells available to the Sorceress is Magic Missile.

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WORDS: GEORGE WALTER

POLAROID PETE

Meet Pete and his bad, mad, sad photo world. This is a game that *should* be all over the front page.

Publisher: JVC
Developer: Irem
Players: 1
Release: 7 December

Full frontal nudity. A contented-looking old man defecating in a swimming pool. Death by mutilation. Geisha girls flashing. Domestic violence. A snake that eats itself. A blushing couple getting it on in a cage, dressed as neanderthals, *being watched by a group of monkeys, dressed as humans*. All of these, all in a videogame. Surely not.

Glancing at our screenshots, you'd probably imagine *Polaroid Pete* is a lot tamer than the filth we've just described. It's got brightly coloured 2D/3D cartoon characters, it has side-scrolling, everyday locations like the zoo and it has a smiley hero wearing a baseball cap. So what the hell's going on here? Well believe it or not that rictus grin belongs to press photographer Pete. Working for a newspaper, his (and your) job is to take pictures of the increasingly ludicrous events which happen in a series of different themed levels.

In Japan, this game is known as *Gekibo 2*, which roughly translates as *Exciting Photo Boy 2*. Irem's official Web site explains the concept: "The most famous cameraman of the world. David Goldman's strange and amasing story." In the UK Goldman gets a name change as does the game. *Gekibo 2* is now *Polaroid Pete* due to a deal with the instant camera manufacturer.

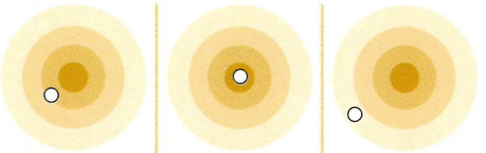
Playing the recently released Japanese code, one of the first things that grabs you is how it is so much more than just point and click. Along with the more obvious targets – funny looking people, bizarre accidents, animals falling out of trees, monkeys – there are other incidents that need to be triggered by taking a number of specific consecutive shots. To hinder your quest for the front page splash, objects are hurled at you causing you to lose valuable film and flash bulbs (needed to reveal events happening in the dark). These can be regained by snapping said subjects before they hit you, or to save film, by jumping over them.

The game adds depth by giving you more points for taking a picture spot on time and less for missing the moment. Furthermore if you are too hasty and take a shot to early, the subject becomes camera-shy and you miss the points entirely. Accidentally put yourself in the picture and the vain Pete throws a pose and an even more freakish smile, but you lose 500 points. A zoom lens is also available to let you look further into the background to spot otherwise missable photo opportunities. Add in a load of movie references (Charlie Chaplin, *Star Wars*, *The Matrix* and more) and there's a lot to discover that you might ignore on first look.

Although unlikely to attract the attention of a genre-hoovering game-buying public, *Polaroid Pete* is not only daring, genuinely funny and playable but it is most certainly the first PlayStation 2 title to show a cat chasing a cuttlefish, a skunk farting and a naked man. For that at least it should be duly congratulated. □

ON TARGET? POLAROID PETE

Games like *Polaroid Pete* unfortunately don't get made in the UK. Why? Because Japanese game developers make them.



GRAPHICS
Bold, colourful and a clever 3D-but-2D depth of field.

TABOOS BROKEN
Too many to count, but they're all in there somewhere.

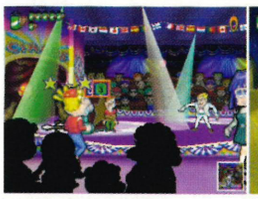
PERIPHERALS
Sadly we won't be able to make use of the USB functions.

CAMERA OBSCURA

PS2's flashy USB functions get utilised in *Gekibo 2*.

Messrs Moyle, Goldsmith and Sefton in casual attire.

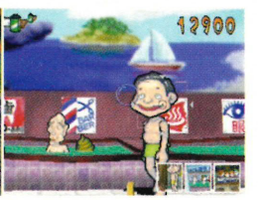
Included in *Gekibo 2* are two added functions which show the potential provided by the PS2's USB and Firewire ports. As in *Golf Paradise DX* (demonstrated in *OPS2* issue #04), *Gekibo 2* has the option to put your face in the game via a Picture Paradise compatible camera. Then once you've done that you can print any pictures you have taken during the course of the game on the PS2 compatible PopEgg printer. For reasons beyond JVC's control these functions won't be included in the UK version (BOOO!) However we've done our best to show you what it would have looked like. Shudder.



The circus level features an inaccurate knife thrower.

And no prizes for guessing who this pair are.

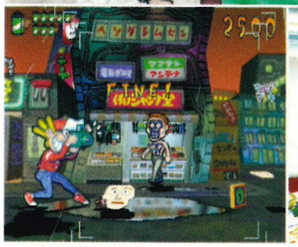
They had to get a mech in there somewhere.



Proof that old age plays havoc with your sphincter.

Naughty Pete takes a voyeuristic peek at the ladies changing room for extra points.

Good prank, well executed. But what's the man in the shirt hiding in front of him?



Another movie reference. This time it's Arnie-san.

Pete and bride realise they've forgotten to invite guests.

The more you take pictures of this bulbous alien the bigger it grows. You'll get a higher score too.

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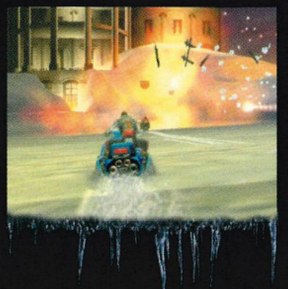
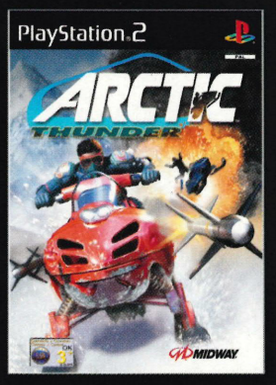
Throttle the competition with hard-core hand-to-hand combat.

Hyper-realistic racing velocity and major air give new meaning to "breakneck speed."



Make 'em feel you with combat weapons like snow bombs, missiles, and The Atomic Snowball.



Sneak Preview @ www.arcticthunder.midway.com

ARCTIC THUNDER

PlayStation.2

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WORDS: KEITH STUART

JET SKI RIDERS

Churning up a frothy wake on an expanse of water near you comes the natural contender to *Splashdown*.

ON THE DVD

Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Opus Corporation
Players: 1-2
Release: December

Ah, how the coastlines of the world have been immeasurably improved by the noble jet ski. Once all you could do was swim about in the brine, or perhaps clamber aboard one of those glass-bottomed tour boats. Now you can sit astride a throbbing Kawasaki and ride the wave like some deranged rocket-powered Poseidon. Well, if you have lots of money to waste you can. If not, Japan's Opus Corporation has recreated the world of competitive Jet Ski racing in digital form. It's cheaper and you're considerably less likely to decapitate a swimmer.

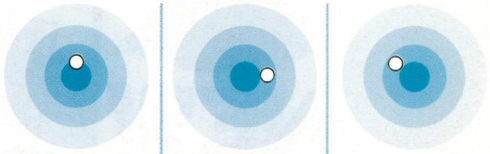
Gamers new to the exciting sport of jet skiing should not be dissuaded. Opus has wrapped up its aquatic babe in a very familiar racing game bikini. You choose from Arcade, Championship, Freestyle, Two-player or Time Trial modes, then you select one of the five available jet skis (each one has different handling, acceleration and top speed characteristics, naturally) then you hop aboard and start making waves. Just like on the real machines there's no brake: only the accelerator and analogue controller stand between you and a nasty accident. Each of the game's 12 circuits has red and yellow buoys which must be passed on the correct side to avoid a time penalty. You'll also discover ramps and alternate routes – both of which will give you the edge on your less daring competitors.

Fans of realistic water generation will certainly be impressed. The choppy reflective surfaces produced by Opus look and feel surprisingly authentic. In really rough weather you'll lose loads of acceleration and turning power as your craft is lobbed through the air by the waves, whereas on quieter surfaces – like the Venice canal section – you can zoom through the gently rippling waters without a worry in the world. From the sunny Florida coast with its ramps over speedboats, to the rain-pummelled Thai course with its treacherous rock pool sections, Opus has sought to create as many different racing scenarios as possible. On top of this you get the freestyle section where riders are given a set time to perform a number of different ramp and wave tricks using various button press combos. In our demo version, these were prohibitively hard to pull off, but there is work to be done on the engine and we're hoping for a more intuitive system.

The analogue control also needs some attention. Pulling back slightly on the analogue stick while turning should create a respectively tighter circle – this subtlety is vital in a decent jet ski sim. Importantly Eidos won't have a monopoly on this market. Infogrames' *Splashdown* – a very similar game, but with Sea-Doos instead – is also due out soon offering comparable water physics and gameplay features. *Jet Ski Riders*' official Kawasaki license (aimed at the huge videogamer/professional jet skier crossover audience) certainly won't be enough to ensure success. ☐

ON TARGET? JET SKI RIDERS

The lord has answered our gaming prayers and provided a jet ski simulation. But will it be wet and wild or just moist and mundane?



WAVES
The undulating surface is so realistic, we threw up.

RIDES
Super fast jet skis throbbing with indecent power.

VIEWS
Nice scenery filled with big ramps and secret routes.

GIVE US A WAVE

How the water can affect your game.

Jet Ski Riders makes use of Opus' 'GZWave' engine which offers 'ultra realistic waves and dynamic water physics'. The huge rolling breakers generated by this watery engine give you an exhilaratingly rough ride in the race sections. Hitting them at the right time can also get you over sunken obstacles – a tactic to be avoided when close to a race barrier (you can't steer in the air). Those hefty breakers also allow you to pull off a range of mad mid-air tricks in the freestyle section. Barrel rolls, back flips and somersaults are all possible, as is a trick called a Super Monkey. Nice.

The tricky sit-down craft seem to have the turning circle of an luxury cruise liner.

Forget gondolas – experience the romance of Venice by jet ski.

Why avoid dangerous obstructions when you can jump 'em?

Put the Kawasaki through its paces with some silly tricks.

Bashing other riders out of the way adds to the fun.

The treacherous rockpool section. Ooh look, a sea anemone.

PSM2

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WHAT PSM2 STANDS FOR...

PSM2's all about the detail. We'll show you what it's like to feel the rain on your screen in *Metal Gear Solid 2*, watch the sun set on your village in *Jak and Daxter*, and floor an Audi TT around central London in *The Getaway*. PSM2's all about cracking 300 in *Tekken Bowl*, getting a review score totally *right*, staying up too late and the brilliance of *THAT* blue light. It's your fat-free guide to the Emotion Engine experience.

What PSM2 isn't about is seen-it-before features on girls 'n' games. Or game violence. Or piracy in the games industry. It's not about *those Japs* being mad or D-list celebrities playing some random title. And you'll never catch us reviewing ice creams. We won't waste space with such clichéd trash – we'll leave that to other independent PlayStation 2 magazines.

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SOUL REAVER 2
THE LEGACY OF KAIN SERIES
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PC CD-ROM
PlayStation 2
CRYSTAL DYNAMICS
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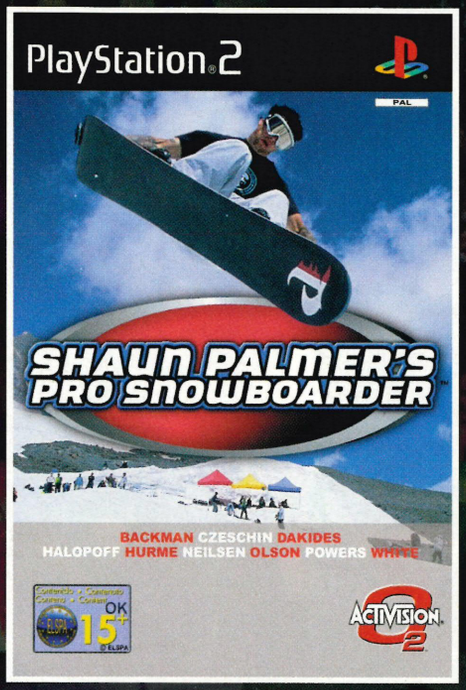
INTERACTIVE

This winter, people will be suffering from flu, colds and PST (PlayStation Thumb).



Shaun Palmer's Snowboarder

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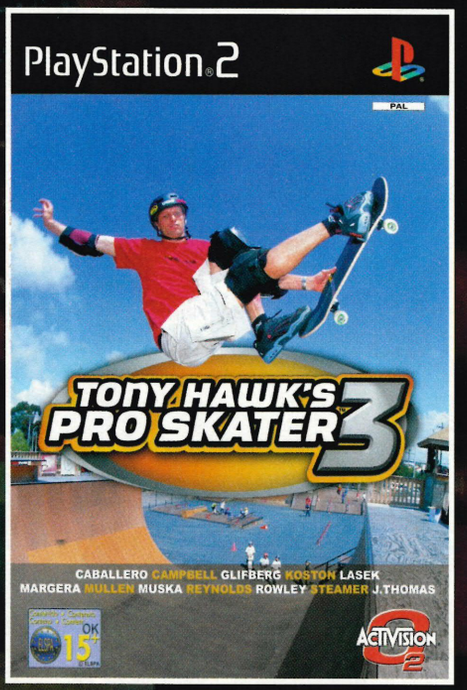

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

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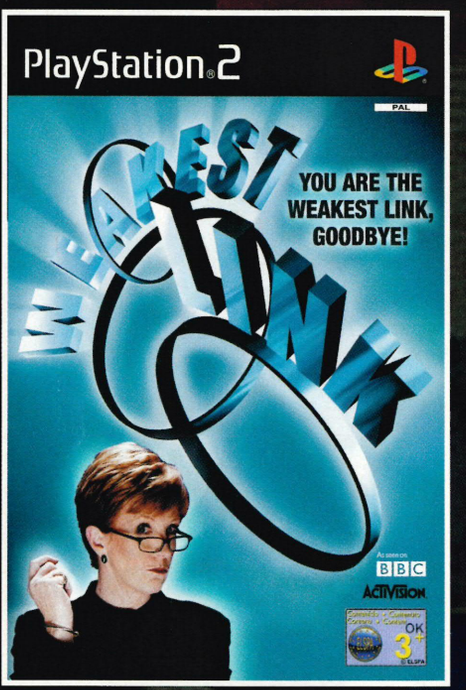

The Weakest Link

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SPY

EDITED BY JAMIE SEFTON

headliners

Appeal's sci-fi epic *Outcast 2* → p41
Dynasty Warriors 3 slashed open → p43
Final Fantasy's anime TV series → p45
Essential *Virtua Fighter 4* info → p47
Exclusive! Judge Dredd on PS2 → p50
Will advertising ruin videogames? → p52
Moped mayhem in *Scooty Races* → p56

TOKYO GAME SHOW

METAL GEAR RAY STORMS JAPAN

OPS2 grabs exclusive *Metal Gear Solid 2* details direct from the autumn 2001 Tokyo Game Show.

Solid Snake has a worldwide launch of *Metal Gear Solid 2* in his sights.

THERE WAS ONLY ONE PS2 title that brought gasps of disbelief at this October's Tokyo Game Show – *Metal Gear Solid 2*. Kojima's opus couldn't be missed: a monolithic wall complete with a big screen was flanked by units with the new extended *MGS2* demo – and *OPS2* was there to play it.

Again set on the Discovery, any sense of déjà vu from the original demo was soon expelled upon gaining entry to its multi-levelled engine room and making use of Solid Snake's new items, the handiest being a set of thermo goggles and a digital camera for taking photos during the mission. In the gloomy confines, guards could be observed and taken out using the M9 Tranquillizer Gun. Further exploration led to a corridor, where a booby-trapped door sent our hero shuffling off this mortal coil – if only we'd brushed up on

Emma, a new female character for *MGS2* revealed at the TGS.

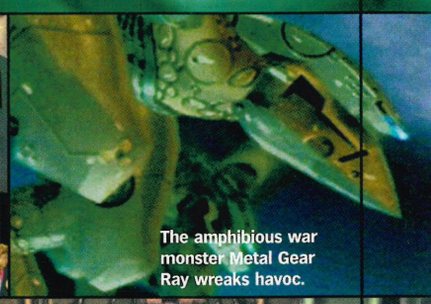
//The brand new *MGS2* trailer was once again the star of the show//

our Japanese, Otacon's advice would have been a life-saver. Another area opened up for exploration after the original demo's ending of Russian Olga Gurlukovich's death, was a crow's nest that Snake could access by climbing a mast – all impressive stuff.

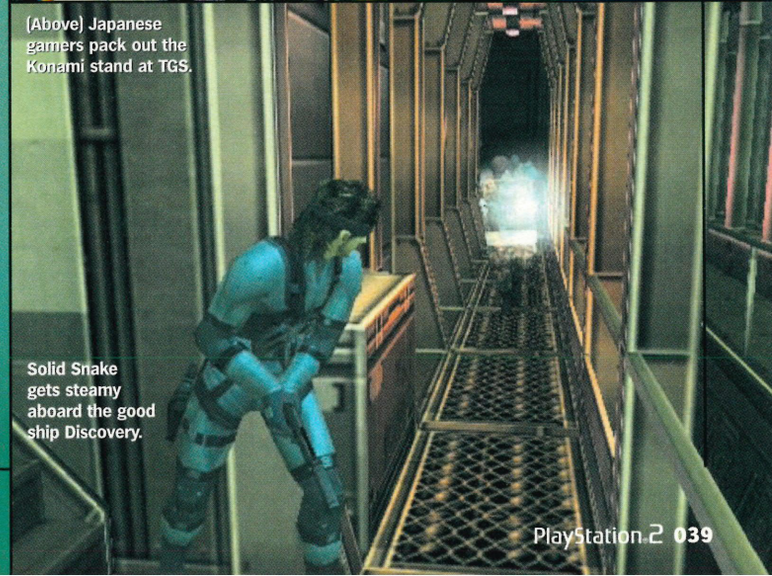
However, the brand spanking new trailer was, once again, the star of the show and looked absolutely stunning. Starting on slow boil, the setting is an industrial complex. After shots of a parrot and its suspected owner – a slightly worse for wear Otacon – an exterior of the structure basking in the morning sun leads to the title screen.

Then the action kicks in, complete with a thumping soundtrack that pumped loudly through the massive Konami PA system. The Discovery makes its way through choppy seas as a Metal Gear slides through the calm underneath. Two military choppers approach, and Olga, spotted by Snake, disembarks on

(Above) Japanese gamers pack out the Konami stand at TGS.



The amphibious war monster Metal Gear Ray wreaks havoc.



Solid Snake gets steamy aboard the good ship Discovery.

SPY

NEW FACES
Who are the new *MGS2* characters revealed in the TGS trailer?

Solidus Snake
Could this scary, eye-patch-adorned psycho be the infamous Solidus Snake? Most certainly, as the silhouette mentioned in the McFarlane Toys catalogue matches this fella's mad tubed-up costume.

Emma
A 'very cute' girl according to Kojima, Emma is a young, bespectacled character shown very briefly in the trailer.

Ninja
Whether this is *the* Ninja from *Metal Gear Solid* on PSone has not been confirmed, but he's seen fighting with Revolver Ocelot. Just like old times?

Scuba Guy
Seen in the trailer wearing futuristic breathing apparatus, this ominous-looking unnamed character could spell the end for Solid Snake.

Other Characters
Raiden is a character seen in the new trailer wearing a frightening gas mask. The garlic-hating Vamp, and Fortune, owner of the expensive-looking electric gun, are also featured. Unconfirmed reports also mention rumours of two further Ninjas in the game, known as Wind and Rain. Stormy weather ahead for Solid Snake and allies...

Fortune reels back from a powerful electric gun blast.

Russian agent Olga Gurlokovich. Does she die at the end of the demo?

one of them. Fortune walks into a room as bugs scatter away from the field caused by her large electric gun. Then we see Ocelot throwing his coat in the air to protect himself from gunshots – of course he's uninjured. Like a Prince of Darkness, Vamp rises and stands on a pool of water; surely this guy is unholy. Later, he slams a guard against the wall with a menacing snarl, teeth gleaming in the dark.

One of the most eagerly-anticipated characters making an appearance is the seriously armoured, eye-patch wearing Big Boss himself – Solidus Snake (see New Faces). Wielding twin swords, he effortlessly deflects bullets, just like the Ninja does later with his blade in a confrontation with Ocelot and his guards. Finally, a bespectacled young girl Emma makes an appearance, backing up Kojima's interview in *OPS2* issue #009, where he revealed his wish to include more girls in *MGS2* including his, "ideal girl, who's intelligent, has a career and is beautiful." As

//Kojima has done it again and managed to maintain the unprecedented hype//

the music builds to a crescendo and Snake leaps into the sea after Metal Gear Ray, the goosebumps hit big time. By the time the trailer finished with Solidus Snake twirling his machine gun and pointing it directly at the audience, we were breathless.

Kojima has done it again, managing to maintain the unprecedented hype about the game, without revealing too much information about the plot or its disturbing array of characters. *Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons Of Liberty* is released in the USA and Japan in November – expect a full UK release and exclusive UK review in *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine* early in February 2002. □ JS/AW

A typically frantic Tokyo Game Show was packed with Oriental goodness.

AND NOT FORGETTING...
***MGS2* wasn't the only new game at this autumn's TGS.**

With more games on show for PlayStation 2 than any other console (87 in total), the Tokyo Game Show was a resounding success for Sony. ***Onimusha 2*** dominated Capcom's stand, with beautifully pre-rendered and seamlessly animated backgrounds. Water in the stream looked clean enough to drink and the fog partially enshrouding a bridge made the screens drip with atmosphere. With Jubei wielding a spear and possessing a new ice element attack, foes were satisfyingly frosted and smashed into a zillion shards. Namco's ***Xenogears*** was incredible for those with a penchant for anime. Think an RPG with *MGS*-like elements, combined with turn-based combat and awesome giant robots, not to mention enough philosophising to rival *Evangelion*. For fun, SCEI's hilarious ***Yoake no Mariko*** required players to yell into a mic and provide the voices for comically presented CG movies. Also, Sega had major ***Virtua Fighter 4*** news (pg. 47), Genki announced ***Kengo II*** (pg. 42) and KOEI showed off the two-player ***Dynasty Warriors 3*** (pg. 43).

"FORCES TOTALLING 3,000 ARE STUCK IN A 1KM ARENA WITH VERY SHARP STICKS"

FAMILY FEUD, PG 043

Good enough to eat: Which delicious flavour of PS2 would you choose?

PS2 ON TOP OF THE WORLD

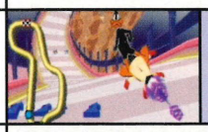
PS2 at £199 and 20 million units sold around the globe..

SCEE'S AGGRESSIVE PRE-CHRISTMAS PS2 price cut taking the next-gen console to just £199 has massively boosted UK sales. Before Friday 28 September, approximately 20,000 PS2s were being sold per week, but since then, sales have actually tripled. *OPS2* has also learned through a source at WH Smith that some of the company's stores are now selling as many PlayStation 2s in a *day* as they used to shift in a whole week.

As well as the price cut, SCEE also announced that since the games machine's launch in Japan on 4 March 2000, over 20 million units have found their way into people's homes around the world. Compared with the PSone launch, PS2 has shipped four times the number of consoles in the same time period. To celebrate this success, SCEI is launching a limited edition of 2000 PS2s in five glossy metallic colours, inspired by prestigious European cars. The stylish PlayStation 2s, that come complete with a matching Dual Shock 2 and stand, will be strictly limited and divided equally between Japan, USA and Europe with 666 devilishly hued consoles for each of the three Sony territories.

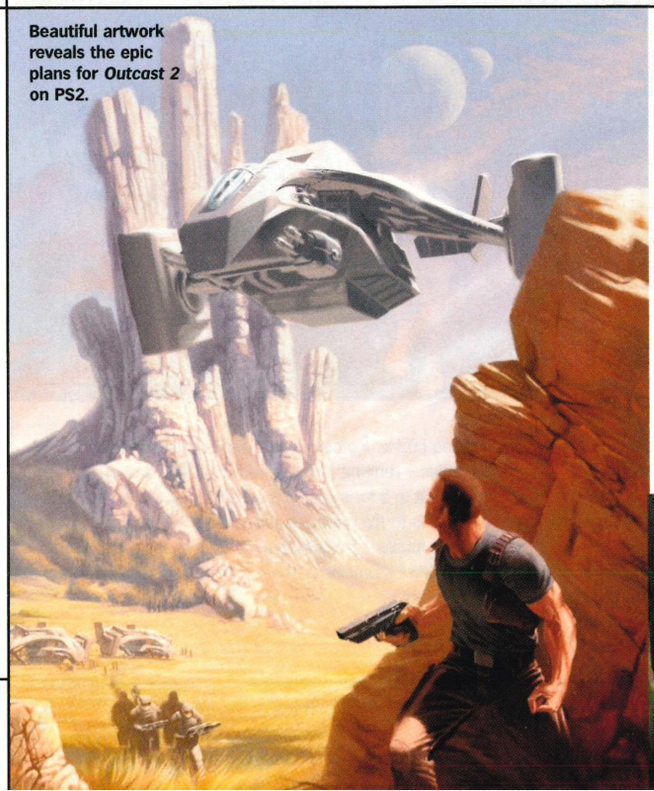
With a Christmas packed with quality games such as *Jak And Daxter, SSX Tricky, Devil May Cry* and *Pro Evolution Soccer* plus the titles featured on this month's magnificent playable DVD – *AirBlade, Silent Hill 2, WWF SmackDown! 'Just Bring It!'* and *World Rally Championship* – lucky owners of PlayStation 2 have never had it so good. ☐ **JS**

**Gamers wanting a limited edition colour PS2 should keep checking www.eu.playstation.com for announcements. Get in there early though – these will sell out very quickly.*



BLUE LINES

***Space Race* is a new Looney Tunes rocket racer from *Wacky Races* publisher Infogrames due out in March 2002. Featuring eight intergalactic worlds, the game packs in tons of ACME visual gags and Warner Bros cartoon faves such as Wile E Coyote and Daffy Duck » TDK Mediactive has acquired the rights to develop and publish PS2 games featuring DC Comics' *Aquaman* and his underwater kingdom of Atlantis. Expect the first title late 2002 » Sega is planning an update of its MegaDrive puzzle classic *Switch* on PS2 next year**



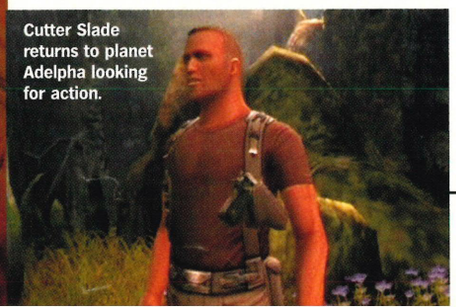
Beautiful artwork reveals the epic plans for *Outcast 2* on PS2.

IMPOSSIBLE WORLDS

Appeal unveils the sci-fi spectacular *Outcast 2: The Lost Paradise.*

EXCITING SCREENSHOTS AND information have been obtained by *OPS2* on the sequel to the PC's epic adventure *Outcast* for PlayStation 2. Developed by the Belgian-based outfit Appeal, *Outcast 2: The Lost Paradise* again stars the wise-cracking Navy SEALs commander Cutter Slade on the strange alien planet of Adelpha.

The survival action adventure centres on high-tech invaders attacking the Talan people on Adelpha, who are divided into four races with different characteristics – Air, Earth, Fire and Water. Cutter Slade is brought back to the planet to defeat the invading force and destroy the conspiracy that could end the Talan civilisation. As Cutter, players have access to a range of high-tech military weaponry, as well as using native wildlife to provide help through the adventure, much like the Twôn-Ha ostrich-like animals in the first game that you can actually tame and ride.



Cutter Slade returns to planet Adelpha looking for action.

As you'd expect, the graphics have been vastly improved with five times the detail on the characters for enhanced lip-synching and expressions, as well as a huge draw distance that renders all six different environments on planet Adelpha. These regions include Ranzaar, an icy world of snow in the North Pole, and Shamazaar, a meditational world of mysterious temples. Check out these first screenshots before *OPS2* grabs an exclusive play of *Outcast 2: The Lost Paradise* in a forthcoming issue. ☐ **JS**

**Outcast 2 will be released late 2002, with a publisher TBC.*

SPY

"THINGS GOT DIZZYING THROUGH WINDING DUCTS. SICK BAGS ARE RECOMMENDED"

SPY IN JAPAN, PG 055

Kengo II features multiple attackers.

Cutting the grass 17th Century-style. Alan Titchmarsh would've been very proud.

TWICE THE SLICE

Lightweight's sharp-edged *Kengo II* impresses at TGS.

THE RECENT TOKYO Game Show (main news pg.39) gave *OPS2* the chance to check out the state of Lightweight's forthcoming samurai sim *Kengo II*. The original *Kengo*, eventually published by Ubi Soft in the UK turned out to be an enjoyable if pale imitation of the PSone's *Bushido Blade*, which had amongst the swordfighting gameplay, a very original element – no life bar. This feature meant that one accurately placed swipe from an enemy would end in your warrior slumping lifeless and bloody to the floor, forcing gamers to adopt a completely different and more restrained battle strategy than other beat-'em-ups.

The addition of a life bar to PS2's first *Kengo* took away much of the subtlety of *Bushido Blade*, disappointing fans of the series and reducing the action to derivative button-bashing blade slashing. However, the good news is that the developer seems to have listened to criticism and removed the offending screen furniture for *Kengo II*.

Lightweight has also ditched the exclusively one-on-one fights by including competitions that can include several combatants at the same time, set against the more open, free-roaming arenas of *Bushido Blade*. The TGS demo showed the hero duelling with enemies, changing position quickly to dodge attacks and making sharp jabs and precision strokes with his sword to see off the aggressors.

From these screenshots, it's obvious that Lightweight has fine-tuned the visuals, making vast improvements with character detail and backdrops, which include lush forests and wooden dojos. Due for release in 2002, *Kengo II*'s daring duelling could be a cut above recent efforts. ☐ **JS/AW**

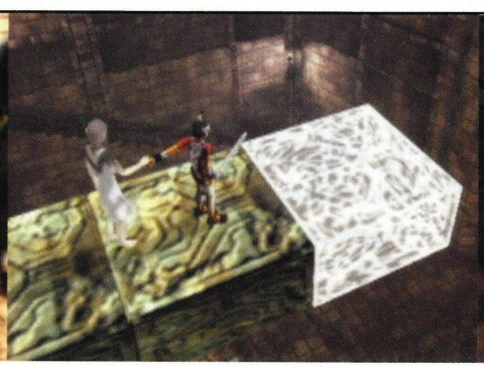
//Competitions can now include several combatants at the same time//

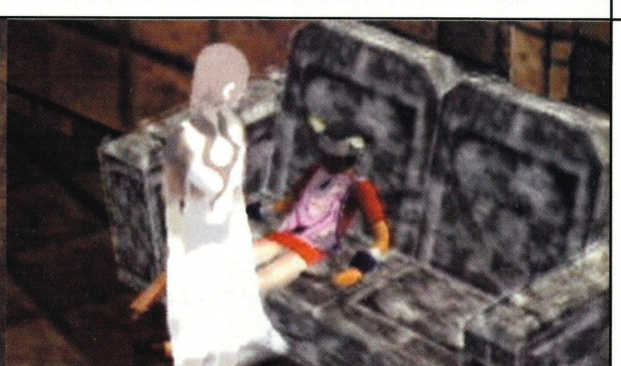
*Kengo II will be released in 2002

BLUE LINES

Codemasters has announced that *LMA Manager 2002* for the PS2 – due to be launched next spring – will allow footy mad gamers to view stats of any of the six major European leagues running concurrently as you play a season » *Reign of Fire* is the name of a new dragon-slaying PlayStation 2 title from *Driven* developer Bam! Out next year, the adventure is based on a Hollywood movie starring Matthew McConaughey » Sony and Canon are pooling resources to develop printers compatible with televisions and games consoles

Ico has a truly unique fairy tale ambience.





As usual, *Ico* hogs the couch and TV remote.

GHOST-FACE THRILLAH

Devil boy rescues phantom girl in the ethereal adventure *Ico*.

***OPS2* HAS BEEN PLAYING** SCEI's bizarre in-house project *Ico*, a title that's already out in the USA and heading for a European release in 2002. Rather than providing instant thrills, *Ico* is meant to be savoured – much of the excitement comes from discovering it for yourself. Written description really does the game no justice.

So, without shattering the illusion, here's some fractured information on what could be a huge 'sleeper' hit in the UK. It's a third-person mystery adventure set in a huge stone castle in the middle of nowhere. The star is a small boy with horns; the female lead is a shining-white ghost-like girl he finds trapped in a cage. From that moment on, it's the player's duty to protect her, and lead her around and out of the tower. A button press calls the girl across and grabs her hand.

Each section of the castle works like a self-contained level, and while there are some brief moments of combat – shadow enemies come from nowhere to steal your female friend and must be driven away – working out how to get to the next room is the puzzle. *Ico* boasts elements similar to the *Tomb Raider* series – running, jumping, switch-pulling and block-pushing – but in a far more unusual and mysterious setting. Atmosphere is to *Ico* what cars are to *Gran Turismo*, or psychedelic music is to *PaRappa The Rapper*. It's the focus of the game. *OPS2* promises to share more of *Ico*'s unique experience very soon. ☐ **SC**

*Ico will be released in the UK next year through SCEE.

The game with more sword fodder than any other returns to PS2.

FAMILY FEUD

The latest on KOEI's tactical action sequel *Dynasty Warriors 3*.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3 is the second PS2 instalment of KOEI's epic-scale slasher. Once again it requires copious amounts of slicing and dicing through hordes of enemies in a bid to unify 2nd Century China. Action is plentiful – three kingdoms are at war and opposing forces totalling 3,000 are stuck in a one kilometre arena with very sharp sticks.

Naturally, *Dynasty Warriors 3* will offer a host of improvements, starting with the characters themselves. An increased polygon count allows more facial emotion (most probably variations of pain) and foot soldiers will possess more individualistic movement patterns compared to the previous game. Just as well, as the total number of playable characters has now been upped to over 39.

More of the game environment will be visible, as the developer says it's pushed back the fog distance about 20 metres from *DW2*. Not only that, but the total number of stages has been increased from eight to 23. The sequel offers a different story and stage composition for each character, as opposed to the last game where a single scenario was set according to which kingdom they belonged to. This also means roughly six times more character-specific cut-scenes, now presented with full voiceovers.

The all-important special 'Musou' attacks department hasn't been neglected either. Now these attacks have extra variations, including the True Musou Attack. There's two new charge moves, a defensive position, as well as a Power Guard which has enough energy to repel multiple enemies.

Best of all is the inclusion of a Two-player mode, where you can opt to fight on the same side or face off against each other as leaders of two opposing armies. Another addition is the Challenge mode, which can either be a Time Attack to see how long it takes to carve up 100 soldiers, or how long you last against the enemy onslaught before biting the dust. *OPS2* has been assured that the developer worked hard in refining the AI algorithms of the soldiers to allow more complex and involving battles. For added mayhem, *DW3* lets characters ride elephants for crushing hapless enemies underfoot.

Hitting top spot in the Japanese charts, *DW3* has proved its popularity with Oriental gamers – can it do the same in the UK? ☐ **AW**

//*DW3* lets characters ride elephants for crushing hapless enemies underfoot//

* Dynasty Warriors 3 *will be released in 2002 – publisher is TBC.*

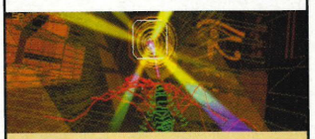
War elephants! *Age of Empires II* isn't the only PS2 game to feature these magnificent beasts.

The new Two-player mode means mortal PS2 enemies can now battle it out for supremacy.

KOEI has improved the graphics in *DW3*, with better draw distance and detailed clothing.

UPDATE

Bringing you up to date with the biggest PS2 games.



REZ

Publisher: SCEE
Last Seen: *OPS2* #010
Latest Release date: 25 January 2002

BAFTA nominated *Rez* from Sega UGA (see pg.46) is shaping up to be an audio/visual banquet. Looking like the kind of videogame you expected to play after watching *Tron* in the Eighties, *Rez* throws you into a virtual techno world infected with a psychedelic computer virus.

TOCA RACE DRIVER

Publisher: Codemasters
Last Seen: *OPS2* #012
Latest Release date: Spring/Summer 2002

Codemasters' latest *TOCA* instalment introduces fictional character Ryan McKane who players follow throughout his career. Latest info reveals that the car sound effects were recorded scientifically in a rolling road noise chamber.

RUN LIKE HELL

Publisher: Interplay
Last Seen: *OPS2* #010
Latest Release date: Spring 2002

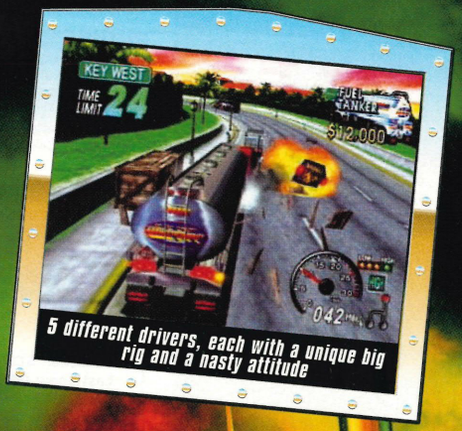
OPS2 recently grabbed more screenshots and updated playable code of Digital Mayhem's sci-frightening adventure. It now features a more refined control system and even more sickening flesh-ripping graphics.

MIKE TYSON HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING

Publisher: Codemasters
Last Seen: *OPS2* #010
Latest Release date: Feb 2002

Apparently, ear-munching pugilist Mike Tyson has spoken out on this forthcoming boxing title. "The ideas for the new game sound awesome!" says the excitable born-again videogamer. "It'll be good to see me going to face-to-face in a heavyweight-specific game."

THE ARCADE SMASH THUNDERS ONTO PLAYSTATION®2



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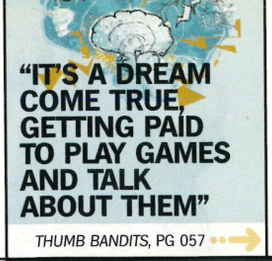
PlayStation®2



"IT'S A DREAM COME TRUE, GETTING PAID TO PLAY GAMES AND TALK ABOUT THEM"

THUMB BANDITS, PG 057

SPY

BACK TO SQUARE ONE

Square Pictures folds as Sony buys a stake in the videogame parent company.

AFTER A DISASTROUS showing at the box office for *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*, Square has decided to completely pull out of the movie business. The hugely expensive CG movie cost in excess of $137 million (£95 million) to make, yet only took around $61 million (£42.3 million) of revenue worldwide – just a third of the company's projected profits. However, Square's Hawaiian animation studio will remain open until at least March next year as the company is still working on an unnamed secret project for another film studio.

Meanwhile, Sony has bought a large share in Square, paying ¥14.9 billion (£85.1 million) for approximately 19% of the company. What this means for gamers is that *Final Fantasy X*, *Final Fantasy XI* and any future incarnations of the world's biggest console RPG will remain with Sony's consoles. Also, with Square's online gaming portal PlayOnline about to go live, the two companies are now collaborating on Broadband technology, ready for the full launch of the PlayStation 2 Network Adaptor next year. ☐ **JS/AW**

//*FFX*, *XI* and future incarnations will remain with Sony's consoles//

The world's first unemployed virtual actor.

Tiny Tim's Christmases all came at once with a Chocobo feast.

Could *FFU* be Square's final non-videogame project?

FINAL FANTASY UNLIMITED

Square's RPG gets the anime treatment on Japanese TV.

The new *Final Fantasy*-based anime started broadcasting on 2 October in Japan with something of a bang. Viewers witnessed a pair of gigantic beasts being transported to the Japanese coast via a column-like portal – the creatures then promptly destroyed each other after one took out an entire military battalion. Dr Joe Hayakawa and his wife, were then introduced. They had already ventured to the strange creatures' homeworld and written a book about the experience. After they disappear on a return trip to the place, their children, Ai and Yuu, make the same journey to search for them, using their book as a guide.

The series' first episode displays more familiar *FF* elements than *The Spirits Within*. Ai and Yuu are teamed up with Lisa, whose magical skills come in handy when the party encounter a mushroom monster after arrival on the alien beasts' planet. When Lisa fails to completely destroy it, cloaked gunslinger Kaze finishes it off – accompanied by the victory music from the game. There's even a comical interlude with a Chocobo, a bunch of which stampede across the ending credits. With the same director and production studio as *Blue Submarine No. 6*, *FFU* shares a similar combination of 2D characters and 3D CG elements, though not quite to the same quality. Airing weekly, it's currently slated for four seasons of 13 episodes.

GOOD & EVIL

Our new Heaven and Hell-styled 'ometer

PS2 HEAVEN

The astounding free-roaming, platforming and Disney-quality animation of Naughty Dog's *Jak And Daxter*. Pure gaming genius.

Gearbox's magnificent conversion of Valve's PC first-person shooter *Half-Life*. A funny, frightening, gory game that every PS2 owner *must* experience.

AirBlade, *WipEout Fusion*, and *Silent Hill 2* – just three of the magnificent playable demos on this month's exclusive DVD.

PlayStation 2 now at £199 – if you haven't got Sony's machine yet, grab one sharpish before they sell out at Christmas.

Uninspiring, turgid PS2 racing games. We've got *GT3*, *WRC*, *Extreme G 3* and *Burnout* – will *Stunt GP* and the rest of you just please leave the building?

Editor Goldsmith going to Japan for the Tokyo Game Show and getting a bad dose of 'food poisoning'. It was probably that dodgy third glass of Sake, Mike.

Fitz's disturbing 'pancake face' in the *WWTBAM? 2nd Edition* feature (pg. 073). Giving the whole *OPS2* team nightmares.

Anne Robinson in a PS2 videogame. More disturbing than *Silent Hill 2* and scarier than a *Resident Evil* zombie in your shower. Feel the fear…

PS2 HELL

ILLUSTRATION: MR JAGO

BLUE LINES

Eidos has launched a new Web site for its PS2 first-person shooter *Deus Ex* (*OPS2* #011). Check out www.deusex.com » The latest motion-sensing coin-op from Konami is based on *Jurassic Park III*. Players have to move their body to avoid dinosaur attacks while simultaneously shooting back – no news on a PS2 conversion just yet... » Westwood has decided to change the name of the forthcoming Pirates Of Skull Cove, to *Pirates: Legend Of Black Kat* in an attempt to place more emphasis on the main character, Katerina.

WHEN CYPRIEN IS GOOD,
HE'S VERY GOOD.

"A beautifully constructed dark fantasy world with imaginative platforms, puzzles and combat"
PC GAMER

"scoffs in the face of platform conventions"
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I'D LIKE TO THANK...

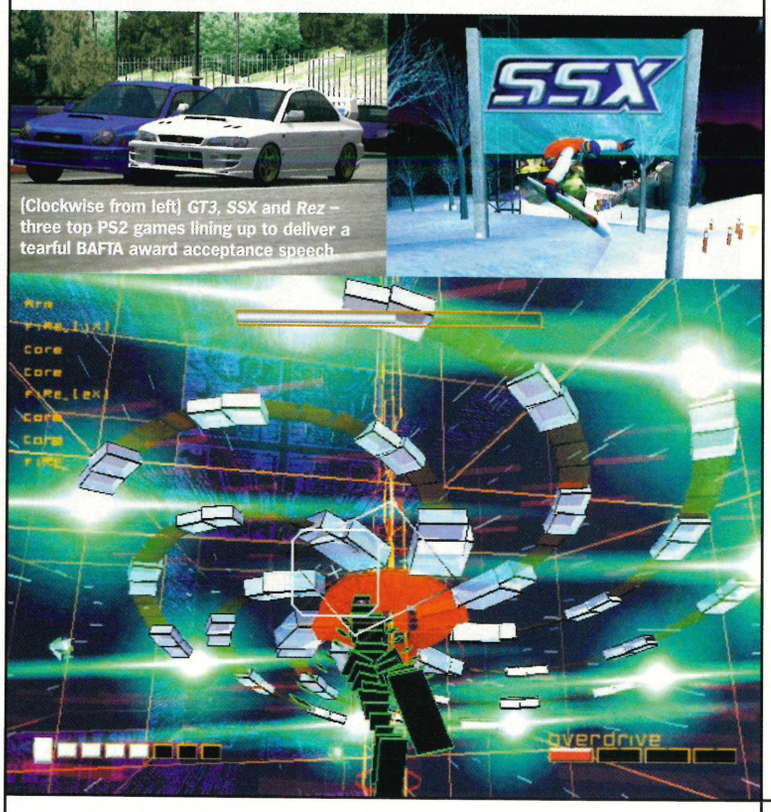
PlayStation 2 game publishers are poised for a haul of prestigious BAFTAs.

AN AVALANCHE OF PLAYSTATION 2 games have been nominated in The British Academy of Film and Television Arts fourth annual Interactive Entertainment Awards. Sega's *Rez* and SCEE's *Gran Turismo 3: A-spec* are two frontrunners in the race to pick up a BAFTA at the ceremony held on 25 October at London's Grosvenor House Hotel. Due to increasing popularity of the event, the venue has changed to accommodate more people and Goldie will be giving a performance at the post ceremony party. After hosting the awards last year, Phill Jupitus, of *Never Mind The Buzzcocks*, has been asked to return – undoubtedly with a few cockney wisecracks up his sleeve.

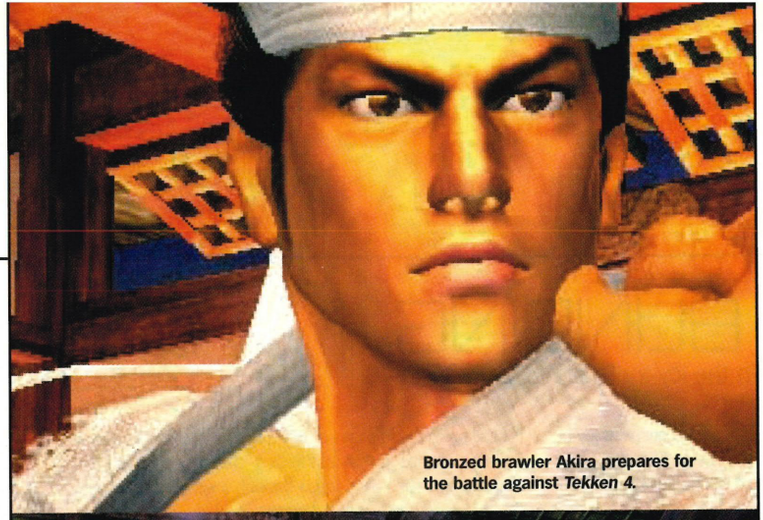
The Interactive Entertainment Awards, held separately from the film and TV BAFTAs, have been criticised in the past for their insistence on lumping videogames in with 'new media' enterprises such as Web sites and edutainment. This year however the number of categories for games have been increased. In Networked Games, *Gran Turismo 3*'s i-Link gameplay is up against online titles, while *SSX* could win Best Sound for EA. Ubi Soft's *Jungle Book Groove Party* is up for a Children's award and Sega's mesmeric techno shooter *Rez* is deservedly nominated for a prize in the Interactive Arts category. Superlative Dreamcast game *Virtua Tennis 2* (now confirmed for PS2) is one of the favourites for the Sports award, along with Activision's *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2* and Konami's *ISS Pro Evolution 2* on PSone.

Jez San, BAFTA judge and CEO of Argonaut, told *OPS2*: "It's been a huge year for PlayStation 2 games, taking three of the four nominations in the Console category." *GT3*, *Red Faction* and *SSX* are fighting it out with PSone's *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2* for a place in videogame history. Strangely SCEA's *Frequency* (like *Beatmania*, but with clubby visuals) has been nominated in the Lifestyle And Leisure category without a UK release even scheduled yet. Other congratulations must go to *WipEout Fusion* designers Good Technology who are up for a gong for their official U2 Web site, while a Technical Innovation award nomination goes to Sony's robot pooch AIBO. ☐ **JS**

**OPS2 will be announcing all the BAFTA winners and losers next month.*



(Clockwise from left) *GT3*, *SSX* and *Rez* – three top PS2 games lining up to deliver a tearful BAFTA award acceptance speech



Bronzed brawler Akira prepares for the battle against *Tekken 4*.

VF4 is stuffed with PS2-only features, including a slo-mo Training mode.

TOKYO GAME SHOW

HARD HITTER

Sega announces its game strategy for 2002 and debuts PS2 *Virtua Fighter 4* at the Tokyo Game Show.

"WE MAY BE NUMBER one in the arcades, but not so in consumer software," admitted Sega's Chief Operating Officer Tetsu Kayama at the company's TGS conference. But all that is about to change, following a new business model that aims to shift 35 million units globally between 2003 and 2004. Through reinforcing sports titles, major arcade and consumer franchises, reviving vintage brands and creating new titles, Sega has its eyes firmly set on the number one spot.

While games for other systems were presented, PS2 was certainly not left in the cold. "PS2 is a major platform with the largest market share at this point," stated the COO, "and it will not drop in the future." Announced with no firm release dates were *Eternal Arcadia*, *Culdcept II*, *Hundred Swords* and *Aero Dancing 4*. Games aside, Sega and Sony will also be working together to develop interactive TV.

AM2's Yu Suzuki was amongst the development team leaders present to showcase their work and revealed for the first time footage from the much anticipated *Virtua Fighter 4* on PS2. It looks to be progressing well in development. Projected onto large screens, character modelling and speed looked consistent with its arcade counterpart, though at this stage the backgrounds seemed to lack the same detail and animated objects.

//"PS2 is a major platform with the largest market share," Tetsu Kayama, Sega//

Suzuki also mentioned the extra features. A comprehensive Training mode incorporates slow-motion features to get into the nitty gritty of learning how to punish opponents. Character Edit adorns your favourite characters with beanies, sunglasses, berets and a plethora of accessories. The AI System mode allows you to coach characters in the art of fighting, then sit back and watch how they progress in Survival mode – if they're then beaten spectacularly, you won't be able to complain. When asked to confirm its 31 January release next year, Suzuki laughed. "This is always the pattern… how about 2003?" ☐ **AW**

**VF4 will be released in early 2002 through SCEE.*

BUT WHEN HE'S BAD, HE'S BETTER.

Evil Twin

CYPRIEN'S CHRONICLES

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SPY

Alpine Racer 3 has snowboard competitions as well as ski events.

"DOGFIGHTING THROUGH A HAZE OF BLUE SKIES AND FRENCH ANIME CHARACTERS"

ADRENALINE HIGH, PG 060

SNOW BLINDING

Namco goes downhill with the icy thrills of *Alpine Racer 3*.

FREELOADING ROYALS WILL be 'incandescent' with joy at the news that the latest coin-op conversion from the developers of the *Tekken* franchise will be the skiing simulation *Alpine Racer 3*.

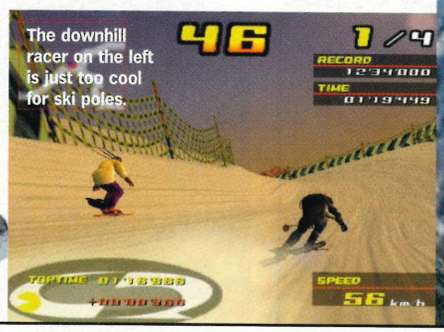
Although the arcade cabinet's clunky but highly enjoyable pole and skis controller won't make it to PS2, the game will pack in all the addictive challenges of the original with new bonus and multiplayer modes.

Alpine Racer 3 is a speedy, accessible racer with downhill and slalom events, alongside the chance to perform gravity-defying stunts and tricks for extra points and bonuses – think (yep, you guessed it) *SSX* on skis. As well as the usual coin-op modes, the PS2 conversion will have two-player challenges set in some of the world's most-famous Royal winter retreats in France and Switzerland, plus bonus challenges such as a chase through a glittery theme park.

Namco has expanded on the graphics for the PS2 port, producing detailed courses that twist through mountain passes into bustling ski towns, with various weather conditions ranging from fog to blizzards. The skiers and snowboarders themselves have been motion-captured and fine tuned by hand, featuring realistic facial expressions and fluid animation. *OPS2* will keep this promising Namco title on ice until we thaw out a full preview next year. ☐ **JS**

Alpine Racer 3 will be released early in 2002.

//The PS2 conversion will have two-player challenges set in the world's most famous Royal winter retreats//



The downhill racer on the left is just too cool for ski poles.

Moving hazards, such as trains, will provide sub-zero thrills and spills.

PlayStation®2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

POCKET HEROES

COLLECT THE ENTIRE SERIES!
SWAP WITH YOUR MATES!
CUT OUT AND KEEP!
SEND NO CASH!
MONSTER FUN!

PlayStation®2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK #83 of 100

HELENA

Dead or Alive 2

Age: 21	Height: 5'7"	Blood Type: Hot

Distinguishing features: French, blonde hair, breasts like a dead heat in a zeppelin race.

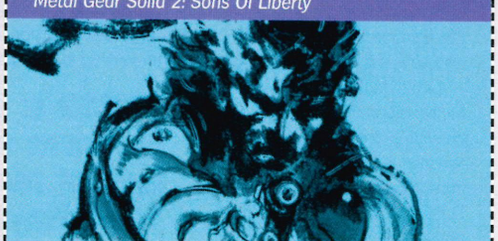
Looks	Could break many hearts – and arms, legs, necks...	93
Attack	Extremely fast and nimble. Expert juggling combos.	88
Defence	Particularly strong at countering attacks, with quick recovery.	85
Specials	Helena's Izuna throw can totally demolish opponents.	77

Helena is one of the cast of Tecmo's popular beat-'em-up *Dead or Alive 2*. Fighting in a Pi Qua Quan style, opera star Helena is seeking vengeance for the death of her mother.

PlayStation®2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK #60 of 100

SOLID SNAKE

Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons Of Liberty

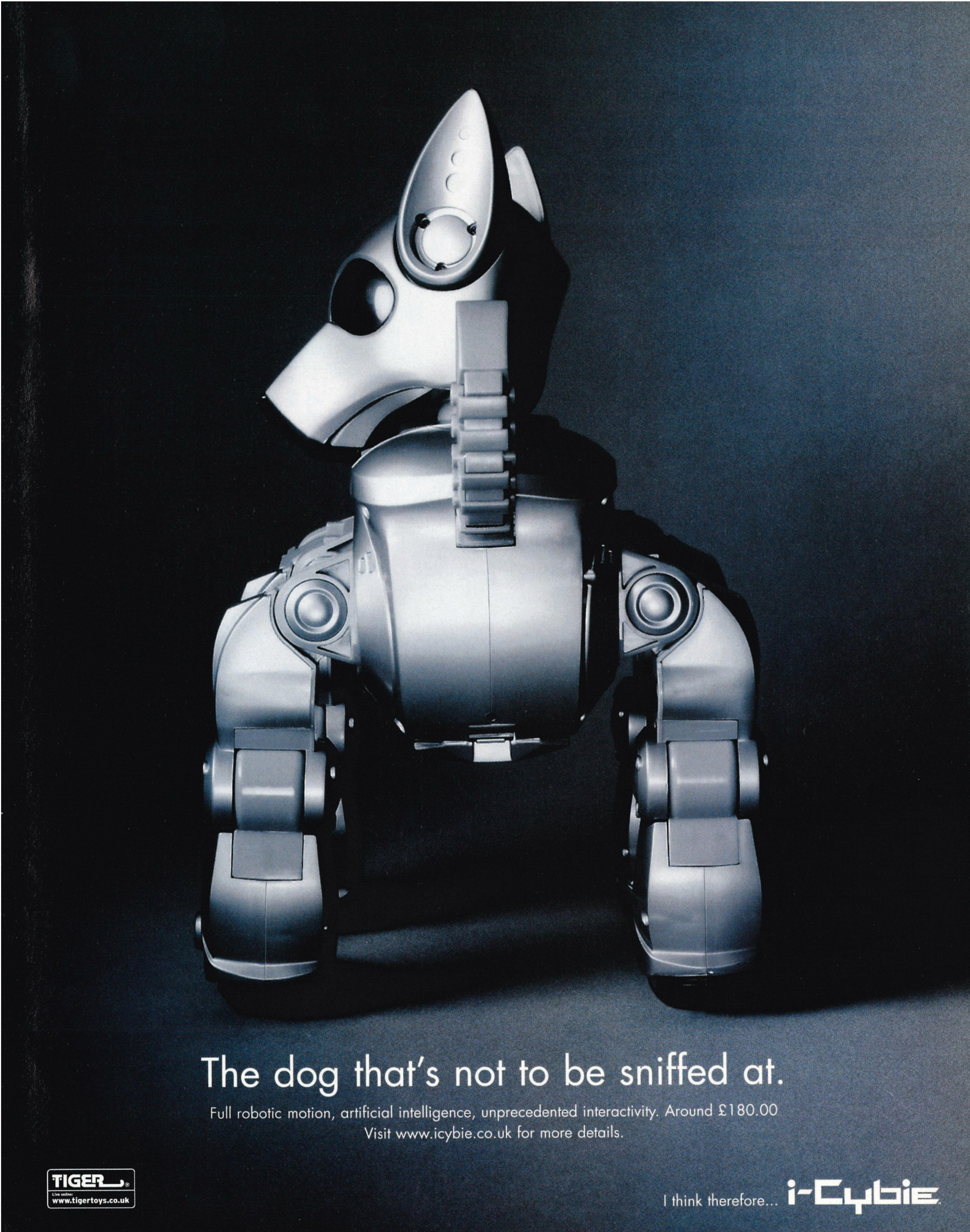


Age: Early 30s	Height: 5'9"	Blood Type: Easily spilled

Distinguishing Features: IQ of 180, speaks six languages, has a love of metallic robot machines.

Looks	Sad Eighties mullet – resembles an ex-member of Power Station.	41
Attack	Covert infiltration combined with the quiet, efficient disposing of enemies.	92
Defence	Uses a soggy cardboard box, some fags and a packet of bandages.	37
Specials	The ability to climb into a locker and kiss a poster of a semi-naked girl.	24

Solid Snake is the American star of sneak-'em-up series *Metal Gear Solid*. In his latest adventure, *Sons Of Liberty*, Snake has an epic battle with Solidus Snake and Metal Gear Ray.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I think therefore... i-Cybie

"CEMENTING HIS PLAYBOY IMAGE BY SETTLING DOWN TO A MINI-GAME OF POKER"

LARGO WINCH, PG 064

DROKK IT!

OPS2 guns down the exclusive on Rebellion's Judge Dredd Vs Judge Death.

DEATH LIVES!

Why did Rebellion choose Judge Death over Dredd's other villains?

"Judge Death has always been Dredd's ultimate nemesis, for the simple reason that he's impossible to kill," says Kingsley. "If you stop to think about this in the context of first-person shooters, it's quite refreshing – far too many games entertain players with an interesting, exciting story, only to fall at the last hurdle by forcing the player to spend a tedious five minutes shooting everything they've got at some über bad guy. Although it's not giving too much away to say that there will be a final showdown with Death, you won't be able to claim victory by heavy use of your trigger finger."

***2000 AD*'S WORLD FAMOUS** psychotic anti-hero will soon be administering his own kind of brutal justice in the forthcoming PS2 release of *Judge Dredd Vs Judge Death*. With a brand new story line written especially by Dredd creator John Wagner, developer Rebellion (creator of the superb PC title *Aliens Vs Predator*) is hoping that the action game will introduce the sci-fi franchise to a whole new legion of fans.

"*Judge Dredd Vs Judge Death* features the greatest character from the Galaxy's Greatest Comic," says CEO of Rebellion, Jason Kingsley. "It's a first-person shooter that oozes style, has an engrossing story line, stunning graphics and above all, is great fun to play." The game begins with Dredd tackling a particularly perplexing crime, but before he can work out what's going on, the Dark Judges (imaginatively named Fire, Fear, Mortis and Death) escape, resulting in much chaos and destruction (see Death Lives!).

Luckily, Judge Dredd has access to his trusty Lawgiver gun, packed with six different types of ammo – Standard execution, Armour-piercing, Ricochet, Heat-seeking, Incendiary and High-explosive – plus a Lawrod Rifle and a full supporting cast of grenades and gadgets that could be helpful in bringing down a 50 foot mechanoid. "We don't particularly shy from goriness, but Dredd is actually quite a moralistic character. He's much more likely to tap someone on the shoulder and knock them unconscious than stab them in the back," adds Kingsley.

Graphically, the game is planned to be very stylised, with Rebellion wanting to bring to life 3D environments as sumptuous as a high quality 2D graphic novel, with subtle lighting, real-time shadow effects and the beautiful future-noir curves of Mega City One, all inspired by 20 years of *2000 AD* art and concept sketches.

So what other characters will gamers be able to interact with from the Judge Dredd universe? "We have to avoid shoehorning characters into the plot just for the sake of it, but the Dark Judges will obviously feature strongly as well as a veritable host of mutants, robots, perps and a few old favourites such as Mean Machine."

Gamers will also get to play as Judge Death in a multiplayer option which is hoped will include online compatibility. Judge Death Tag is a deathmatch game where players can only score points while 'possessed' by Judge Death. If another player kills the Judge Death player, he possesses them and it's their turn to score. "People tend to team up against whoever is Death, but then turn on each other so they can get to be the one who becomes Death's next host. Absolute carnage – Judge Death would be proud."

Rebellion's *Judge Dredd Vs Judge Death* is planned for release late next year, but *OPS2* can reveal that this may be the start of many other *2000 AD* characters heading to PS2. "We've been working on a prototype of *Rogue Trooper*, but it's still very much early days. Watch this space!" says Kingsley. ☐ **JS**

**OPS2 will visit Rebellion soon for more PS2 exclusives.*

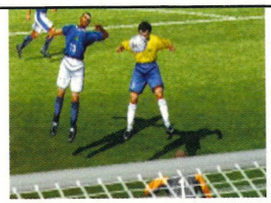
"With this gun, I AM THE LAW!"

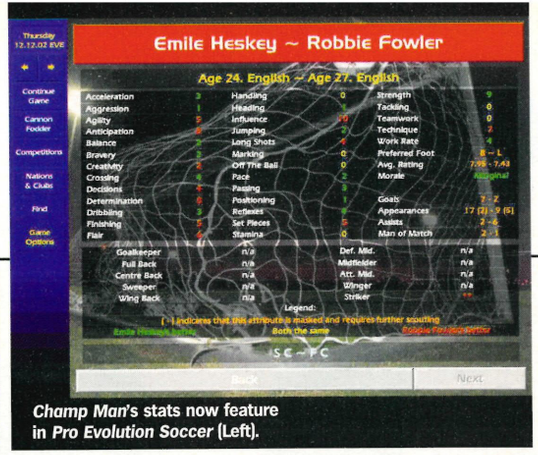
//"The Dark Judges will feature strongly, as will Mean Machine," Jason Kingsley, Rebellion's CEO//

The game's environments are taken from the *2000 AD* comics.

DREAM TEAM

Konami's *Pro Evolution Soccer* signs up *Championship Manager*'s Chairman.





Champ Man's stats now feature in *Pro Evolution Soccer* (Left).

IN A MOVE AS startling as Sol Campbell's shock transfer from Spurs to North London rivals Arsenal, the makers of the two most realistic football videogames have formed a unique managerial partnership. Sports Interactive, the company behind the superlative *Championship Manager* on the PC, has provided information from their massive 130,000 player database for the upcoming PS2 football extravaganza *Pro Evolution Soccer*. Developed by Konami TYO (formerly KCET) *PES* could pack hundreds of stadia with fans of the game, distinguishing itself with a silver award in this month's review (see page 108).

Speaking exclusively to *OPS2*, Championship Manager's guru and Chairman of Sports Interactive Paul Collyer revealed how much of a *PES* fan he is. "I love the game. I even bought an import PS2 just to play *Winning Eleven 5*. Konami's game is great because of the detail, the realism and the fact that things still surprise after months of play."

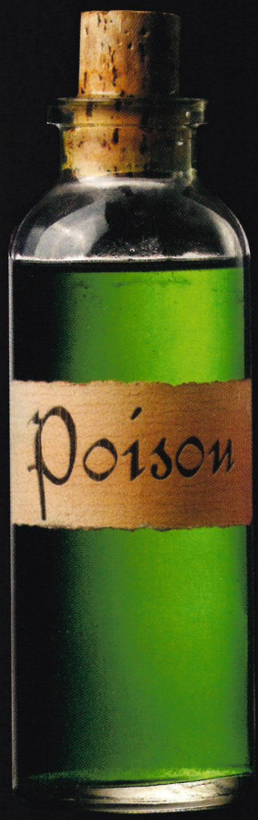
Collyer believes that the massive *Championship Manager* database, used for the up-to-date stats in the incredibly addictive PC game, will really enhance *PES* – especially the excellent Master League, where players can create their own superteam. "It's a realism thing – our team of researchers are renowned around the world for compiling the best football database there is, so by adding it to *PES* it can only make the game better."

So what about the chances of *Championship Manager* making the leap from PC to PS2 when the Hard Disc Drive and Network Adapter are launched next year? "We can't confirm or deny that," says Collyer, "but it's something that we would love to look at. Maybe Sony should give us a call about it..." ☐ **JS**

*Pro Evolution Soccer *is out on 16 November.*

Sports Interactive's Paul Collyer enjoys a game of *Pro Evolution* Soccer as fave team Italy.

PlayStation.2



DOES EXACTLY WHAT IT SAYS ON THE BOTTLE

Not everything you drink in Baldur's Gate™ is good for you, so make sure you read the label. Three and a half million people have experienced the PC version - but this is different, way different. This is 55 levels of frantic combat. This is a world full of hideous monsters, fiendish traps and hordes of treasure. This is Baldur's Gate™: Dark Alliance™. I'll drink to that.

Forgotten Realms Baldur's Gate Dark Alliance

Forget all that has gone before.

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"A MOVE AS STARTLING AS SOL CAMPBELL'S TRANSFER FROM SPURS TO ARSENAL"

DREAM TEAM, PG 051

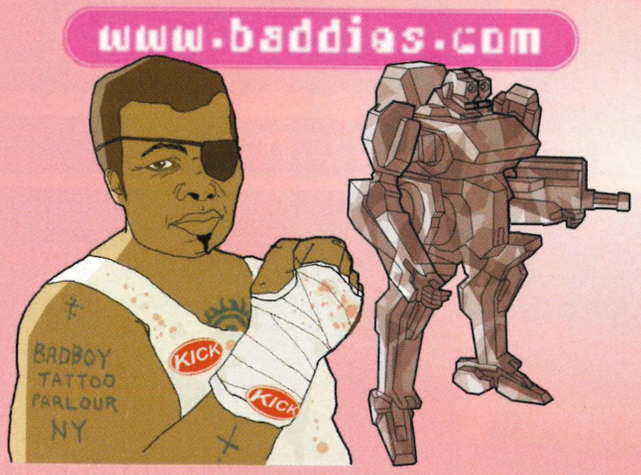


ILLUSTRATION: LEE WOODGATE

COMMERCIAL BREAK

Like sharks round sardines, PS2 games are registering on the sonar of advertising execs.

CONSIDERING MOST GAMERS sit smack-bang in the prized 17- to 35-year-old male demographic, the surprising thing about in-game advertising is how little there has been. It only really started with the Red Bull billboards in *WipEout* and the Diesel-clad G-Police. Yes, it was the PlayStation generation that proved to be a magnet for pony-tailed ad executives with money to burn. And as the installed base of PlayStation 2 starts to zip skyward, those execs, now buzzcut like Beckham, are preparing their next assault.

"Lots of people want to get involved with *WipEout Fusion*," explains Nino Ceraolo, Communication Manager at SCEE's Studio Liverpool. "It's a futuristic game so we want deals to reflect that." The result is a cross-marketing deal with Kappa. But forget 'Kappa Slappers': the Italian clothing firm is resurrecting itself, something it hopes to prove due to its association with *WipEout*'s edgy brand. Similarly SCEE will be the recipient of Kappa's forthcoming *WipEout* clothing range. "We didn't just put Kappa in the game. It had to come up with a good concept," argues Ceraolo. "*WipEout* T-shirts have always been a big part of the game's marketing. Now we're taking it further. Kappa's range is using futuristic materials and tight-fitting designs."

While the majority of in-game advertising operates on a friendly co-marketing basis, some publishers have managed to sell advertising space. Notable among these are the enfant terribles at Rockstar Games. "We've placed a variety of adverts in our games, particularly in *Midnight Club*," boasts Terry Donovan, Rockstar's Chief Operating Officer. And although he also warns that, "done badly it could ruin a game," overall Donovan feels advertising adds to the sense of realism in an urban environment. "We enjoyed spending the money enormously," he adds.

Conversely some game publishers have had to pay cash to the big brands in order to carry trackside ads in-game. "The rule of thumb is if the game publisher will sell more units because of the inclusion of a brand, it has to pay. If the brand is getting more exposure, then *it* pays," confirms Lisa Cato, MD of interactive marketeers Microtime. And having placed brands such as Adidas, Pepsi and McVities in games, as well as doing the trackside deals for the European version of *Gran Turismo 2*, Cato should know. "In-game advertising is a successful tool if used correctly," she says. "It can be very cost effective considering the length of time people play games."

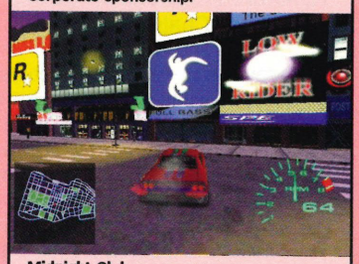
Even though Forrester Research has predicted worldwide revenues from in-game product placement could reach $700 million by 2005, gamers shouldn't be too worried about developers selling out. That said, there are always jokers in the pack. Eidos' Marketing Manager, Jon Rosenblatt, has negotiated with Bachelors over a Super Noodles deal. And Donovan illustrates how far some manufacturers will go: "A shoe company wanted us to repurpose one of our games, so that you drove around in giant shoes, as opposed to cars," he recalls. "Honestly, it was one of the most surreal things anyone has ever asked me! I was speechless. It was so off-base I wasn't even angry." ☐ **JJ**

//SCEE will soon be the recipient of Kappa's forthcoming *WipEout* clothing range//

Product placement in future games could soon verge on the ridiculous.

SELLING OUT?

Recent PlayStation 2 games with blatant corporate sponsorship.



Midnight Club
Rockstar's urban racing game gained realism and extra cash thanks to in-game advertising, although we doubt music partner Moving Shadow paid for this plug.

Extreme-G 3
Storm (watches) and the Ministry Of Sound (music) signed on the dotted line to provide atmosphere for Acclaim's futuristic bike racer.

The Getaway
Not direct advertising as such but the threads for SCEE Team Soho's ambitious gangster game are based on designs from labels Karen Millen and Ted Baker.

Gran Turismo 3: A-spec
GT3's focus on Japanese cars was underlined with the inclusion of the Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution VII. It was in the game before the car was launched.

Despite the lack of eyes or lips, charismatic Zorro still fights injustice and evil.

BEHIND THE MASK

Getting the Zs in with In Utero's *The Shadow Of Zorro.*

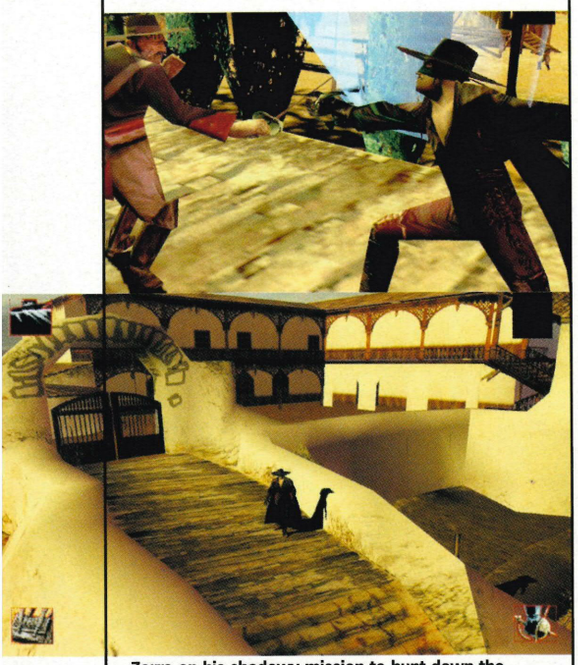
A SWASHBUCKLING BLACK-MASKED avenger is about to leave his famous mark on PlayStation 2 with the forthcoming release of *The Shadow Of Zorro.* Capturing the romance and adventure of the classic Fifties Disney TV series and various comic books, developer In Utero (also coding *Evil Twin* for Ubi Soft) has crafted a promising 3D stealth-'em-up.

It's 1822 and the charismatic popular hero Zorro, with his trademark black hat, mask and dodgy habit of cutting a 'Z' into all manner of enemy clothing, is on the hunt for a war criminal known as De La Hoya – the Saragossa Butcher. The trail leads him to California, where a recently-appointed police chief Montero happens to bear a striking resemblance to the evil Spanish traitor...

The Shadow of Zorro mixes sneaking-about-behaviour with exciting swordplay, including classic set-pieces such as the hero snuffing out candles with a single violent swipe of his sword and duelling with hordes of blade-flashing foes. Zorro will meet and interact with many other characters during the game, including Montero's henchman Coroto and the sultry beauty Carlota, across 28 different locations. Seven chapters divide the derring-do into missions ranging from the rescue of captured fighters to the infiltration of Montero's well-guarded strongholds, with players able to be as aggressive or as low-profile as they want, customising their fighting style as they progress through the game.

In Utero is currently polishing the graphics of *The Shadow Of Zorro* which include motion-captured characters and detailed backgrounds. *OPS2* will unmask the title in a review next issue. ☐ **JS**

**The Shadow Of Zorro *will be released on 7 December through Cryo*



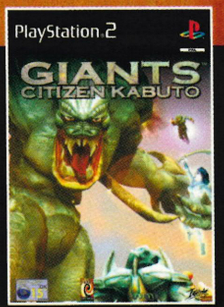
Zorro on his shadowy mission to hunt down the Saragossa Butcher and carve a 'Z' in his trousers.

PlayStation 2

Wouldn't it be cool if you could eat your boss? Or summon a catastrophic whirlwind to throw your bank manager hundreds of feet into the air, so he falls to his gory death? Or shoot the jobsworth bus conductor with a sniper rifle from half a mile away? A safe, cathartic way of releasing the day's pent up aggression?

The international smash hailed by the critics as one of the best PC games ever finally arrives on the beautiful black box. This epic of a game spans over 45 levels in beautiful 3D landscapes, and lets you control three amazing races, who can rip each other apart in various ways. Oh, and did we mention it's got some of the best humour ever to grace a videogame?

After this, you certainly won't attend another aggression management session.



http://www.interplay.com/giants-ps2

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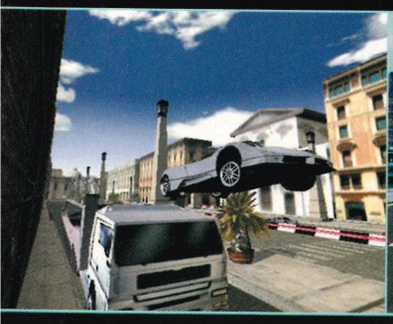
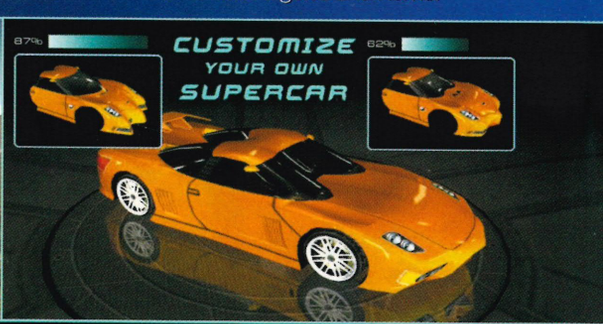
»--- **Race the streets** in **23 interactive courses**, all with **alternate routes** and **shortcuts**, in **7 cities**, from London to Los Angeles and Rome.





»--- **Build your own dream machine** with the **Steve Saleen™ Styling Studio,** choosing the **features** and **morphing the style** for **maximum performance.**

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PlayStation®2

ACTIVISION®

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SPY in japan

Edited by **Amos Wong**

30 DAYS IN TOKYO

DAY 1 (31 AUGUST)
In the midst of *PaRappa 2* fever, I spot new *PaRappa The Rapper* chocolate cream biscuits at a convenience store and immediately grab a few packs. Each comes with a cute plastic character figure and there are ten kinds in total. It's 2am and the clerk is looking at me strangely, but I don't care.

DAY 3
Blown away by the *Cowboy Bebop* anime movie, which puts most recent Hollywood SF to shame. Feel like screaming 'yeah!' during a climactic battle scene – it doesn't happen often these days – but I manage to restrain myself. See www.cowboybebop.com/english/index.html.

DAY 9
Before *Final Fantasy*'s lovely Aki is given a new hairdo and recast in another role, I spot her plugging a snack on train advertising. It's aptly named Perfect Plus; I don't disagree. Awfully serious expression though… where's the smile?

DAY 14
Pick up a copy of *Ace Combat 4: Shattered Skies* on the way home. Start it up and am instantly hooked. End up playing until the morning.

DAY 15
Wake up late and decide on a bit of impulse shopping. Fearing Gamecube shortages, I head to the nearest local game store (called Wonder Goo!) ASAP. Needn't have worried, though: I am met with a somewhat less than spectacular launch reaction, there is plenty of hardware available.

DAY 21
Just when you thought items for UFO catchers couldn't get stranger. At JAMMA (see right) Konami comes up with a new machine – complete with a chiller – for ice cream! Try to go for the Haägen Daaz, but end scooping a cheapo ¥100 (60p) brand. Can't complain: turns are free at the event after all!

Namco's new coin-op makes you feel sick in full 360° 3D.

ARCADE FEVER

The latest exciting coin-op games previewed at the JAMMA Arcade Show.

AT TOKYO'S JAMMA Arcade Show, Sega was clearly targeting anime fans. The oddly named anime *Lupin III: The Shooting*'s levels were based on events from the classic series of the same name, about a comical master thief. Snippets of footage from relevant episodes were incorporated into the light gun game, which distinguished itself from the usual fare with a *Crazy Taxi*-like driving level: players had to use their gun triggers to steer a car through oncoming traffic. Another stage involved stealing diamonds from display cases, while avoiding lasers that set off security alarms.

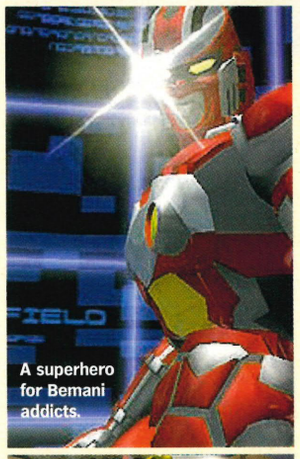
In another anime spin-off, *Initial D*'s story of illegal street racers and fetishistic car talk was translated into a one-on-one racer. But with only one opponent in every race, mass appeal may not be forthcoming.

Elsewhere Konami found more uses for its motion-tracking technology with the sword slashing *Tsurugi*. Requiring a combination of pedal work and sword waving for the hacking action, a kendo expert decked out in full Samurai gear demonstrated the game in style.

Motion units aside, it was Namco that showed off the coolest hardware of the show. O.R.B.S. is an enclosed cockpit system where the image literally envelops you. Running on O.R.B.S. was *Scrabbled Operation Blue Planet*. Essentially the same as its predecessor in graphics and gameplay, the enclosed confines and fish-eye lens presentation made battle cruisers look massive during fly-by attacks. However, things got dizzying through the winding ducts that led to a ship's core. For some, sick bags are recommended. ☐ **AW**

NEW DANCE HERO!

SEIGI NO MIKATA

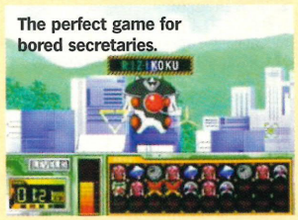


A superhero for Bemani addicts.

Translating as 'Ally Of Justice', players assume the role of a *Kamen Rider*-style superhero to fight monsters. So expect loads of fancy posturing, transformations, special attacks and ridiculous-looking enemies. The twist is that battles play out like *PaRappa The Rapper* with foot tapping music. What will they do next – *Kamen Rider: The Musical*?

TYPING MADNESS!

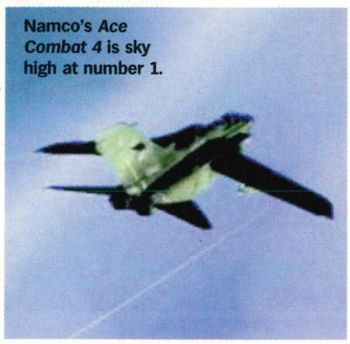
EVANGELION PROJECT E



The perfect game for bored secretaries.

At the helm of an Eva unit, players must defeat invading angels by typing them to death! Only by tapping out the word displayed within the time limit will attacks be unleashed. Lacking keyboard skills? No worries – Maya at Nerv Command will train you up to be a pro in no time. Other fun typing modes make super-deformed characters from the series dance and jump. Riveting stuff… think I'll watch the anime instead!

japanese top10



Namco's *Ace Combat 4* is sky high at number 1.

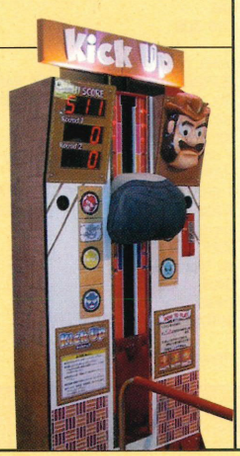
1. **ACE COMBAT 4: SHATTERED SKIES** (NAMCO)
2. **CAPCOM VS SNK 2: MILLIONAIRE FIGHTING** (CAPCOM)
3. **ZEONIC FRONT** (BANDAI)
4. **JIKKYOU POWERFUL PRO BASEBALL 8** (KONAMI)
5. **EVERYBODY'S GOLF 3** (SCEI)
6. **DEVIL MAY CRY** (CAPCOM)
7. **SHIN YUGIOH DUEL MONSTERS II** (KONAMI)
8. **PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2** (SCEI)
9. **JIKKYOU POWERFUL WORLD SOCCER 2001** (KONAMI)
10. **FINAL FANTASY X** (SQUARE)

**Chart source:* Dengeki *(Sept 10-16)*

DE-STRESS!

KICK UP

When pumping opponents full of lead or beating them to a pulp on the screen isn't satisfying enough on a rainy day, *Kick Up* is the perfect outlet. Simply plant your foot firmly between those jeans-clad bum cheeks and watch it fly up the cabinet. Should your attack be powerful enough, the rubber arse will even 'smash' through the sign at the top! If only the machine exploded as well, it'd be perfect.

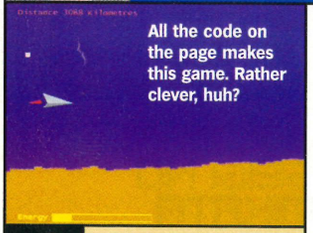


Just imagine it's your boss for perfect scores.

SPY

BACK TO BASIC

***OPS2*'s Jamie Sefton shows you how to make your own Yabasic games.**



All the code on the page makes this game. Rather clever, huh?

#6 THIS MONTH: **THE STORY SO FAR**

THIS IS THE SECTION that shows the gaming power of Yabasic – the program that comes free on the CD with any newly purchased PS2. In the last five issues we've printed code for your own *Defender*-style game. In case you've missed any of the previous issues here it is again. Enter this code and you'll be able to move a spaceship using the D-pad, avoiding fast moving objects and a side-scrolling mountain range.

```
REM  Set up
OPEN WINDOW 640,512
draw = 0
plx = 100
ply = 100
DIM mountain(41)
FOR t = 1 TO 41
mountain(t) = 400
NEXT
energy = 100
mile = 0
framecount = 0
maxobjs = 100
DIM obj_type(maxobjs)
DIM obj_x(maxobjs)
DIM obj_y(maxobjs)
FOR t = 1 to maxobjs
obj_type(t) = 0
NEXT

LABEL framestart
SETDRAWBUF draw

REM  Draw sky
SETRGB 1,64,16,0
SETRGB 2,64,16,0
SETRGB 3,0,0,255
GTRIANGLE 640,512 TO 0,512 TO 0,0
SETRGB 2,0,0,255
GTRIANGLE 640,512 TO 0,0 TO 640,0

REM  Draw mountain
mountain(41) = mountain(40)+(RAN(12)-6)
IF mountain(41) > 500 THEN
mountain(41) = 500 ENDIF
IF mountain(41) < 300 THEN
mountain(41) = 300 ENDIF
SETRGB 1,120,80,0
FOR t = 1 TO 40
mountain(t) = mountain(t+1)
FILL RECTANGLE (t-1)*16,mountain(t) TO t*16,512
NEXT t

REM  Object control
FOR n = 1 TO maxobjs
IF obj_type(n) = 1 THEN GOTO
enemy_turn ENDIF
LABEL endturn
NEXT

REM  Draw player
SETRGB 1,128,128,128
FILL TRIANGLE plx+10,ply TO plx+64,ply TO plx,ply-24
SETRGB 1,80,80,80
FILL TRIANGLE plx+10,ply TO plx+64,ply TO plx,ply+10
SETRGB 1,128+RAN(128),0,0
FILL TRIANGLE plx,ply TO plx-30,ply TO plx-4,ply-8

REM  Player control
c = PEEK("port1")
IF AND(c,16)  = 16 THEN ply = ply - 5
ENDIF
IF AND(c,64)  <> 0 THEN ply = ply + 5
ENDIF
IF AND(c,128) <> 0 THEN plx = plx - 5
ENDIF
IF AND(c,32)  <> 0 THEN plx = plx + 5
ENDIF
IF ply < 30  THEN ply = 30 ENDIF
IF ply > 500 THEN ply = 500 ENDIF
IF plx < 30  THEN plx = 30 ENDIF
IF plx > 500 THEN plx = 500 ENDIF

REM  Energy Bar
IF energy <= 0 THEN END ENDIF
SETRGB 1,255,255,0
TEXT 30,500,"Energy"
IF (energy > 70) THEN SETRGB 1,0,255,0
ENDIF
IF (energy < 20) THEN SETRGB 1,255,0,0
ENDIF
FILL RECTANGLE 100,490 to 100+(energy*2),506
RECTANGLE 100,490 to 300,506

REM  Distance Display
SETRGB 1, 600, 100, 0
DISTANCE$ = "Distance "+STR$(mile)+" kilometres"
TEXT 30,30, DISTANCE$
mile = mile + 1

REM  Background collision detection
IF (ply+10) > mountain((plx+30)/16) THEN
ply = ply - 12
energy = energy - 1
ENDIF

REM  Scheduler
IF MOD(framecount,30) = 0 THEN
n = nextobj()
obj_type(n) = 1
obj_x(n) = 640
obj_y(n) = ran(280)
ENDIF
framecount = framecount + 1

REM  End of frame
SETDISPBUF draw
draw = 1 - draw
GOTO framestart

SUB nextobj()
LOCAL t
FOR t = 1 TO maxobjs
IF obj_type(t) = 0 THEN RETURN t ENDIF
NEXT
PRINT "Error: run out of objects"
END
END SUB

LABEL enemy_turn
SETRGB 1,  RAN(600), RAN(600), RAN(600)
FILL RECTANGLE obj_x(n),obj_y(n) TO obj_x(n)+10,obj_y(n)+10
obj_x(n) = obj_x(n) - 25
IF obj_x(n) <= 0 THEN obj_type(n) = 0
ENDIF
IF ABS(obj_x(n) - (plx+30)) < 15 THEN
IF ABS(obj_y(n) - (ply-10)) < 15 THEN
energy = energy - 20
BEEP
obj_type(n) = 0
ENDIF
ENDIF
GOTO endturn
```

**Thanks to Mike Dean @ SCEE.*

NEXT MONTH:
THE START OF A BRAND NEW GAME...

"COME ON WAKE UP! IT'S TIME TO FREAK OUT AMERICAN TOURISTS AT LOCH NESS"

SWIM CITY, PG 063

The Italians love their scooters and Trecision's game reflects that.

CARELESS VESPA

Take the ride of your life in Trecision's *Scooty Races*.

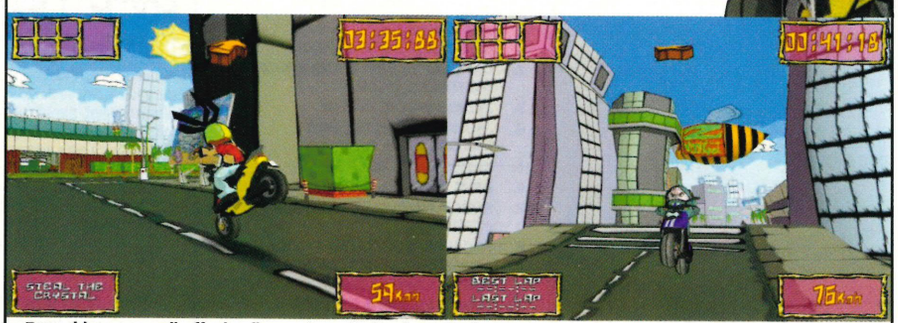
DEVELOPER TRECISION HAS skidded into *OPS2* towers with exclusive details concerning its forthcoming 3D cel-shaded game *Scooty Races*. The Italian company believe that its scooter-based racer will deliver a unique driving experience for PS2 owners, reflected in the very different driving model and physics engine. "*Scooty Races* is about fun, exhilarating action against the competition and learning how to control your vehicle in every situation," says Sales and Marketing Director Massimiliano Sacchi. "It's not just about choosing the right trajectory at the right speed – we'll leave that to other games."

//A licensing deal with a major scooter manufacturer has just been signed//

Scooty Races will be a free-roaming title, with numerous original game modes that will challenge the gamer to find short cuts, negotiate all kinds of moving hazards, perform tricks and physically challenge other competitors. One such mode is a 'musical chairs'-style event where players battle it out with other scooter racers to find and keep a set numbers of items to complete certain goals.

Trecision has jumped onto the cel-shading bandwagon for the game's visuals, but it's a very distinctive look, more hand-drawn than Sega's *Jet Set Radio* or other similarly rendered titles, showing backgrounds containing wonky, charcoal-smudged buildings and roughly sketched trees. A licensing deal with a major scooter manufacturer has also just been signed, which will lend the game the essential cred it'll need in an increasingly competitive PS2 3D racer market. *OPS2* will have more information from the quirky Rapallo-based developer about *Scooty Races* very soon. ☐ **JS**

**Scooty Races is currently without a UK publisher and its release date is TBC.*



Easy riders can pull off wheelies and acrobatic stunts in *Scooty Races*' many game modes.

SCHEDULE INVADERS

Channel Four videogames TV show *Thumb Bandits* aims to pick up the pieces left by *Bits*.

The smart-talking Aleks from *Bits* dumps her videogaming sisters to team up with presenter Iain Lee.

A BRAND NEW Channel Four videogame TV programme *Thumb Bandits* is about to light up our screens on wintry Friday nights at 11.50pm. Presented by the *11 O'clock Show*'s sardonic Iain Lee and the ex-*Bits* American beauty Aleks Krotoski, the show aims to take gaming seriously, while still remaining accessible and entertaining. "We want to make this a programme that you can tune into without your girlfriend complaining to change the channel," says *Thumb Bandits*' Producer John MacLaverty. "We want to open up the show a lot more and make it more 'adult' than *Bits* with authoritative reviews and exclusive features on gaming culture."

Promising to be "no geekfest" *Thumb Bandits* aims to produce bang-up-to-date news, interviews, vox pops with an outside reporter and regular online votes for the best games on every format, especially PS2. Iain Lee has already presented *Thumb Candy* on Channel Four, where he met the videogame industry's biggest stars including Shigeru Miyamoto (creator of *Donkey Kong*, *Mario* and *Zelda*) and *Pong* inventor Nolan Bushnell. "Iain absolutely loves gaming," continues MacLaverty. "He just keeps saying it's a dream come true – getting paid to play games and talk about them." *OPS2* hopes that the 15-show series will finally deliver the TV experience that videogaming deserves – check it out for yourself when it starts on 16 November. ☐ **JS**

** For further info on the programme, log onto www.channel4.co.uk.*

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PlayStation.2

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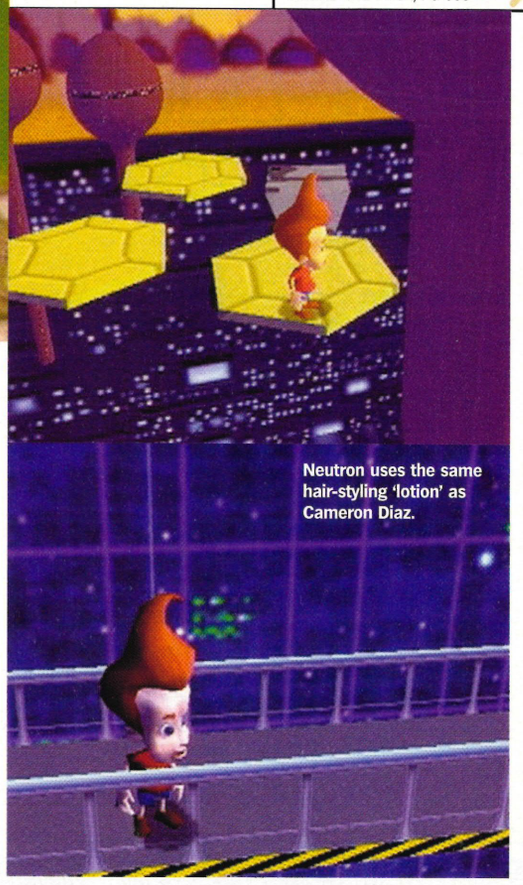
Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius has become a Nickelodeon cult fave.

"HIS MISSION, TO HUNT DOWN THE SARAGOSSA BUTCHER AND CARVE A 'Z' IN HIS TROUSERS"

BEHIND THE MASK, PG 053



Neutron uses the same hair-styling 'lotion' as Cameron Diaz.

MAD ABOUT THE BOY

Wacky cartoon action in THQ's *Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius.*

NICKELODEON'S LATEST BONKERS cartoon starring the Flash Gordon-inspired Jimmy Neutron is heading for PlayStation 2 courtesy of THQ. Jimmy is a ten-year-old boy genius, who with his robotic canine chum Goddard and allergic best friend Carl Wheezer has adventures in a retro Fifties-style world. He gets around with ludicrous inventions such as jet packs made from school bags and spy satellite/toaster combinations. Created by DNA Productions with the wit of Writer/Director Steve Oedekirk (*Ace Ventura, The Nutty Professor*) *Jimmy Neutron* also features the voices of US comedian Martin Short and *Star Trek TNG* legend Patrick Stewart.

The game is a third-person platforming adventure, where players have to solve fiendish puzzles and defeat nasty aliens intent on destroying Earth, but still make sure that they get Jimmy home in time for tea. Several playable characters will be available including Goddard the dog and a gigantic mutant chicken called Poultra. Plus Jimmy's mad gadgets will add much insanity to the proceedings with a mini-copter and scooter.

Graphically, *Jimmy Neutron* will create a colourful, CG universe complete with impressive 3D backgrounds from the TV series and forthcoming movie, with locations as varied as Yolkus city and harsh, forbidding asteroids in the far reaches of the galaxy. Already a cult animated hit, the pointy-haired Jimmy Neutron could turn out to be fresh, funny and futuristic on PS2 on next year. ☐ **JS**

* Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius *will be released through THQ Easter 2002.*

DESIGNER GENES

Games designed by you. This month: Bemani-style bell ringing bizarreness.

#14 | GAME NAME **RING 3D** | DESIGNERS **JOHN STEVENSON + JASON STONES**

"A NEW GENRE OF gaming has arrived! The ring-'em-up. *Ring 3D* focuses on the favourite British pastime – campanology (bell-ringing to the uninitiated). The game is in the style of a Bemani title, in which the gamer bell-rings against a series of opponents as part of a team (of 6 to 12) trying to ring with the least amount of errors. The game can be controlled with the optional specially made controller (sold separately) which mimics a real bell-rope!

"The player has a circular reel with the numbers of all available bells in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen and must press ⊗ when the red marker is positioned over the number of the bell you picked at the start of the level. Press the button too early, and the computer will command you to 'pull harder', too late and the computer will shout 'don't pull as hard!' With every successful button press, the player is awarded points. You must reach a target score, with later levels requiring huge scores.

"The game would also feature mini-games like Snipe The Wolf (wolves are attacking the old grannies who are trying to get to the Sunday church service. Can you take them out from the belltower?) and Race Up The Stairs (players take part in a *Track & Field*-style event in which they button bash to get to the top of the tower). There would also be a Garage mode that lets the player view any ringer or bell that they currently own. Namco-style useless personality facts included."

WRITE TO
Designer Genes, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Or email us at **PS2@ futurenet.co.uk**. Send us a description of your game idea and try to accompany it with a few sketches or drawings to bring your words to life. If we use it we'll send you a T-shirt and a print of the box art designed by top art fella, Moyler.

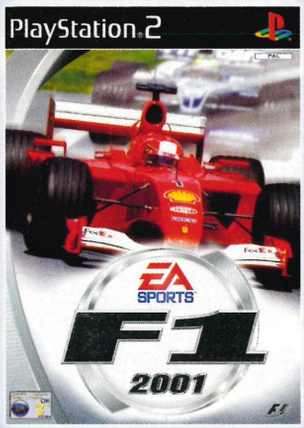
THE EXPERT'S OPINION
PAUL GLANCEY

A campanology rhythm-action RPG requiring a special controller... The ultimate ultra-niche game... And with a dreadful title... It might just be crazy enough to work! Or not. Given normal circumstances, this title would be a massive hit with three people worldwide, but with the right marketing spin it could reach a market of, quite literally, a few dozen idiots. A real landmark title in the history of videogames if only some publishing visionary could fool people into buying it.

**Paul Glancey is Creative Manager at developer Criterion Games.*

HMV

seriouslyaddictive...



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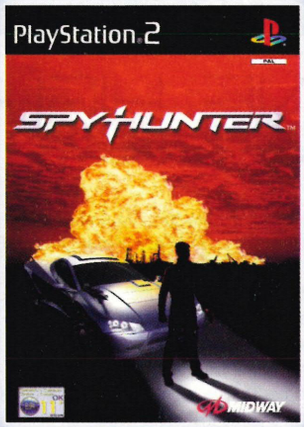
F1 2001

Battle for position at every sweeping bend, high-speed straight and hairpin turn within the world's most glamorous sporting arena. From Monaco to Monza, take on the most intelligent and daring racers to hit the Formula One circuit. The circuit comes to life with fully interactive pit stops, roaring crowds, a buzzing grid, driver animations and a full spectrum of driving conditions, including torrential downpours and other mid-race weather changes. Add the official 2001 FIA Formula One World Championship license and *F1 2001* is poised to reach new milestones in motor sports gaming.

Out Now



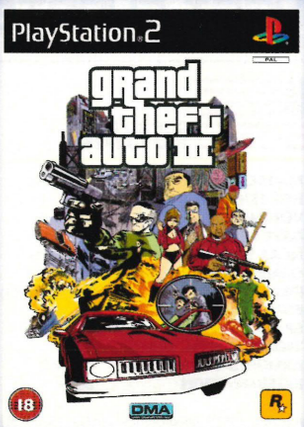
Spy Hunter © 2001 Midway Amusement Games, LLC. All rights reserved. SPYHUNTER, MIDWAY and the Midway logos are trademarks of Midway Amusement Games, LLC. Used by permission.

Spy Hunter

Twenty years on from its original arcade run the legendary *Spy Hunter* game returns to our screens. Racing across road and sea you must dodge bullets, swerve crashing cars and take out the enemy (the evil NOSTRA agency). With the amazing G6155 Interceptor able to travel on road and sea and turn itself into a motorbike and jet ski, you'd better get ready to strap yourself in for a full on, full speed adventure.

"A beautifully crafted, knockabout thrill" PSM2

Out Now



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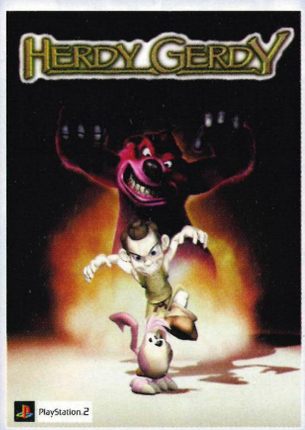
Grand Theft Auto III

The legendary *Grand Theft Auto* series continues with this crime packed third instalment. Having escaped from a prison bound security van you are now free. You'll have to rob, steal and kill just to stay out of serious trouble. But be careful, for as you make your way up the criminal pecking order you will come under close scrutiny from the cops and may be forced to hijack a speeding car to escape. Now in 3D this is the best looking and most exciting *Grand Theft Auto* yet.

"An expertly executed, thrilling videogame? Certainly" Official UK PlayStation Magazine

Out Now



Herdy Gerdy © Core Design Limited, 2000. Published by Eidos Interactive Limited. Herdy Gerdy is a trademark of Core Design Limited.

Herdy Gerdy

Get ready for the highly anticipated *Herdy Gerdy*, a game that not only pushes PlayStation 2 to its limits but also offers a whole new take on 3D gaming. Gerdy, an apprentice herder, must embark on an epic quest to avenge his father's nemesis, Sadorf, and restore goodness to Balley Island. This graphically stunning adventure game introduces a totally new genre of gameplay combining puzzle solving with tactical and platform elements. Don't miss this massive game featuring a dramatic story line, breathtaking cinematic sequences and engaging gameplay.

Coming Soon

All titles subject to availability at participating stores only.

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SPY

Explosions are suitably dramatic, especially when using the fireworks special weapon.

ADRENALINE HIGH

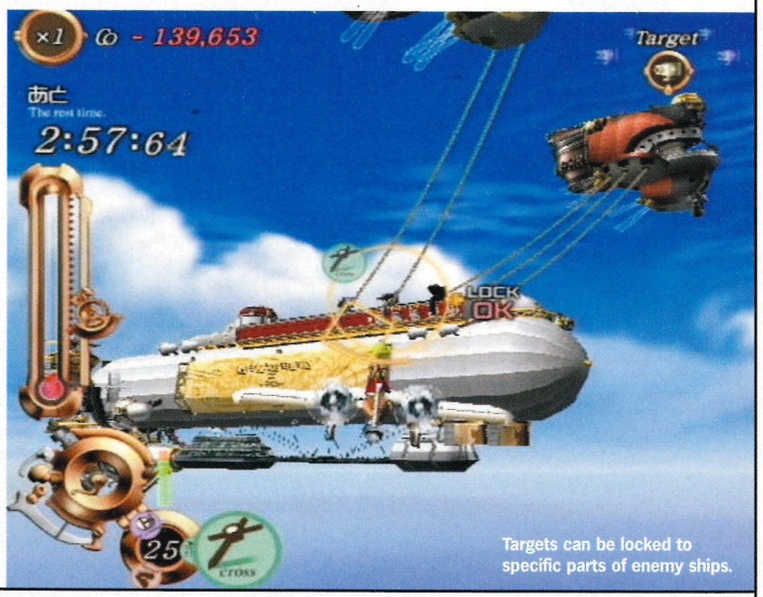
Fight or flight? Pixel Arts' *Sky Gunner* wants you to do both.

AN ARCADE FLIGHT shoot-'em-up spun with typical Japanese cute-chic, *Sky Gunner* takes classic bullet-weaving close-combat dogfighting and filters it through a haze of blue skies and French anime caricatures. Ignoring all the landing and taking off nonsense, it starts you in the middle of a firefight, and it's up to you to shoot everything. This is not a subtle game – it's the inverse *Ico*, if you will – but that's not something to be ashamed of.

In fact, there's even less emphasis on flying than you might initially think. The targeting system places your enemy in view at all times, meaning all you have to do is tilt your retro-techno styled plane in their general direction and open fire. Gunfire is unlimited, although each bullet knocks points off your score, some punishment in a game that relies heavily on points attack for replay value.

Three special weapons are also available, the most spectacular being the fireworks that send foes off with multiple *Fantavision*-style bursts of pastel colour, although rewards lie in store for those pilots skilful enough to complete levels without using them. With multiple story lines, several planes and characters to unlock, and an outlook that's so energetic it screams for you to get involved, *Sky Gunner* has the makings of a cult hit. ☐ **SC**

* Sky Gunner *is already out in Japan and is likely to get a release here through SCEE in 2002.*



Targets can be locked to specific parts of enemy ships.

HMV PS2 CHARTS

"Go on zombie, make my day." Claire shoots to number one.

	TITLE	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER
1.	**RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X**	Capcom	Capcom
2.	**DARK CLOUD**	Level 5	SCEE
3.	**GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC**	Polyphony	SCEE
4.	**EXTREME-G 3**	Acclaim	Acclaim
5.	**TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT**	Namco	SCEE
6.	**FUR FIGHTERS**	Bizarre Creations	Acclaim
7.	**KENGO: MASTER OF BUSHIDO**	Lightweight	Ubi Soft
8.	**FIFA 2001**	EA Sports Canada	EA Sports
9.	**RED FACTION**	Volition	THQ
10.	**PARIS-DAKAR RALLY**	Broadsword	Acclaim

**Source: HMV 27/09/01*

#1: RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X
The rotten, undead charms of *Resident Evil* have finally killed off *GT3*'s domination of the PS2 charts. *Code: Veronica* is a magnificent conversion of the Dreamcast original.

#2: DARK CLOUD
Currently the best RPG on PS2. A combination of real-time dungeon battling and the ability to conjure up whole villages. You'll need patience for the complex micro-management, but stick with it and *Dark Cloud* becomes an original and rewarding gaming experience.

#4: EXTREME-G 3
Fast, with stomach-churning tracks and cool weapons set against an aural backdrop of pumping techno. *Extreme-G 3* is a dream come true for anyone who's ever watched *Tron* or *Akira* and fancied a piece of the action.

topdogforgames
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GUEST CHARTS

PlayStation 2 Top Tens from around the world

TOP 10 USA PS2 GAMES

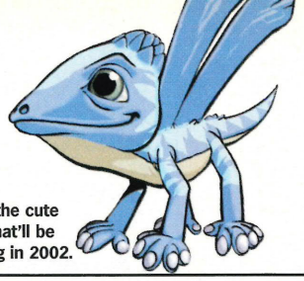
1.	**MADDEN NFL 2002**	EA Sports
2.	**RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X**	Capcom
3.	**DAVE MIRRA BMX 2**	Acclaim
4.	**NCAA FOOTBALL 2002**	EA Sports
5.	**GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC**	SCEA
6.	**NBA STREET**	EA Sports Big
7.	**ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING**	Konami
8.	**TWISTED METAL: BLACK**	SCEA
9.	**ARMORED CORE 2**	Ubi Soft
10.	**EXTERMINATION**	SCEA

**Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service (15/09/01)*

TOP 10 IRISH PS2 GAMES

1.	**RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X**	Capcom
2.	**GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC**	SCEE
3.	**ONIMUSHA: WARLORDS**	Capcom
4.	**FIFA 2001**	EA Sports
5.	**RED FACTION**	THQ
6.	**PARIS-DAKAR RALLY**	Acclaim
7.	**THE BOUNCER**	SCEE
8.	**EXTREME G 3**	Acclaim
9.	**CITY CRISIS**	Take 2
10.	**CRAZY TAXI**	Acclaim

**Source: Elspa (15/09/01)*



One of the cute Dinoz that'll be hatching in 2002.

SPY

incoming

Need to know when a game is coming out? Look here.

November 2001	Genre	Publisher
18 Wheeler	Arcade racer	Acclaim
AirBlade	Extreme sports	SCEE
Batman Vengeance	Action	Ubi Soft
Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath Of Cortex	Platformer	Vivendi Universal
Devil May Cry	Action	Capcom
DNA – Dark Native Apostle	Adventure	Virgin
FIFA 2002	Sports sim	EA Sports
Global Touring Challenge: Africa	Rally sim	Rage
Half-Life	FPS	Vivendi Universal
Lotus Challenge	Racing sim	Virgin
Pro Evolution Soccer	Sports sim	Konami
Robot Wars	Action	BBC
Silent Hill 2	Adventure	Konami
Silent Scope 2: Fatal Judgement	Shoot-'em-up	Konami
Soul Reaver 2	Adventure	Eidos
Splashdown	Extreme sports	Infogrames
SSX Tricky	Extreme sports	EA Sports
Supercar Street Challenge	Arcade racer	Activision
The Mummy Returns	Adventure	Vivendi Universal
The Simpsons: Road Rage	Arcade racer	EA
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	Extreme sports	Activision
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 2nd Edition	TV tie-in	Eidos
World Rally Championship	Rally sim	SCEE
WWF SmackDown! 'Just Bring It!'	Wrestling	THQ

December 2001	Genre	Publisher
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance	RPG	Interplay
Cricket 2002	Sports sim	EA Sports
Dragon Rage	Adventure	3DO
Driven	Arcade racer	BAM!
Dropship	Strategy	SCEE
Evil Twin	Adventure	Ubi Soft
Frank Herbert's Dune	Adventure	Cryo
Giants: Citizen Kabuto	Strategy	Interplay
Jak And Daxter	Platformer	SCEE
James Bond 007... Agent Under Fire	Action	EA
Jet Ski Riders	Arcade racer	Eidos
Polaroid Pete	Platformer	JVC
Rayman M	Platformer	Ubi Soft
Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Winter Games	Sports sim	Eidos
Shaun Palmer's Pro Snowboarder	Extreme sports	Activision
Smuggler's Run 2	Arcade racer	Rockstar
The Shadow Of Zorro	Adventure	Cryo
Twisted Metal: Black	R/S	SCEE
WTA Tour Tennis	Sports sim	Konami

January 2002	Genre	Publisher
Ecco The Dolphin	Adventure	SCEE
Endgame	Light gun game	Empire
Headhunter	Adventure	SCEE
Police 24/7	Action	Konami
Rez	Shoot-'em-up	SCEE
Sled Storm 2	Extreme sports	EA Sports
WipEout Fusion	Future racer	SCEE

February 2002	Genre	Publisher
Ace Combat 4	Flight sim	SCEE
Capcom Vs SNK 2	Beat-'em-up	Capcom
Conflict Zone	Strategy	Ubi Soft
Drakan	Adventure	SCEE
Eve Of Extinction	Action	Eidos
Everybody's Golf 3	Sports sim	SCEE
Grandia II	RPG	Ubi Soft
Herdy Gerdy	Platformer	Eidos
Max Payne	Action	Rockstar
Metal Gear Solid 2	Adventure	Konami
Mike Tyson Boxing	Sports sim	Codemasters
Moto GP 2	Arcade racer	SCEE
No One Lives Forever	FPS	Fox
PaRappa The Rapper 2	Rhythm action	SCEE
Pirates: Legend Of Black Kat	Adventure	EA
Resident Evil: Gun Survivor 2	Light gun game	Capcom
Shadow Man: 2econd Coming	Adventure	Acclaim
Space Channel 5 v1	Rhythm action	SCEE
Space Channel 5 v2	Rhythm action	SCEE
Tekken 4	Beat-'em-up	SCEE
Vampire Night	Light gun game	SCEE
Virtua Fighter 4	Beat-'em-up	SCEE

March 2002	Genre	Publisher
Deus Ex	FPS	Eidos
Dinoz	Platformer	Vivendi Universal
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2	Extreme sports	Activision
Maximo	Platformer	Capcom
The Getaway	Arcade racer	SCEE
The Thing	Adventure	Vivendi Universal

2002 TBC	Genre	Publisher
Aliens: Colonial Marines	FPS	EA
Alpine Racer 3	Arcade racer	SCEE
Ape Escape 2	Platformer	SCEE
Black And White	God sim	EA
Blood Omen 2	Adventure	Eidos
Colin McRae Rally	Rally sim	Codemasters
Commandos 2: Men Of Courage	Strategy	Eidos
Conflict: Desert Storm	Combat sim	SCi
Dark Summit	Extreme sports	THQ
Duke Nukem Forever	Adventure	Rockstar
Dynasty Warriors 3	Action	TBC
Exo	Action	Infogrames
F355 Challenge	Racing	SCEE
Final Fantasy X	RPG	SCEE
Good Cop, Bad Cop	Action	TBC
Hidden And Dangerous 2	Action	Take 2
Ico	Adventure	SCEE
Iron Storm	FPS	Wanadoo
Judge Dredd Vs Judge Death	FPS	TBC
Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	Extreme sports	Activision
Kengo II	Beat-'em-up	TBC
Kingdom Hearts	RPG	SCEE
Legion: Legend Of Excalibur	Strategy	Midway
Medal Of Honour: Fighter Command	Flight action	EA
Medal Of Honour: Frontline	FPS	EA
Onimusha 2	Adventure	Capcom
Outcast 2	Adventure	TBC
Primal	Adventure	SCEE
Prisoner Of War	Strategy	Codemasters
Run Like Hell	Action	Interplay
Scooty Races	Arcade Racer	TBC
Sky Gunner	Flight action	SCEE
SOCOM: US Navy SEALs	Combat sim	SCEE
Soul Calibur 2	Beat-'em-up	SCEE
Spider-Man The Movie	Action	Activision
Spyro The Dragon 4	Platformer	Vivendi Universal
Star Wars Racer 2: Revenge	Arcade racer	Activision
Star Trek: Shattered Universe	Space shooter	Interplay
State Of Emergency	Action	Rockstar
Stuntman	Arcade racer	Infogrames
The Lost	Adventure	Crave
TimeSplitters 2	FPS	Eidos
TOCA Race Driver	Racing	Codemasters
Tomb Raider: Next Gen	Adventure	Eidos
Tribes 2	FPS	Vivendi Universal
Zombie Revenge	Action	Acclaim

**Game release dates are correct at the time of going to press..*

KEY FPS – First-person shooter; R/S – Racer/Shoot-'em-up; RPG – Role-playing game

MOST WANTED

This month's games were chosen by this man. He's called Ben Smallman.

1. JAK AND DAXTER
"A good game that isn't a sequel. I pre-ordered it. Better be good!"

2. SONIC ADVENTURE
"C'mon then Sega! I think we deserve it!"

3. RISTAR
"One of the lesser known Mega Drive games but still fantastic."

4. DYNAMITE HEADDY
"Well if they're not doing sequels at least give us a next-gen update of this fab game."

5. CRASH BANDICOOT: TWOC
"Me ickle bro's getting it for Xmas, but I'll get to play too."

6. EARTHWORM JIM
"We demand something from Shiny after they abandoned PSone versions of *Messiah* and *Earthworm Jim 3D*."

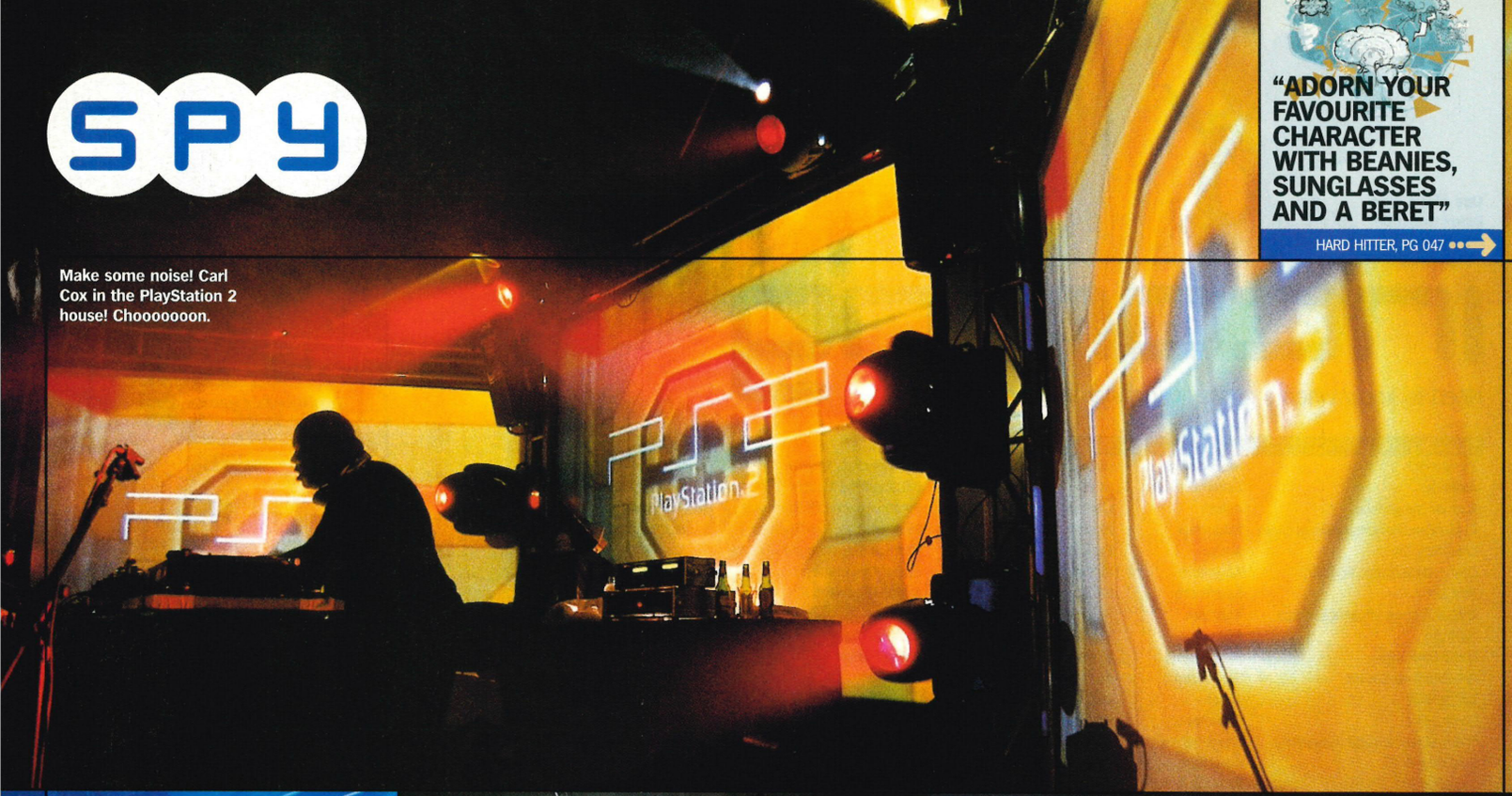
7. APE ESCAPE 2
"My analogue sticks are drooling for this monkey caper already."

8. FUR FIGHTERS 2
"I know it's not been announced, but they have to make it."

9. KLONOA 2
"Has better graphics than the playful original [and hopefully lasts longer]."

10. TOEJAM AND EARL
"Capturing tourists in jars has never been so fun! Me want."

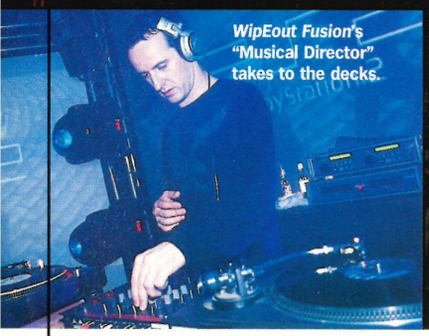
YOUR GO!
Drop us a line with the games you can't wait for and and why plus a photo of yourself and we'll do the rest. **Most Wanted, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.** Email **PS2@futurenet.co.uk**



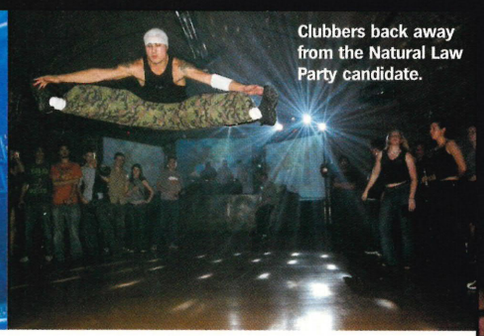
Make some noise! Carl Cox in the PlayStation 2 house! Chooooooon.

"ADORN YOUR FAVOURITE CHARACTER WITH BEANIES, SUNGLASSES AND A BERET"

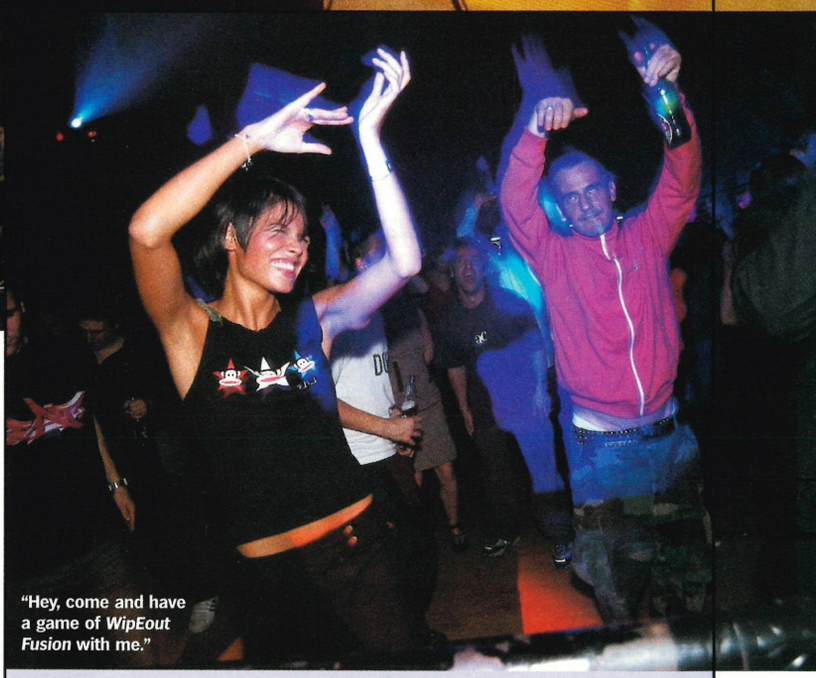
HARD HITTER, PG 047 ••→



WipEout Fusion's "Musical Director" takes to the decks.



Clubbers back away from the Natural Law Party candidate.



"Hey, come and have a game of *WipEout Fusion* with me."

PHOTOGRAPHY: MARTIN BURTON

WIPEOUT ROCKS THE HOUSE

The *Muzik* Dance Awards after-party proves *WipEout* is king of club hits.

SUCH IS THE GROWTH in status of the *Muzik Magazine* Dance Awards (MDA), that over the last few years they've become known as 'Clubland's Oscars'. As such, every DJ worth their vinyl must be seen there. Throw into the mix the girls, the beats, the blaggers and the booze, and we're sure you can imagine that anyone who managed to snag a ticket for the after-party was in for a special night.

The location: Shoreditch, trendy London borough of the moment. The venue: the impressive Planit Arches. But what, you may well ask, have the *Muzik* Dance Awards got to do with PS2? Simple. This grand event is a more than apt moment to show off the latest instalment in the *WipEout* series – *WipEout Fusion*. No game has made the marriage between clubland and gaming culture more complete. From day one *WipEout* featured tracks that came hot off the decks and onto the console. Such is the success of this synergy between gaming culture, house music and clubbing, the fourth chapter of the game (first for PS2) once again boasts house emperor Sasha as its Musical Director. And it's DJ Sasha that the masses have come to see and hear spin in the PlayStation arena at the *Muzik* Dance Awards after-party.

But no-one stood idly by, waiting for Sasha's set. The crowd was kept dancing by hot rookie James Zabiela; men of the moment, the Plump DJs, who played an electrifying set of breakbeats and mad rhythms; and the legendary Carl Cox, who as always tore up the rule book as well as the dancefloor, with his unique brand of tech-house.

Julia Napoletano, one half of JDS, the DJ duo whose track Punk Funk features on *WipEout Fusion*, was in no doubt as to why the worlds of PlayStation and clubbing make such great companions. "I think a lot of people who play PlayStation do it because they get into different worlds and I think lots of people go to clubs for that same reason, because they get to move to another level. Each experience is both new and individual."

What followed was five hours of high-octane clubbing and gaming to celebrate that very point. If it hadn't proved it already, there was now no doubt that the *WipEout* series has won the hearts and minds of the nation's clubbers and DJs. ☐ **PM**

OVERDRIVE TIME MUSIC

WipEout Fusion **featured artists explain why their tracks are perfect for the game.**

PARIAH (Beats Defective)
"It's just gotta have a kinda driving, banging feel to it, the kind of thing you want for futuristic racing."

JDS (Punk Funk)
"It's been one of our ambitions for years, we've always wanted to do this sort of thing so we're really pleased that our track was accepted. Ours is one of those tracks that keeps going, you can keep listening to it over and over again and find new bits. Sometimes if you listen to something over and over again it gets on your nerves but this track doesn't."

BRAINIAC (Neuro)
"We chose this track because it's entirely suitable for the WipEout game. It's a futuristic rough ride, just like *WipEout*. Our track is all about futuristic vibes. When we're in the studio and things are coming on top we like to break out the PlayStation, have a few games, kick it, and there you go."

CHARACTER ASSASSINATION

Every issue, *OPS2* decamps to a medieval castle in sunny Romania to create the most perfect game characters from the still-twitching discarded bits of other PS2 personalities. This month: It's alive! The most magnificent beat-'em-up creature ever, ever, ever.

CHARACTER ASSASSINATION #02

THE PERFECT BEAT-'EM-UP BRAWLER

1. Edward Carnby from *Alone In The Dark* kindly donates his Gothic-styled, patchouli oil-scented, flowing black locks.

2. Scare opponents with the ruthlessly focused undead aggression of *TimeSplitters*' very own Teeth Mummy.

3. Hypnotise and flatten with Mama Tua from *Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2*'s frightening sumo style lady bumps.

4. *Tekken Tag Tournament*'s Nina Williams wades in with a smart pair of skintight leather trousers – you'll notice them just before she kicks a hole in your skull.

5. Shred the rules with the vicious, skin-slicing samurai sword of *Onimusha: Warlords*' Samanosuke.

6. Rip someone a new arsehole with the claws nicked from *Bloody Roar 3*'s animal-morphing battler Long. Easy tiger.

7. Make sure you give nothing away with a set of deathly white zombie eyes from *Resident Evil Code: Veronica X*.

8. Dress to impress with the smart whistle and flute of *The Getaway*'s resident cockney *Lock Stock*-inspired psychopath Charlie Jolson.

9. The beat-'em-up hero is protected with the essential padded up extremities of a US hockey star from *NHL 2002*. Puck you!

10. Spread tricky opponents all over the arena with the super-fast wheels from the TVR Serbera in *Gran Turismo 3: A-spec*.

WORDS: JAMIE & FITZ/ILLUSTRATION: DANIEL MACKIE

SWIM CITY

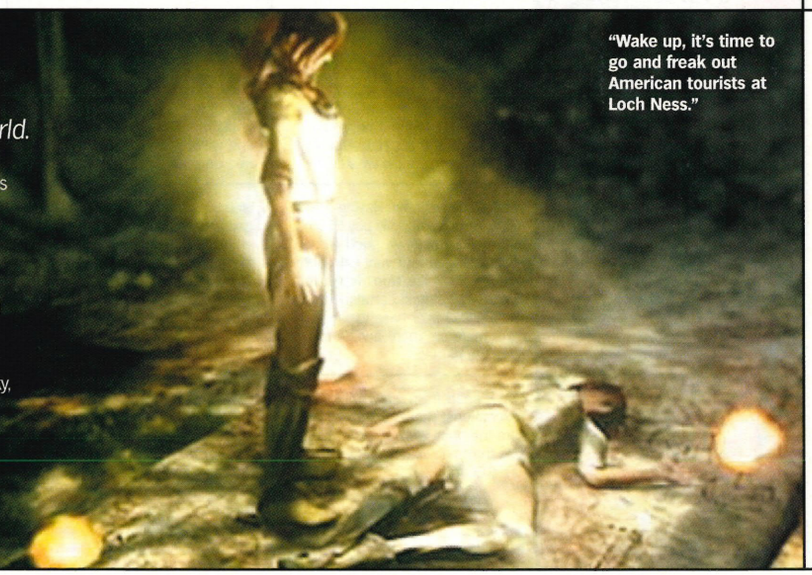
Discover a long-lost kingdom in Cryo's epic *Atlantis III: The New World*.

THE MYTHICAL LOST CITY of Atlantis is the basis of a new underwater adventure title, *Atlantis III: The New World*. The game is the first PS2 instalment of the already successful PC-based point 'n' click series. Most notably for PS2, the game will feature the body-scanned features of the actress Chiara Mastroianni – daughter of the French screen goddess Catherine Deneuve.

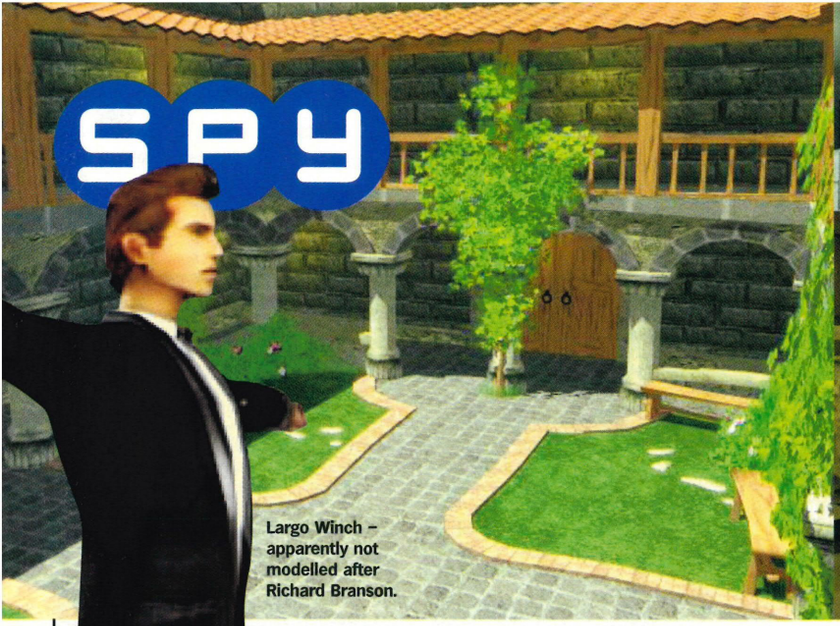
Mastroianni's videogame double, an intrepid Egyptologist, embarks on a scintillating journey across the globe in search of the sub-aquatic lost city. Along the way she befriends the mysterious Tuareg who accompanies her on her quest.

Cryo is particularly proud of the graphics in *Atlantis III*, with its beautifully intricate backdrops, authentic in-game characters and effective voice synchronisation. Locations will include grand Egyptian palaces, scorched desert and snow covered wastelands, each with fully interactive scenery. As the player progresses, the ingenious puzzles become increasingly tricky, and promise to provide a challenge to even the most hardcore adventure nut. □ **JS**

*Atlantis III: The New World *will be released through Acclaim on 7 December. Expect a full review next issue.*



"Wake up, it's time to go and freak out American tourists at Loch Ness."



Largo Winch – apparently not modelled after Richard Branson.

Largo encounters deadly henchmen and (right) pert young lady spies.

INTERNATIONAL PLAYBOY

The billionaire star of comic book *Largo Winch* jets into the UK.

A STYLISH THIRD-PERSON action game based on the French graphic novel character *Largo Winch* is currently in development for PlayStation 2 by the team behind *Rayman Revolution*. Although virtually unknown in the UK, the series is a huge bestseller in Europe, with over two million comic book sales and a successful TV spin-off inspired by the cool Gallic 'bandes dessinées' style.

Largo is a young, extremely wealthy businessman, who after inheriting the W Group multinational firm, spends his time travelling to exotic destinations around the world in search of glamorous adventures and beautiful women – well, it's a living. The story of the game sees Monsieur Winch facing a deadly plot from an ex-mistress of his father, intent on destroying the reputation of his company and killing thousands of innocent people in the process.

Gamers will control Largo, guiding him through 60 different locations, hacking into the Internet via a special interface to track his foes, fighting turn-based battles and cementing his playboy image by settling down to a mini-game of poker. One mission features Largo attempting to salvage an incriminating document from an attaché case in a well-guarded hotel room and requires players to use available objects, such as scaffolding and planks of wood, to sneak into the building and disable any hoodlums.

Keeping the dark hand-drawn look, Ubi Soft's 40-strong development team boasts that the finished game will impress with real-time lighting and shadows, facial animation, voicing for all characters, and dynamic music and sound effects that react to Largo's on-screen experiences. More news soon. ☐ **JS**

* Largo Winch *will be released in autumn 2002 through Ubi Soft*

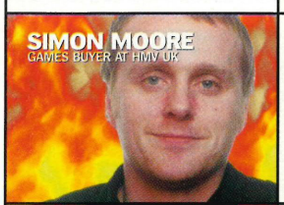
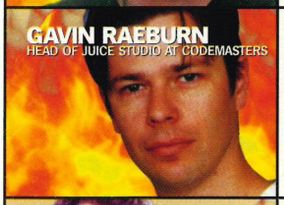
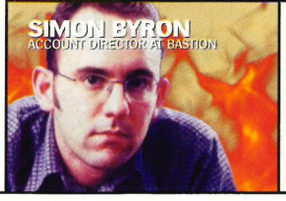
//*Largo Winch* is a huge bestseller in Europe, with over two million comic book sales//

THE BURNING QUESTION

***OPS2* grills the videogames industry's finest on a hot topic.**

THIS MONTH

ARE PLAYSTATION 2 GAMES TOO EXPENSIVE?

	Would you say that PS2 games are good value for money?	Is there more competition for videogames from other desirable media such as DVD?	Would cheaper games mean bigger sales and more money for developers and publishers?	Do higher prices for games encourage piracy?	So, are PlayStation 2 games too expensive?
 **SIMON MOORE** GAMES BUYER AT HMV UK	It's all about personal enjoyment. I bought *Gran Turismo 3* on its day of release and have played it practically every day since then. That equates to approximately 50p per day so far and I'm still likely to be playing it beyond Christmas. If that's not value for money, I don't know what is.	The fact that you can now buy a machine that plays both DVD and games makes little difference – if anything they complement each other. I think the scenario where a man walks into HMV with £40 in his hand looking for a game and walks out with two DVDs is a rare one.	A game would need to sell somewhere in the region of five times as many copies at £29.99 as it does at £39.99 to generate the same kind of profits. It's unlikely that a price drop would instigate an increase in sales which would mean a lot less funds available for games.	Whatever price games are, there will always be an unscrupulous bunch willing to try to get their piece. CDs are less than £15 but this is the most pirated market in the world. High prices are just an excuse for people looking for a fast buck.	
 **GAVIN RAEBURN** HEAD OF JUICE STUDIO AT CODEMASTERS	At the moment, no. Having said that, I'd quite happily pay £50 or £60 for a stonkingly good game that takes up four very enjoyable weeks of my life. Don't forget that prices will almost certainly drop as the PS2 user base expands and there are more people to buy the games.	Well, Japan has had more gadgetry than any other country in the world over the years, and that has never stopped them from buying games!	Not necessarily. It would probably mean that we have to change the types of games that we produce, though. Impulse game buying would become more popular, so the game names, licences and themes would become more important than the quality or size of the game.	I don't think the cost makes any difference. If a pirate version of a game can be bought for £8, and the legitimate copy for £10, many people will still opt for the £8 option. It's a mindset thing. People choose to ignore the fact they are breaking the law or doing any damage.	
 **SIMON BYRON** ACCOUNT DIRECTOR AT BASTION	No – apart from a few Triple A exceptions. The best value titles are the ones with an extended life from two-player games such as *GT3* and *SSX*.	I don't think that people ever make a decision on the spot to spend money on a DVD *or* a videogame – you tend to make buying videogames a positive action. However the cost does limit the number of games you can buy – if they were cheaper, you might buy more.	It's a Catch 22 situation. For the huge Triple A titles such as *Metal Gear Solid 2*, I don't think the price is so much of an issue, but with lesser-known games you might be happier taking a risk if they were cheaper. There is a perception that cheaper games equal worse games, though.	Yes – but I believe everybody would be happy to pay a certain amount of money for a game. Unfortunately with the digital format, anything can be copied, which means people can be tempted to spend their cash on inferior-but-cheaper rip-offs.	

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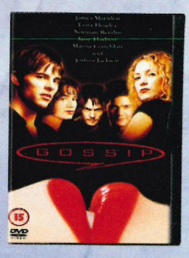

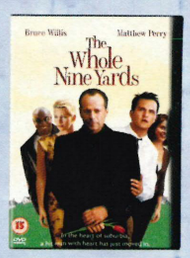

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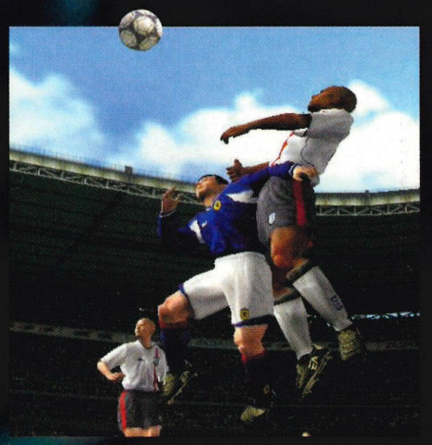

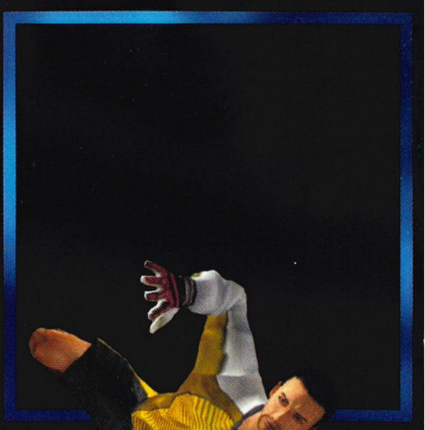

PC CD-ROM

PlayStation 2

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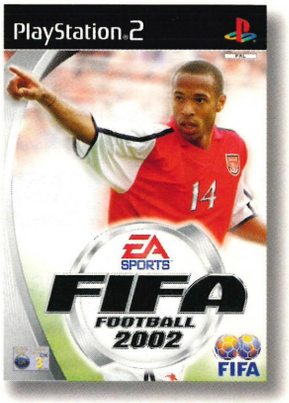

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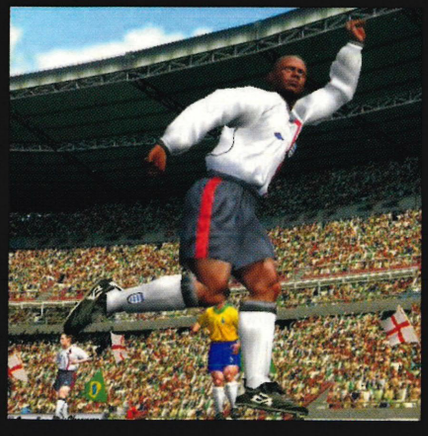

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WORDS: SAM RICHARDS/PHOTOGRAPHY: MARTIN BURTON

Martin Kenwright

Bringing his experience with 12 years of flight sims to bear on the World Rally Championship, *OPS2* talks to the man who might just have made the most realistic racing game ever.

While Formula One has always had game developers battling to make the most realistic console replication of the sport, rallying has never quite received that same level of respect. When SCEE decided that it was about time the 128 bit console made rallying's answer to *Formula One 2001*, it turned to a start-up studio. But Evolution Studios was not just any start-up – emerging from the ashes of Warrington's Digital Imagination Design (DiD), the development team had over a decade of experience behind them. MD Martin Kenwright is the man who sees TV coverage, not other videogames, as his competition.

***World Rally Championship* is Evolution Studios' first console game. How did you find the development process?**
It's been a bit of a roller coaster ride, it always is when you're embarking on new technology and attempting to make a ground-breaking game. It's all paid off quite nicely now. We're all really happy. The lads have worked their pants off.

Are you ever satisfied with a final product?
Never. That's why I'm not worried about what the public might say, because I beat myself up so much. My role at Evolution Studios is to set a level. People can get too close to their own projects and become complacent. It needs someone who sets the bar so high so that if they fall short the game is still considerably better than anything out there.

Was the idea of *WRC 2001* central to you setting up Evolution Studios?
After doing flight sims and war sims for 12 years [at DiD] I was tired. My team and I wanted to adapt all our knowledge into a genre that was a lot more lucrative. We saw all these driving games that people were raving about and thought we should be up there with the best of them. It's as simple as that.

It seemed like SCEE became involved at a very early stage…
We created a technology demonstration for SCEE. Although we'd never done a console game before and the company was only a few weeks old, they still gave us one of the world's biggest driving franchises. So that suggests they must have had belief in what we could do. We didn't know that SCEE had the WRC licence at the time, we were just out to make a top driving game.

Do you mean that you could have ended up making a Formula One game?
No. We knew it would be a rallying game, because we loved the idea of gritty realism. I don't really enjoy track games, I find them boring. So being able to go point-to-point across spectacular scenery in photo-realistic cars is what we wanted to achieve.

Have you had a go at testing your own Evo's rally potential?
A long time ago I had to call a mate in the middle of the night after I'd blown all the tyres in a forest in Wales. I find it inspiring to take a really high performance four-wheel drive car

"It's the adrenaline. Rally driving's not about going sideways on fat roads. It's about hanging on for dear life"

down twisty lanes not knowing what's around the next corner. It's the adrenaline. Rally driving's not all about going sideways on big fat roads. For me it's about hanging on for dear life.

Did you get to do much personal research when putting the game together?
At the end of 1999 the Network Q rally came to Wales so we went and watched half a dozen cars go past. We realised that we probably didn't really need to go to every rally event. We just needed good photographic reference and to get inside the cars. Manufacturers like Subaru provided us models to play with. Personally I've been driven around courses by Burns and McRae which is quite an experience.

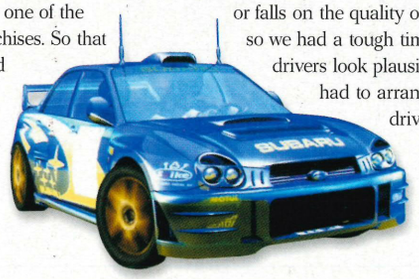
Was it always the idea to use DigiMask technology to put accurate drivers' faces in the game? How did the drivers react when they saw themselves for the first time?
As we wanted to make our game look as realistic as possible it seemed natural to utilise their technology. An accurate DigiMask stands or falls on the quality of the source photos so we had a tough time making all the drivers look plausible. In the end we had to arrange for every single driver to queue up and do it all under the right lighting conditions like a school photo. When we showed Colin McRae and Robert Reid [Richard Burns' co-driver] the result they were chuffed. Robert even spent an afternoon at our place trying to persuade the artist to give him more of a tan.

Mostly, the drivers were overwhelmed at seeing their faces in the game. They view themselves as the poor relations to F1 drivers. Richard Burns came round the other day to play the game and he didn't talk about frames per second or glitching or polygons, he took it as if it was real. We felt we'd crossed the boundary there – the real drivers can approach the game as though they're driving a real car and the game is consistent with their experience.

How similar are the tracks to those in the real World Rally Championship?
From the satellite data it's 80 percent accurate. At first we attempted to create exact replicas but it was obvious that we were being anally retentive. Only a tiny, tiny percentage of gamers would have ever driven down those roads, they were all only six to eight feet wide and therefore unplayable to most people. We've taken the basic squiggle you see on the map and superimposed it on the terrain. The shape of the track is the same, but there aren't the correct lengths, elevations and profiles.

In the past you've said that you're not competing with any other games, but there was obviously a definitive rally game on PSone. How do you feel now you've effectively come out and trumped Codemasters' *Colin McRae Rally* on PS2?
I've never been naïve enough to think that it's some sort of personal competition between ourselves and Codemasters. Another good rally game can only help grow the market. *Colin McRae* is a great game although I've only played it once because I didn't want to cloud my vision for *WRC*. When they come out with *Colin McRae Rally* on PS2, it's obviously going to be a quality game. That will keep us on our toes.

Are you looking to make a sequel or are you going to take what you've learnt and do something completely different?
You're the first to know that we've already started the sequel. We want to turn *WRC* into something that's a bit more of a 'game experience'. We're seriously investigating all the opportunities that networked play presents. Basically this first game is our practice run for what's ahead. We want to become known as *the* rally studio. □



The star of ***World Rally Championship.***

Curriculum Vitae
Name: **Martin Kenwright**
Title: **Managing Director, Evolution Studios**
Nationality: **British**
DOB: **13/10/57**
Background: **Born in Canada, residences in London, UK and Vancouver, Canada**
Career: 1987: **First game, *Falcon* (Amiga), published by Mirrorsoft**
1989-1999: **Founder and MD of DiD, signed by Ocean. Games include *F29 Retaliator, Epic, TFX, RoboCop 3, Inferno, EF2000, F22 Air Dominant Fighter, F22 Total Air War, Wargasm.***
1999: **Leaves DiD after acquisition by Infogrames (who later sells the studio to Rage)**
2000-now: **Founder and MD of Evolution Studios**
Hobbies: **Liverpool FC, driving, travel**
Favourite bands: **Pink Floyd, Chemical Brothers**
Favourite films: ***Gladiator, The Matrix***

Kenwright and his own Evo – the inspiration behind *World Rally Championship 2001*.

next month
in the Christmas issue of

PlayStation.2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

JAK AND DAXTER

FROM THE MAKERS OF CRASH BANDICOOT COMES THE BRILLIANT ADVENTURE THAT'LL KEEP YOU INDOORS THIS CHRISTMAS. WE BRING YOU THE EXCLUSIVE FIRST REVIEW!

MAG CONTENTS

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PRIMAL – THE MAGICAL, MALEVOLENT ADVENTURE THAT'S TRULY MEDIEVIL...

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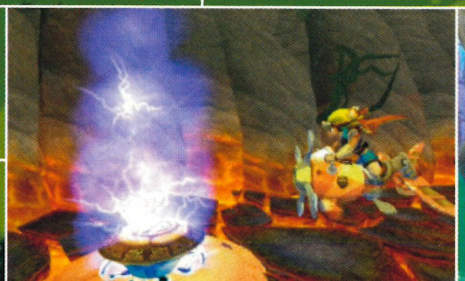
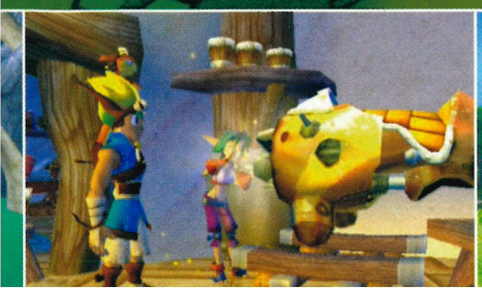


Would you trust this big-eared misfit and his weaselly friend to save your planet? Looks like you've got no choice...



WORDS: PAUL FITZPATRICK/PHOTOGRAPHY: KATHARINE LANE-SIMS

ONE IN A MILLION

How Eidos is using ground-breaking technology to put you in the hot seat in *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 2nd Edition.*

London's Oxford Street. Busiest shopping street in the world. Home of tourist tat, flagship stores and one of the few thoroughfares in the world where taking your chances in the traffic is nearly always preferable to wading through the bog of sullen pedestrians on the pavements. Not exactly the first place you'd think to come to on the hunt for ground-breaking advances in videogame design. Well, there is a Dixons but you know what we mean.

Sure enough though, up above the streets and houses, in an anonymous looking conference room, *OPS2* is being shown a suite of revolutionary scanning and mapping software that could change the way we relate to the games we play forever. And just how does this example of mind-bogglingly keen, cutting edge technology manifest itself? In the shape of a salsa-dancing, pigtailed girl to be precise, complete with gingham shirt, and a particularly fetching pair of dungarees. Oh, and the eerily realistic, grinning face of a rather familiar *OPS2* staff writer.

There better be a damn good explanation for all of this. And it's summed up in the question the good people at Eidos Interactive found themselves asking when they approached the inevitable sequel to their PSone hit *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*. How do you improve on a game whose immense appeal is, essentially, based on an unchanging format in a single, static location? Well, you can deal with hindsight-assisted improvements on the

Is that your final render? *WWTBAM? 2nd Edition*'s virtual Tarrant ponders his future on PS2.

original (the inability to speed through to the next question without being caught in satisfaction-slowing camera swoops again and again being the prime candidate here). Check. Then how about getting über-smirker and all-round genial host Chris Tarrant to record all of the questions and answers this time around for a kick of sonic authenticity? Check.

That pretty much took care of the PSone *WWTBAM 2nd Edition*. But how to make the new game a thoroughly next-gen title for PS2? Given the overwhelming focus in the TV show on the instantly recognisable seated host and question master, why not forget flashy presentation and concentrate on creating the most realistic virtual game character ever seen? Why not give every PlayStation 2 owner the opportunity to be grilled for the opportunity to win a million by their very own lip-synched, buttock shuffling Tarrant?

//"We've captured every nuance, every wrinkle, every fold" Martin Alltimes, Exec Producer//

Enter Eyetronics, a Belgian company specializing in 3D Acquisition Technology, and their suite of software called ShapeSnatcher. Thanks to the combined efforts of Eyetronics, Revolution Software – the developer of *WWTBAM? 2nd Edition* on PS2 – and some natty new lip-synching software, Chris Tarrant is fast developing a spookily realistic virtual double life, facial ticks and all. The new animated Tarrant looks as though he'll be ready in time for the game's November release.

THE FACE TAKES SHAPE

The role of ShapeSnatcher in all of this should not be underestimated. Moreover the way the software works to capture 3D images of objects and people gives an exciting glimpse to a future beyond *Millionaire*, of accessible, personally customised game avatars. To demonstrate how easy it is to create a virtual you, *OPS2* was cordially invited to experience the whole process. Here's how it works.

The process previously required an expensive, purpose built laser scanner, but ShapeSnatcher lets you do the business with a PC, a decent digital camera and a slide projector. The subject sits at the apex of an imaginary triangle. At the other two corners stand the camera and the projector (fitted with a slide that casts a very fine grid over the subject). When both grid and subject are in focus a few photos are taken, and the images are transferred instantly to the PC direct from the digital camera. That's pretty much it so far as potential for human error is concerned. Time taken so far? About three seconds.

The real science bit is done by the software which registers how the projected grid's lines are deformed by the contours of the projectee's face. With this information it can map the true 3D geometry of the subject (dimples, warts and all) to create an eerily high resolution mask. Tarrant's face, mapped in this way, contained a staggering 96,000 points of reference which, by the time the game is released, will have become 10,000 polygons of head attached to a further 10,000 polygons of body. Compare this, for example, to the perfectly respectable 1,300 polygons per entire wrestler in *SmackDown! 'Just Bring It!'*, and you'll appreciate the level of detail the developer has been able to shoot for in *WWTBAM? 2nd Edition*.

For the purposes of capturing and moulding your reporter's delightful mug in cyberspace the software will take about ten minutes. Tops. Just enough time to chat with Executive Producer at Eidos Martin Alltimes about the game and its star.

What's it been like to create a fully functioning virtual Tarrant on PS2?

Because of the format of the show – one environment and one main character – it really gave us the opportunity to throw the whole power of PS2 into a very limited set of objects and models. Even so it's a pretty high ambition to not only create a human-looking character but also one with whom everyone is very familiar. We realised from an early stage that we would have to rethink the whole development process. With ShapeSnatcher we were able to take an accurate three-dimensional map of Chris's face so every nuance, every wrinkle, every fold is in there. His face is not naturally symmetrical which I think is a really good use for this technology. If we'd used any other kind of approach, it wouldn't have been realistic. Then there are over 3,500 lines of dialogue in the game. Traditionally we'd hand animate that and I calculated that

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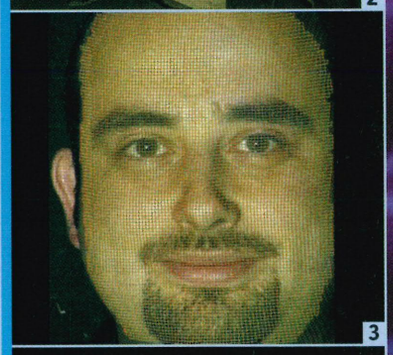
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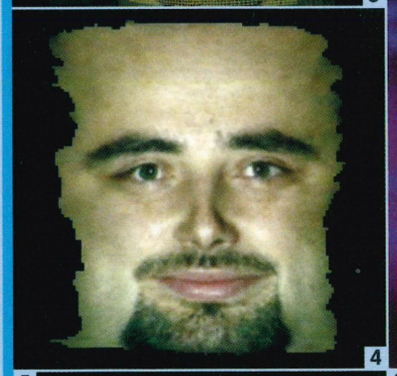
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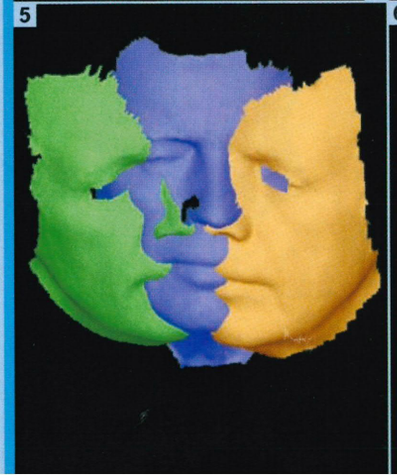
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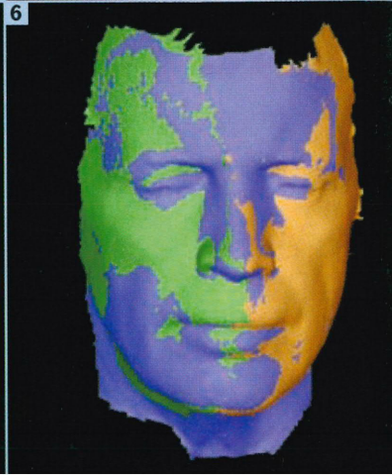
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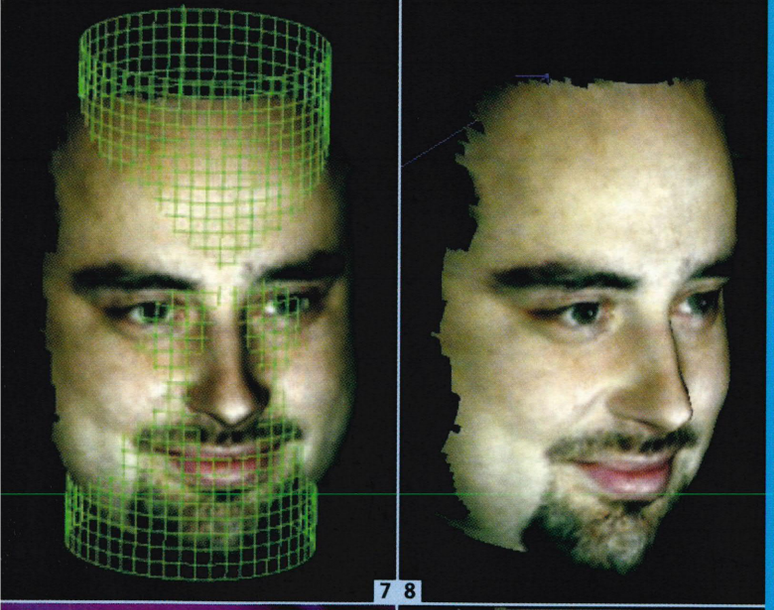
IF THE FACE FITZ...

How technology made *OPS2*'s Paul Fitzpatrick look (and dance) like a girl. And how the software used in *WWTBAM? 2nd Edition* could put you in a game.

1. Using a state-of-the-art digital camera and a projector fitted with a special slide...
2. ... an image of the subject is taken, with a fine grid superimposed on his devilishly handsome features.
3. The resulting image is not only a joy to behold but shows the deformation of the grid over the contours of the subject's fizzog which will be used by the ShapeSnatcher software to make a 3D map.
4. That done, the grid (and as a result the image) is flattened out, whereupon it is removed, to leave a pristine, if stomach-churning pancake face.
5. If the subject has been mapped from different angles, as Chris Tarrant was, the collected, flattened images would then be roughly assembled in their approximate positions...
6. ... whereupon ShapeSnatcher software would put the whole lot together, cancelling out overlapping information and creating a seamless whole.



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IF THE FACE FITZ...

7 Back to the single scan of Fitz's face, the pancake image is then remapped in 3D using a cylinder as an approximate geometric guide. There's handsome.

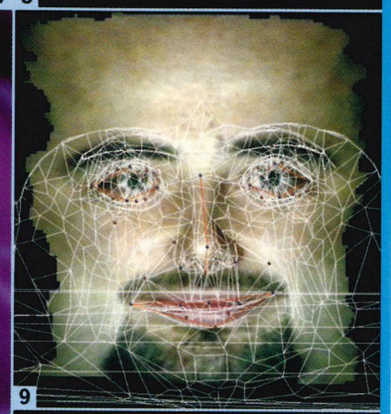
8 Remove the cylinder and you're 'a head' of the game. Get it? But this is just a start. Now to put the face on a game character.

9 To do this, a pre-existing face template is taken from a professional 3D animation suite like Maya 4. Common points between your scanned image and the template (corners of eyes, mouth etc, etc) are matched up quickly...

10 ...and hey presto! The scanned face and the template are merged. In this case the template is a wide eyed caricature to show the possibilities, but a more realistic template could be used.

11 From here it's up to the animators to make you do and wear whatever they please. A dancing girl here, but it could so easily have been a Marine in a first-person shooter.

MCMILLAN (www.mcmillan.co.uk) McMillan owns the exclusive UK distribution rights for the Eyetronics software.
EYETRONICS (www.eyetronics.com) Creator of ShapeSnatcher software.
ALIAS WAVEFRONT (www.aliaswavefront.com) Creator of Maya 4 3D software.



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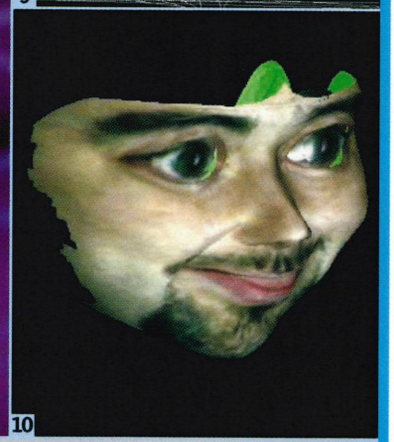

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Fitz realises the details of his weekend activities are no longer a secret.

it would take us nearly 18,000 design days. We knew that unless we had an army of animators that we could hire at the drop of a hat this wouldn't be a sensible solution! So we recognised that we had to come up with some automated lip-synching technology. Eventually we contacted Professor Richard Irvine – he's been working on voice recognition software for 20 years – and licensed him the technology, building our own sophisticated animation system around it.

How does it work?
It uses a bone system. There's a total of 64 bones in the face of the main character and 64 bones in the body, so it's a very complicated model for a computer game. It's all driven by this licensed software that basically analyses the speech and then analyses the text underneath and between the two recognises the corresponding mouth shapes. And this has given us the ability to finish the game in time for Christmas. In terms of the level of sophistication in the main character there's nothing currently in computer games that can touch it.

How long did Chris Tarrant work with you? Recording 3,500 lines of text must have taken forever...
We calculated that it would take two to three days to record every single line in 20 seconds without a mistake and allowing for pauses and so on. Chris said he could do it in a day. We thought that's never going to happen, and he actually ended up completing it two hours early. He literally walked straight out of the Capital Radio building and into the studio, started almost immediately, had virtually no tea breaks and he blitzed it.

How else is *WWTBAM? 2nd Edition* improving on the original?
One of the opportunities working with 3D gave us was the ability to recreate the show very accurately. The set itself was reproduced from the original floor plans from the TV show. We digitised everything, took hundreds of digital stills from the studio itself – we had video cameras on the lighting setup, and so on. Celador changed it for the new show so we changed it again! We can also recreate all the camera positions to produce as authentic a reproduction of the TV show as possible.

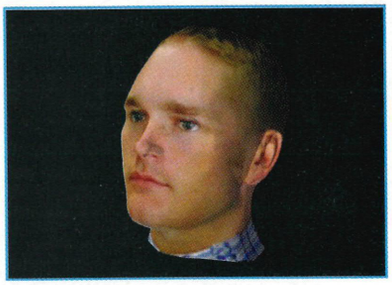
//Tarrant finished his 3,500 lines of questions in a single day – with two hours to spare//

With so much time and effort spent getting Chris just right how does the newly implemented audience measure up?
The audience is one thing that we very much wanted to do. There are 200 people in the audience and I really wanted to make a 3D audience rather than a 2D one. This was because on other games that I've seen, particularly

FACE: THE FACTS

While the deeply impressive ShapeSnatcher may not yet be available to John Q Tight-Budget, there are other ways to get your features in a game.

1. AVATARME!
What? First seen in the Millennium Dome, AvatarMe!'s photo booth took four photos of your entire body and turned them into a downloadable, personalised avatar for use in PC games like *Half-Life* and *The Sims*.
How much? The entrance fee to the Dome.
When? The booths are yet to appear in bus stations around the country, but you can keep up to date by visiting www.avatarme.com.

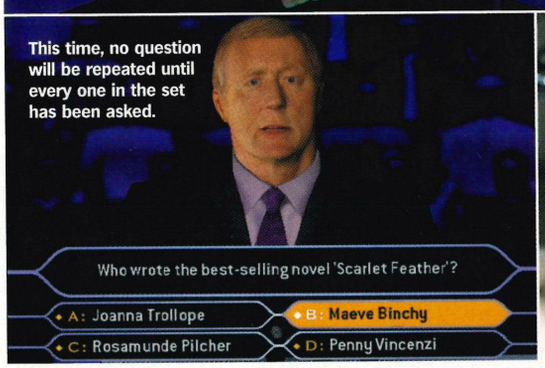


2. DIGIMASK
What? Involves taking two digital photos of your head then putting them into a program downloadable from www.digimask.com to create a convincing virtual you.
How much? Technically free. Digimask aims to make money from licensing software to games developers.
When? Right now, although PS2 is yet to see games that will allow you to put your own Digimask in the thick of the action.

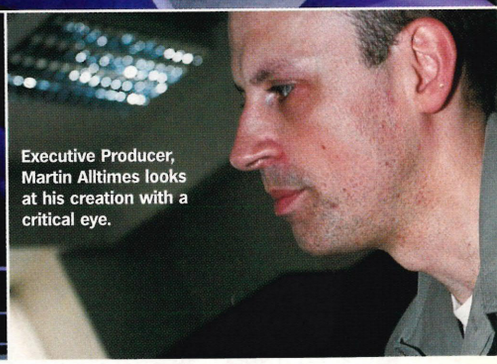
3. PICTURE PARADISE
What? As featured in *OPS2* issue #004, the Japanese version of *Swing Away Golf* allows you to use digital photos taken with a Picture Paradise compatible camera (Sony's own CyberShot range for example) to graft a basic likeness onto your golfer's face.
How much? The price of an import copy of *Golf Paradise DX*.
When? Now!

4. CREATE A SUPERSTAR
What? *WWF SmackDown! 'Just Bring It!'*s very own nuts and bolts avatar maker allows you to mix and match from a buffet of body parts, features and clothing to make an approximate likeness. Providing you've got a thick neck and jailhouse tats, that is.
How much? £44.99
When? Now.

From Tarrant's trademark suit to every single lighting setup, *WWTBAM? 2nd Edition* has it all.



This time, no question will be repeated until every one in the set has been asked.

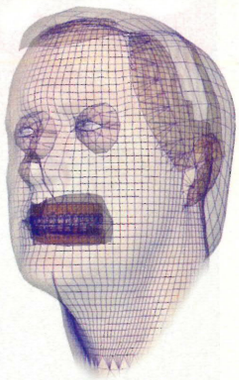


Executive Producer, Martin Alltimes looks at his creation with a critical eye.

sports games, you have incredibly detailed models of the main characters then you go against the edge of the arena and the crowd look like wallpaper. So our audience is 3D, but with very limited polygons – at least the effect is not so jarring. Some 30 percent of the power on the machine is spent just rendering the audience because 200 people times 60 frames per second is quite a sizeable figure.

Have there been any instances where recreating the TV show exactly would have compromised gameplay?
We did do a lot of work on emulating Chris's mannerisms but we found they didn't translate that well to a computer game. If you watch him in the show, he moves around a lot, but in a computer game it just doesn't work. So now we're going through all the animations to make the whole experience a little more intimate. Obviously he has to look down at the screen a lot in the show, but in the game you want him to be looking at you, not at the screen.

At this point, your *OPS2* reporter is informed that somebody would like to meet him. And so it is that a bemused journalist and a handful of technicians and Eidos executives come to cluster around a monitor to witness a swaying, pigtailed girl with anime eyes and what can only be described as a beard. A bit of fun, to be sure, but also a fine demonstration of technology that could feasibly be turned into an accessible, cost-effective way of allowing people to put themselves into their favourite games. As for its current application there remains just one more crucial question to be answered by Alltimes. What are the chances of seeing the pigtailed monstrosity sitting in the audience of *WWTBAM? 2nd Edition*? None? Is that your final answer? □



Now you can admire Chris Tarrant's fine bone structure. From the inside out. You first.

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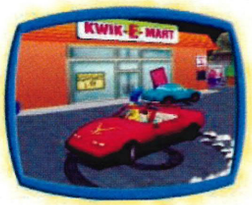


Mr. Burns' nuclear-powered fleet of critical mass transit is making Springfieldians catch "ride-share fever"! Help buy the bus system back by driving fares through rush-hour traffic, suicide shortcuts and unsuspecting buildings. Take the fastest possible route. Or just use the roads.

THE SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE

thesimpsonsroadrage.com

FOX INTERACTIVE

ELECTRONIC ARTS

PlayStation.2

Infra-red goggles allowing you to see perfectly in the dark? Well, Solid Snake had some...

Being able to lean around corners and shoot is a clever and effective stealth move.

TEXT: SAM RICHARDS

BJÖRN TO BE WILD

Welcome to Los Angeles circa 2015 where corruption is rife in the internal organ trade and only a man with a beard on a bike can save the day. *Headhunter* is the one game that could possibly challenge *MGS2* in the action adventure stakes, and it's coming to PS2 from Sweden via Sega. *OPS2* visited Stockholm developer Amuze to discover how a Scandanavian blockbuster is built.

Imagine a future where the most valuable currency is not cash, gold, drugs or even rare Pokémon cards, but human internal organs, used to prolong the lives of the wealthy elite. Imagine a future where having run out of public institutions to privatise, the government hands over the running of the police force to a dubious, unaccountable corporate organisation called the Anti Crime Network (or ACN). Put these two scenarios together and you've got criminals facing compulsory organ donation instead of prison and police contractors working as bounty hunters, more concerned with collecting hearts, livers and, yes, brains, than they are about verifying the culpability of their victims.

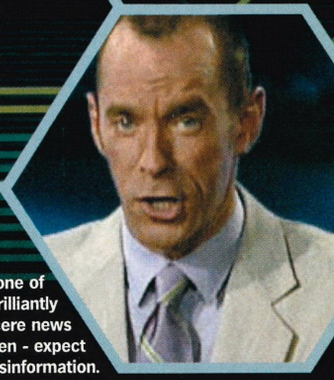
This is the Los Angeles dystopia that Swedish developer Amuze has invented – with a healthy dose of deadpan black humour – for its debut game, *Headhunter*. Starring bike-riding, beard-wearing, sullen hero Jack Wade, *Headhunter* is the only game on the horizon set to challenge *Metal Gear Solid 2* in the intelligent action adventure stakes. Like Hideo Kojima, the Amuze team are keen students of Hollywood action fare, dark comic strips and apocalyptic anime. With a story scripted by professional screenwriters and linked together by hilariously accurate parodies of US TV newscasts, *Headhunter* is a potential blockbuster in the making.

You may wonder how an action adventure being mentioned in the same breath as *MGS2* came to emerge from Stockholm, and moreover why it's being published under the Sega brand. To cut a long story short, Amuze was formed in 1996 by John Kroknes (now Executive Producer) and Stefan Holmqvist (now Technology Director), who both entered the videogame industry in the early Nineties. They recruited comic artist Johan Lindh as Design Director and after raising some capital, set to work on their striking idea for an epic adventure game.

It was almost another two years before they were in a position to woo publishers (see Basement Jack) but the *Headhunter* demo immediately attracted the attentions of Sega Europe, who was keen to source original games that complemented the rest of Sega's arcade-orientated line-up. Work on the Dreamcast version began in earnest, and *Headhunter* will still arrive on Sega's ailing format first (in November). However, early in 2001 it became obvious that *Headhunter* would deserve a wider audience. Amuze hired more staff and a PlayStation 2 port became reality. "We knew it was a big project, and we were aiming high," Kroknes tells *OPS2*.

HEADHUNTER

Jack opts for shirt sleeves while even a bio-suit can't protect hapless enemies.



Meet one of ABCBS' brilliantly insincere news anchormen - expect blatant disinformation.

After a particularly fraught adventure, Jack auditions for a part on *Baywatch Nights*.

Intelligent enemies will roll, strafe and duck to avoid your fire, as well as running away or calling for backup.

Prove yourself, and Angela will let you raid her dead Dad's arsenal for desirable hardware.

ABCBS newscasts will report on your antics, usually twisting the facts to suit their agenda.

It's the year 2015 and high time that Tomytronic made a comeback.

"We could have gone straight to PSone," continues Holmqvist, "but our idea needed a next-generation console to support it."

It may have been almost five years in development, but *Headhunter* is a game with a powerful story line and a genuinely immersive setting, qualities that are all too rare in PS2 games at the moment. Kroknes gives an indication of the thinking that was required before *Headhunter* even leapt off the drawing board.

"First of all we wanted the player to have a strong relationship with the lead character, and we wanted to give the impression that this character was part of a society. We wanted the setting to be convincing. That's why *Headhunter* is set in the future, but not too far forward. We wanted the freedom of large environments to explore, so the motorbike became a central idea."

As the ex-ACN headhunter of the title, Jack Wade is an ideal videogame character. A combination of subtle facial animation and superb voice acting gives Jack the inscrutable air of a classic Clint Eastwood character, the perfect guy to be investigating a grand conspiracy involving the murdered ACN chief Mr Stern and his mysteriously alluring daughter Angela. Then there's Jack's beard. Lindh laughs and pulls out some early sketches showing a clean-shaven Jack (see Hirsutes You, Sir) and we all agree that, for some unfathomable reason, he looks remarkably better with a bit of fuzz on his chin.

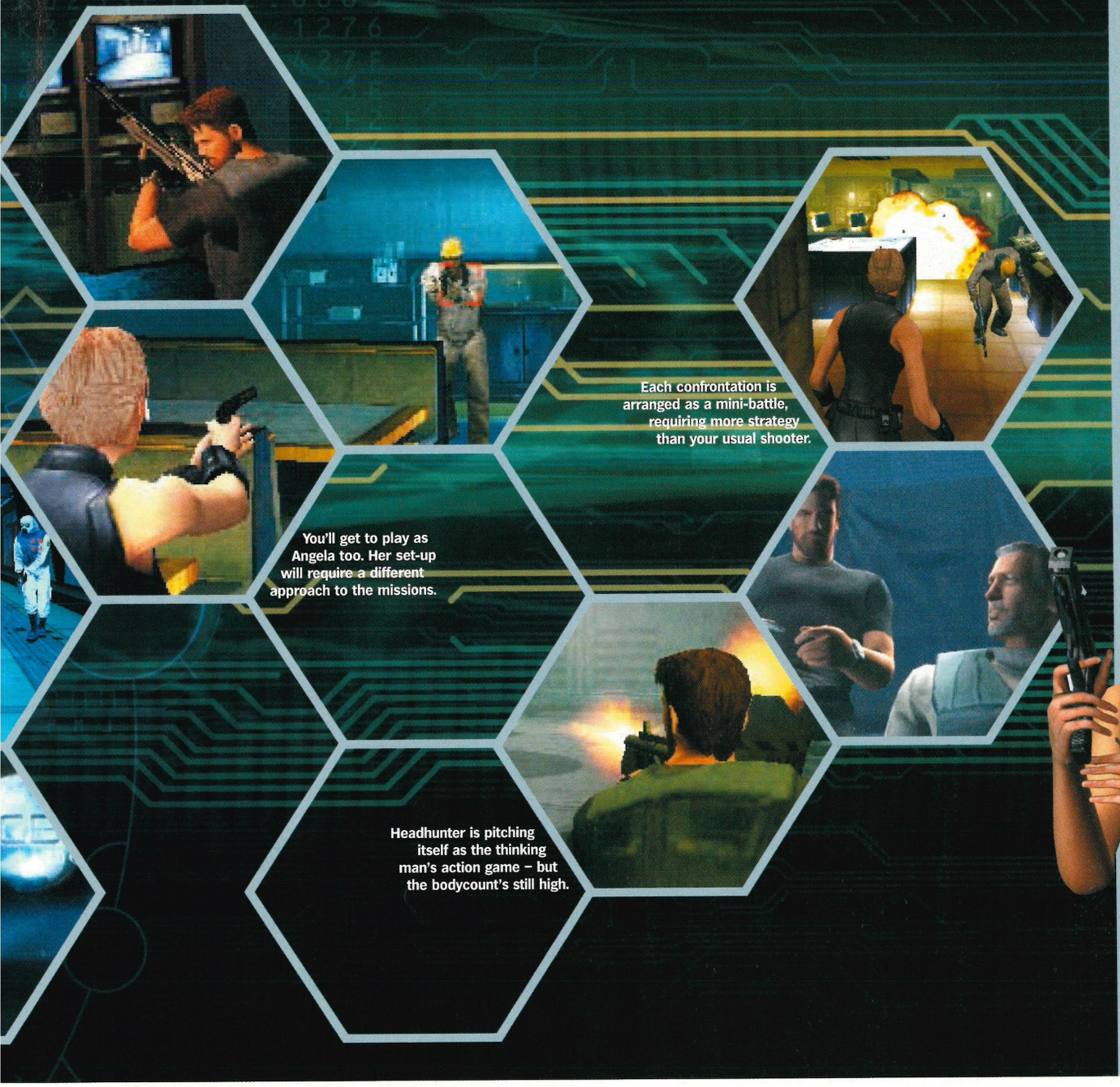
As for the setting that makes such a conspiracy story line possible, a near-future LA is perfect, both for its iconographical status, and its easy target for satire. "It's capitalism going to its extremes," explains Kroknes. "Everyone talks about the value of human capital in the workplace, so we pushed this concept to the limit and came up with the idea of human organs as currency. We wanted to make a violent game without getting into too much trouble, so the weapons don't technically kill people, they just put them into a vegetative state so the headhunters can raid their body parts." *OPS2* isn't entirely convinced about Kroknes' plans to bypass the censors but appreciates his warped sense of morality.

"We wanted the freedom of exploration, so the motorbike became a central idea," John Kroknes, Executive Producer

"Because we believe *Headhunter* has a strong story," continues Lindh, "it became important that we offered the full package – strong graphics, strong sound, strong music, strong acting."

"The production values of the major titles are very high these days," adds Kroknes. "We decided we'd have to be up there."

Media partners were recruited. These include Sega's in-house composer Richard Jacques (*Sonic R, Metropolis Street Racer*) who recorded a full orchestral soundtrack at London's Abbey Road studios; cinema sound engineering specialists Noisebox; scriptwriter Phillip Lawrence; and the cast of professional actors that provide voices for all of *Headhunter*'s characters.



Each confrontation is arranged as a mini-battle, requiring more strategy than your usual shooter.

You'll get to play as Angela too. Her set-up will require a different approach to the missions.

Headhunter is pitching itself as the thinking man's action game – but the bodycount's still high.

ANGELA'S LASHES

Meet *Headhunter*'s second playable character – it's a lady clad in leather. Hurrah!

Jack Wade isn't the only playable character – partway through the game you get to play as Angela Stern, the posh daughter of the ACN chief whose assassination precipitates *Headhunter*'s whole story. Angela wears a mildly kinky black leather catsuit and in order to aid the Amuze art team with their animation, they had the actual piece of clothing made-up by a specialist dressmaker and posed in by a model. The catsuit now hangs in John Kroknes' office, although he claims he hasn't ever felt the need to wear it himself in moments of leisure.

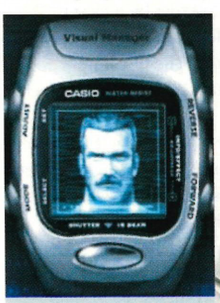
CASIO TONIC

If you're a gadget-head, you may already own Jack Wade's coolest piece of kit.

Remember the ultra-cool Casio Wrist Camera we featured way back in issue #001? The popularity of this gadget hasn't escaped the Amuze team, who approached Casio with a view to some cross-promotion…

Kroknes: "For the Dreamcast version, Jack has a device like the Dreamcast VMU attached to his wrist. We were planning to give players mini-games that you could download to actual VMUs, but obviously we can't do that with PlayStation 2. Instead, we got in touch with Casio and they agreed it would be a good idea to design the device just like the Casio Wrist Camera."

Johansson: "As well as being a video-phone communication device, it's where you go to store game saves and check mission objectives. But apart from the 'non-lethal' weapons we haven't gone for too much far-fetched technology in the game. You're not going to see cars flying around."



The cool Casio Wrist Camera in real life.

Kroknes reflects. "With a great adventure title it should become less and less significant you are playing a *game*. When you save and restart it's like turning off a TV series and coming back the following day for the next episode."

SOMETHING BORROWED

Many elements of *Headhunter* have been cleverly borrowed, adapted and expanded from other popular titles. Gameplay features will remind you variously of *Resident Evil*, *Metal Gear Solid 2* and *Shenmue*, which are strangely enough the three games the team cite as benchmarks.

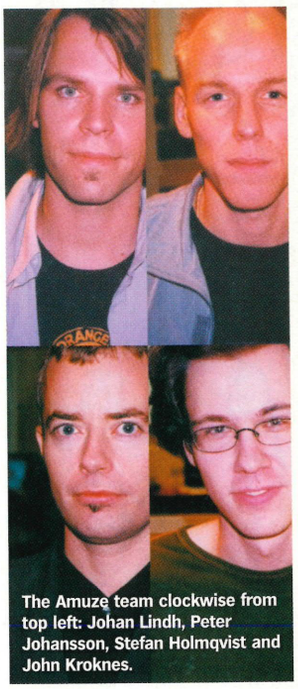
Kroknes: "Of course we looked at a lot of movies too – *RoboCop*, *Mad Max* – and I think if you want to make a mass-market game you also have to look at trends. Although *Headhunter* is set in the future there is a little bit of a Seventies feel to some elements."

Lindh: "For me, Frank Miller is an big influence. His comics always have a strong story line and visual identity. Also he often uses media cuts to break up the story, like the newscasts in *Headhunter*."

Kroknes: "You'll notice the influences and the inspirations when you play because we pay obvious tribute in some scenes."

Although the idea of Jack riding a motorbike between locations was central from the outset, balancing the gameplay wasn't easy. Too often, where adventure games incorporate a driving element vehicle handling is poor, making these segments either frustratingly hard or tiresomely simple.

"Yeah, it was tough," agrees Kroknes. "We wanted to give the player freedom to drive anywhere in the city, but we couldn't make it into a racing game or the next *Crazy Taxi*…"



The Amuze team clockwise from top left: Johan Lindh, Peter Johansson, Stefan Holmqvist and John Kroknes.

The motorbike-based missions are much more than a cosmetic addition to the game.

Jack's demeanour invites players to adopt an air of steely ruthlessness.

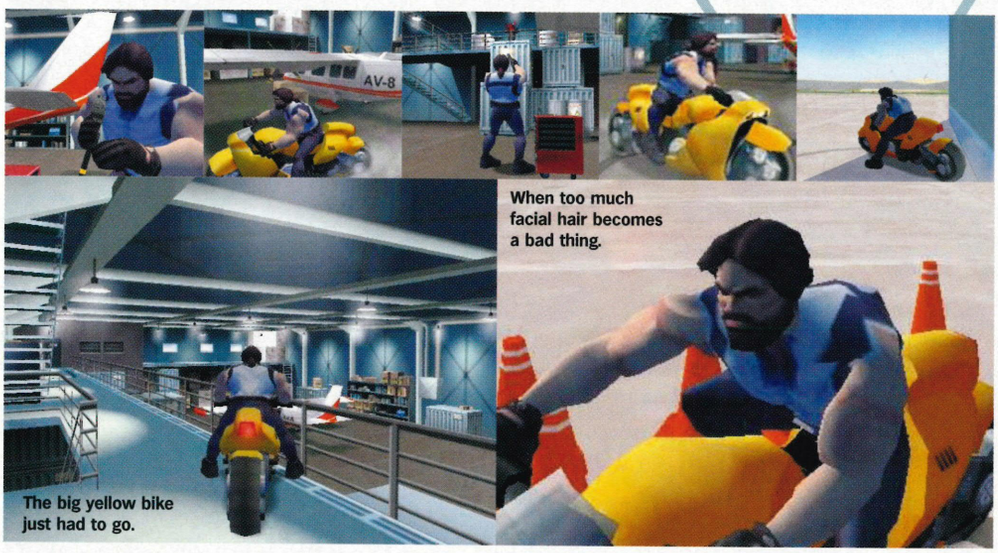
HIRSUTES YOU, SIR

The evolution of Jack Wade's facial hair.

1. An altogether stockier Jack gets a big straggly Hell's Angel effort, as well as a rank ponytail round the back.

2. A complete rethink as Jack visits the barbers and takes a full 20 years off his age. Now looks a little too clean cut.

3. Finally, the perfect Jack copies a style from Sweden's most famous sex symbol, Benny Andersson of ABBA.



When too much facial hair becomes a bad thing.

The big yellow bike just had to go.

BASEMENT JACK

Stored deep in a cellar at Amuze HQ is the very first working demo of *Headhunter*.

Created in 1999 and used for presentation purposes, this early demo shows that gameplay ideas such as the combat system and centrality of the motorbike have remained intact since the game's inception. Aesthetically, though, *Headhunter* has been overhauled. Jack himself has slimmed down and chopped off that heinous ponytail while his bike is now black instead of yellow, eradicating any cartoon feel the demo might have had.

In fact, the motorbike handling is more realistic than you'd expect. You really have to decelerate and lean into corners, or force the bike hard into U-turns. You're often free to drive at your leisure, but there is an incentive for reckless riding. Game Designer Peter Johansson explains: "There are some missions where you have to get from place to place within a time limit, diffusing bombs or whatever. When there is no such pressure, we wanted to promote the joy of driving so there is a system where you can gain skill points by driving quickly for a sustained period. Sometimes you may have to take jumps or short cuts to maintain the speed. You need these skill points to upgrade your licence, so there is always an urge to drive fast."

THE LEARNING CURVE

There will be no training missions at the beginning of *Headhunter*. Instead, the learning of new skills is incorporated into the game's story line, in the form of Jack's mentors at LEILA – the bureau of Law Enforcement Information and Licence Approval.

"This is a more sleazy independent group of law enforcers that Jack is forced to work for after his ACN contract is terminated," says Kroknes. "LEILA are like minicab drivers compared to ACN's big black cabs! The LEILA HQ is our device to provide the player with training throughout the game, without removing you from the story. To be able to perform certain actions or to access certain areas of the city, you need a higher licence which you can only get by passing virtual training missions at LEILA HQ."

Naturally, the primary aim of the virtual training is to teach you how to exploit the game's combat mechanics. Targeting and shooting systems are typically the bane of third-person adventure game designers, so what was Amuze's solution?

"At first, we planned to avoid having any kind of display on the screen," reveals Johansson. "We thought it would be more realistic that way, but actually it turns out to be much harder than aiming a gun in real life." Holmqvist continues: "Now you will see two targets on-screen, and one is the secondary target, showing which enemy you will fire at next if you kill the first enemy or if you choose to switch your aim. It helps you make a much faster decision when you have many enemies to take on."

Headhunter's targeting system is tricky to master, but once it's under the fingers, it gives you a lot of freedom in the way you approach a situation. Novices can simply lock on to one target after another, but a more advanced approach allows you to manually manoeuvre your aim in order to lock on to a more distant (but perhaps more dangerous) target, or even to turn rapidly to face an enemy behind you. In battle against multiple enemies, guile is vital. Wounding an enemy nearby will give you breathing space to hit an oil drum at the back of the room, blocking the entrance for reinforcements. You've then got time to finish off your nearest assailant before lobbing a grenade and getting the hell out.

In the way that every situation can be approached in numerous ways, with stealth usually being the ideal option, *Headhunter* is much like *Metal Gear Solid*. In the way that *Headhunter* is bound together by a clever, cinematic plot that twists and turns around the fortunes of an inscrutable hero, *Headhunter* is also much like *Metal Gear Solid*. The uncanny similarities continue, but there are also many crucial differences between the two titles.

Amuze realises that, while there may only be room for one F1 title in your life, players are always on the lookout for quality narrative-lead action titles, especially if, like *Headhunter*, they can boast more than 25 hours of gameplay. Kroknes accepts that people aren't going to buy *Headhunter* above *MGS2* – indeed, he's looking forward to playing Kojima's masterpiece as much as anyone – but he hopes that *Headhunter* will be good enough for you to want to buy both. Yes, the wait for *MGS2* has seemed like an eternity. But come *Headhunter*'s release in January, it's suddenly going to feel a lot shorter. □

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TEXT: STEVE MERRETT

CREDIT WHERE CREDIT'S DUE

A band's influences can define its music, so is the same thing true for game developers? How do key moments in games of the past come to bear upon PlayStation 2 games of today? We grilled a panel of top PS2 game gurus to find out what made them do it.

Strange as it may seem, if the gameplay limitations of *Space Invaders* hadn't got up Hideo Kojima's nose *Metal Gear Solid 2* may never have existed. But Kojima isn't the only leading developer willing to acknowledge that the classics of yesteryear have had a distinct bearing on their current work. Inspiration for games such as *Stuntman*, *Medal Of Honour: Frontline* and *TimeSplitters 2* can and has come from the most unlikely sources, but now is the time to celebrate these heroes of yore – and to thank them for what we are about to receive...

HIDEO KOJIMA

Producer, KCEJ

HOW **METAL GEAR SOLID 2** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...

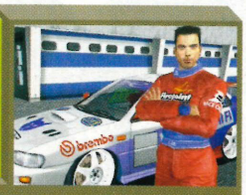
SPACE INVADERS Taito, Coin-op, 1982

The Knowledge: From rows of chunky green aliens to super-smooth stealth.

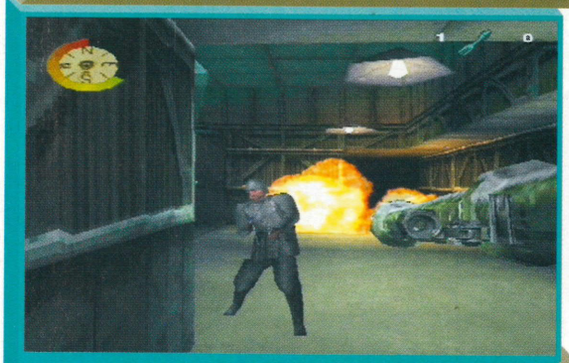
Kojima says: "In any game you have an enemy coming at you that you have to shoot. If you go back to *Space Invaders* they shoot at you, so how are you going to protect yourself? You're going to shoot back. I wanted to make a game where you could avoid the enemy. That is when Konami told me to make a war game so I took these two elements and the result was *Metal Gear*."

GAVIN RAEBURN

Studio Head, Codemasters



HOW **TOCA RACE DRIVER** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...



MEDAL OF HONOUR EA, PSone, 1998

The Knowledge: EA's WWII-themed first-person shooter ranks as one of the best of its kind on PSone. But it is its use of sound that will have a bearing on Codemasters' forthcoming touring car title.

Raeburn says: "The sense of tension and foreboding created by barking dogs or the distant Nazi conversations is supremely involving. Because of this, the music in *TOCA Race Driver* will flow, as in a film, from the start to the end. There will be no 'latest band' tracks for the sake of it. Instead, we will be using snippets of licensed music from the last 30 years, and even then we will only be using these to enhance the mood in the story sections."

CHARLES CECIL

Managing Director, Revolution Software

HOW **BROKEN SWORD 3** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...

DRIVER Reflections, PSone, 1998

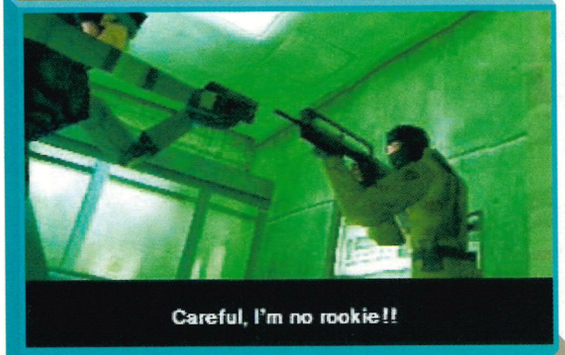
The Knowledge: *Driver* was a revolutionary game that took the car off the race track and into a cinematic adventure.

Cecil says: "Reflections' *Driver* was brilliantly simple yet as a driving game it broke the mould in several ways. What impressed me most was the way it took the dramatic elements of a film and made them work within the context of a videogame. It's something we have done, and are continuing to work on, with the *Broken Sword* series. *Driver* was proof that we can learn from other entertainment mediums and film in particular."

ADONIS STEVENSON

Lead Artist, Kuju Entertainment

HOW **LOTUS CHALLENGE** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...



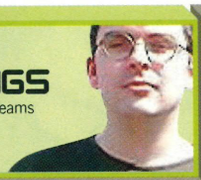
METAL GEAR SOLID KCEJ, PSone, 1998

The Knowledge: A masterful mix of 3D action and storytelling, rammed with ingenious gameplay innovations.

Stevenson says: "It's the bit where Psycho Mantis asks you to put the controller down and then moves it psychically by making it rumble – I actually jumped out of my chair when that happened. It was an idea that made us more active about finding new ways of using controllers and contributed to our new 'circular steering' technique in *Lotus Challenge*."

JOHN JENNINGS

Producer, Silicon Dreams



HOW **UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2001/2** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...

PARALLAX Sensible Software, C64, 1982

The Knowledge: Sensible Software's 2D shooter was the first to use dual-layer scrolling. But Jennings appreciates its aural talents.

Jennings says: "*Parallax*, like all Ocean games at the time, featured loading tunes showing that music and sound in general needn't be an afterthought, but could be really important to the player's involvement in a game. For our football games we have an audio department constantly researching new crowd effects. Recreating that big-match stadium sound can't be underestimated in terms of atmosphere. No matter how flashy the graphics, the game falls flat without a decent roar when a goal is scored."

PETER HIRSCHMANN

Writer/Producer, EA

HOW **MEDAL OF HONOUR: FRONTLINE** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...

JEDI KNIGHT LucasArts, PC, 1995

The Knowledge: LucasArts took the Jedi mythology into first-person territory, opening a new universe – and EA's eyes.

Hirschmann says: "Long before *Half-Life*, *Jedi Knight* was a FPS with real character and atmosphere. Despite the sci-fi setting, the world seemed very real. It established logical rules and things worked the way you thought they should. It influenced *Medal Of Honour* immensely, because it served as an example of smart level design. Hopefully we were able to approach a similar level of quality, setting up the conventions for all the *Medal Of Honour* projects to follow."

RETRO RAVINGS

More game developers reveal the games that inspired them.

TIM WRIGHT

Creative Director, Jester Interactive

PARADROID

Graftgold, C64, 1983

"It was such a great combination of arcade shoot-'em-up with chess-like sub-games and the strategy involved in choosing which android to control next. In fact, *Paradroid* was so good that we went out and bought the company that wrote it!"

JON HARE

Chief Game Designer, Codemasters

POKÉMON SNAP

Nintendo, N64, 2000

"An entirely new genre of game at a time when no new genres were being created. It adds more weight to the opinion I have long held that if you think you have got a good and truly original idea then you should ignore the reservations of people with no vision and just trust your own intuition and steam ahead regardless..."

DON WHITEFORD

Studio Manager, Rage Warrington

MUSIC 2000

Codemasters, PSone, 2000

"I have a host of programs on a PC that do virtually the same stuff and I can't figure how they crammed it all onto a PlayStation disc. Genius. My kids use it a lot and it will no doubt have inspired dozens of future DJs and remixers."

MATT WILKINSON

Managing Director, BAM

EXOLON

Hewson, Spectrum, 1982

"It appeared when the majority of Spectrum games were pretty much monochromatic due to the hardware limitation of the system. *Exolon* was in full, glorious colour and was able to do this through the use of brilliantly designed backdrops and some clever programming. It also had a well-designed difficulty curve and some really neat gameplay ideas."

FIN MCGECHIE

Designer, Mucky Foot

3D ATTACK

Quicksilva, Spectrum, 1982

"When it came out it was like nothing else before it. It grasped the capabilities of the machine and took them a little bit further and in a slightly different direction to the rest of the pack. It made its mark within the development community and is regarded as a great even today."

ALEX MCLEAN

Technical Director/Programmer, Pivotal Games

KNIGHT LORE

Ultimate, Spectrum, 1983

"*Knight Lore* showed complex depth sorting for the first time – scenes had perspective – there was a far and a near. This was revolutionary. It was one of the first real tricks that games programmers pulled, doing something that looked so far beyond what was previously possible. It's rare indeed nowadays that programmers introduce something truly new to a game."

DEAN BETTON

Lead Artist, Rage

METAL GEAR SOLID

Konami, PSone, 1998

"The quality and detail of this game was ground-breaking, from the story line to the attention to detail of the characters and levels. This set the standard for action games

RETRO RAVINGS

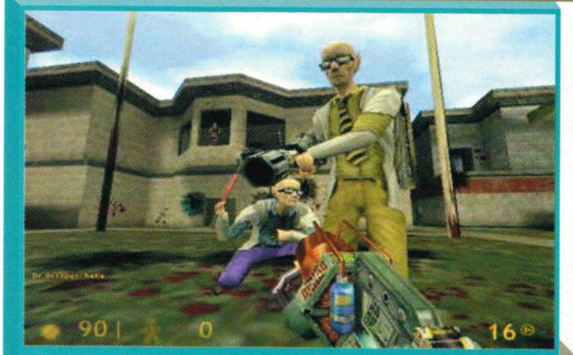
and it has yet to be beaten. I think every artist and designer would like to work on a game of that standard and you always hope that game will be your next."

JAMES BROOKSBY
Executive Producer, Kuju Entertainment
FINAL FANTASY VII
Square, PSone, 1997
"*Final Fantasy VII* has a massive story that immerses the player in the game world. You get drawn in like a good book and demand to know what will happen next. It's also a game that has a very non-western style and yet was successful outside of Japan. It has, for me and other gamers drawn us further into the world of Far Eastern gaming and influenced us to develop our games with that in mind."

ARCHER MACLEAN
Director, Awesome Developments
MARBLE MADNESS
Atari, Coin-op, 1983
"Who'd have ever thought someone would do an arcade game using marbles controlled by trackballs!"

ALAN LAWRANCE
Lead Programmer, Volition

HOW **RED FACTION** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...



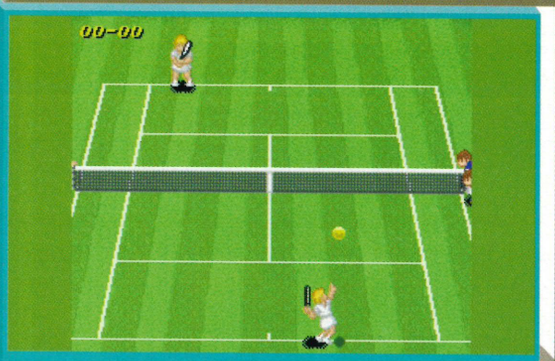
HALF-LIFE Valve, PC, 1998

The Knowledge: Valve's story-led first-person shooter went for the throat – and got Lawrance thinking...

Lawrance says: "It was when a head crab in *Half-Life* jumped at me and attached itself to my face! It scared the pants off me. Anything that can make me jump while playing a videogame is great, but also serves to reinforce the idea that immersion in a game is extremely important. I doubt the head crab would have scared me if I hadn't already been drawn into the game."

ALEX WARD
Creative Manager, Criterion Games

HOW **BURNOUT** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...



SUPER TENNIS Nintendo, SNES, 1991

The Knowledge: The Big N's tennis title is the perfect example of how a finely-tuned control system can make all the difference.

Ward says: "The SNES was an incredible machine, but often a solo experience for me as my family didn't play games. *Super Tennis* changed that. The control system was so simple that after ten minutes new players could show mastery of the game. With *Burnout*, we spent a long time making the control and initial experience as accessible as possible for *all* players. We're big believers in pick-up-and-play rather than pick-up-and-learn. People demand to be entertained and should be having fun from the start."

TAKAYOSHA SATO
Lead Artist, Konami TYO

HOW **SILENT HILL 2** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...

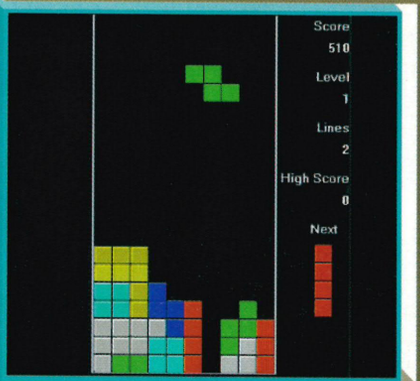
TOMB RAIDER Core Design, PSone, 1996

The Knowledge: Lara's original 3D outing raised more than a few eyebrows, but Konami was busy looking at the architecture.

Sato says: "At the beginning of the [first *Silent Hill*] project we looked at *Tomb Raider*, to study how to make 3D worlds. Generally, we'd make the scary environments first, and then fit the story around them. So, when making *Silent Hill 2*, we already knew roughly what the environment was going to look like. This meant we could build the entire story before designing the game. We think that this makes the town of *Silent Hill* a more realistic place overall."

MARK ROGERS
Senior Producer, Capcom US

HOW **MAXIMO** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...



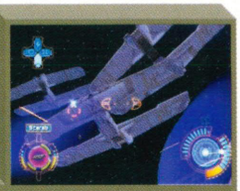
TETRIS Mirrorsoft, PC/Gameboy/Every format ever, since 1984

The Knowledge: Devised in Russia, this simple yet engaging shape-sorting exercise teaches us less is more.

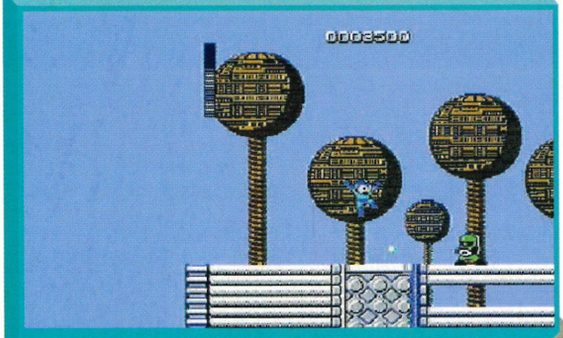
Rogers says: "*Tetris* was one of those games that was simple yet totally occupied the brain. More importantly, as with the likes of *Maximo*, it shows that what the player does from second-to-second counts, and that gameplay is the number one priority. It also proves that a great design is worth far more than a high development budget."

REEVE S THOMPSON

Producer, LucasArts



HOW **STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...



MEGAMAN Capcom, NES, 1983

The Knowledge: Capcom's 2D platformer began an unremarkable game series – apart from its method of telling a story.

Thompson says: "I love the way you can complete the game in different orders. Giving this degree of freedom would normally disrupt the game's entire balance, but *MegaMan* pulled it off. We're always looking for new ways to tell stories in games, which is a big challenge because storytelling has traditionally been a linear experience, while games are inherently non-linear. Gameplay structures like the one used in *MegaMan* are important landmarks in this development of game language."

MARTIN EDMONDSON

Managing and Development Director, Reflections

HOW **STUNTMAN** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...

INDIANAPOLIS 500 Papyrus, Amiga, 1988

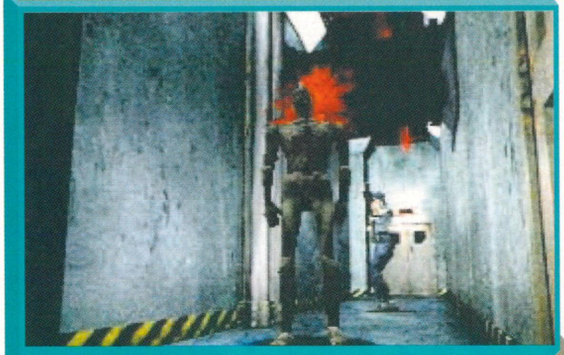
The Knowledge: Naturally, the man behind *Driver* and *Destruction Derby* looks to the original destructive race title.

Edmondson says: "The game itself was nothing that special, but the *smashes!* Full 40-car pile-ups and debris flying everywhere. There were no real collision physics going on, but it proved, before we designed *Destruction Derby*, that causing smashes and pile-ups in a game was a worthwhile activity! I spent hours setting up pile-ups and watching them from loads of different angles. Rather sad, really..."

PETER MOLYNEUX

Managing Director, Lionhead

HOW **BLACK & WHITE** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...



RESIDENT EVIL Capcom, PSone, 1997

The Knowledge: Shinji Mikami's clever use of distant and eerie camera angles will have a pronounced effect on Molyneux's forthcoming PS2 conversion of *Black & White*.

Molyneux says: "Things like the cinematic sequences in *Resident Evil* have affected my thoughts on how to tackle *Black & White Next Generation* for PlayStation 2. As a result, the console version of *Black & White* will be completely different from the original version. It's now a mixture of first- and third-person views – and you can do very cool things. This will have players focus more on their creature in the PS2 version than in the original."

KARL HILTON

Art Director, Free Radical Design

HOW **TIMESPLITTERS 2** IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO...

GRAN TURISMO Polyphony Digital, PSone, 1998

The Knowledge: Polyphony's shiny cars are to thank for *TimeSplitters 2*'s equally varied aesthetics.

Hilton says: "The cars in *GT* had two layers of polygons. The 'underneath' layer contained all the surface details like grills, air vents and panels, while the 'upper' layer had a semi-transparent reflection map. Particularly with *TimeSplitters 2*, it has made us look carefully at how we use the extra polygons available to us. Good graphics are about creating atmosphere. To do that you have to communicate how materials and light affect each other. When an environment becomes believable you know you've succeeded."

TOMORROW'S HEROES

Five PS2 games that tomorrow's developers will be thanking retrospectively...

DEVIL MAY CRY
For delicately balancing instant gameplay and stunning 3D locations without sacrificing speed or limiting control over the main character.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER
So far ahead of every other footy game it's frightening. Any game that lets you shield a high ball with your chest before spinning and volleying it into the top corner deserves the adulation of its peers.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2
Likely to be remembered for its impact as much as its gameplay. Kojima's demo showed developers just what the PS2 was capable of, with the rain effects, guard AI and sublime controls setting a new benchmark for all to follow.

FINAL FANTASY X
For many the holy grail is a game barely discernible from a CGI movie. Square's epic RPG is the closest a PS2 game has come to achieving this, and its hugely involving story line will make it a landmark title.

REZ
The ultimate in-game audio, relying on your sense of rhythm to shoot down hostile craft and build up a trance soundtrack as you do so. The retro-future visuals are unique too.

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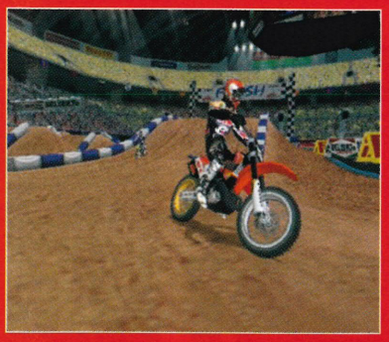

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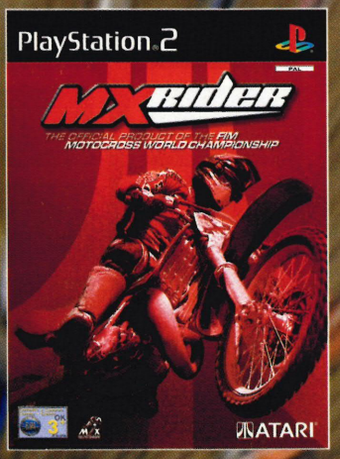
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»REVIEWS

The only PS2 game reviews worth reading

Reviews Charter

FACT: *OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE*'s reviews are the best in the business. Our crack squad of reviewers play the games longer, harder and better than anyone else – take a look at the screenshots in each review for proof. Rather than a few images from the first two levels or some replay footage, our review pages show we've played the games to bursting point.

It's this dedication that means you can trust our scores above anyone else's. Whether a game's superb or sewage, our experts will tell it like it is with buckets of opinion rather than a few cheap gags and some PR nonsense. Our experienced reviewers have written for the likes of *Edge*, *DC-UK*, *Official PlayStation Magazine*, *Super Play*, *PSM2*, *PC Gamer*, *GamesMaster*, *ZZAP!*, *Games Radar*, *N64* and *Sega Power* so you know these are opinions you can trust.

Next time you head off to spend your hard-earned cash on a PlayStation 2 game? Make sure you read our reviews first.

Review Ratings

Here's what our review scores stand for:

10/10 Nigh on revolutionary. A game that could change the face of gaming forever
9/10 A truly astonishing game. If you have a PlayStation 2, you need this now
8/10 Highly recommended
7/10 Good, solid fare that's definitely well worth a look
6/10 Better than average, and ideal for hardcore fans of the genre
5/10 An average game
4/10 Poor, but still with the odd moment
3/10 Extremely disappointing
2/10 To be avoided
1/10 Beer mat

The OPS2 Awards

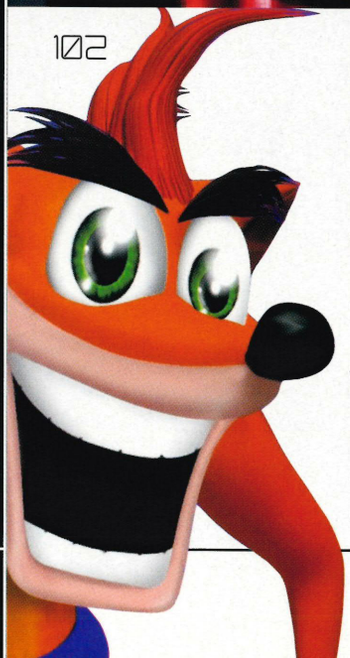
We don't hand out high scores for nothing so when you see one of these, you'll know it's a sign of quality. Look for them on game boxes.

The Gold Award is a rare gem and only to be given to PS2 games that score that magic 10/10. Remember: no game has got one of these yet!

The Silver Award is for games that receive 9/10. If you see this, it's a sign of star quality, indicating that you should buy this game now!

The Bronze Award is for games that score 8/10. These games are highly recommended and are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.

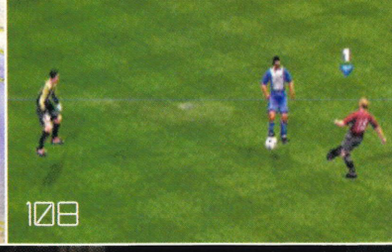
DEVIL MAY CRY 092
Go to hell and back with Capcom's gargantuan goth-horror adventure.



HALF-LIFE 098
It's got shooting. It's got aliens. It's got gore by the bucketload. Get blown away by the PC classic, given a new lease of life on the PS2.

CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX 102
A PSone platforming legend reclaims his iconic status – Crash might have grown up but he's still full of life and intent on spinning you out.

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 2001....104
"Right five. Left four into hairpin right. Warning. WARNING!" The most complete and downright dangerous rally game we've ever seen.



PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 108

It's been a long time coming. You were patient. And now it's here. We give you the best footy game ever.

NHL 2002 110
LOTUS CHALLENGE 113
SOUL REAVER 2 114
AIRBLADE 118
STUNT GP 123
SILENT SCOPE 2 127
SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE 128
FIFA 2002 130
ARCTIC THUNDER 132
NYR: NEW YORK RACER 133
18 WHEELER 134
NHL HITZ 135
TEST DRIVE: OFFROAD WIDE OPEN 137
GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE: AFRICA 138
SPLASHDOWN 140
DNA 142
TOP GUN 144
PENNY RACERS 145
BATMAN VENGEANCE 146
THE MUMMY RETURNS 148
THE WEAKEST LINK/ROBOT WARS 150
LEGO RACERS 2 151

PS one™

The latest titles for the little grey box

FIFA 2002 152
ONE PIECE MANSION 153
ROCKET POWER TEAM ROCKET RESCUE 153
SPONGEBOB SUPER SPONGE 153

media

DVD/INTERNET/PRINT/MUSIC

DVD RELEASES 156
The Godfather/Unbreakable/Planet Of The Apes/ Cast Away/Quills/Bedazzled/Meet The Parents/ Ravenous/The Wizard Of Oz/Ben-Hur.

DVD TOP 10 158
The top ten comedy DVDs on the market.

INTERVIEW 160
A quick chat with *WipEout Fusion* stars, Plump DJs.

INTERNET 160
BOOKS/MAGAZINES 161
MUSIC 161

Contributor

The faces behind the reviews

Lee Hall

Official PlayStation Magazine's recently-promoted Deputy Editor might have just spent a week in the jungle for "journalistic purposes" but our Lee's still found time to enter the equally dangerous *OPS2* office and scribe a few reviews for us. Following on from his review of *Burnout* last issue, Lee donned a rubber body suit to take on *Batman Vengeance*. Chap.

Game of the month: "Can't get enough of *Pro Evolution Soccer*."

Can't wait to play: "Want *Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2* now."

RECOMMENDED

Things to get and things we want to get

Still playing

SILENT HILL 2
It keeps giving us nightmares so why do we continue to torture ourselves? Because we like to...

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X
The last *Resi* on PS2 for a while, Issue #010's cover star captivates us still.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER
We know. We should get out more. But we just. Can't. Leave. This One. Alone...

Can't wait to play

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
Given none of us can skate, this is about as close as it gets. Review next issue!

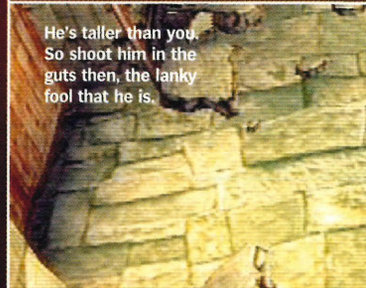
JAK AND DAXTER
Finally, a decent next-gen platformer courtesy of Naughty Dog. Review and demo next issue!

REZ
We've been lucky to play this techno shoot-'em-up already, and it's absolutely mindblowing.

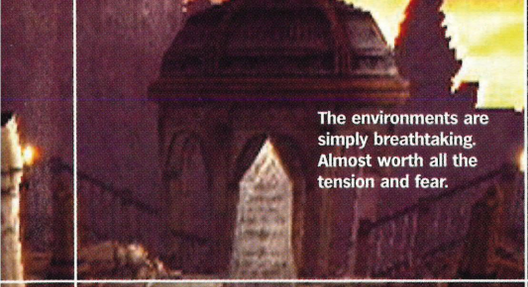
Dante is the most memorable dark hero ever consigned to silicon. Take up the sword, and challenge the demons to a few bouts in *Devil May Cry*.

The action is frantic, and at times, explosive.

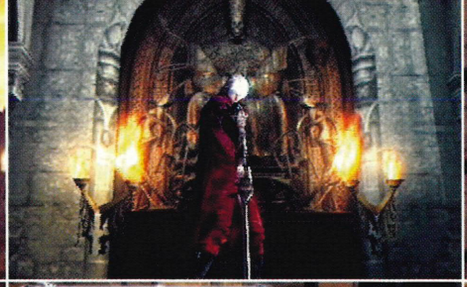
The Gothic scenery is always stunning and often hides important clues.

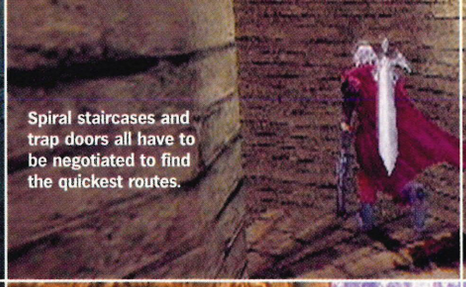


He's taller than you. So shoot him in the guts then, the lanky fool that he is.

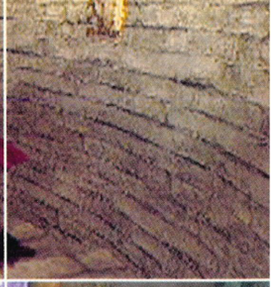


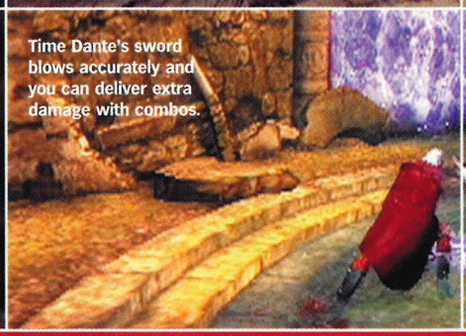
The environments are simply breathtaking. Almost worth all the tension and fear.





Spiral staircases and trap doors all have to be negotiated to find the quickest routes.





Time Dante's sword blows accurately and you can deliver extra damage with combos.

ON THE DVD

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK SILVER

DEVIL MAY CRY

Survival horror has a new Daddy. And the stakes are on your side.

Publisher: Capcom Eurosoft
Developer: Capcom
Price: £39.99
Players: 1
Out: 23 November
Web site: www.capcom-europe.com

Back story
Capcom is renowned for producing quality survival horror titles; the *Resident Evil* franchise has enthralled gamers for over five years. But the creative force behind those games – Shinji Mikami – decided to try something a little different. *Devil May Cry* has all the tension of the early survival horror games but now the fire power and agility are firmly with you. Demons beware...

For a minute, consider what the term survival horror means. You're thinking *Resi*, *Silent Hill*, *Onimusha*, right? Titles traditionally based around visceral shocks with the occasional gunfight to spice things up. *Devil May Cry* might fit the genre criteria, but it isn't your usual survival horror. It has a set of pistols. It has a hefty great sword. But unlike others, it has unrelenting action right from the outset, never ceasing until the final scene. Ladies and gentlemen, prepare yourselves for one of the most exhilarating game experiences ever.

Devil May Cry is a game born out of passion. You only have to look at the way its creator Shinji Mikami would excitedly imitate the game's fluid combat at press conferences by shooting the air with imaginary pistols. After marvelling at the lavish environments the unique fighting technique will be the first thing you notice about the title.

Over a year ago, video footage of the main character's dynamic fighting style emerged from Capcom. Walking through Gothic environments populated by demon spawn, Dante (as he was later to be named) displayed remarkable levels of agility and fire power. A glowering demon appeared above his head and Dante would dispatch it with a quick jump and a slash of his blade. A shambling monstrosity would emerge from his right, ready to strike. But Dante just un-holstered his shotgun and obliterated the aberration to another plane with a film hero's nonchalance. Then again, that was video. No-one expected the final cut to be anything close to the headline making footage. You should thank the dark forces, then, that *Devil May Cry* is so much more than just a few sequences of promotional video. Five minutes into *DMC* and you will appreciate Mikami-san's penchant for gun mimes. You too will be sounding battle cries as you slay another horde of monsters, and when they regenerate in an area you previously cleared – such a bane in nearly every other adventure game – you'll be ready for more.

The most integral part of such a game, the combat system, soon becomes second nature. It combines simplicity of control with an underlying depth: △ slashes, while ◎ operates Dante's firearm. The fluidity between these two methods of

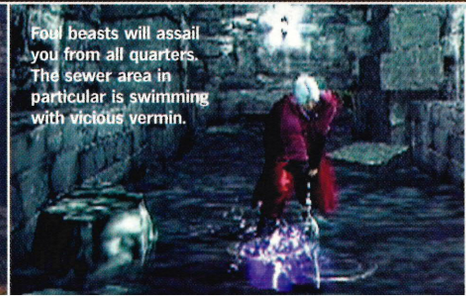
//*Devil May Cry* might meet the genre criteria but it isn't your usual survival horror//

attack is swift and coupled with the ability to leap towards or away from enemies will soon have you delivering dramatic, choreographed death blows to a host of opponents – just as the trailers suggested. Careful timing of your attacks adds further combo opportunities and on-screen messages reward you with encouragement – or derision, should your attacks be under-par.

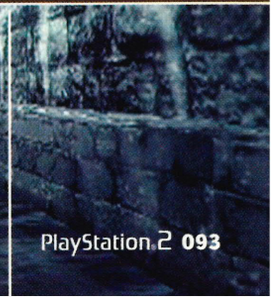
It is, in the most simplistic of terms, exactly what we wanted.

IN THE BEGINNING

The plot of *Devil May Cry* begins 2000 years ago when a Devil Prince was born in an icy cavern in the netherworld. After gaining the Devil Throne this mysterious Demon Emperor threatened to become supreme ruler of both the upper and lower realms



Foul beasts will assail you from all quarters. The sewer area in particular is swimming with vicious vermin.



The hero dons his trunks and enters the water. No bronze swimming certificate for this effort.

ALASTOR PLAST

The history of the blade.

Gaining the demon-possessed sword, Alastor, is a key moment in the game. The bloody cut-scene which accompanies the acquisition of the weapon is played out with brilliant economy. Alastor sucks out Dante's blood and becomes an extension of his body.

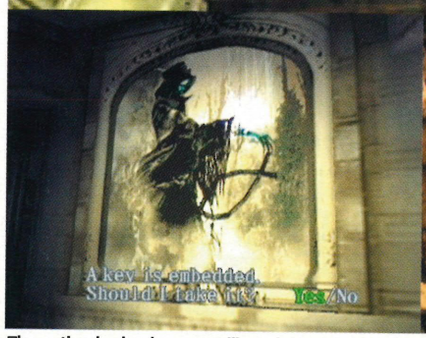
Alastor is the blade of darkness which grants Dante even greater infernal powers. It can be charged up with orbs to maximum effect.

BORDER LINES

***OPS2* assures all that DMC's borders are excusable...**

Hopefully you'll be sucked into the action of *Devil May Cry* so much that you won't notice the black borders at the top and bottom of your screen. As we've explained before (*OPS2* issue #012 pg.52), this occurs because Japanese and American games are developed to run on 60hz NTSC televisions. Unfortunately the UK is 50hz PAL only. In the case of *DMC* it's excusable, because there's no slow-down, another possible outcome of conversions.

These scenes may look pre-rendered but they actually rotate around the hero in full 3D. These are the best environments yet seen on the PS2.



The option is simple: cower like a fool, or take the key and face the might of a demon horde.

Obvious clues are distributed to ensure that the puzzle solving never gets in the way of fighting.

by invading the human world. But a powerful Devil-Knight, Sparda, took pity on the pathetic humans and lead a rebel force to defeat the Emperor. This tyrant was then sealed in a vault and has lain dormant for two millennia. After freeing his people, Sparda travelled to the human world, married and produced a half devil, half human child. Dante is the fruit of this coupling – a half breed said to be so powerful that even a devil may cry begging for his mercy. Clever, see? When strange demonic activity occurs on a certain Mallet Island it is an indicator that the dark beings are stirring ready to take action against the humans again. When he hears of this, Dante heads to Mallet Island's castle to eradicate the evil. It's a disturbing, eerie place.

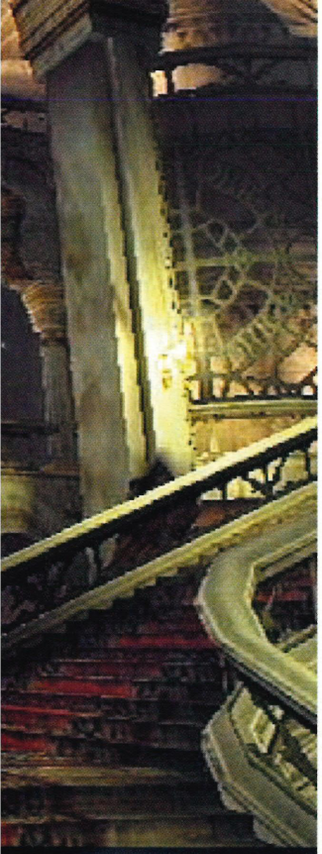
Devil May Cry's look may display obvious Gothic undertones but it contains none of the hackneyed white-lace shirt-cuff tropes associated with films like *The Crow*. Part German fairytale, part Bergman movie, the game exudes a terrific atmosphere all of its own and is assuredly one of the most distinctive game worlds ever created. More importantly, Capcom has opted to drop the static pre-rendered backdrops made famous by the *Resident Evil* series and has gone for full three-dimensional locales. The decision has allowed players to enjoy a greater sense of freedom. Now the camera follows Dante around spiral staircases, over ruined battlements and into misty woodland with greater urgency and energy.

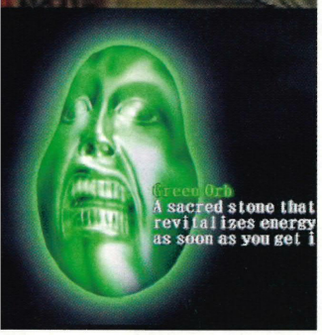
While creatures are now likely to assail you from all directions, seemingly innocent objects like paintings and mirrors can harbour malevolent spirits. Examining objects and smashing tables is likely to get you rewards but can also plunge you into further battles to open up other areas of the castle. These include places as diverse as cellars, courtyards, battlements and towers. Navigation is aided by a map which can be called up with a tap of R2. All the floors can be cycled through with a press of the analogue stick (L3) and in typical Capcom style a glowing area indicates the next point which must be reached. Though hardcore adventure fans may be wary of such obvious guidance, it cuts down on unnecessary wandering and keeps the action flowing fast. The emphasis of this game is on activity not exploration and the sign-posting ensures there is never a dull moment.

ON A MISSION

One of the finest enhancements to this Capcom adventure is the imagination evident in every mission. Foregoing the typical save point and backtracking formula, *Devil May Cry* instead opts for a mini-mission approach. This breaks up the game neatly into dramatic episodes and has clearly allowed the developer the freedom to explore more innovative avenues. Examined cynically this still falls within the find-the-key-to-

//Part German fairytale, part Bergman movie, the game exudes a terrific atmosphere//





Coloured orbs can be found or bought at certain points. This green orb will heal flagging energy levels.

I HAVE THE POWER!

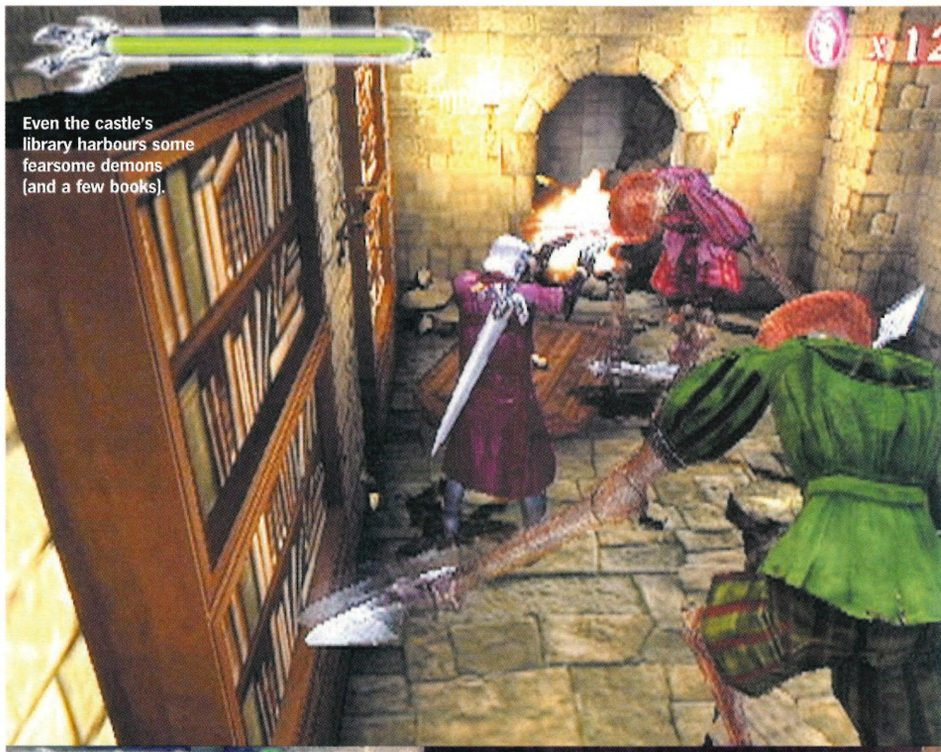
How to maximize Dante's skills with red orbs.

Skill shop
After every mission you will be given the opportunity to build up special powers here.

Air Raid
Purchase this skill and you can leap into the sky before pummelling your enemy from above.

Stinger
Get the timing correct and Dante's sword will lash out several times to skewer the nearest foe.

Devil Trigger
This power grants Dante awesome damage and a special speed boost.



Attack enemies in a stylish fashion and you'll be rewarded with a 'bravo!' - and more orbs.

Cut-scenes occasionally heighten the drama and forward the plot. Look behind you...

The shotgun comes in handy in the courtyard against these nasty reptiles.

open-a-door formula, but the 'keys' and 'doors' have undergone an imaginative make-over. At one point Dante must break into the Cathedral but to do this he must use his power-sword attack to disturb an ancient altar which then reveals a hidden trap door. Descend into the depths of the subterranean cavern and a staff is discovered which can be placed into the hands of an age-worn statue, thus opening the way for further adventures. Such mechanisms and triggers are common throughout giving the exploration a vitality and novelty worth savouring.

Some of the most amazing locales appear later in the game when Dante discovers a sunken pirate ship beneath the castle's catacombs. Cleverly, the developer has even included an impressive underwater swimming section which switches your view to first-person. But the murky waters are still fouled with evil creatures and some agile swimming or quick sub-aquatic gunplay is required to avert the danger.

Occasionally, boss encounters round off an episode and provide some of the most powerful moments in the game. The demon-lord's general, Phantom, appears early on. He takes the form of an enormous spider capable of spitting flames and crushing Dante with his legs. Jumping on his back and slicing through his thick carapace is one of the best methods of slaying this beast. It would be cruel to reveal more and spoil your experience, but suffice to say, Dante requires all his skills and a touch of acumen to survive such an onslaught. The intrepid player can also discover secret areas.

Added to the 22 standard missions – which form the main narrative – are 12 hidden bonus missions. These ask the player to perform special feats such as laying waste to 100 arachnids within a certain time limit or taking on three bosses at one time.

DMC also offers several difficulty settings. On the harder levels – and without auto aim – things can become very tough indeed. But *DMC* rewards slaughter. In fact, it rewards stylish slaughter. Defeat enemies and their red 'life' energy floats in the ether ready for Dante's spirit to suck them in. Dispatch enough enemies with impressive combos and varied weapons and a green orb appears to revitalise flagging health levels.

REWARDING GAMEPLAY

The reward structure is simple: destroy more enemies to collect more orbs. Time bonuses will also grant the player an increase to their tally at the end of individual missions. The orbs act as currency. At key points during your wanderings in the castle – or just before a new mission – there is the opportunity to 'buy' a number of special abilities and objects to help you on your quest. These range from simple health gems to Dante's Air Hike power-up move. The sheer number of options available is staggering and adds a gentle level of strategy to the carve-'em-up action.

Collect enough orbs in the main game and you can begin to seriously upgrade your hardware and special moves. Round Trip gives Dante the ability to throw his sword, boomerang-style, at

The ghostly pirate ship provides one of the best missions in the game. It's even possible to climb to the top of the mast.

oncoming foes while Stinger propels the hero forward in a charge culminating in a vicious repeating stab attack on the unfortunate enemy. Purchase the Air Hike move and you can double jump the hero into an attack, delivering a swift blow from above. But Dante has an even more awesome attack in reserve: the Devil Trigger. If the DT gauge reaches maximum then a quick press of L1 surrounds Dante with a flickering aura. Both speed and attack powers now become more potent. If you have purchased special moves with the orbs you can access the game's astounding specials: the Vortex and the Air Raid. The Vortex sends Dante crushing into his enemies in a furious rage of destruction while Air Raid fires him into the air before unleashing a lightning attack.

DANCE WITH A DEVIL

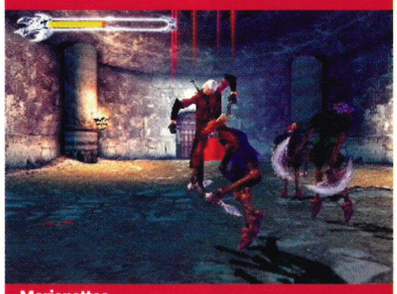
Dante's list of special moves is made more impressive by the fact that they can be triggered so effortlessly. String different attacks and defensive moves together and he begins to perform some truly remarkable athletics. Rolling dodges and special skewering attacks can be performed by simply pressing R1 and moving the left analogue stick either backwards or forwards, respectively. The backward somersault helps Dante get out of tight spots when enemies surround him on all sides.

Search the castle's confines diligently and you will discover hardware capable of dispatching the game's trickiest foes. Rocket guns, the Alastor blade and the Fire Gauntlets all give *Devil May Cry* greater variety and depth. Faced with such fire power it would be easy to assume the demons could be destroyed with ease. But interestingly, each type of enemy responds differently to each weapon. The Marionettes are standard fodder in the game, but leave yourself vulnerable for too long and they can propel blades across the room taking away vital energy. Sin Scissors are ghostly apparitions carrying elongated shears which threaten to cut Dante in half. Their masks are the only weak point and must be targeted for a successful kill. Shadows are shape-shifting wild cats, completely invulnerable to sword attacks. Only Dante's projectile weapons have any effect on these feline fiends.

Tackling creatures is as much a game of strategy as it is skill. Do you go for the all out

BEASTLY BESTIARY

The game includes a book listing all the demons.



Marionettes
These clumsy if persistent aberrations fall from high places and throw sharp blades at the hero. They can be dispatched quickly but never really go away for long.

Sin Scissors
Haunting and troublesome, the Sin Scissors emerge out of paintings and walls and attempt to cut the hero in half with their scything blades. Their pale masks provide the only weakness.

Griffon
One of the highest ranking demons in the emperor's army, Griffon is a giant, disease-riddled bird of prey. Boss confrontations with Griffon are the most strategic in the game, and therefore the most enjoyable. Flame-griddle that fowl!

CAPCOM GENERATIONS

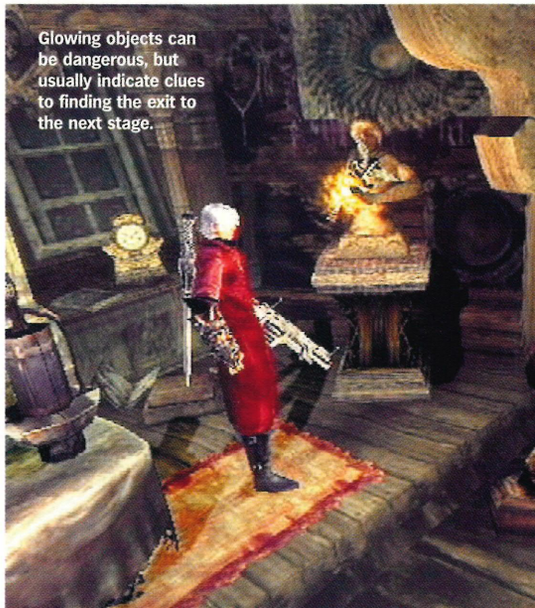
Capcom has always been interested in the gruesome and the paranormal. Here is just a brief list of some of its major franchises which have made art out of gore.

1985 Ghosts'N Goblins
Arguably, *Ghosts'N Goblins* was the first survival horror game from Capcom. Though a strictly 2D affair the ability to change weapons and defeat demonic bosses was ground-breaking.

1996 Resident Evil
Shinji Mikami's first major hit contained all the ingredients we have come to expect from him. Intense combat, wonderfully creepy environments and shocks to savour.

1999 Dino Crisis
Capcom followed up on the success of *Resident Evil* and its sequel with something a little bit different. Zombies were replaced with dinosaurs but the heart-thumping action never let up.

2001 Resident Evil: Code Veronica X
The latest in the *Resident Evil* series. Claire Redfield's quest provided many more avenues of exploration and a plot which seemed less linear than before.



Glowing objects can be dangerous, but usually indicate clues to finding the exit to the next stage.

Spiders infest certain areas but can be dispatched quickly with pistols.

WATERY GRAVE

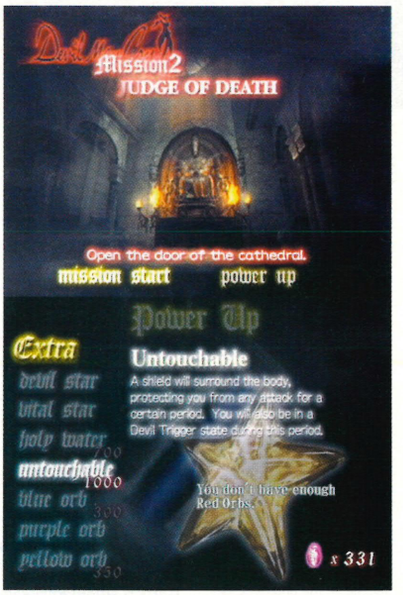
Demons can't drown.

Killing demons in a Gothic castle is pretty strange, but things take a turn for the bizarre when Dante must submerge himself for some underwater antics. Luckily he is a fast swimmer and most creatures can be avoided. Those proving more persistent can be blasted with a few rounds from the handgun.

Pause for too long and the Marionettes will string Dante up and deliver some truly horrific torture.

The shotgun is less powerful than Alastor but can stun enemies to give you breathing space.

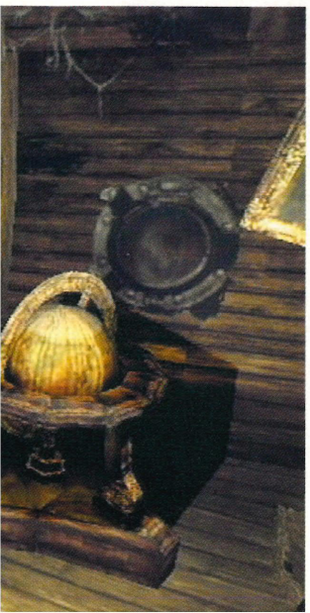
//Those waiting for another PS2 killer app need wait no more. Mikami has delivered//



Missions are often short and sweet. Going through the game again can reward players with bonuses and secrets.

onslaught with a sword attack? Or risk a flashy combo routine peppered with gun-shots to impress your friends? Deciding when to unleash the Devil Trigger is vital too. The DT energy meter does not regenerate quickly and this should be kept in reserve for intense fight scenes or the unexpected boss encounter.

A mention must also go to the quality of cut-scenes – so often lengthy and uninteresting in most games – which have here been created with great skill and panache. Though never usurping the gameplay, the short clips draw the player in to the atmosphere of the game and drive the narrative forcefully onwards. While *Metal Gear Solid 2* has been lauded by all sections of the industry for its cinematic style, *DMC* proves Capcom is leading the way in producing engaging visual narrative. There are no *Final Fantasy* epics here, this is short, sweet and entertaining.



TO HELL WITH IT

As remarkable as *Devil May Cry* is though, like all great epics it suffers from a few flaws. Boss encounters are occasionally blighted by poor camera angles. Manoeuvring around the arena while being attacked from all sides by lightning bolts and flame projectiles is hard enough – not being able to see where you are going because the camera is focusing on the enemy, makes it even worse. But gladly, this occurs infrequently. Some might also question the game's length. It should take dedicated gamers between ten and 15 hours to complete (though for others this may be considerably longer) but in typical Capcom fashion there are bonus missions and extras to discover if you are willing to go through the castle a second time.

Even the most cynical observer can see that Mikami's latest work is that of a genius. The fluidity of combat combined with some of the most impressive visuals ever seen on a console make this a landmark title for PlayStation 2. Those still hungering for another killer app need wait no more. Mikami has delivered with this most ambitious of titles and even beside all his previous creations this stands as his magnum opus. Completely unmissable. ☐ **Mark Walbank**

DEVIL MAY CRY

Why we'd buy it:	**Why we'd leave it:**	**Amazing, awesome and atypical. The vision and hard work of Shinji Mikami and team has culminated in another AAA title for the PS2.**
- Fluid movement and controls - Extraordinary visuals - Dramatic combat - Superb gothic atmosphere	- Some camera niggles at key moments - It just doesn't last long enough	

Graphics	To take your breath away	09
Sound	From rock to baroque	07
Gameplay	Fast, furious and sublime	10
Life span	Can be completed in a weekend	07

09

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK SILVER

A Bullsquid closes in for the kill in *Half-Life* – probably the greatest story-driven first-person shooter of all time.

Two-player deathmatches allow you to blast bloody great chunks out of your gameplaying comrades.

HALF-LIFE

Can Valve's award-winning PC classic make a name for itself on PS2?

Publisher: Vivendi Universal
Developer: Valve/Gearbox
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2
Out: November
Web site: www.half-lifeps2.sierra.com

Back story

Half-Life on PC is a legend in its own lifetime, having won over 50 Game Of The Year awards following its release at the end of 1998. Valve's incredible first-person shooter soon spawned various add-on packs. A passionate online community has also been created courtesy of the magnificent team-based mods *Counterstrike* and *Team Fortress*, that are still proving to be as popular as *Quake III Arena* or *Unreal Tournament*.

As a videogamer, you live for those rare moments when you play something so great, so imaginative and original, it actually redefines the whole landscape of its genre, asking the question of every title that dares to follow in its wake: "Can you ever be as good as this?" *Half-Life* is such a game. First launched in 1998, the intensely atmospheric, scary sci-fi first-person shooter soon became one of the most popular and best-loved PC titles of all time. Now it's being launched again on PlayStation 2, hoping to frighten and delight a whole new generation of gamers with its visceral 3D blasting and incredible story line.

Half-Life's main single-player game puts you in the Hazardous Environment (HEV) suit of Dr Gordon Freeman, a scientist in the massive underground Black Mesa Research Facility in New Mexico, which you enter via monorail in the ingenious scene-setting intro sequence. It seems as if this is going to be like any other normal working day in the lab, until an experiment that Freeman is involved with suddenly goes disastrously wrong, causing an explosion that rips open a dimensional rift between Earth and a distant alien world. Suddenly Gordon is fighting for his life in a devastated complex infested with otherworldly horrors, trying desperately to find a way out before he is killed by extra-terrestrial monsters or trigger happy government troops sent into the base to 'clean up'.

Luckily, Gordon is protected somewhat by his company's HEV suit, which also provides you with the on-screen HUD showing health, the suit's protective charge, weapons and ammo, a torch icon, a small animated figure to show your physical position and an audio/visual alarm that alerts you when in contact with dangerous chemicals, radiation or other hazards. Control is via Dual Shock 2 – although for old stick-in-the-muds the game will work with a USB mouse and keyboard – with a new targeting system for PS2 that shows on-screen enemies. Gordon has a hefty armoury at his disposal, with more bizarre and lethal weaponry available to play with the further you progress in the game. There's a useful crowbar, the usual smattering of pistols, magnums, grenades and rocket launchers, dangerous experimental technology that can bring down helicopters and hilarious living alien creature weapons called Snarks that when released, viciously attack any human nearby – including yourself (see The Best Of Both Worlds).

LEARN TO LOVE LIFE

Half-Life is basically an adventure-on-rails, taking you through each sector, and requiring you to solve puzzles, jump platforms and shoot nasties. However, it's the way that the game constantly surprises you and messes with your expectations through brilliant level design and scripting that make it such a fantastic experience. You can be crawling along a rusty pipe with a small beam of torchlight, when suddenly your weight will make it give way, plunging you into a room crawling with deadly Headcrabs wanting to take a chunk out of

Q&A

ALIEN SPEAK

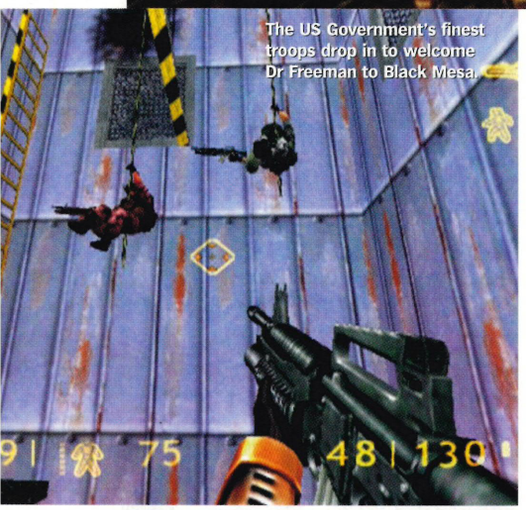
Randy Pitchford, ex-magician and President of Gearbox, talks *Half-Life* on PS2.

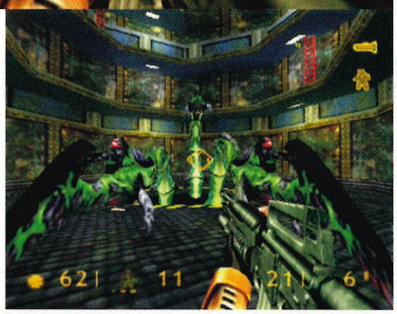
Why should gamers who've already bought the PC version invest in *Half-Life* on PS2?
We've been focused on taking care of PlayStation 2 owners with this title because we know that the majority of the people who get this game will never have had the chance to play *Half-Life* before. Having said that, I bet that some of the things we've created would be interesting to fans of the PC game. Decay, for example, has to be exclusive to the PlayStation 2 because of the co-operative nature of the game. A PC fan who'd like to play through the game again as an Alien or just experience the high-impact moments with the new graphical enhancements will also appreciate the quick load times and easy start-up the PlayStation 2 version offers.

How have you adapted the mouse/keyboard control method for PlayStation 2 from the PC version?
We've done a few things in this regard. First, we've added a lock-on targeting system and you don't require difficult crouch-jump combinations any more. For example, you can just double tap to execute a long jump. We offer four preset configuration options but allow you to custom configure the game however you please. Also the Dual Shock 2 will provide physical feedback during game events. So, when a Headcrab suddenly jumps out of the dark and onto the players face, not only does the visual feedback scare the beans out of people, but the controller jerking at that moment really makes 'em jump!

What's your favourite part of the new PS2 conversion of *Half-Life*?
I love playing through the original *Half-Life* as an Alien Slave and playing Decay with friends in the office. The PS2 exclusive elements add a lot to the game.

Will the enhanced characters and weapons make a better game?
Besides bringing the game to a new level of detail and quality, the animated facial expressions on the characters really help bring the horror of the game through. Now you can see real fear on the scientists' faces when the aliens come in to destroy them.





Be quiet in the presence of the Tentacle – this three-headed beast reacts violently to sound.

Outdoor areas, such as this dam, are expansive with enemies attacking from land, sea and air.

WHEN ALIENS ATTACK

A collection of planet Xen's loveliest inhabitants

HEADCRAB
Like the Face Huggers in *Alien*, these horrible scuttling creatures hide in dark places, waiting to leap out and attach themselves to your face.

ZOMBIE
Black Mesa scientists who have been turned into slimy, pulsating aliens by a bite from a Headcrab. Slow moving, but a deadly claw attack.

ALIEN SLAVE
Of low intelligence, but these spiky bipeds have a slow-charging energy attack that is devastating when used with other slaves.

ICHTHYOSAUR
This underwater beastie would give David Attenborough nightmares, being a ferocious predator fish that can tear a man apart in seconds.

BULLSQUID
Large aggressive animals that can move quickly and spit limb-melting acid over great distances.

GARGANTUA
A big, blue bastard of an alien that can stomp on you or reduce your body to a gooey mess with a blast from its terrifying death ray.

(Left) Levers to pull, buttons to press. (Right) A not-so-friendly troop carrier.

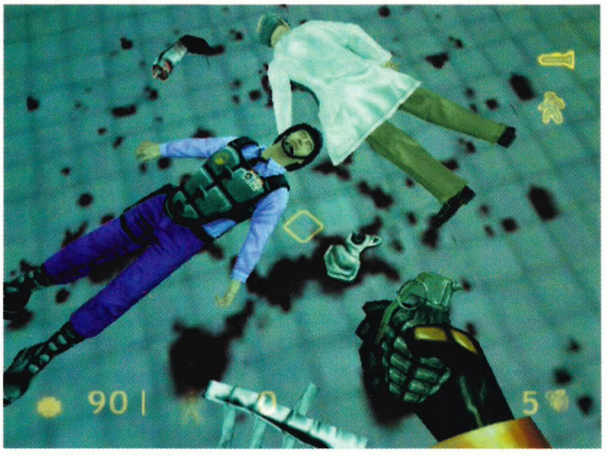
your face. Or you may finish off a pack of Houndeyes, little bastardised dogs that yelp and emit a dangerous sound wave, just getting to a room in time to see a poor scientist dragged screaming into an air conditioning duct and sprayed out as a stream of slippery guts and blood. These scripted pieces that allow you to overhear banal conversations between soldiers or gain an insight into the sinister machinations of the 'man in the suit' are instrumental in establishing *Half-Life*'s believable game world.

Character AI is also a major contributor to *Half-Life*'s genius, in the way that different enemies will think and act differently. Some alien creatures such as the ceiling-based Barnacle will lie in wait for an unsuspecting victim to be caught in their long dangling tongues and devoured, whereas other monsters will co-ordinate attacks in groups for more deadly assaults, following your scent or reacting to any sounds you make (see When Aliens Attack!). Human soldiers show the most realistic behaviour, shouting, "Go, Go, Go!" and opening fire if they see you, often falling back to defensive positions – there are no 'suicide-runs' of the type that you expect to see in less sophisticated videogames. It really is quite a startling moment when you throw a grenade into a group of soldiers and hear them scream, "Oh shit!" as they scatter in all directions, or when you shoot and injure someone another character shouts, "Medic!" before running to get help. So complex is the AI in *Half-Life*, that you can actually use it to your advantage, waiting just out of sight when firefights are going on between aliens and soldiers until they've weakened each other to such an extent that you can waltz in there with an assault shotgun and finish each side off with ease.

//All the elements that made the PC game so fantastic have been retained for PS2//

But not everyone you meet wants to attach itself to your head, suck out your brains and turn you into a writhing, undead alien sub-species. Other characters can help you in your gruesome struggle, with scientists eager to unlock doors using a retina scan and Black Mesa guards (affectionately known as 'Barneys') following you to provide useful backup, firing upon anything that moves and dryly commenting after a kill that now there's, "One less horror in the world."

Yet *Half-Life* will be remembered mostly for just how damn frightening it is. If there's a 'scariest

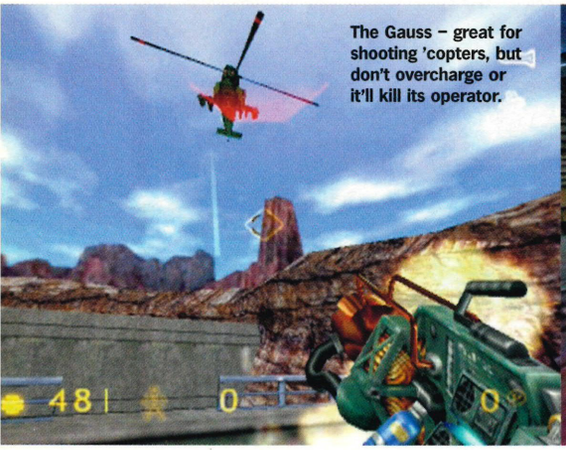


***Half-Life* is littered with the bodies and undigested limbs of unfortunate alien victims. Best tidy up the place with a quick explosive grenade.**

Head shots are very graphic. Here an enemy gets it in the swede with a crossbow bolt.

Troops have unnervingly realistic AI, organising methodical attacks and avoiding your gunfire.

A *Jaws* moment: with only a crossbow for company and running out of air, Gordon Freeman has to face the new killer of the deep, the Ichthyosaur.



The Gauss – great for shooting 'copters, but don't overcharge or it'll kill its operator.

A disturbingly cute pack of Houndeyes unleash a devastating sonic blast.

Barney the security guard helps to finish off a pair of zombies. You'll often be assisted like this.

videogame moment' gallery somewhere, you can be sure that *Half-Life* will be among the first games to be nailed up, literally making you jump out of your chair during the sequences where Gordon has to crawl through the dark, Headcrab-infested air ducts with only a torch for company. The sound effects too add a wonderful sense of unease, with the distant squelches and guttural half-spoken hisses from nearby aliens always keeping you in a delicious state of near panic.

And that's just the main game – *Half-Life* on PlayStation 2 also has a raft of new features, including an exclusive mission-based bonus game called Decay, set during the same time as Gordon Freeman's adventure, often crossing paths and revealing previously unseen areas of the Black Mesa complex. Starring two female doctors, Gina Cross and Colette Green, players can choose to complete the nine missions as a two-player co-operative game, or as a single-player game by simply switching between each character.

Missions can only be completed by using both characters and working together to solve puzzles, such as one person deactivating a sentry gun system while the other darts through to safety. Decay is a worthwhile addition to *Half-Life* and completing it unlocks a Skirmish mode for computer-controlled bot-based deathmatches and an Alien Slave character to use as a replacement for Gordon Freeman in the main adventure, allowing you to play it through again from a distinctly foreign perspective. There's also a two-player Head-to-Head mode, with 12 unique maps designed especially for this release.

Half-Life is a revelation on PS2. All the aspects that made the original PC single-player game so fantastic have been retained, including a smooth frame rate and an ingenious Quick Save feature that actually saves to the PS2's internal memory. Plus there are the very playable Decay two-player missions, new weaponry, masses of unlockable characters and bonus deathmatches. If you've played *Half-Life* on PC before, there's enough new material here to pull you into Valve's sick, funny first-person shooter once again. However, if you're in the lucky position of never having played *Half-Life* before, *OPS2* envies you – you're in for a hell of a ride. ☐ **Jamie Sefton**

HALF-LIFE

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	You probably won't ever play a better single-player first-person shooter than *Half-Life*. Consider it your duty to buy and play this game to death.
- A superbly frightening plot that never lets up - Ground-breaking enemy AI - Some great modes exclusive to PS2	- Slightly annoying loading between stages - No four-player deathmatches - Still essentially a three-year-old PC game	

Graphics	Gory effects, big explosions	09
Sound	Intensely atmospheric, scary sound effects	09
Gameplay	The pinnacle of first-person shooters	10
Life span	Decay missions add months of gameplay	09

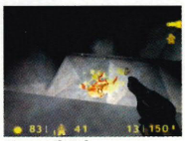
09

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

***Half-Life* on PS2 includes new weapons from Earth and the alien homeworld.**

Crowbar
Useful for smashing open things like air vents and for caving in the skulls of pesky aliens.



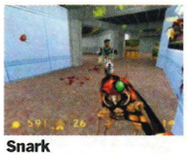
9mm Pistol
Not very powerful, but accurate. A great weapon against the hard-to-kill Headcrabs.

MPS
Rapid fire bullets with an alternative function of grenades that explode on contact. Lethal.

Trip Mine
When attached to a wall it sends out a laser beam that if broken, triggers a huge explosion.

Crossbow
Works under water, but also has a sniper mode for taking out enemies lurking in the distance.

Gauss
An experimental Black Mesa weapon that fires short bursts of energy or a massive one-off blast.



Snark
When released, goes for the nearest human and attacks, but can also turn on its master…

The Hive-Hand
Unleashes stinging alien hornets. Slow firing rate, but great for medium- to long-distance attacks.

Sunny Delight
Sunny Delight
Sunny Delight
Sunny Delight Makes your mouth go mental

Some of the boss characters pose a formidable threat, like this wind god – it'll blow you away!

Different developer, same inane grin. Can Traveller's Tales take Crash to uncharted platform territory, or is the leap to PS2 just too wide for the brave bandicoot?

ON THE DVD

CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX

Still going strong, or is it time for Crash to Jak it in?

Publisher: Vivendi Universal
Developer: Traveller's Tales
Price: £39.99
Players: 1
Out: November
Web site: www.t-tales.com

Back story
Conceived by Naughty Dog back in 1996, *Crash Bandicoot* revolutionised the platform genre with its smooth, addictive gameplay and state-of-the-art graphics that fooled the player into thinking that the game they were playing was in full 3D, even though it wasn't. Two sequels and a spin-off racing game later and *Crash* was tossed from Naughty Dog's kennel. Now Crash is back in familiar platform territory, but without the Dog has he still got the bite ?

"Thank you for purchasing *Crash Version 3.1* for PlayStation 2. This *Crash Bandicoot 3: Warped* update disc features state-of-the-art visuals to fully take advantage of the phenomenal processing power of PS2, whilst still retaining the same easy-to-use engine which made the PSone game the platformer of choice." The truth of the matter is that the wait is over and Crash has finally made the jump from lesser technology to the greatest console known to man – but on the surface of things, it seems this particular leap has proved too far for the platform king.

To be honest, it's easy to see why Naughty Dog severed all ties with its flagship product after *Crash Team Racing*. It knew then what we are only just discovering – that *Crash*, as a concept, has run its course and has now spun his way into a brick wall in terms of new direction.

Whilst Naughty Dog is enjoying its freedom to explore new, *Mario*-esque avenues in PS2 platforming with *Jak And Daxter*, Crash remains boxed into the same corridor confines that have been his trademark. To be fair to Traveller's Tales, a fine job has be done in taking the well-used formula of the three PSone platform games, giving it a bit of spit 'n' polish and putting it onto a PS2 disc, but to be frank, hardened fans expect, and deserve, better.

In *Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath Of Cortex*, Crash's arch nemesis, Dr Neo Cortex is back hatching all kinds of unscrupulous schemes to take over the world. Perhaps his cronies should suggest that if he can't even bump off a dozy bandicoot then he shouldn't persist with his crackpot plans, but whatever. In this adventure he has devised a plan to crush Crash once and for all, by utilising a group of renegade masks with the destructive powers of Air, Earth, Water and Fire.

Your aim, as Crash, is to venture to five different worlds and find these elementals before Cortex. It sounds easy and, if you've played any of the previous games, it is. Very.

You control Crash's destiny from a main control room where you can save and check your progress, plus visit one of five hubs which each house five different stages and a boss battle. Only when you defeat the boss in one hub can you move onto the next, and so on, until finally you must do battle with Cortex himself. Once there, we can only hope you condemn the beardy buffoon to hell forever.

CRASH AND BURN

There's nothing in this game that makes it stand out as being an original or invaluable addition to the series. Crash still has to navigate through the pseudo 3D levels, smashing crates, collecting gems and spinning into enemies. But then anything else just wouldn't be Crash, now would it? It's purely the fact that many of the classic scenarios have been pointlessly regurgitated that make this release feel distinctly cheeky. Everything from the flying levels to the being-chased-by-large-creature levels have been copied and pasted into this game and it's all made worse by the fact that Traveller's Tales hasn't felt the need to explore any new avenues to prolong Crash's lifespan. As such

KNOW YOUR REWARDS

By completing levels in *The Wrath Of Cortex*, you'll be rewarded in four different ways. Here's what sparkling treats await.

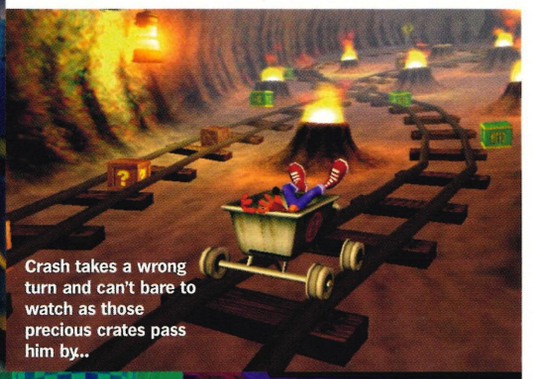
1. Crystals
There's one to be found on every level. In the platform stages you pick them up as you near the end of the level, but in the racing and flying sections you earn them by finishing first or destroying all of your targets.

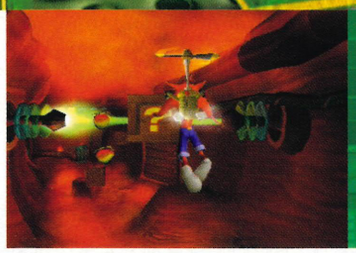
2. Clear Gems
You earn one by smashing every crate on a level – including TNT and Nitro boxes. Most platform levels also have '?' sub-levels which house more perilously placed crates, but be sure to get them all.

3. Coloured Gems
Tricky to obtain as they involve getting to a certain point on the level without dying. These coloured gems later form a sequence of platforms to get further rewards, so be sure to collect them all along the way.

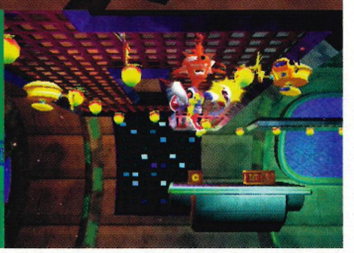
4. Relics
Once you return to a completed level you'll see a stopwatch. Get this and a timer starts ticking so go through the level as fast as possible without dying. Yellow crates can be smashed to stop time for a few seconds. Three different types of Relic can be won.

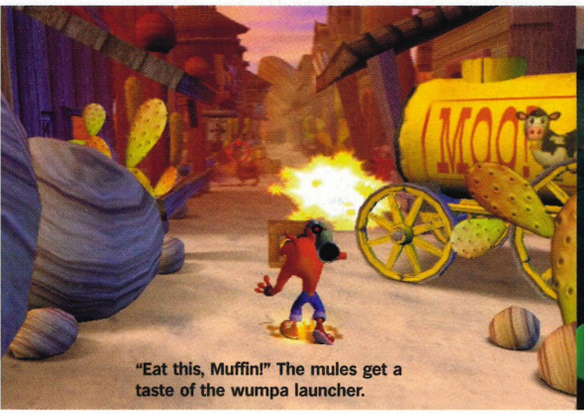
One false move and it's curtains for Crash, so... move... very... slowly...


Crash takes a wrong turn and can't bare to watch as those precious crates pass him by...


Crash's new heli-gadget is a bitch to control so expect deaths aplenty.

X-ray-ted! Step behind the screens in the sci-fi levels to see anorexic Crash.


Another deeply unpopular feature returns – those blasted monkey bars.



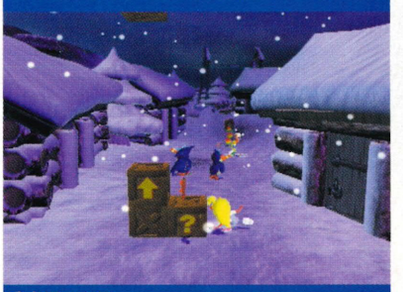
"Eat this, Muffin!" The mules get a taste of the wumpa launcher.

When you reach the penultimate level hub, you will be introduced to a Ripley-style suit. It comes with a built-in wumpa gun for offing baddies.

I SHOULD COCO

Although there have been three previous platform games in the series, *The Wrath Of Cortex* is actually the first that allows you to play as Crash's sister, Coco (as opposed to controlling Pura the tiger upon whose back she rode). Here's what the plucky female can do...

1. Roundhouse
Whereas Crash recklessly spins into things, Coco has a more refined approach, spinning and unleashing a kick-ass kung fu kick. The range is wide for this move, so use it with caution near TNT crates.



2. Leg-sweep
Crash can slide into objects; Coco crouches and flicks a sweeping kick to much the same effect. Unlike Crash's slide, which is a good means of extending a jump, Coco's move is slow and cumbersome.

3. Head-stomp
Crash bounces on enemies with his backside and belly-flops onto industrial strength crates; Coco performs a far more ladylike head-stomp which is both rapid and effective.

//Many of the scenarios have been regurgitated in a way that feels distinctly cheeky//

we must endure those annoying time trials whereby Relics are awarded for completing every level again, in record time, without once dying.

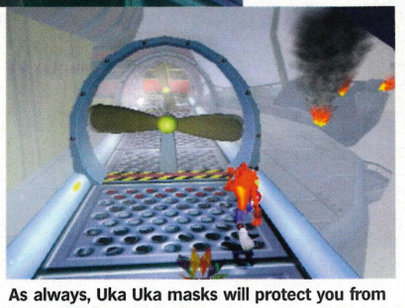
Thankfully, Traveller's Tales has been brave enough to add a few minor features of its own. For example, in some levels, Crash is housed in a ball much like the Atlasphere from *Gladiators*. In this contraption he must shift his weight accordingly to manoeuvre the sphere through the rickety terrain. Painfully hard on the thumbs, these levels are ultimately the stand out moments for sheer panic-playing as you'll constantly be fighting Crash's weight resistance to avoid toppling off a cliff. Elsewhere Crash has a few new modes of transport (mini-sub, jeep, micro-scooter, Ripley-style loading suit) but with no modification to the gameplay to accommodate them, they don't stand out as being anything other than alternatives to vehicles of old.

If the gameplay is disappointing in its reluctance to take Crash anywhere excitingly new, the graphics go some way to reducing the anguish. They are stunning. All new effects and animations impress, as does the way in which the perspective can change anything up to five times during any one level, casting an authoritative next-gen shadow over the proceedings.

But even this picturesque beauty comes at a price, in this case some painful loading times. It's like every level has been created as an entirely separate game and the developer hasn't yet figured out how to link them all together. You must tolerate one mammoth load to leave a level and go back to the warp room, only to stay there approximately two seconds whilst you skip to the next level and suffer another interminable wait. The phrase "I'll just have a quick game of *Crash*" now becomes, "Can I really be arsed to suffer all that loading?"

It's such a shame. What should have been a stunning PlayStation 2 debut is tarnished by an overriding sense of déjà vu. Although this game will still charm the pants off the youngsters, those of us that have grown up with the marauding marsupial will undoubtedly feel like we've seen it all before. ☐ **Ryan Butt**

One of the only genuinely new features of the game is Crash's ability to sneak over nitro crates. To be honest, it adds very little.


As always, Uka Uka masks will protect you from harm, albeit temporarily.

CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Fantastic to look at, but not enough innovations in the gameplay. A missed opportunity by Traveller's Tales to take the aging mascot to new heights of platform nirvana.
– It looks absolutely lush – Instantly accessible to fans and newcomers – Very hard to put down, even though you've seen it all before	– Devoid of any new ideas – Crippled by severe loading times – Not the spectacular leap we were expecting	

Graphics	Crash looks beautiful on PS2	09
Sound	Little has changed in this department	06
Gameplay	As solid as ever, but few surprises	06
Life span	Getting every reward is a labour of love	06

06

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

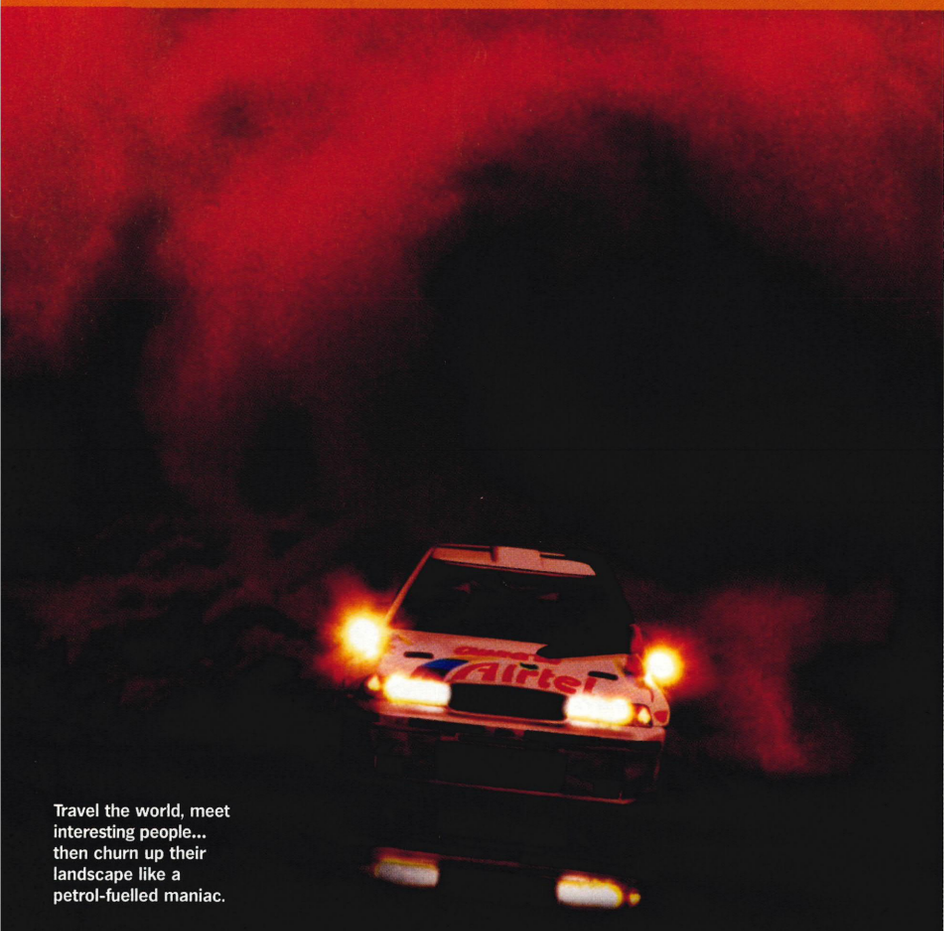
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK SILVER

(Above) Colin McRae aka 'Ford Driver' on familiar turf in the Network Q rally.
(Below) The duo from Subaru. But why is Stephen Gately navigating?

ON THE DVD

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Doing for rallying what Gran Turismo did for touring cars. And then some.



Travel the world, meet interesting people... then churn up their landscape like a petrol-fuelled maniac.

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Evolution Studios
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2
Release date: 30 Nov
Web site: www.wrc.com

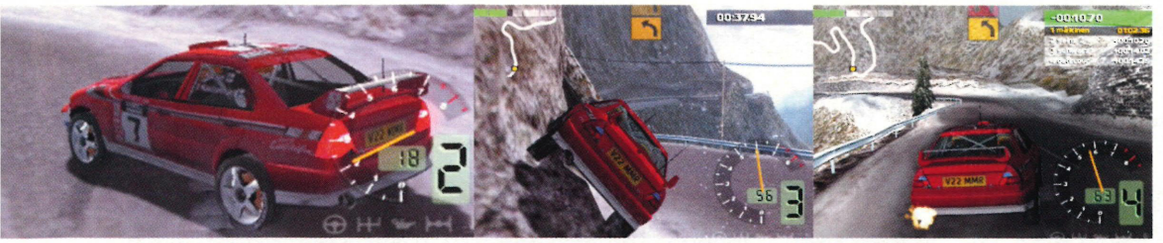
Back story
World Rally Championship is the first game from Evolution Studios, a development house built on the ashes of flight-sim specialist DiD (see page 68 for more on this story). It's the first game to make use of a full WRC licence, so features all the cars and locations from the real-life motorsport.

A recent theory put about on some of the Web's many gaming forums suggests that *Gran Turismo 3* shouldn't be classed as a driving game, but instead as an RPG with cars. More ardent subscribers to this school of thought have gone so far as to make comparisons with Pokémon: just as the battle elements of the Game Boy classic are merely a means to 'catch 'em all', the racing elements of *GT3* are merely a means to amass more cars in your garage.

This theory is, of course, a load of old tripe, insulting the efforts of Kazunori Yamauchi and team in producing a race game that is as exhilarating as it is exhaustive. However, in order to get the most out of *GT3*, you do have to be a bit of a car completist, not averse to spending hours in a virtual garage fiddling with your driveshaft. Many of us love the smell of burning rubber on tarmac, not so many the smell of machine oil on overall.

It's for the seeker of pure, undiluted racing thrills that *World Rally Championship* is designed. The number of cars available is limited to the seven models currently battling for real-world WRC supremacy and there is only one menu for tuning options. Rallying is all about the battle between the driver and the terrain, whether it be desert, snow or mountainside hairpins on icy asphalt.

Rallying may not be racing in the traditional first-past-the-post sense, but it's an infinitely more exciting spectacle than any number of laborious Grand Prixs. Rally tracks are often roughly carved from the landscape, full of imperfections and potential blackspots waiting to snare the



Tommi Makinen in the Mitsubishi Lancer Evo gets to grips with Monte Carlo's mountainous terrain.

Harsh slides around tight corners on gravel result in dramatically realistic plumes of dust.

unprepared or the plain unlucky. Every course, being run on radically differing surfaces in radically differing climates, is a completely new experience. Each stage within each course contains plenty of individual quirks, and each corner, each straight and each crest has its own personality.

World Rally Championship the game recreates this experience more effectively than anyone could have imagined possible. At the wheel, there can be no lapses in concentration. Even if your misjudged right-hand doesn't send you hurtling off a 50 foot cliff, you're going to lose vital seconds and a vital psychological advantage over your opponents. Yes, it's difficult to imagine feeling psychological pressure from CPU opponents that you don't even get to watch race, but the update that flashes in the corner of your screen every time you power through a checkpoint can feel like a physical punch in the stomach, especially when Carlos Sainz – the bastard! – is always ten seconds ahead of you.

Although it's difficult to replicate the test of endurance that is driving for thousand-kilometre stretches across the Kenyan desert, some of the longer stages in the game will actually leave you shattered upon completion. Corners where you can simply ease off the throttle and drift around are rare, if not non-existent. Almost every corner requires you to fight through gear changes as you attempt to brake, turn and accelerate away with the least possible fuss – even if you're driving on automatic. If a corner tightens faster than you expect, or a patch of ice sends you spinning into a barrier, or, like Tommi Makinen in Finland recently, an unseen tree stump wrenches off a front tyre, then tough. Rallying is unforgiving, that's why it's so draining, even in videogame form.

//For the full pant-soiling rally driving experience you should venture in-car//

CRASH AND BURNS

Having said that, *World Rally Championship* does make some understandable concessions. Even if you launch off a precipice, you're returned to the track in three seconds without so much as a popped rib. Vehicle damage is probably the best ever seen in a videogame, with crumples, smashes and scrapes all visibly taking their toll on your dirtying motor, but however crocked it is, you can always limp to the finish line.

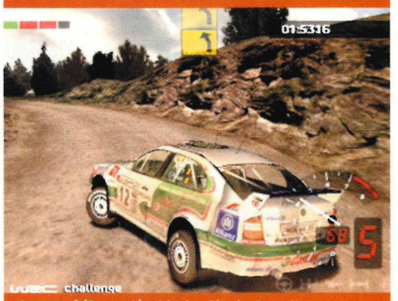
Scotching pre-release rumours of questionable handling put about by clueless *Ridge Racer* fans, the cars steer and manoeuvre as perfectly as you might expect – as long as you're prepared to accept that you'll have to brake for corners! Camera views can make a vast amount of difference to the way you approach a race. The chase cam is the obvious choice, allowing you to get some perspective on your landscape and see when a nice flat straight is unfolding in front of you. Obviously this isn't how a real rally driver views the action, so for the full pant-soiling experience you should venture in-car.

LICENCE TO SKILL

Europe's best *World Rally Championship* players could be in line to win a trip to Cyprus by gaining their licence to race in a virtual rally.

Following the success of the online time trial competition for *Formula One 2001*, SCEE has decided to organise a similar contest in conjunction with *World Rally Championship* and the attendant Web site at www.wrc.com. First off, you're required to gain your World Rally Licence by completing three stages from different rallies within a certain time limit:

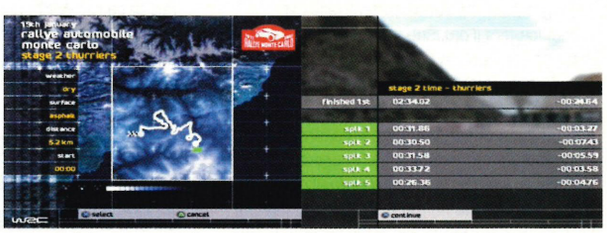
Catalunya (Stage 1) with the Hyundai Accent



Portugal (Stage 2) with the Skoda Octavia

Sweden (Stage 3) with the Citroën Xsara

Although you're only offered one of the less fashionable cars for each stage, the courses are relatively straightforward and qualification isn't too taxing. After registering with www.wrc.com, you'll be given a code to unlock the first of the virtual *WRC Rally Challenges*, due to coincide with 2002's first rally in Monte Carlo (17-21 Jan). Fast times can be logged into a high-score table on the Web site, with three more virtual *WRC* Rally Challenges taking place before the end of February. European winners will then be offered the chance to attend the rally of Cyprus in March to compete for the European *WRC* PS2 crown and an extra-special prize.
For more details, check out the leaflet that comes packaged with the game, and visit www.wrc.com



A map of the course before you race gives you an idea of how many treacherous turns you'll face. Timewise, green is always good.

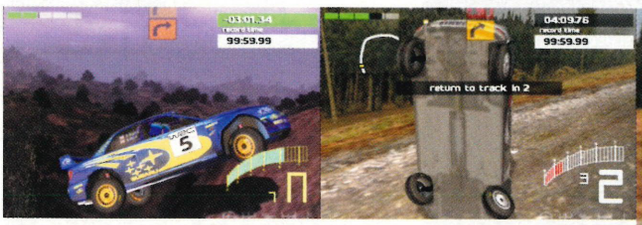
Intro movies before each rally show how the pros cope.

SUPER SPECIAL GREAT

Try out some of the much-loved special and super special stages in *WRC*'s unusual split-screen mode.

A popular feature of the real-life World Rally Championship are the special stages and the purpose-built super special stages where two drivers race head-to-head, either on the same track or on dual-circuit tracks to get the best times. Ten stages are available for you to race against a mate in *WRC*'s split-screen Multiplayer mode. These special stages are based in Monte Carlo, Argentina, Safari, Corsica and Italy, while the super specials are based on the actual famous circuits from Australia, Sweden, New Zealand, Portugal and the UK.

Intriguingly, you only get to view your opponent as a ghost car with which you can't collide, a feature intended to allow you to view the track properly and concentrate on your own race. However, this does dilute the cut-and-thrust element of head-to-head racing and therefore the Multiplayer mode has to go down as a mild disappointment.



Wipeouts never mean instant retirement, but your car will be damaged.

Replays look scarily like TV coverage.

THANK Q

There's only one rally left in 2001 and that's the Network Q rally of Great Britain, staged near Cardiff on November 22-25. Could it be the title decider?

On 8 October, the Sanremo rally was won by Tarmac specialist Gilles Panazzi in the Peugeot 206. Makinen didn't finish while McRae trundled home outside the points, so out of the four title contenders, only Carlos Sainz, finishing fourth, improved his position. That means, at the time of writing, the drivers' championship looked like this:

Tommi Makinen 40
Colin McRae 40
Carlos Sainz 33
Richard Burns 31

By the time you read this, the rallies of Corsica and Australia will have been completed, setting up a grandstand finish for Great Britain. The stage appears to be set for three-times rally of Great Britain winner McRae, but Burns also fancies his chances on home turf. Despite teething problems with the new Lancer in Sanremo, you can never rule out four-time WRC champion Tommi Makinen.
For more details on the rally of Great Britain, visit www.network-q.co.uk

It all seems that much faster and your co-driver's instructions need to be heeded instantly, but you often feel a little more in control of your drifts.

Evolution Studios head honcho Martin Kenwright personally recommends playing the game with the official GT Force steering wheel, but this really depends on how well you get on with steering wheel peripherals in general. If in doubt, the Analogue sticks on your regular Dual Shock 2 do an excellent job.

SAINZ AND SINNERS

World Rally Championship is probably the best advert the unfairly maligned motorsport has ever had. The full WRC licence is used appropriately, with all the displays matching the FIA's own, so what you see on screen closely resembles TV coverage. There's a little promo video for each rally that emphasises just how realistic the game's Replay mode can be. Importantly, you can also learn from the way the pros attack a particular type of corner by comparing video footage to the replays of your own runs.

Input from the seven current rally car manufacturers (Ford, Subaru, Citroën, Mitsubishi, Peugeot, Hyundai and Skoda) has been invaluable. You might be hard-pressed to feel the difference between some of the models but this puts more emphasis on driver skill than superiority of construction. You may find the Peugeot 206 faster on tarmac and the Impreza marginally more stable on gravel while the Focus is probably the best all-rounder, but this is really up to personal aesthetic preference.

Whereas in *GT3* the cars are the stars, here the courses are king. A quick spin around the opening stage at Monte Carlo immediately reveals the scope of Evolution's ambition. High on a mountain top, you can see the track stretching into the distance. This is no static background illusion – everything you can see exists in 3D.

What *Colin McRae Rally 2.0* could never demonstrate was the gradient that drivers contend with in some rallies, in addition to tight corners, narrow roads and uneven terrain. The Monte Carlo tracks wind up and down mountain sides, straining horsepower and nerves to the limit. After Monaco, the snow of Sweden couldn't be more different, or could the dusty outcrops of Portugal after that, or the searing tarmac of Catalunya after that... you get the picture.

There are 14 rallies in the *WRC* and here each consists of five stages. When added to multiplayer stages this makes for around 80 stages in total, all entirely unique, stretching over 500km end-to-end. When you consider that the majority of developers believe 12 tracks to be generous for a racing game, *WRC*'s achievement is colossal. Feel free to write in and contest, but we reckon *WRC* must have more than twice as much distance of original track than any other game in history.

//The tracks wind up and down mountain sides straining horse-power to the limit//

Agreed, Evolution has been able to spend time on fashioning its many spectacular courses because it was unburdened by the need to develop AI for rival cars. *WRC* can't offer you the thrill of overtaking on the final bend, but you've got to pay your money and take your choice. Not even *GT3*'s AI is perfect – CPU cars still seem to conform to something of a predictable pattern. Do you want the (often transparent) illusion of a head-to-head contest or the very real struggle between you and the track?

The variety of terrain to be conquered with the same car, requiring strength, speed, agility and versatility, makes rallying arguably the ultimate motorsport. *World Rally Championship* truly understands the essential dynamics of rallying, and what makes it a more exciting and involving discipline than F1 or any circuit-based race for that matter. Finally, the PS2 has delivered a realistic racing game with balls. ☐ **Sam Richards**

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

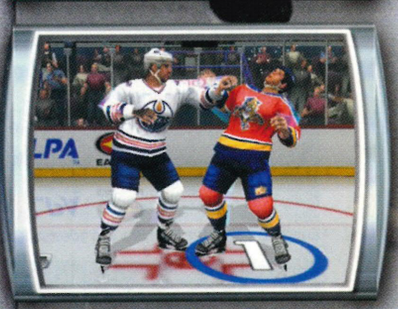
Why we'd buy it:	**Why we'd leave it:**	***WRC* is an amazingly immersive driving simulation but you don't have to be a petrolhead in order to enjoy it. An essential purchase for every racing fan.**
- Frighteningly realistic - 500km of varied terrain to race - Brilliant antidote to unimaginative F1 sims	- It's not much good if you dislike rallying	

Graphics	As good as *GT3* with more variety	10
Sound	Accurate engine noise and six licensed tunes	08
Gameplay	Powerful feel of raw, rugged racing	09
Life span	80 stages, 500km of track	09

09

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

MIDWAY
www.midway.com

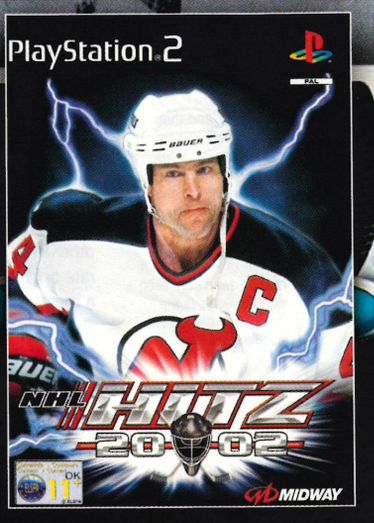


WE KNOW HITZ.

NHL HITZ 20-02

Heads Up. The first adrenaline-style hockey game is here. Only NHL Hitz 20-02 delivers intense action from the NHL's experts of impact. Feel the crushing checks and super-sonic slapshots as eye-popping next-generation graphics bring teams, super-charged players and fantasy arenas to unparalled brilliance. With hits this hard, you won't need a ref to get ejected from the ice.

GAME PREVIEW AT WWW.NHLHITZ.MIDWAY.COM



PlayStation.2

NHLPA

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England's saviour lines up a trademark free kick. With their accurate stats, players like Becks and Rivaldo are deadly from here.

Now there's full analogue control over the shooting, precision stick positioning is vital.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER

Football has come home. Chant yourselves silly for the Best Footy Game Ever™.

Publisher: Konami
Developer: KCE Tokyo
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-8
Release: 16 Nov
Web site: www.konami-europe.com

Back story

Okay, now pay attention 'cos there's a quiz later. KCET's *ISS Pro Evolution* on the PSone was the best football game available, closely followed by KCEO's more arcade-style *ISS* for N64. KCEO continued in the arcade vein with its PS2 version of *ISS* and then earlier this year KCET produced the PS2's true successor to *ISS Pro Evolution*, entitled *Winning Eleven 5*. Finally released over here with a few changes and the new monicker of *Pro Evolution Soccer* to avoid confusion – yeah, right – this is the greatest footy game yet seen. Right, got all that?

There's a simple reason why football is the greatest, most popular sport on the planet and that's the game's pure, joyful simplicity. Yes, you can confuse matters with the offside rule and so on, but at its heart this is a game involving nothing more complicated than the placement of a ball in an opponent's goal while defending your own. KCET, the developer of *Pro Evolution Soccer*, obviously understands this simplicity and that's why the team has created the best football game ever made.

PES doesn't try and win you over with bombastic intros accompanied by chart-topping music. It doesn't fill the menu screen with more options than you know what to do with. And its gameplay isn't light-speed idiocy with so many possible button combinations you'd need to be an octopus with the fingering skills of Liberace to fully appreciate it. *Pro Evolution Soccer* doesn't do any of that. Instead, it simply and quite magnificently recreates the beautiful game on your PlayStation 2.

PES captures the *feel* of football almost perfectly. As every under-achieving midfield stroller will tell you, pace is vitally important and where other footy games either amble along at a boring rate or go so damn quickly it's impossible to play a measured game, like that baby bear's porridge, *Pro Evolution Soccer* gets it just right. The matches unfold at an expertly-balanced pace with nippy players like Giggs and Owen quite rightly leaving most lumbering centre backs in their wake and no matter who you're controlling, when you need an extra burst of speed you can just hold the sprint button (over-use it though and your man will soon be huffing and puffing in exhaustion). Equally, the number of available moves lends itself to an intuitive game of footy. Tap ⊗ for a short pass or foot-in tackle, ○ to hit a long pass or perform a sliding tackle, □ shoots, △ slips in a through ball, R1 sprints, R2 enables close-control and L1 changes the player you're in command of. Throw in a few bonus skills like the step-over (tap L1 twice), the lob (L1+□) and the one-two (L1+⊗ then △) and you have a rota that is both instantly accessible and thorough enough to ensure those who put the practise in will be dribbling, dummying, lobbing the keeper and generally larging it over less-accomplished players, à la Maradona in the 1986 World Cup.

//It simply and quite magnificently recreates the beautiful game on your PlayStation 2//

The flow of the game is also superbly realistic. Unlike the *FIFA* games where you can embark on a mad rush down the pitch, enter the box on the diagonal and score every time from the same trusty sweet spot, if you try headless chicken-style play in *Pro Evolution Soccer* you'll be 5-0 down by half-time. At first you'll find it difficult to keep possession and get on the score sheet, but the trick is to approach it as you would an actual football match and forget all the usual moves that bring success in videogames. Here, as in real football, results have to be earned. Play a passing

TEAMS OF THE CENTURY

By winning various international tournaments in *Pro Evolution Soccer*, there are five classic sides to unlock full of legendary players from football history (all with daft, jumbled names, naturally). Here are three of the teams, we'll let you discover the others yourselves.

1. Classic Brazil: Win the American Cup playing as Brazil to get this fantastic team. With players like Pele, Zico, Garrincha and Careca available up front, the attacking skill of this side is frightening.

2. Classic Netherlands: Lift the European Cup as the Netherlands to get their total footballing predecessors. Van Basten, Cruyff and Gullit in attack, Rijkaard and Koeman in defence. Stunning.

3. Euro Classic: Win the European Cup with either England, Italy or Yugoslavia to unlock this team of Euro all-stars. Best, Charlton, Cantona, Platini, Zoff, Baresi, Moore – you won't know who to leave out.

As in real-life, the refs don't always get it right, with hideous professional fouls sometimes going unpunished.

Most of the players look uncannily like the real things. That said, some haircuts are a bit out of date...

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE CHEEKY

There are numerous goal-scoring methods in *Pro Evolution Soccer*, indeed, just about everything you can do in real football you can also do in the game. Here are three of the more frequent methods of finding the back of the net.

1. The Good: The classic *ISS* goal-scoring technique. Play the ball up to your front two, run at the defence and as one marker comes out to meet you, your attacking partner will find himself in space. Quickly hit the through ball and you'll be one-on-one with the keeper. Remain composed and slide a shot past him to get on the score sheet.

2. The Bad: A hideous flaw left over from the PSone versions. With free kicks right on the edge of the box you can still hit a short pass that will go straight to one of your – totally unmarked – players, leaving you with time and space to pick your spot. Unsatisfying if you score from it, incredibly annoying when it's used against you.

3. The Cheeky: You're through on goal, the keeper rushes out to narrow the angle. Attempt a shot either side of him and if he guesses correctly, the goalie will save and a golden opportunity will have been wasted. What do you do? Well, if you've got the skill then press L1+○ and hit a cheeky lob over the goalie and into the unguarded net. Magic.

game, move into space, sprint only when a gap appears and always stay patient and you'll soon find yourself in goal-scoring positions.

THE NAME OF THE GAME

Of course, this brilliance has always been evident in the *ISS* series and yet the games have continually been outsold by EA's inferior *FIFA* franchise. Some of this can be attributed to EA's constant TV and print advertising. *FIFA* also sells more because it's easier to play, choosing accessibilty over complexity. But the main reason behind *FIFA*'s success is its trappings – the real strips/stadiums/teams/players that the FIFA licence brings. It looks like the real thing, basically.

Unfortunately, *PES* loses out once again in this crucial presentation department. For the first time it does have an official FIFPro licence but this only applies to 29 nations and means all the South American countries and a few European ones are lumbered with jumbled up player names – Batistuta becomes Butatista, Giggs is now Gregs and Roberto Carlos is Roberto Larcos. Admittedly, it's a minor fault – and the player names can be edited if you really want to go to all that trouble – but in a game that oozes realism in every other department this lack of authenticity is bound to annoy a few football-mad punters.

Perhaps a more serious problem is the shortage of club sides in *Pro Evolution Soccer*. Where *FIFA* offers just about every major league in the world, *PES* has just 32 club teams and while most of the big boys are there – Milan, Barcelona, Real Madrid, Bayern Munich and seven Premiership sides including Man U, Leeds and Liverpool – anyone who supports a team that isn't available will be more than a little disappointed.

Ignore these presentation faults though, and *Pro Evolution Soccer* hammers the *FIFA* series and every other football game into non-league obscurity. In fact, the only title that can even begin to compete with it is *Winning Eleven 5* – the Japanese version of the game. Both iterations have been *OPS2* office favourites for months now and opinion is divided as to which is best.

Close control has been altered in *PES* so that each player no longer has a perfect first touch. And while that's good in theory, in practice the number of times you lose possession because of dodgy control is a bit too high. Player movement has also been changed slightly and is no longer quite so impressive: there appears to be added momentum which occasionally results in your player out-running the ball and skidding like Bambi on ice when you try and make a sharp turn.

On the other hand, where *Winning Eleven 5* seemed to provide CPU assistance with passing and shooting, *Pro Evolution Soccer* doesn't interfere in the slightest. If a long pass sails into the stand then it's entirely your fault. Equally, if you hit a 25 yard blockbuster that curls into the top left corner it's because you timed and aimed the shot to perfection, not because the computer guided the ball there.

For our money, this complete control over every aspect of the football makes *Pro Evolution Soccer* superior to its Japanese cousin and, as such, it's the best footy game you can buy. We could go on and on about all the different things you can do and how authentic it is but until you actually get your hands on the game, you won't believe quite how much *Pro Evolution Soccer* looks, plays and feels like real football. If you love football – and if you don't, why the hell not? – then to paraphrase Mr Keegan, you'll love it, *love it*, when you play *Pro Evolution Soccer*. □ **Lee Hart**

"Beckenbauer, Claudia Schiffer, Beethoven, Kaiser Willhelm III, can you hear me?! Your boys took one hell of a beating!"

The two methods of defending: (Top) The risky sliding tackle. (Above) The calm, classy, foot-in.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Realistic, fun and utterly addictive, this is the new benchmark in videogame football. Up there with *GT3* as the best reason to own a PS2.
- It's the best football game ever made - Incredibly realistic gameplay and visuals - Rewards practise more than any other game	- Occasionally frustrates with dodgy first touch, bobbling ball and too much sprint momentum - Still has some fake player and club names	

Graphics	Superb visuals and motion-captured animation	08
Sound	Laughably bad commentary but great effects	07
Gameplay	Astonishingly, it actually *feels* like football	09
Life span	A game you'll never ever tire of playing	10

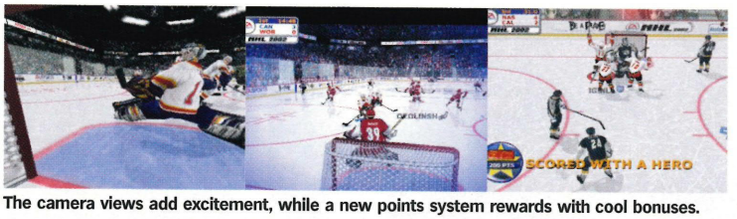
09

PlayStation.2 VERDICT

NHL 2002

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK BRONZE

The presentation, gameplay and graphics are some of the best we've seen in a sports game.



The camera views add excitement, while a new points system rewards with cool bonuses.

Hit him! Player fights result in a broken gob and a visit to the sin bin.

NHL 2002

EA Sports delivers a cool PS2 hockey sequel that will melt your heart.

Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Sports (Canada)
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2
Out: Now
Web site: nhl2002.ea.com/

Back story

NHL 2002 is the sequel to *NHL 2001* released last year, which was one of the first great sports games on PS2 (*OPS2* #02, 8/10). EA began its domination of the sport at the beginning of the last decade with *NHL '93* on the Sega MegaDrive moving onto the PSone with *NHL Face Off '97*. The much-respected EA Sports Canada development team is behind the latest incarnation again.

Last season's *NHL* on PS2 was an ice hockey extravaganza, featuring true next-gen graphics and fast easy-to-get-into action. A new remix has inevitably appeared, but EA Sports has decided, quite wisely, to freeze everything that made the original game so enjoyable, while melting the eyes with sparkling new presentation and extra features.

Fans can now further indulge their sporting obsession in a Career mode that is spread over ten seasons with all 30 NHL teams and 20 International squads, as well as being able to design their own odd-looking stars in the Create-A-Player mode (see Local Hero). Graphics have been given an expensive-looking makeover with smoother animation for speedier gameplay and more realistic player faces, while the occasional slowdown that affected *NHL 2001* has been banished to the sin bin.

The TV-style coverage is better than before, with a unique 'Game Story' recap showing exciting events such as a team's early domination, plus a clever 'Breakaway Cam' gives a unique eye-level perspective of an athlete's one-on-one with an opposition goalie, complete with hazy adrenaline-pumping visuals and heartbeat sound effects. Instant replays of major pieces of action are cut seamlessly into game, so that a great save from the goalie is shown in dramatic multi-angled vignettes. With one eye on EA's tendency for looks over gameplay (hello recent *FIFA*s on PSone), it was a worry that any improvement in presentation for *NHL 2002* would overshadow changes in how it played. Not so. The frantic passing and movement combined with the brutal tackles and slap shot goals captures the excitement of NHL in a way that has never happened before.

However, the main addition to *NHL 2002* is the NHL cards. An icy version of the Madden cards to be found in EA Sports' *Madden NFL 2002*, these are bought in packs with points that you earn by completing *Tony Hawk's*-style tasks, such as scoring a hat-trick winning ten face-offs in a single period. Bringing back memories of Panini football sticker albums, these NHL cards mainly feature a sportsman and endless stats and figures on their career, but others can also unlock special player celebrations, cheats and 'Easter Egg' bonuses.

NHL 2002 is great fun for absolute beginners right through to obsessive fans who will want to fiddle around with a team's formation during a match. There's an overwhelming amount of options, allowing gamers to customise their own player celebrations and through a set of special sliders, select how easy or difficult you want to make the hockey opposition. *NHL 2002* is also one of the funniest two-player games you can thrash on PS2, especially when the fists start flying in the comical player scraps that almost qualify as a beat-'em-up mini-game.

Bursting at the seams with top drawer presentation, punishing tackles, intuitive passing, spectacular goals and some of the most impressive commentary heard in a videogame, *NHL 2002*'s improvements make a great game even better. ☐ **Jamie Sefton**

Passing and shooting is beautifully fluid, but tackles can be brutal.

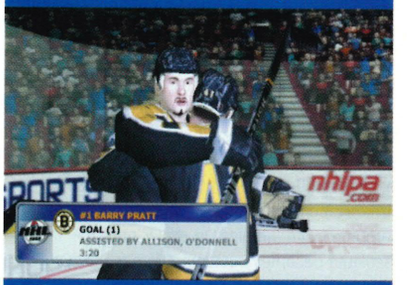
"I can't watch any more..." A 3D crowd reacts to the puckin' action.

LOCAL HERO

Witness the birth of a new sporting superstar with *NHL 2002*'s Create-A-Player mode

1. The face
Start by choosing your star player's eyes, nose, mouth, skin tone and beard type and then, from a wealth of stats on the next pages, you can add a name, birthplace, weight, height and playing style.

2. The game
And dream forward Barry Pratt is born! Once you've chosen a team for the plucky chap, the game automatically places him in the starting line-up.



3. The stats
He shoots... he scores! From zero to hero – the fat, 50-year-old ice hockey veteran from Pontefract does the UK proud and slots home his first goal for the Boston Bruins.

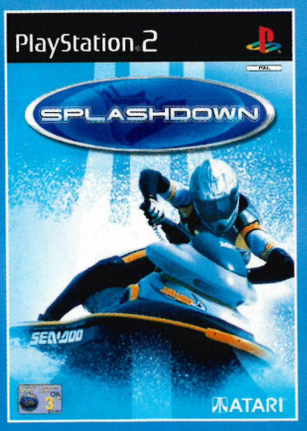
NHL 2002

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	The definitive ice hockey videogame. Hugely playable, with fantastic graphics and a cool collection of extras that make it a must-buy for NHL addicts.
- Extremely playable - Fabulous TV-style presentation - Addictive NHL card collectables	- If you have *NHL 2001* and can't afford splashing out another forty quid	

Graphics	Detailed players and superb presentation	09
Sound	Atmospheric crowd and excellent commentary	09
Gameplay	Smoothly, great depth and exciting matches	08
Life span	Multiplayer games will keep you coming back	08

08

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT



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"The Gran Turismo of water racing games." P2

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Featuring ultra realistic wave effects and graphics, Splashdown is a racing game unlike any other. Fire up your machine and take on the challenge of negotiating fearsomely testing courses, at death defying speeds in exotic locations across the globe.

Stunning ultra-realistic graphics - 18 race locations from Hawaii to Australia.
8 riders from around the world - Two player split screen - 30 bone crushing tricks.

PlayStation 2

ATARI

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THE WORLD NEEDS A HERO AND THERE IS ONLY ONE MAN FOR THE JOB.

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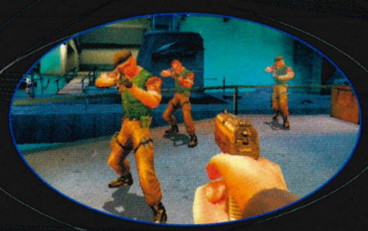

An original, suspense-filled storyline.

Turbo-charged supercars.

Astonishing cutting-edge technology.

PlayStation 2

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Metro Goldwyn Mayer TRADE MARK MGM INTERACTIVE

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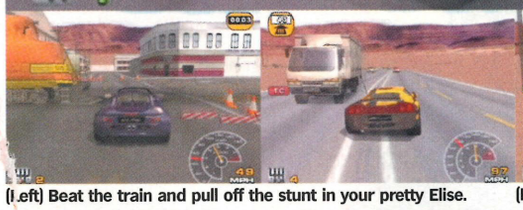
WWW.007.EA.COM WWW.EAGAMES.COM

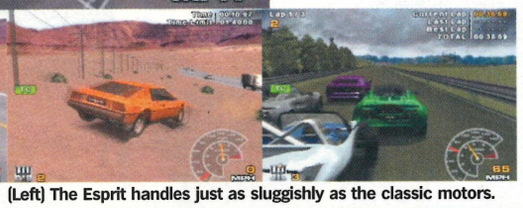
Your Elise can sustain heaps of damage, but don't scrape the paintwork...

The only way to be victorious is by shunting other cars off course.

Player Two lines up a classic multiplayer spin out...



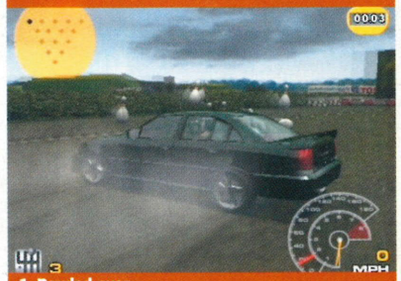
(Left) Beat the train and pull off the stunt in your pretty Elise.



(Left) The Esprit handles just as sluggishly as the classic motors.

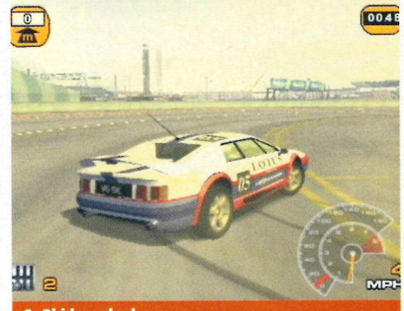
ELISE-Y RIDER

In a *Crazy Taxi* Crazy Box-style, use your powerful motor for these mini-games.



1. Bowled over
Start off by knocking six pins to knock over by hitting them head on. By the time you need to scatter 21 pins you'll have to spin into them.

2. Penalty kicked
Take five penalties, then play as the 'keeper in Rome's Olympic Stadium. A bizarre sub-game, especially considering it's virtually impossible to beat the computer.



3. Skid marked
Simply keep the tyres spinning and the rubber burning for as long as you can. Unfortunately you can only skid for ten metres before you're forced to move on.

LOTUS CHALLENGE

Think Lotus. Think speed, power and finesse. Think again...

Publisher: Virgin Interactive
Developer: Kuju Interactive
Price: £39.99
Players: 2
Out: November
Web site: www.lotuschallenge.com

Back story
This licence has nothing to do with the early Amiga/PC classic *Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge II*. Instead it is brought to us by UK developer Kuju Interactive, the folks behind the PC's *Microsoft Train Simulator*.

Whether you're the type to drool at the sight of fast shiny cars or not, you will know that the name Lotus is synonymous with pure class and raw pace. It's no surprise, then, that this symbol of motoring elegance would soon be represented in a game of its own. Virgin has scooped the licence for *Lotus Challenge* and with it the rights to reproduce all the company's dream machines. A sure-fire winner then? Or so you'd think.

Sadly, the game is a non-starter. In fact it stinks more than a dodgy catalytic converter on a hot day. Why? *Lotus Challenge* is so painfully slow that it feels more like a Sunday driving sim than a high-octane thrill. The first championship throws you behind the wheel of a classic Lotus Seven S1 in the English countryside with commendable tweeting birds and a beautiful undulating track, but the pace is sadly somewhat pedestrian. Next stop London, and while the view of Buckingham Palace is impressive, who wants to trudge along so slowly they can see what colour mixer the Queen Mum's slipping in her afternoon gin?

Even when you move on to the modern, 'faster' cars the sense of speed doesn't improve. The handling is bizarre too, the car's turning feels much like a milk float and you'll need to dab the handbrake to get around most corners. Worse still, the absence of a road map may test your driving, but it means you're totally unaware of your rivals' locations which becomes dull. Unfortunately nice looking cars and pretty settings don't compensate for fundamentally flawed gameplay.

Lotus Challenge, however, is a game of two halves, with Stunt and Challenge modes chucked in to add variety. Some of the ideas are pretty good – drive a woman in labour to hospital or perform Hollywood stunts, for instance – but the handling is still poor, the crash physics are terrible while the race against time feels more like a turtle's morning jog.

When you undertake the manoeuvres test to unlock the stunt challenges you have to use manual gears. Sadly reaching 70mph, spinning 180°, shifting down the gears and driving backwards without dropping below 60mph is both tricky and unrewarding. And if the manual gears prove awkward, the normal controls aren't much better. The automatic gear system works much like that of bus climbing a steep hill, complete with that irritating whir of wasted power.

The two-player mode is uninspiring and the fact you can play as a man or woman is irrelevant. The only glimmers of fun are the bonus events in which you undertake varied challenges (see Elise-y Rider) but it's just not enough to rescue the game. Assuming the developers' hands were tied by Lotus (which is often the case when image-conscious motor manufacturers dish out licences), gamers would be far better served with lookalike unofficial motors that handled well. If you want the real thing, check out www.lotuscars.com but if it's a real challenge you're after, buy *Burnout* instead. There's no challenge here. ☐ **Lee Hall**

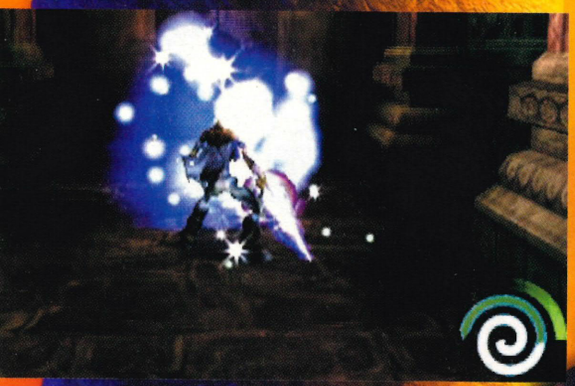
LOTUS CHALLENGE

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	On first glance this certainly looks like a driving game, but closer inspection reveals there's little in the way of fun gameplay, and a total lack of racing action.
- You're a Lotus fan - There's a bit of variety - A few fun challenges	- So slow it hurts - Good ideas are undermined by poor physics and handling - Not a thrill in sight	

Graphics	Pretty backdrops and nice looking cars	07
Sound	The odd nice effect, passable vehicle noises	06
Gameplay	No sense of speed or competition	03
Life span	Plenty to do, but we doubt you'll bother	05

05

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT



Don't pick a fight with our Raziel – he's rock hard.

The complex and tormented Raziel reflects on his dual-plane life.

EVERYTHING IN PLANE VIEW

Better puzzles were promised for *Soul Reaver 2*, but they're still of the put-this-object-here-to-unlock-this-door type.

1. Bite me
That's a rather unusual shield that chap's got. Stab him a few times and it's yours. But what do you do with it now?

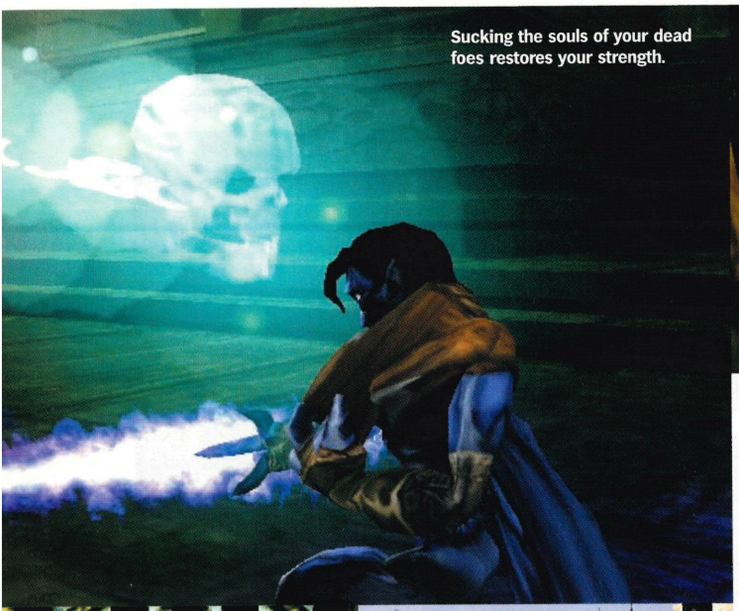
2. Hole in one
Well, would you credit it – that purple shield fits in the purple-outlined hole in the doorway just by where he died.

3. Mmm... shiny
Now we're in the room, that mirror looks like it needs to be removed and put somewhere else. How taxing...

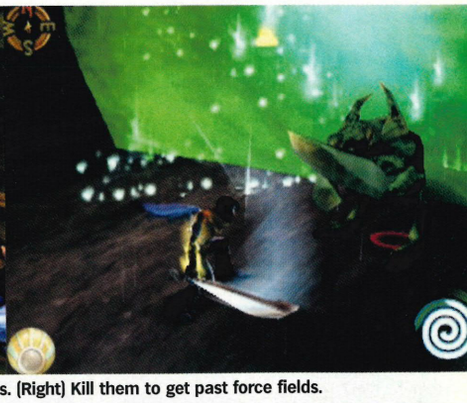
4. Hot grille
We've exhausted all the other possibilities. We just have to get through this gate somehow – but there's no handle.

5. Plane sailing
Let's have a look from the spiritual angle by shifting planes using our special ability. Hmm, doesn't look too different.

6. Quo vadis
However, if we press ourselves against the grille, we start to pass through it. It's a bit spooky actually.



Sucking the souls of your dead foes restores your strength.



(Left) The monsters get more bizarre the further you progress. (Right) Kill them to get past force fields.

BEAT-'EM-UP

Never has fighting been so enjoyable – Raz has a field day.

Combat in *Soul Reaver 2* is a pleasingly complex affair, that's almost a game in its own right. Holding R1 autofaces your opponent, tapping L1 will block. Combine ⊗ with any of the directional arrows to dodge out of harm's way. Tapping ▢ unleashes a sequence of blows, tapping Ⓐ metes out blows that are more likely to be countered. Other buttons can be used to make up combos, such as L2 which makes Raziel crouch.

SOUL REAVER 2

Darkly gothic goings-on in a sumptuous 3D world? Eat my soul.

Publisher: Eidos Interactive
Developer: Crystal Dynamics
Price: £44.99
Players: 1
Out: November
Web site: www.eidosinteractive.co.uk/games

Back story

Soul Reaver 2 is, rather strangely, the third game in the series. The first two, *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain* and *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* were big hits on the PlayStation, PC and Dreamcast with *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* selling over 1.4 million copies worldwide. The games are all set in Nosgoth, a fictional realm where vampires and humans struggle for power.

Michael Moorcock is a UK fantasy author who – for a short time in the late Sixties – was perceived in rather the same glamorous light that Irvine Welsh enjoyed at the end of the Nineties. He was the next big thing and the real deal all rolled into one; hip and outrageous, sexy and very rock 'n' roll. He wrote novels, he performed with rock outfit Hawkwind, he was cool. We mention him here because the themes of his most famous works, the *Eternal Champion* novels, are almost exactly those of *Soul Reaver*.

In Moorcock's stories heroes are singled out against their will to fight in epic conflicts. They are pitted unwittingly into battles between the forces of Chaos and Law with the object of restoring the balance between the two – and thus harmony to the multiverse. Moorcock's most enduring creation was the noble albino sorcerer Elric who wielded a sword called Stormbringer that ate souls. Not a million miles from the hero of this game.

Soul Reaver could be a lost book by the bearded master of bachelor fiction himself. In it you take on the role of fallen vampire knight Raziel, reluctant pawn in the struggle between humans and vampires. You're armed only with your courage, the ability to shift between the Physical and Spiritual Planes, a regenerative capability and a huge soul-absorbing sword (the Soul Reaver of the title). Your mission is to restore the natural order of things after two arch-meddlers Moebius and Kain (human and vampire respectively) have meddled with the very flow of time itself.

What this actually entails is, naturally enough, a large slice of 3D platforming action. Raziel can jump, swim, run around and even glide a little with his stubby wings. Success involves solving puzzles of a fairly standard nature familiar to anyone who's ever played *Tomb Raider*, and either defeating or, more often, running past a diverse crew of monstrous opponents. The puzzles are satisfyingly straightforward – hard enough to make you think, but not so hard that you can't resolve them fairly fluidly. The combat is great, pitching you into fights with sword-wielding knights and dimension-hopping demons (see Beat-'Em-Up for more on how combat works). Your quest takes you to a variety of beautifully-realised locations from towering medieval fortresses to Aztec-style shrines, all set in the mystical realm of Nosgoth. As the tale unfolds you'll get to do a lot of travelling, and some of it in the 4th dimension too, as you skip backwards and forwards through time attempting to uncover the mysteries of this unusual land.

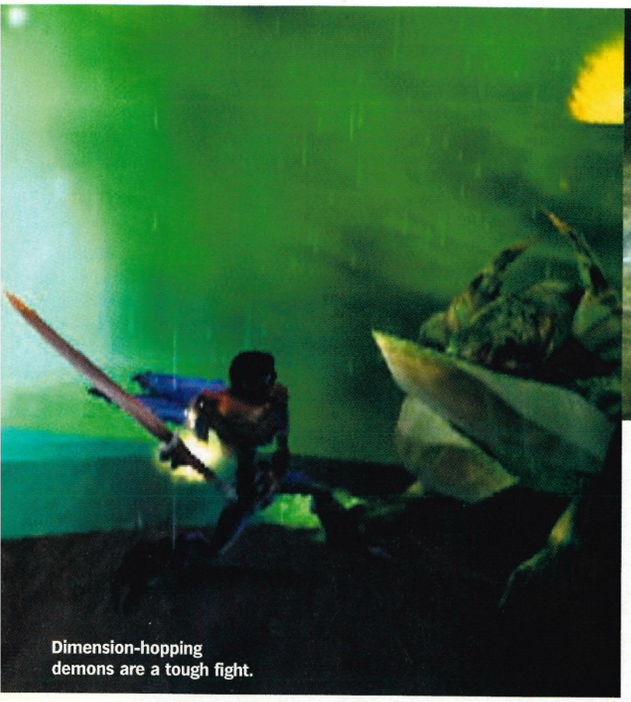
Seeing Nosgoth in many eras is entertaining, and fans of the previous games will be pleased that many of the characters and stories first illuminated in the PSone outings are further explored here. There's also quite a bit of scope for *Zelda*-style exploration as previously inaccessible regions and paths open up with the passage of time. As you travel, the story line unfolds via a series of set-piece FMVs – reach a particular location and a film kicks in. The story is rich and complex, and we wouldn't dream of spoiling it for you any more than we already have. It's well-told and well-acted in baroque, fruity language but it can also become somewhat tedious. Some FMV sequences last for ten minutes or so, consisting entirely of the two main characters, Raziel and Kain, philosophising endlessly about their destinies, or talking about life, death, demons and free will, making it feel rather more like a particularly depressing episode of *EastEnders* than an action/adventure game.

//Combat pitches you against sword-wielding knights and dimension-hopping demons//

THE SOUL WITHIN

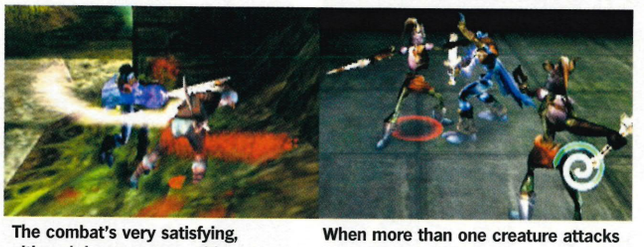
Ironically for a game that sets itself the laudably deep goal of examining the concept of free will, *Soul Reaver 2* runs on rather limiting rails. In common with all of Crystal Dynamics' offerings, the emphasis is on character development, atmosphere and plot above the ability to go where you choose and do what you want.

Whether this works for you depends on what kinds of games you enjoy, but you may find yourself frustrated by the lack of decision-making opportunities. Even the next location you must visit is predetermined, so for all the undeniable scope and size of the world, there's no opportunity to go off the rails for a while and – say – enjoy an evening of soul-sucking high-jinks in a local village.



Dimension-hopping demons are a tough fight.

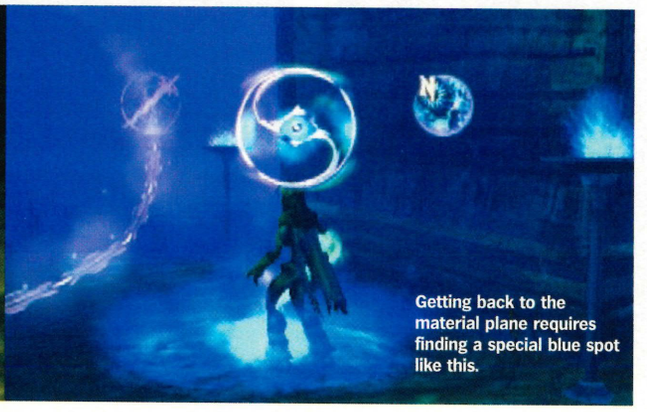
There's a great variety of weapons to be picked up.



The combat's very satisfying, although it can get repetitive.

When more than one creature attacks life gets very difficult.

The blood of thousands will be on your hands by the end.



Getting back to the material plane requires finding a special blue spot like this.

Using your sword, the Soul Reaver, you can unlock various mysterious sites dotted around the map.

The size of the world can be a problem, too. The game drags you back and forth across the map, using and re-using the same locations over and over again. Although they're gorgeously realised, you tend to stop gawping at the scenery the second or third time around and just concentrate on getting through the enemy units scattered across it. More often than not this involves simply out-running them.

For all these criticisms, *Soul Reaver 2* remains a tremendously enjoyable game, just one that's punctuated by occasional moments of frustration. You start to resent the fact that you don't have a choice about where to go next and wish you didn't have to haul yourself through that damn swamp again. For the most part you'll find yourself drawn into its dreary, dark world, determined to succeed at your puzzles, and, if you give the game enough time, you might even find that you start to care about the overwrought plot and want to know how it all ends.

If *Soul Reaver 2* does manage to grab you to this extent, you'll find there's plenty of reward with a good many days of gameplay to enjoy. One criticism that you certainly can't make of the game is that it is lightweight, and the generosity of its size is just one more example of this. In every area *Soul Reaver 2* is an obvious labour of love, it has been well-crafted and well-honed.

The first two games in the series, *Blood Omen* and *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* both proved popular with the punters, at least at a cult level. The darkly gothic plot here won't appeal to all and the unmistakable feeling that this is simply more of the same, rather than a radical next-generation overhaul may put fans off. The game is an absorbing, if dark, experience with an undeniably intriguing lead character whose invisible battles with his own inner demons may turn out to be as interesting as any of his battles with physical foes.

Soul Reaver 2's ambition sometimes gets in the way of it being a game, with those overly-long set-pieces interrupting the flow of the action. It's an attempt at a masterpiece that doesn't quite reach the high standards it sets itself. It could undoubtedly be one of the Christmas contenders for the cash in your pocket, but *Soul Reaver 2* is pitching into battle against a multitude of superior rivals, making it more likely to be a post-turkey romp. □ **Steve Faragher**

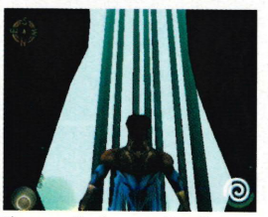
THE GRAND TOUR

There are plenty of opportunities for a spot of sight-seeing in Nosgoth's beautiful locations, but the locals aren't too friendly.

The map shows your next destination as a red dot.

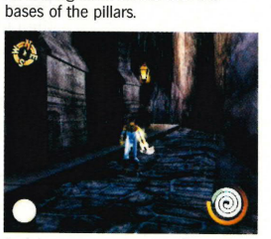
The temple of the Sarafan – a kind of anti-vampire knight sect.

This magnificent fortress is also home to undead haters.



These are the famous pillars that represent the health of the land.

An underground shrine with the bases of the pillars.



A picturesque mountain village, but the residents hide themselves away.

SOUL REAVER 2

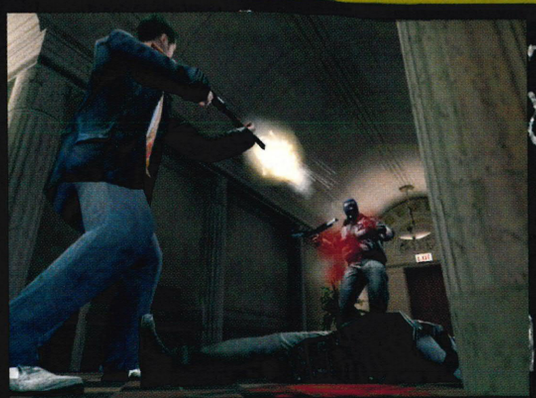
Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Not a radical departure from its predecessors: dark, deep and enjoyable.
- Hugely ambitious game - Absorbing puzzles - Exhilarating combat - Stunning backdrops	- Overly ambitious - Sometimes tedious plot - Frustratingly limited options	

Graphics	Superb detail, stunning moments	08
Sound	Excellent and appropriate	07
Gameplay	A little hit and miss	07
Life span	Days and days of endless night	08

07

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

NEW YORK. FUGITIVE UNDERCOVER COP. NOTHING TO LOSE.



FEEL THE PAIN - "STORY IS THE BEDROCK OF MAX PAYNE. YEAH, IT'S CHOCK FULL OF MIND-BLOWING GUNPLAY. BUT AT EVERY TURN, A NEW AND CLEVER PIECE OF NOIR STORYTELLING WILL MOTIVATE YOU FORWARD AND ILLUMINATE THE ACTION." PC GAMER US

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PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK BRONZE

Although there are only six levels, *AirBlade* features a broad range of environments, from warehouses to skyscrapers.

ON THE DVD

AIRBLADE

Forget skateboards. To experience some really big air, you'd be better off checking out Criterion's latest offering.

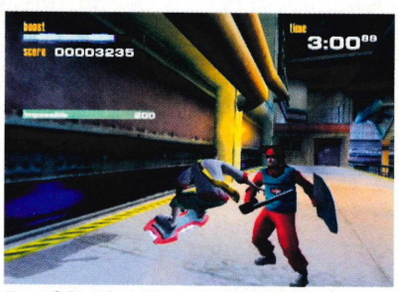
Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Criterion
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2
Out: 9 November
Web site: www.criterionstudios.com/airblade.htm

Back story
AirBlade is the spiritual successor to *TrickStyle*, another Criterion hoverboard title utilising the company's Renderware engine, released to critical acclaim on the Dreamcast. But whereas *TrickStyle* was ostensibly a racing game, *AirBlade* owes more to the tricks and combo style of the *Tony Hawk's* school of game design. And of course it's on PlayStation 2.

If you thought pulling off a 900° over a halfpipe was extreme, then think again. Despite the capacity of PlayStation 2 to create all sorts of hitherto unimagined worlds, realistic renditions of extreme sports remain incredibly popular with gamers – with good reason. But what kind of short shrift would skateboards and BMXs get in a world of anti-gravity propulsion and expansive cityscapes? A pretty brief kind we'd say. Why pull off bunny hops and ollies when you can somersault from a tall building and land into an extravagantly precarious rail grind before swinging off a horizontal bar to smash through a billboard? You'll be asking yourself the same question after you get your hands on Criterion's *AirBlade*. Realising every boyhood *Back To The Future* fan's dream, but with a panache and visual aplomb that Michael J Fox never dreamed of, it's breathtaking to behold and a joy to play, leaving other so-called 'extreme sports' titles in its gravitational field.

As you'd expect from a title set in a slightly dystopian vision of the near future, the game's background story features a suitably anti-establishment plot and an appropriate cross-section of hip protagonists. It's unlikely to win any awards for originality, but surprisingly this plot actually matters, which is a bit unexpected for a game that initially seems to bear some striking similarities to certain conventional, narrative-free, skateboarding titles. It's also satisfyingly cheesy, managing to fit in some fine moments of lame humour and combining these with archetypal bad guys and enough dramatic tension to spur you on throughout the game.

Players take on the role of Ethan Palmer, a laid-back courier with a penchant for traffic violations. Ethan is reluctantly drawn into conflict with the sinister GCP Corporation when his flatmate, Oscar Renton is kidnapped. It's at this point that you start to think that really, Renton only has himself to blame. It's all very well being a bit of a boffin, but if you will discover a limitless source of energy by messing around with gravitational fields, causing potential havoc to the GCP's profit and loss statement in the process, you really ought to anticipate getting kidnapped. But anyway, thanks to Renton's lack of foresight, Ethan has to take on the might of the GCP armed only with the eponymous gravity defying AirBlade and some off-screen assistance from various other bit players – such as cynical hacker, Kat Blake.



One of the advantages of using a hoverboard is that you get to take out those GCP guards.

MCFLY AWAY

Quite apart from its inherent cornball charm, this backdrop serves as a device by which *AirBlade* dispenses with the *Tony Hawk's* formula for incentive structure. Rather than giving players a sandbox-style environment, in which certain tricks or sequences of tricks are rewarded with a high point score, the core Story mode provides a sequence of mission objectives that need to be overcome, one by one in order to drive narrative progress. What this means in practice is that you have to perform several set-piece tricks before the clock runs down. Take level one, Hideaway, for instance. First of all you have to take out several GCP guards by 'tricking' into them and find the bad guys' limousine and grind off it, destroying it in the process, before riding up high to take out

GROUP DECKS

Should you inexplicably find that you've had enough of the one-player experience, there's a host of split-screen competitive multiplayer modes to extend the game's longevity.

Score Attack
The most straightforward mode, which sees two challengers compete for high scores.

Trick List
More suited to experienced players, you attempt to be the first to pull off a particular trick, as its name scrolls across the top of the screen.

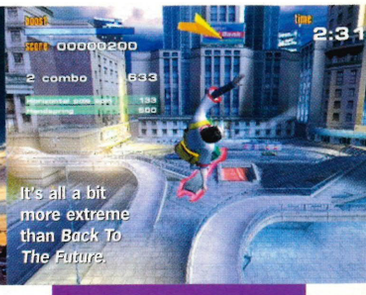
Ribbon Tag
Easily the most enjoyable multiplayer mode, this is essentially a variant of Capture The Flag, albeit with a section of police tape instead of a flag.

Show Off
Players compete to pull off the best tricks in three categories: Air, Combo and Grind.

Party Mode
Like it says on the tin, a Party mode, in which up to eight players take turns to compete in a full-on knockout competition.

On-screen instructions allow you to devise a strategy to take on the most devilish missions.

It might be advisable to steer clear of *AirBlade* if you've a height phobia. It's got some *big* air.



If you can reach it, chances are you can grind off it, including this moving truck, above

Every multi-tiered level is superbly crafted, creating all sorts of elaborate combo opportunities

some snippers. Finally you have to work out the route to reach Kat – which requires a particular combination of grinds and swinging jumps. Performing tricks and combos fills up your AirBlade's Boost Gauge, which can be used for a brief speed boost, or to jump further.

The advantage of the Story mode is that it provides players with ample motivation to explore the limits of the game's environments, apart from just the sheer pleasure to be had from the sublimely intuitive hoverboard handling. It's a quirky attempt to try to revolutionise the tried and tested extreme sports dynamic, but it does have its drawbacks. Chief among these is that it leads to a lot of repetition. Since mission objectives are revealed in chronological order, and they usually require you to work out the optimal route, it's rarely possible to complete a level in one go. This means you'll frequently have to attempt levels a couple of times to fully explore and devise strategies. Another problem is that tight time limits tend to hinder experimentation, meaning you don't get a chance to explore the finer points of the handling and the combo system.

//A quirky attempt to revolutionise the tried and tested extreme sports dynamic//

So it's just as well that the game also includes several other single-player modes to flesh out the main experience. As well as a Freestyle mode for leisurely exploration of the Story mode levels, there's also the Score Attack and the unlockable Stunt Attack modes. It's only really when you start experimenting in each of these modes that the full potential of anti-gravity motivation becomes clear. Essentially *AirBlade*'s control system is pretty similar to any one of a host of similar titles. But it's the hyperbolic stunts and lovingly crafted environments that stand out. Leap into the air, press a combination of buttons and watch as Ethan somersaults and leaps about like a salmon, lands a grind or does a handstand. So far, so familiar. But *AirBlade*'s got one over on similar titles when it comes to matters of propulsion. This means that there's bigger air, grinds are longer, tricks are more acrobatic, and there's more scope to string together some preposterous combos.

And because the game's environments have been constructed with the same care and attention that has been spent on ensuring an

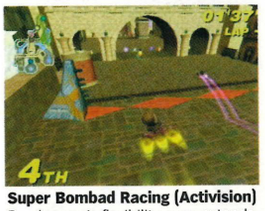
RETURN TO RENDERWARE

Middleware, Renderware and *AirBlade*. If you're a little confused read on...

AirBlade isn't the first outing for Criterion's Renderware technology. There's a host of other big name developers who have been keen to sign up these middleware tools. Renderware is a set of tools that other developers can use to make the development process run more smoothly. While some developers prefer not to use middleware, arguing it's a bit like buying an off-the-shelf suit, the results that are demonstrated by *AirBlade* and other titles speak for themselves.

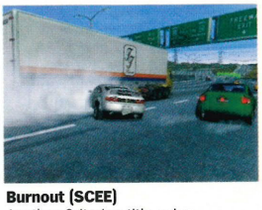
ISS Pro Evolution (Konami)
Quite simply one of the most splendid football titles available.

MX2002 Featuring Ricky Carmichael (THQ)
Another great advert for the visual capabilities of Renderware.

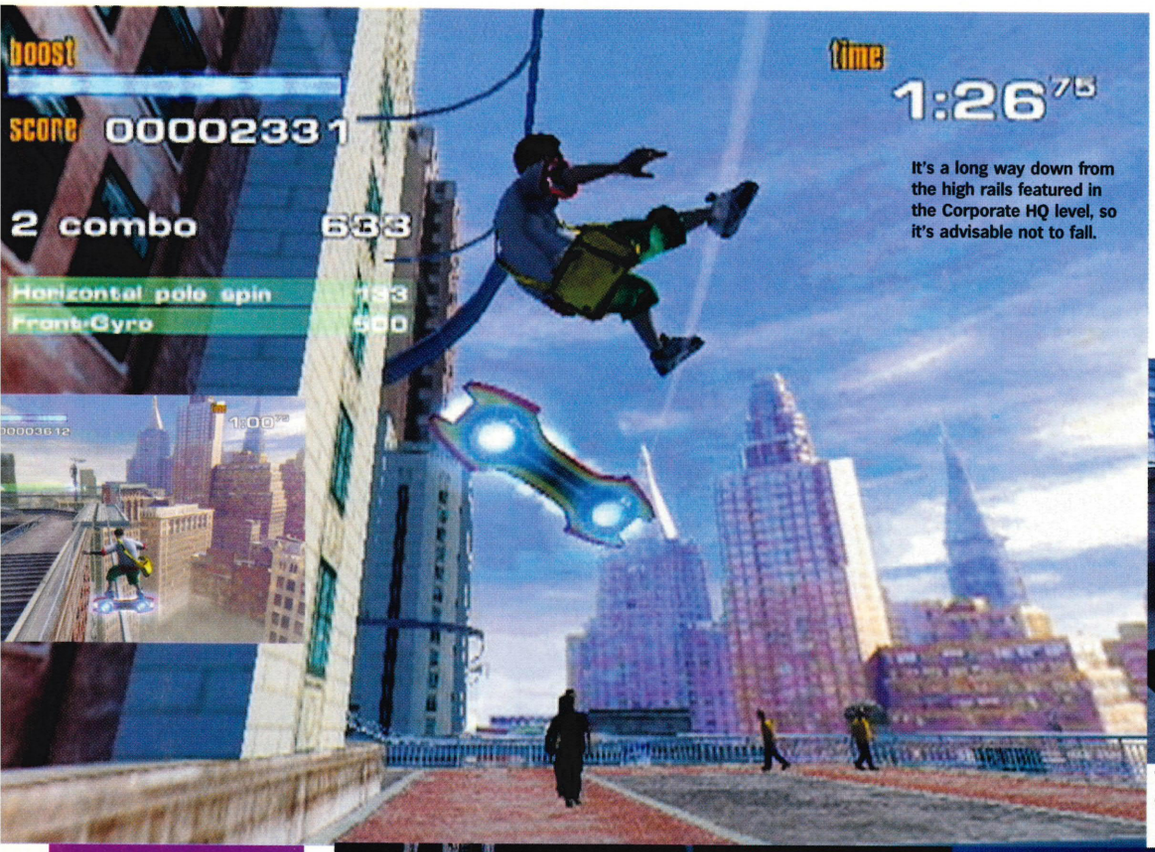


Super Bombad Racing (Activision)
Renderware's flexibility even extends to this Star Wars kiddy karter.

Driven (Bam! Entertainment)
Based on the Stallone film of the same name. Review next issue.

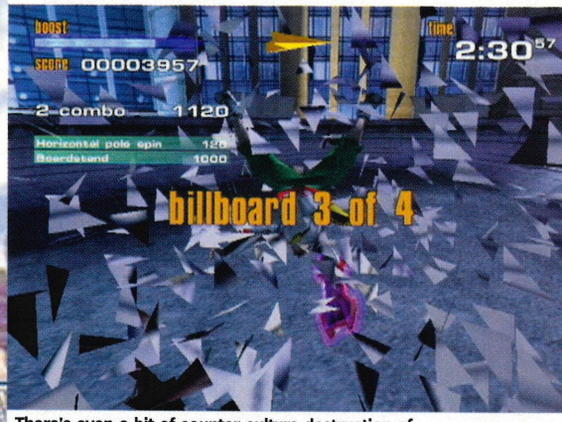


Burnout (SCEE)
Another Criterion title using Renderware, scoring 8/10 last issue.



It's a long way down from the high rails featured in the Corporate HQ level, so it's advisable not to fall.

Ethan manages to take out another guard, with a daring display of anti-gravity audacity.

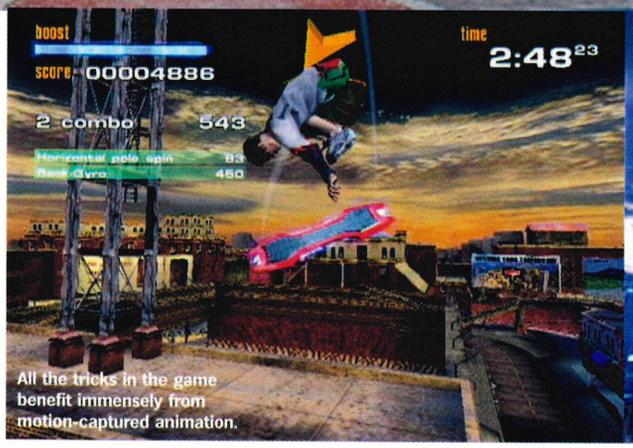


There's even a bit of counter-culture destruction of capitalist property thrown in for good measure.

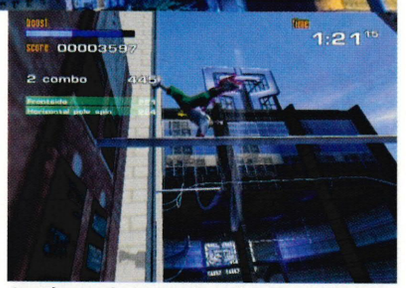
DVD EXTRAS

Here's a quick look at the more attractive 'bits' to be found amongst *AirBlade*'s DVD extras.

Fans of the Channel 4 series will no doubt be pleased to find the delectable *Bits* presenter, Emily Newton-Dunn, turn up on the *AirBlade* disc. Thanks to the greater DVD storage capacity of the PlayStation 2, Criterion has seen fit to include a bunch of extras to flesh out the *AirBlade* experience. Chief among these is a Making Of documentary presented by said Newton-Dunn, which gives an insight into the development process. Also included is a music player that allows you to play the in-game audio at your leisure in all its surround sound glory plus an Art Gallery, showing off the game's protagonists, resplendent in Porn Star, Globe and Gallaz apparel.



All the tricks in the game benefit immensely from motion-captured animation.



Spotting vertical or horizontal poles to spin off is essential to get to those hard-to-reach areas.

accessible control scheme and some stunning animations, the scope for outlandish midair exploits has been amplified exponentially. Even the most compact levels feature a well-conceived architecture, with rails and jumps that increase their vertical scope, and part of the fun lies in discovering the sequences of rail slides, pole spins and platform jumps that expand the horizons of the *AirBlade*'s handling. After playing through the Story mode with a slightly utilitarian approach to tricks and combos, it comes as quite a surprise to realise the sorts of score that you can achieve in Score attack, and this is where the game really excels. In Story mode you might easily overlook some of the scoring opportunities that the game's environments contain.

From the urban sprawl of the Downtown level, to the upper reaches of the cityscape featured in the Corporate HQ level, there are a multitude of short cuts, long cuts, half pipes and elevated rails, all blended together in a visually coherent whole. Indeed in terms of visual splendour too, the current pantheon of extreme sports titles pale into insignificance next to *AirBlade*. Thanks to Criterion's Renderware development tools (see Return To Renderware) and some solid art production, it's one of the best looking titles yet to appear on PlayStation 2. Inspiring character animations heighten the visceral thrill of big air combos, while environments, particularly those featured in later levels, are as stunning to look at as they are to skate in.

While the likes of *Tony Hawk's* and *Dave Mirra* offer real-life stars and locations, and the kudos of an existing street-cool aesthetic, the fact is that you can always get on your skateboard or BMX, and visit your local park if you want to get a taste of extreme sports. But until hoverboarding becomes a reality, *AirBlade* simply renders other extreme sports Earthbound. □ **David McCarthy**

AIRBLADE

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	*AirBlade*'s intricate environments and sublime handling make so-called 'extreme sports' look like a walk in the park. It's everything you wanted hoverboarding to be.
- It's got hoverboards in it - Sublime anti-gravity handling - Opulent visuals - Comprehensive multiplayer support	- Too much repetition - Erm... poor voice acting?	

Graphics	A brilliant advert for Renderware	09
Sound	Soundtrack begins to grate after a while	07
Gameplay	Big air multi-combo joy	08
Life span	A host of extras and multiplayer modes	08

08

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

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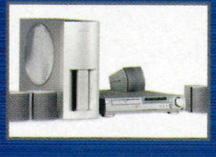

2nd Prize
Home Entertainment System

3rd Prize
Sony Micro System

Plus 250 Sony Walkman's

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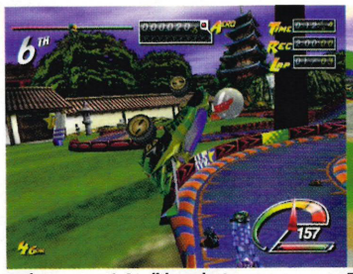
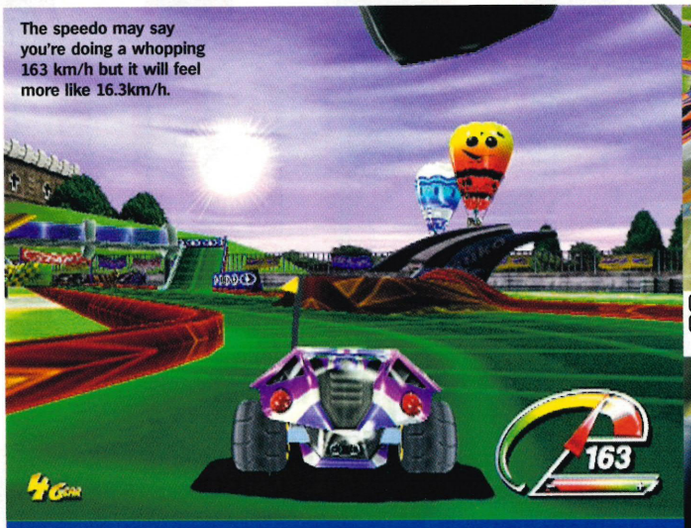


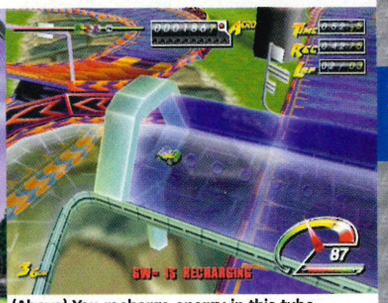
Is that a stunt? Or did we just come a cropper? Who knows? Who cares?

The lurid colour schemes and unimaginative track designs soon annoy.

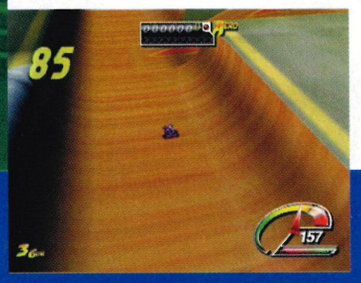
Other vehicles in a race appear to follow a preset path regardless of the situation.



The speedo may say you're doing a whopping 163 km/h but it will feel more like 16.3km/h.



(Above) You recharge energy in this tube. (Below) Pull tricks on the half pipe.



STUNT GP

Big, big racing, with small, small cars. Batteries not included.

Publisher: Virgin Interactive
Developer: Team 17
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2
Out: 23 November
Web site: stuntgp.team17.com

Back story
From the makers of *Worms*. After underwhelming appearances on the PC and Dreamcast, *Stunt GP* makes its way to the PlayStation 2 with very little added.

Good or bad, racing games fall into two categories. There are those that attempt to simulate reality – *Moto GP*, *Gran Turismo* et al – and there are those that have no truck with such concepts as 'realistic physics' and 'genuine car manufacturers' and the like. It is into this latter category that Team 17's *Stunt GP* falls. However, unlike, say, *Crazy Taxi*, which genuinely revels in over-the-top handling and comic-book visuals, *Stunt GP* just isn't enjoying itself. It's like a repressed and sober English office manager, thrust shoulders first onto a karaoke stage to stumble self-consciously through *Delilah*.

On paper, *Stunt GP* is a decent idea, if not entirely original. Like Acclaim's *ReVolt*, this game has you behind the wheel of a remote control car, while the high-banked turns and undulating, roller-coasting tracks are reminiscent of *Rumble Racing*.

For the most part, *Stunt GP* is structured like any other racing game, with the usual progression up the league table, unlocking further courses and vehicles as you go. Inevitably, the better you do, the more cash you have to spend on upgrading your car. Each of the courses is punctuated by opportunities for stunts. And what do stunts make? Prizes! Well, points, anyway. And they also recharge your turbo boost energy reserves.

Your first attempts at playing *Stunt GP* will inevitably end up with your car flying off the track, or coming to rest on its roof. However, after a few circuits, the arcade-like physics can be put to use performing barrel rolls and backflips. Indeed, if you find the racing all a bit passé, there's even a Stunt mode where you can practice your technique.

Sadly, for all its good intentions, its bold and colourful visuals and its wealth of courses, *Stunt GP* just isn't very good. Not only is it uninspired, the gameplay is fundamentally flawed. Handling is suspect, and worse still, there's no sense of speed or gravity; when hitting a jump it's like playing a game that's set on the moon. In fact, had *Stunt GP* actually been set on the moon, it would have immediately explained away the dodgy handling, *and* been a more original game – but it's too late for that now.

Ultimately, while relatively polished, *Stunt GP* is a woefully generic and underdeveloped title. Precious little thought has been invested here. It's just a bare-bones mishmash of over-familiar elements, with a poorly-realised stunt feature tacked on to give it some semblance of originality. There are far better examples of the genre already available on the little old PSone – and that's not really what any self-respecting PlayStation 2 owner wants to hear. ☐ **Paul Rose**

TRACK ATTACK

There are three distinct styles of track to be found in *Stunt GP* – here's what to expect.

Aeroblasters
As you'd expect from the name, the Aeroblaster tracks are more suited to the showier player with a high-powered car capable of insane stunts.

Speed Demons
These tracks are relatively free of obstacles and suited to the fastest cars. The pay-off being that the faster you drive, the tougher the cornering becomes.

Wild Wheels
Break out the trucks and the SUVs for the Wild Wheels tracks; your sleek coupé won't like the mud, the sand or the patches of grass.

A night time level is thrown in to add a little variety.

STUNT GP

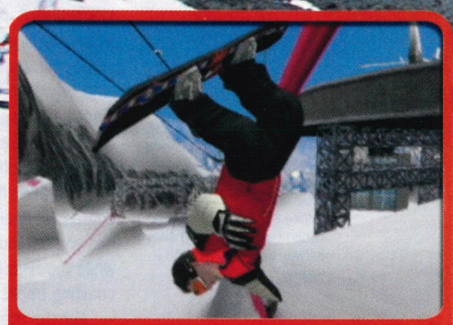
Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Thankfully there's plenty of far more accomplished alternatives to this racing game. A waste of anyone's time or money.
- We're a sucker for anything to do with stunts and cars	- Inconsistent physics and handling - It's totally uninspiring - Better games exist for PSone	

Graphics	Crisp, colourful, but uninspiring	05
Sound	Generic and instantly forgettable	03
Gameplay	The physics, the handling – all so very wrong	02
Life span	Plenty of tracks, but will you care?	05

03

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

TH RIDE LIKE



Features Shaun Palmer and 9 other top pro riders.

PlayStation® 2 Screens

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GAME BOY ADVANCE

DEAR SOFT

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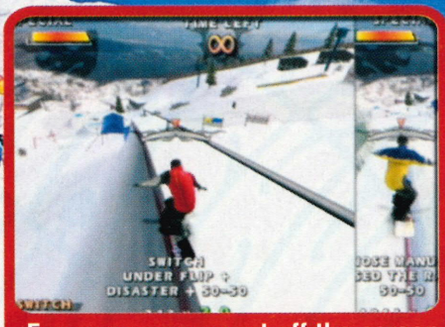
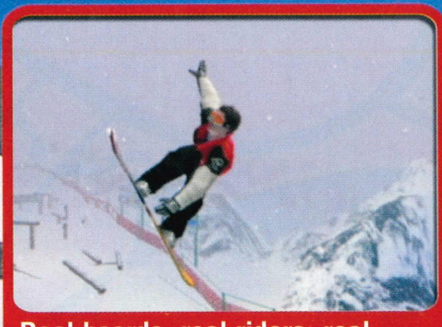
THINK YOU CAN RIDE LIKE ME?

SHAUN PALMER'S PRO SNOWBOARDER™

Trick off anything in 8 real world destinations.



Force your opponent off the screen in the all new PUSH mode.



Real boards, real riders, real mountains, real attitude.

You'll need everything you've got to keep up. I own 6 Winter X-Games gold medals and I'm not slowing down anytime soon. Session with me and some of the best pro riders including Tara Dakides, Shaun White, Ingemar Backman, and others as you drop into 8 levels based on real world-class resorts. With an insane trick style game-play, this computer game is the ultimate snowboarding challenge. Pull the sickest tricks off anything in sight, defy gravity using hundreds of realistic moves, and link combos to access epic new terrain. Still think you can ride like me?

Well step up or step off.

Soundtrack includes songs by Static-X, Papa Roach and Alien Ant Farm.

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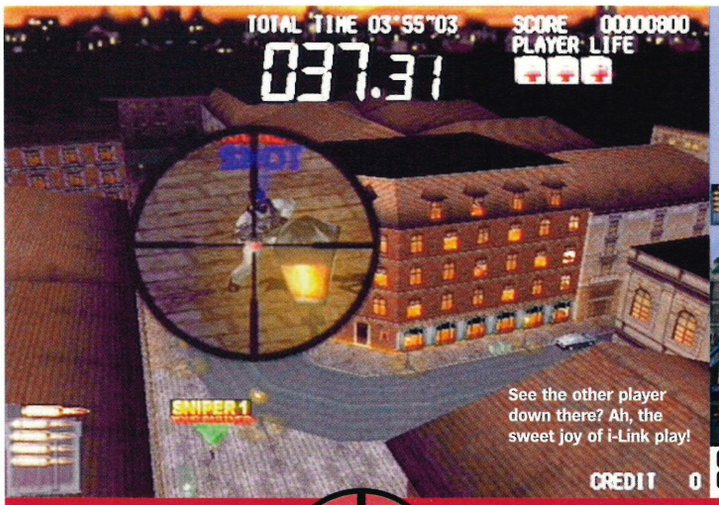
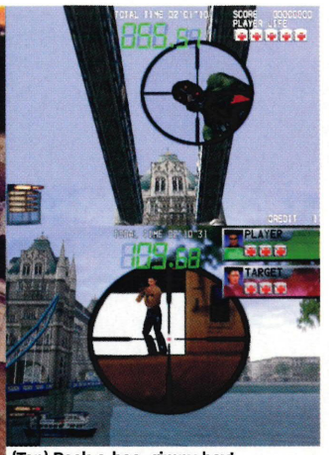


See the other player down there? Ah, the sweet joy of i-Link play!



(Top) Peek-a-boo, gimpy boy! (Above) And you, sirrah, are history.

SILENT SCOPE 2: FATAL JUDGEMENT

A quick hand and a quicker trigger finger are a must for this shooter sequel.

Publisher: Konami
Developer: KCE Tokyo
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2 (via i-Link)
Out: December
Web site: www.konami.com/main/games/ss2/

Back story

Silent Scope made a name for itself in the arcades, mainly due to the fact that it came with a bloody great sniper rifle attached to the cabinet. Since then, the game has appeared on PS2 with shoulder buttons and analogue sticks negating the need for a rifle or light gun peripheral. Shame. This sequel has also appeared in the arcades, under the original title of *Dark Silhouette*.

In reality, being a sniper must be pretty damn tedious, not to mention dangerous. All that crouching on top of buildings and grassy knolls for hours on end in all weathers, with cramp in your legs, waiting for your target to come along. Not our idea of fun and we'd rather be sitting at home with our PS2s any day. Thankfully, Konami created *Silent Scope* so we can do both at the same time.

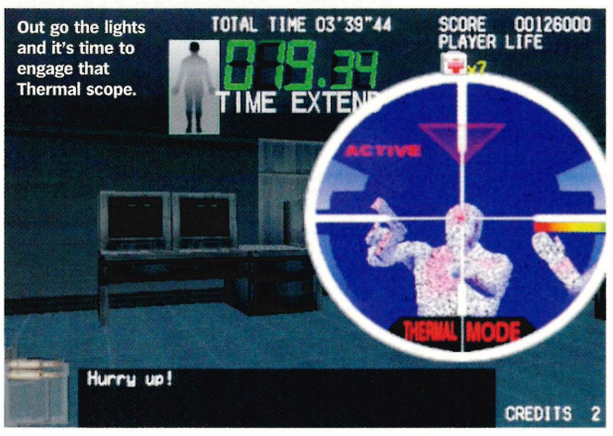
Despite being short-lived, PS2's first *Silent Scope* scored a then generous 8/10 in our very first issue, owing mainly to the fact that it was so much fun to play. It was a straightforward title with little to no plot – decapitate bad guys with your high-powered rifle, end of story – but it was fun.

A year on and these aspects of the game haven't changed for the sequel, *Fatal Judgement*. It's still an entertaining antidote to the stresses and strains of daily life and the terrorist-maiming story line is virtually identical. But there are noteworthy improvements. There are now two snipers to choose from: Falcon, the Government operative from the first title and a mysterious freelance sniper, codenamed Jackal. Each character plays from a different perspective, effectively doubling the size of the game.

The Original mode now includes tricky mission levels with tight time limits while a Duel mode ups the fun factor, with three different areas to play through – City, Forest and Air. The Shooting Range mode from the first game also makes a welcome return, as do the scantily clad ladies who represent life bonuses.

Bosses, with daft names like Fox, Cobra and The Star are a varied bunch and once met in the main game can be accessed in 'Boss Battle' mode. Playing through the Arcade mode also unlocks plenty of additional options, such as extra lives, more time and the ability to turn off enemy location indicators, allowing for a degree of customisation. Although it looks a little dated compared to recent releases, the new X-ray and Thermal scopes are impressive and environments are nicely drawn, with the snow-bound chemical weapons factory and Tower Bridge levels particularly appealing.

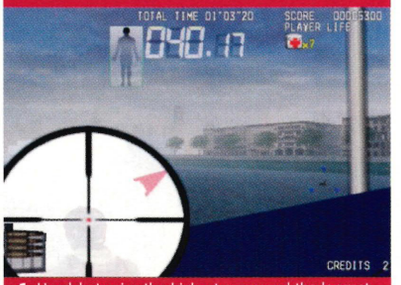
Unfortunately, there's no way around the fact that main appeal of *Silent Scope* in the arcades is the huge sniper controller. Such a peripheral would be impractical for PlayStation 2 and moving your scope with the analogue stick still makes for a quivery performance. A Multiplayer mode has now been included, but it works with the i-Link only (ie two PS2s, two copies of the game and two TVs). Although entertaining, it's no substitute for a split-screen mode. So while *Fatal Judgement* is an obvious improvement on before, it's in danger of being left behind in these busy times. Time for a G-Con makeover... ☐ **Adrian Lawton**



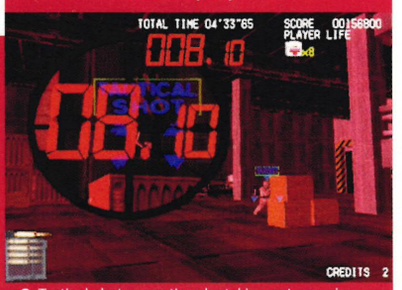
Out go the lights and it's time to engage that Thermal scope.

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD

Time and points are what count in *Silent Scope* 2. You'll need to be fast or it's game over, man...

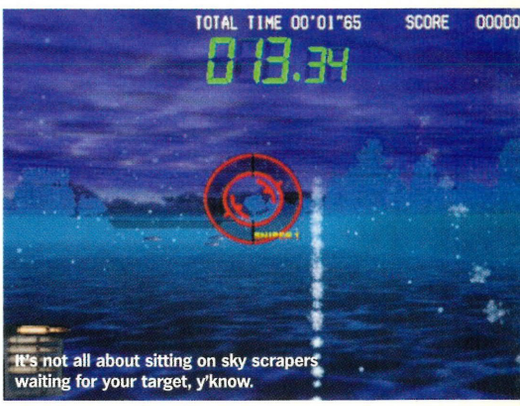


1. Headshots give the highest score and the longest time bonuses. Get as many as you can.



2. Tactical shots save time by taking out enemies for you. Indicators mark where to shoot.

3. Double kills are possible whenever one enemy stands in front of another. These save time and offer huge point bonuses.



It's not all about sitting on sky scrapers waiting for your target, y'know.

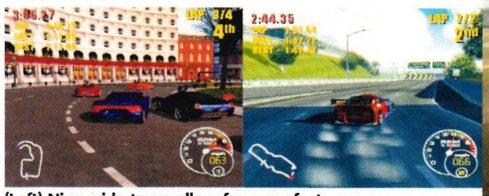
SILENT SCOPE 2: FATAL JUDGEMENT

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	A definite improvement over the original but now looking a little lacklustre. Still an enjoyable arcade experience despite looking a little dated among PS2's AAA games.
- Quirky and unique gameplay - Excellent Multiplayer mode - Cool X-ray and Thermal scopes	- No split-screen Two-player mode - Still too brief in Arcade mode	

Graphics	Not the best on PS2 but some ace touches	07
Sound	Gunshots, death cries and dodgy tunes	08
Gameplay	Shallow but entertaining arcade thrills	07
Life span	New modes add value but could be longer	07

07

PlayStation.2 VERDICT



(Left) Nice wide turns allow for superfast corners. (Right) Ooh, I'm just like that moody Vin Diesel!

The alleys are a pain as all the computer drivers jam together.

SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE

Fast cars, glamorous cities, empty roads, average game...

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Exakt
Players: 1-2
Price: £39.99
Out: 19 November
Web site: www.activision.com/games/supercar

Back story

Supercar Street Challenge is the first game from Exakt, formed in 1999. The game's car dynamics have been designed in conjunction with supercar manufacturer Steve Saleen who donates one of his own hi-tech vehicles, the Saleen S7. Check out www.saleen.com for some more of his nutso models.

The racing game. More than any other genre, it's made up of 1% must-haves, 99% wannabes. *Supercar Street Challenge* (the name itself desperate, attempting to lever in as many parts of other games' titles in as possible) drives into the latter category and parks neatly. It is so characterless, so unassuming, so stunningly mundane, you would never know it was there. Unless you spent £40 on it, and then you would know it alright.

Yet *Supercar Street Challenge* does everything reasonably well. It offers the usual selection of play modes (Championship, Quick Race, Head-to-Head, Time Trial, etc). It offers a reasonable selection of circuits which snake through a series of familiar cities offering the requisite number of sharp turns, long fast straights and nail-biting chicanes.

The cities themselves are also competently produced. London has the Thames and Big Ben (and big drab rain clouds), Paris has its neo-classical architecture and infamous underpasses, LA is all freeways and skyscrapers. But these are dead cities. There's no collateral movement or activity. No pedestrians. Nothing to grab the eye and make the player think, "Hey, that's a cool feature." Oh, there is a little lens flare, of course – "Just like *Ridge Racer V*!" the marketing zombies no doubt intoned.

The only vaguely novel idea is the choice of licensed vehicles. Instead of *Gran Turismo*'s Nissans, Peugeots and Subarus, we get concept cars from obscure outfits like Rinspeed and Saleen. In a concession to mass tastes, Lotus and Pontiac models make an appearance too – not that you'd know it by looking at them. The vehicles are all flat and featureless, resembling turbo-charged slabs of Plasticine.

The handling is okay. Acceleration feels damp even when you reach Class A (the Championship modes are split into three classes, A being the fastest), but you can get some decent cornering out of these beasts. Taking the tightest turns on especially tight circuits at high speeds even raises the pulse a little. Plus, there are wide sections and short cuts where you can go 'offroad' and slice huge corners off the course – it's a nice touch, hinting at what the designers might have been capable of, if they'd been let off the leash a little.

But mostly they're shackled to the rulebook. *Supercar Street Challenge* has had any sense of life or spark sucked out of it. It is an amalgam of washed out dull ideas – it's the videogame equivalent of a made for TV thriller starring Victoria Principal and Corben Benson. Beyond the competent visuals, the 'alright-I-suppose' handling, there is nothing else to offer to a prospective buyer. Why, with *Gran Turismo 3* and *Burnout* already out there, did someone feel this game was necessary? Unfortunately, competent is not enough. And it never was. ☐ **Keith Stuart**

A TALE OF TWO CHAMPIONSHIPS

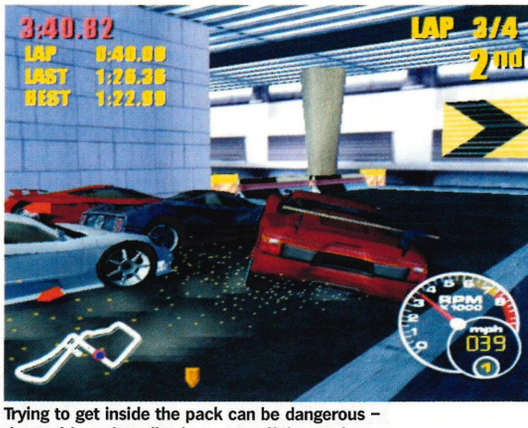
More tasks open later, but *Supercar Street Challenge* begins with two Championship modes – Design Series and Manufacturers' Cup. They're both structured in the same way and use the same tracks – except the Manufacturers' Cup reverses them.

1. Design Series

Here you start with a basic fictitious sports car which you can modify throughout the game, using points earned by successfully completing races. Points can be spent on chassis modification or on fiddling with stats like top speed, acceleration and braking. This is almost an interesting idea.

2. Manufacturers' Cup

Here you race in a series of licensed vehicles – you get a new car at the end of each racing class. The choice of licenses is different, but – we suspect – were more motivated by financial rather than gameplay reasons.



Trying to get inside the pack can be dangerous – the AI drivers happily shove you off the road.

SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Little more than a turgid exercise in following the rules. If you're looking for a totally average experience this game will dutifully provide.
- Interesting choice of licences - Some nice locations	- Complete lack of originality - Lacks any long-term challenge - AI is hopeless	

Graphics	Just about PS2 standard	06
Sound	Risible funk and house music	03
Gameplay	An utter lack of invention	04
Life span	Your pet flea will out-live it	03

04

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

Better

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ON THE DVD

FIFA 2002

Already a goal down to *Pro Evolution Soccer*, can *FIFA* turn the game around?

Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Sports (Canada)
Price: £44.99
Players: 1-8
Out: 9 November
Web site: fifa2002.ea.com

Back story
Finally, EA Sports has bowed to punter pressure and given the *FIFA* formula a sturdy remix. The developer has admitted to poring over online fan forums to compile a practical wish-list of nips and tweaks, with a revamped passing system the most radical rework.

Ever since PSone's *International Superstar Soccer Pro* (*ISS Pro*) from Konami sneaked in and robbed the ball from the flashy but complacent playmaker that was *FIFA '98*, it's been a game of two games. On the *FIFA* side, a front-end polish here, a cursory graphical swab there... But, more or less, every *FIFA* iteration has been the same game with the same niggles (too predictable, over-simplistic, no sense of building the play). It's the curse of success. If every version tumbles off the shelves whatever the content, why risk it all by changing too much?

So while *FIFA* has been happy to sit back and watch the casual pennies roll in, the *ISS* boys have been busy crafting and honing the football fans' football game. They've realised that gamers care more for feel and control than they do for official endorsements and familiar commentary. At last, EA has felt the need to respond – the tagline for *FIFA 2002* is 'reinventing the beautiful game'. With a wary eye on the hardcore fanbase, this is the first major gameplay overhaul since the series began.

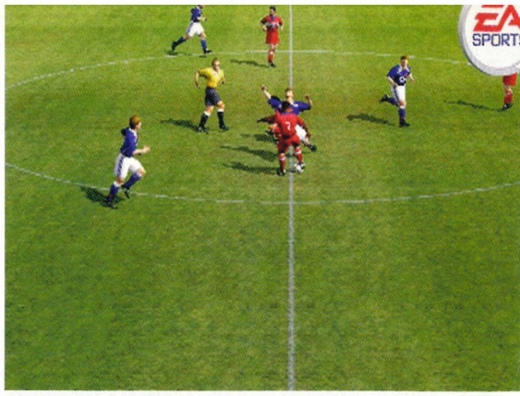
The main focus is on that crucial element that seemed to be so lacking in England's Euro 2000 campaign: accurate, intelligent passing. In previous *FIFA* games, there was a feeling that you controlled the player on the ball and the game engine just sort of reshuffled the rest of the team in-line with your basic tactics – an illusion of control. Passes were, more or less, automatically directed to the feet of a highlighted team-mate, with much stiffness and predictability. Here, the passing system has been reworked to match the realities of the often not-so-beautiful game. Deft use of the new power bar makes it possible to pass the ball into space to exploit slack defending or to anticipate a team-mate's run.

The skill is in weighting the balls perfectly – too soft and they'll be mopped up by defenders, too hard and they'll either run out of play or be pounced on by the goalie. Creative control is enhanced with a tap of L1 which sets a team-mate off on a run while you hold up the ball. There is now less reliance on default, one-touch passing to the nearest player and more of an emphasis on how the real game actually works: Considered build-up, battling for space and adapting the style of attack to the situation.

FIFA LA REVOLUTION

However, although this may be pretty revolutionary for *FIFA*, it's only a small, long-overdue improvement to one aspect of a game which is still lacking in many of the same old areas. Despite the more flowing approach, *FIFA* still doesn't feel like football – it's too clunky and the ball loops and zooms with disregard to physics. Given the amount of time the developer has clearly spent on updating the passing system, it's maddening that they've left so many other elements standing still.

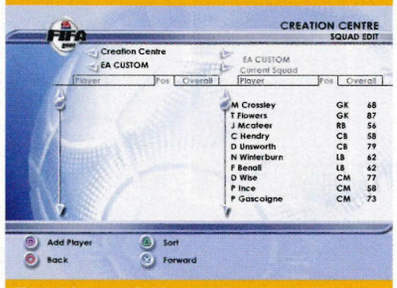
From a distance, it looks superb. There are gorgeous lighting and weather effects, fantastic-looking stadiums, convincing crowd and player animations. Up close, it's a horror-show. The players look like nightmarish, zombified versions of their real-life selves and mince onto the pitch like a poorly-oiled android army. The effort to



That's right, let him know you're there. And break his ankle at the same time.

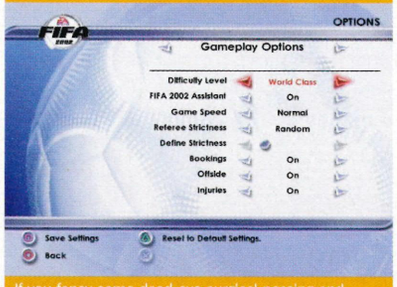
IT'S JUST LIKE WATCHING BRAZIL

Twiddling those thumbs during a week of Premiership postponements? Use *FIFA 2002* to make your team look like world-beaters with no effort involved...

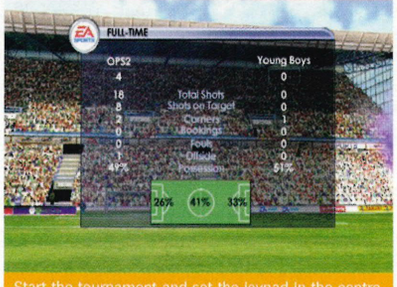


First, pick your side. The more journeymen, the funnier. Go to the Creation Centre and tweak the stats of every player in your starting 11 up to maximum.

Select Options and switch the game speed to Fastest, turn the ref strictness down to minimum, injuries off, and, for the most eye-catching action, change to Swing camera.



If you fancy some dead-eye surgical passing and crossbar-shattering shots, crank the difficulty level up to World Class.

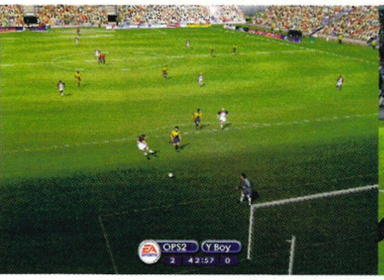


Start the tournament and set the joypad in the centre of the two teams. If, by some weird quirk, your team is struggling, simply wrestle yourself from that pizza, and temporarily take over to bash in a couple of goals. Then, put the game back on auto. Now even Forest fans can see their team win something.

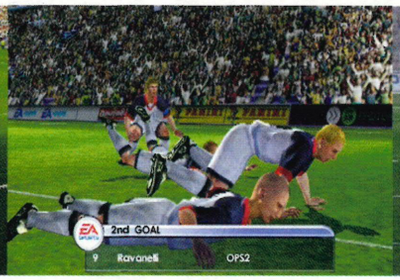
Whipping the ball into the box often gets you a goal.

Getting brought down here means a chance to test out your aim from 20 yards.

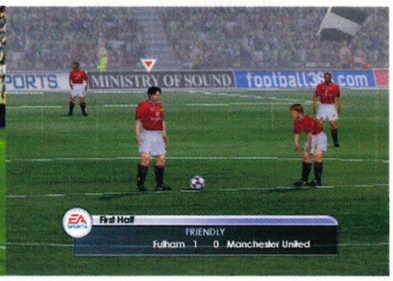
As is the norm for *FIFA* the stadia look exactly like the real thing. Shame about the players.



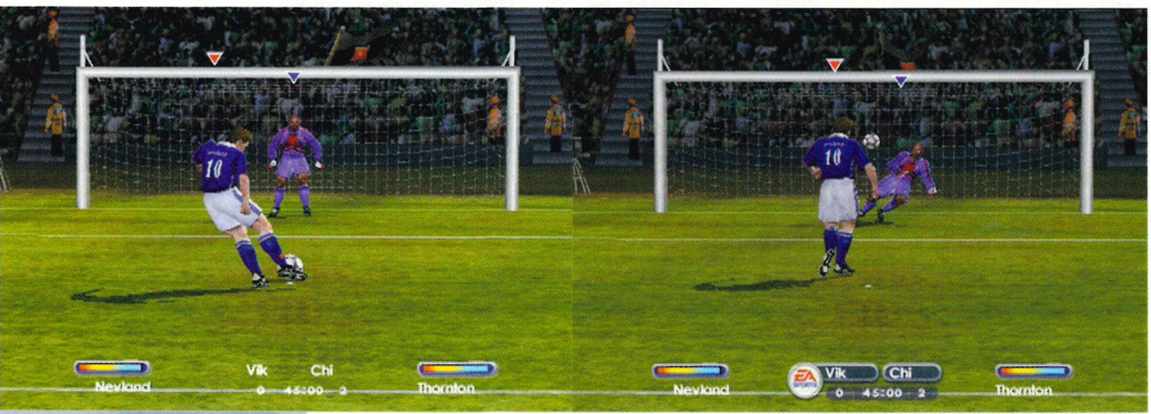
Presentation of goal replays can be breathtaking.



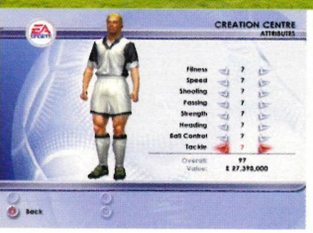
A curiously blond Ravenelli makes love to the turf after putting *OPS2* three-up.



Van Nistelrooy and Scholes back in the centre circle as Man U leak another goal.



Unlike in *Pro Evo Soccer*, scarcity of goalless draws means penalty shoot-outs are rare in *FIFA 2002*.



Create a 7ft, 22 stone Lithuanian striker and set his stats so he can run faster than Owen. Unstoppable.

//Despite the more flowing approach, *FIFA 2002* still doesn't feel like football//

realistically render player features is a disaster. Michael Owen is alarmingly simian, Nick Barmby has a Frankenstein's monster brow and don't even think about checking out Christian Ziege.

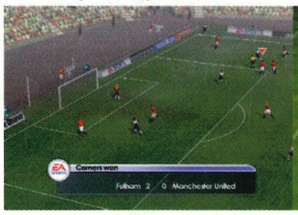
Options and front-end frills are pretty much as expected. Everything is customisable (player looks and skills, league/cup competitions) and there's a nostalgic throwback to the days of obsessive sticker collecting – tournament wins are rewarded with extra options flagged by Panini player cards. Annoyingly, the World Cup 2002 option is limited to a rerun of the qualifying stages, for obvious reasons (*FIFA World Cup 2002* is a commercial dead cert). But, even with the all-new passing system in place, there's no sign of a training mode.

For every detail tweaked in the right direction (ever more impressive commentary, flexible replays which show the whole build-up to major incidents), the niggles still refuse to disappear. Although many of them may seem minor, they all contribute to the overall lack of authentic football 'feel'. Tapping the speed-up button doesn't really result in an obvious, thrilling burst of pace. There's still no chance of chasing and trapping the ball before it trickles over the touchline (players just dumbly run the ball out of play on contact). It's impossible to take the ball off the computer in harder modes, all too easy to get away with horrific sliding tackles otherwise. Injury Time is neither indicated nor given any sense of last-ditch, tactic-changing tension. It's too easy to sit on a win and run out the clock (we managed to waste ten minutes of game time just casually passing the ball in our own half). There's no aggregate score displayed in two-leg games. English Premiership games regularly feature Serie A-style crowd flares, and players are 'ejected' rather than sent off (features that expose *FIFA*'s Canadian origins).

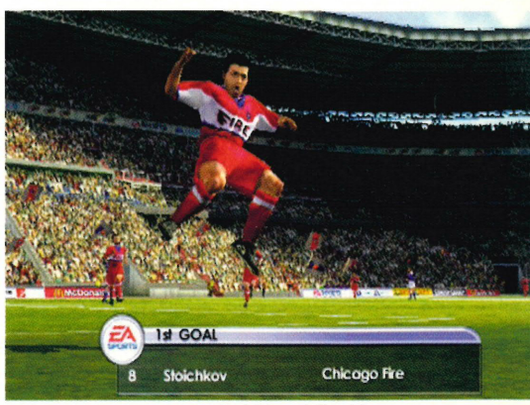
All a bit purist, you might think. You're probably right. *FIFA 2002* is perfectly playable and the new passing style leads to more open, expressive games, particularly against a human opponent. But while *FIFA* is content to continue trading on brand recognition, it'll always be the choice for those who don't know any better. Serious fans of both gaming and football will get much more out of Konami's *Pro Evolution Soccer*. ☐ **Andy Lowe**

FIFA VERSUS PRO EVOLUTION

Who triumphs at cup final time?



	FIFA	PES
Passing	Ostensibly the all-new system means you can pass anywhere on the pitch, but it's a struggle to stop defenders mopping up. ☆☆☆☆	Passes do go direct to feet – but crucially only if your players are in space. Plus there's that sublime through ball. ☆☆☆☆☆
Dribbling and tackling	You can still make a mockery of the tricky tackling system with extended dribbles. Defensive AI is lacking. ☆☆☆	Defenders can pressurise the ball, meaning only truly skilful dribblers will survive. Mis-timed slide tackles are punished. ☆☆☆☆☆
Goalmouth action	Still too predictable. You either dribble through the middle and curl it past the 'keeper or look for a cross or set piece into the box. ☆☆☆	You have to work to get goals but the ball can go in from any angle or situation, emphasising *PES*'s seemingly infinite variety in play. ☆☆☆☆☆
Tactics and stats	Formation makes a difference, but individual teams and players display very little personality. ☆☆☆	Each team has a distinct personality and there are many rewards to be gained from tactical tinkering, although menus are unwieldy. ☆☆☆☆
Presentation	Stadia, atmosphere, commentary and TV-style cameras are all better than ever, but player likenesses are laughably poor. ☆☆☆☆	Good player likenesses and animations, but the front-end is badly-designed and the commentary is just an absolute travesty. ☆☆
Final score	**FIFA: 17**	**PES: 21**



Stoichkov defies his widening girth to celebrate scoring with a nimble leap.

FIFA 2002

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	
- New passing system makes it better than *FIFA 2001* - Cosy and accessible - The way John Motson says 'football'	- Soulless feel - No World Cup 2002 - *Pro Evolution Soccer* is miles better	**EA has blown away the major cobwebs, but the stubborn grime remains. Despite commendable gameplay innovations, *Pro Evolution Soccer* is still an easy winner.**

Graphics	Ace animation and stadiums. Hideous players	07
Sound	In the vein of a Sky Sports presentation	08
Gameplay	Still oddly detached from reality	07
Life span	Lots to unlock in one-player	08

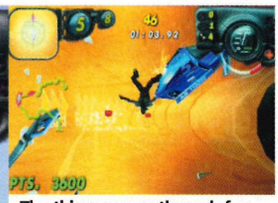
07

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

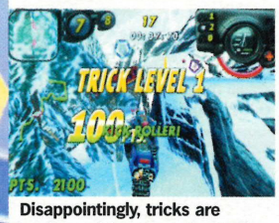
Everything's gone green...

It's *SSX Tricky* meets *Sled Storm*, it's very bloody dangerous, it's got St Basil's Cathedral in it for some reason...

"I said left at the lights. Left!"



The things we go through for a decent screenshot...



Disappointingly, tricks are performed for you automically.

POINTS WIN PRIZES

Simply winning races won't unlock extra courses, riders or features. You've got to rack up points by causing maximum destruction on the way to the finish line and that means plotting an aggressive zig-zag tack from power-up to power-up.

For 300 points
Snag another rider with your grappling hook.

For 500 points
Ride up alongside an opponent and kick 'em off.

For 500 points
Plough into a snowman!

ARCTIC THUNDER

It ain't what you do, it's the way you skidoo...

Publisher: Midway
Developer: Midway/ Inland Productions
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2
Out: Now
Web site: www.arctic thunder.com

Back story
Like many Midway games, *Arctic Thunder* began life in the arcades earlier this year. It was the third in the series of *Thunder* games following on from the excellent *Hydro Thunder* and *Offroad Thunder* – you may have played the speedboat-themed former on Dreamcast or PSone.

With steering wheels, light guns and dance mats littering the stores, developers are becoming increasingly adept at tailoring their arcade game gimmicks to a home console audience. It's a shame Midway's budget couldn't run to a cooling fan peripheral because having cold air blown in your face from the coin-op cabinet as an *Arctic Thunder* race heats up is one of gaming's more pleasurable experiences.

Even disregarding the airstream (or the vibrating seat for that matter), *Arctic Thunder* is just about the best fun you can have in the arcades right now. It's Midway racing in excelsis – ludicrous speeds, daft power-ups, sneaky short cuts and an intense multiplayer experience. Inland was handed the task of porting it to the PS2 and it's chosen to recreate the arcade experience frame for frame. Surely success is assured?

Except on first glance, *Arctic Thunder* looks kinda shoddy. Sure, all the courses you recognise are in there, but the animation is faltering and textures break up all over the place. We've been told countless times that the internal technology of PS2 is now just as powerful as that contained within coin-op machines, so visually, this has to go down as a huge disappointment.

Luckily, as soon as you start to play the game, graphical concerns can be put to the back of your mind. *Arctic Thunder* moves so fast that you hardly notice the struggle to push polygons. Luridly-coloured power-ups litter the screen and in your struggle to greedily gather as many of them as possible, there's no time admire the view.

With eight riders in each race, all firing snow bombs at each other simultaneously, things do get messy. This is one of those gloriously basic racers where scenery is there for you to smash through, rather than to provide an obstacle to rapid progress. Brake? You won't even need to take your finger off the accelerator.

This is not to say that *Arctic Thunder* is easy. Collecting the right power-up at the right time is crucial, as is shaving off vital tenths of a second by discovering a new short cut, or boosting on to a high ridge to access the devastating super attack. Furthermore the AI riders are ruthless and any success is always earned.

There's more depth to *Arctic Thunder* than to most arcade conversions of its ilk. A total of 12 courses display commendable variety while an intelligent game structure (see Points Win Prizes) and a decent split-screen Multiplayer mode turn what would have been a game-to-rent into a game-to-buy. The vehicle upgrades seem superfluous but there are endless high score tables for you to conquer.

The ropey graphics and lack of aforementioned air conditioning in *Arctic Thunder*'s PS2 incarnation suggest that your local smoky games arcade needn't rebrand itself as a trendy wine bar just yet. Nevertheless, this is another winning package of instant coin-op thrills from the ever-reliable Midway arcade stable. ☐ **Sam Richards**

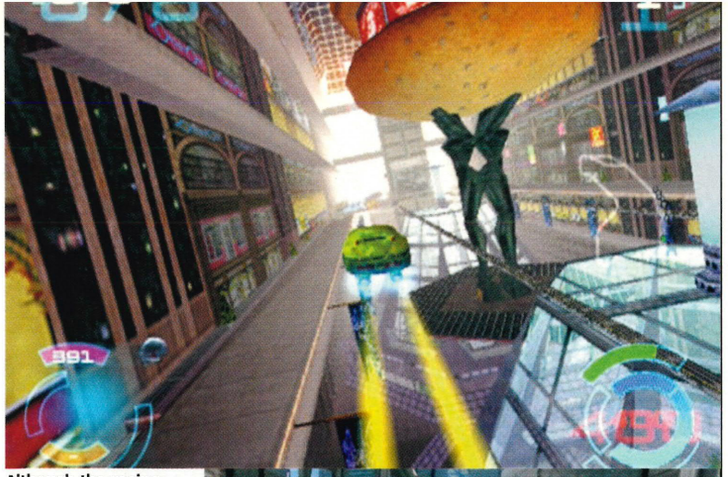
ARCTIC THUNDER

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Don't let the crude visuals put you off. This is archetypal Midway arcade racing – fast, fearless and furious.
- Loads of great multiple-route courses - Progressive game structure - Those sleds don't half shift	- Ropey graphics - Not quite as satisfying as the arcade game	

Graphics	Not exactly next-gen quality	04
Sound	Suitably brash and chaotic	06
Gameplay	Instant arcade thrills par excellence	08
Life span	Longer than most arcade racers	07

07

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT



Although the racing arenas are poorly realised, take time to stop and read the various ad hoardings.

The unforgiving courses are full of obstacles that if hit, slow you down so much you'll lose.

NYR: NEW YORK RACE

This cab ain't stoppin' for no-one.

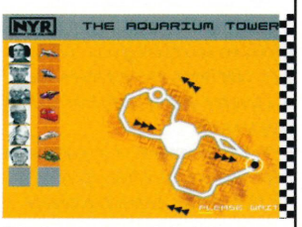
Publisher: Wanadoo
Developer: Kalisto Entertainment
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-8
Out: November
Web site: www.kalisto.com

Good a movie as *The Fifth Element* was, we have to question if it was iconic enough to warrant two games. First there was an average platform game on PSone many moons ago and now this – a sub-standard *WipEout* clone.

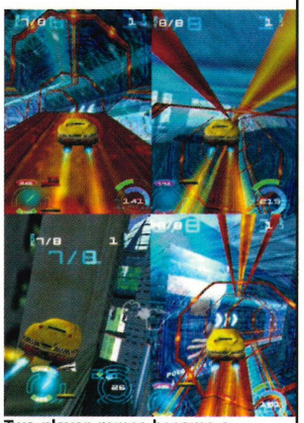
NYR takes its inspiration from the futuristic highways depicted in the film, where wheels and Tarmac are banished in favour of sleek flying machines that weave in and out of the architecture at speeds up to 500mph. A roadless Big Apple of the future should make for an exciting playing arena but, as you'll soon discover, your movement is restricted to a predetermined course from which it's impossible to stray.

Starting out as Korben Dallas – Bruce Willis's character in his hovering NY cab – you must win races to unlock further vehicles and tracks. However, this game is so unforgiving from the start that a faultless race can often be ruined by one minor mistake on the final bend that enables the chasing pack to overtake and pip you to the post. There is a selection of power-ups that'll help in your goal, such as supersonic speed boosts and homing missiles, but they all look the same and it's rather like a lucky dip in terms of what you get.

NYR has a smooth feel about it and controlling your chosen craft is a doddle and at times quite absorbing. Fundamentally though, the game is marred by cheap and cheerful graphics that fail to convey any of the atmosphere from Luc Besson's picturesque blockbuster. ☐ **Ryan Butt**



It looks easy enough, but the courses are tough to complete.



Two-player games become a monotonous fight to the finish.

NYR: NEW YORK RACE

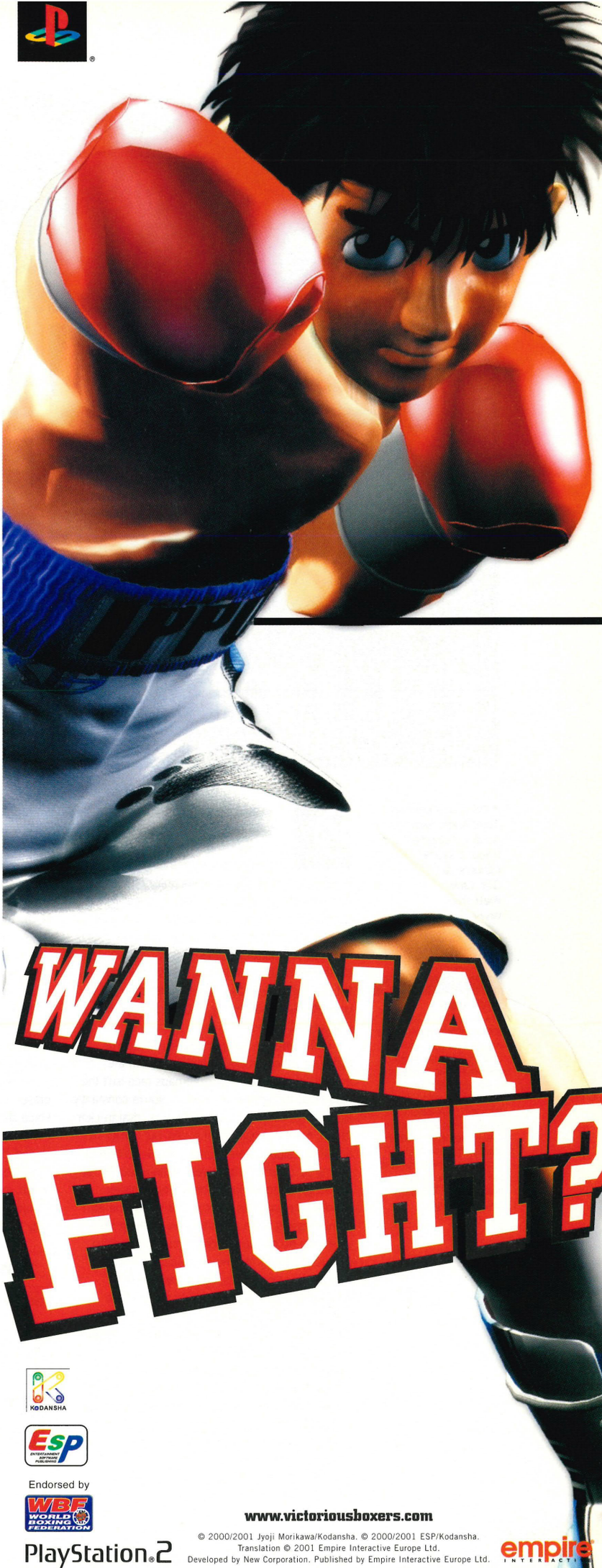
Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:
– Smooth handling	– Lacks atmosphere – Infuriates to often

Graphics	06
Sound	07
Gameplay	05
Life span	05

Smooth and frantic enough, but it has a severe lack of atmosphere.

05

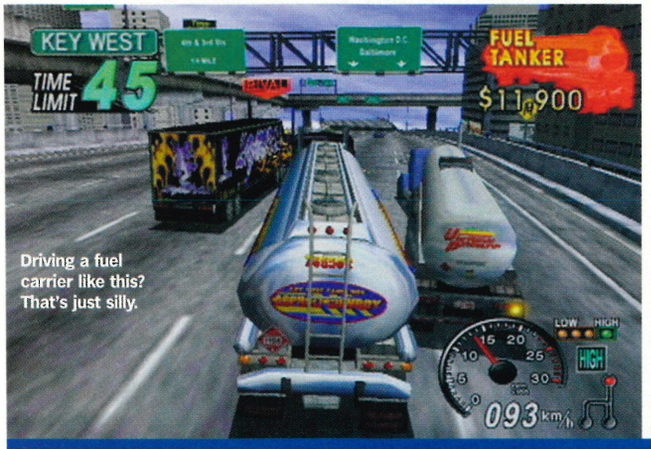
PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT



Park quickly, and you'll set a new time record.

Cars: some you deliver, and some you destroy.

Rushing to park by a suicidal drop? Tight time limits mean you don't have a choice.



Driving a fuel carrier like this? That's just silly.

Use the inside cab view, and you'll get a better sense of speed and a handy rear view mirror.

18 WHEELER

You can take the game out of the arcade, but you can't take the arcade...

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Sega/ Acclaim Cheltenham
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2
Out: Now
Web site: www.acclaim.com

Back story

You should know Sega by now: creator of some of the world's best videogames, and, following the death of the Dreamcast, conceivably the best development house in the world. It released *18 Wheeler* into the arcade in 2000, with a Dreamcast version following shortly after, and Acclaim picked up the PS2 rights at the same time as they bought *Crazy Taxi* and *Zombie Revenge*.

You could do this deal without a second thought back in the arcades, subconsciously, instinctively. If you were offered Sega's impression of American trucking wrapped up in a shiny polished red cabinet with an overstated steering wheel, metal surrounds and crystal clear visuals, how could you refuse? And afterwards you'd walk away, walk taller, because you had memories. This game built ego. Up in the cab of your 18-wheeled steel beast, you felt like a god. Actually, you felt better than a god: you felt like a god in a big truck. Probably the best kind of god there is.

In *18 Wheeler*, you race big trucks across tightly-bounded American highways from the comfort of your own home. Perhaps race isn't the right word though, because whilst you're constantly fighting against the clock and another rival trucker, there's no real sensation of speed. Big trucks accelerate slowly, steer clumsily and have trouble getting up even the shallowest incline, and, for all Sega's good arcade intentions, if the vehicles handled the same as a *Crazy Taxi* there'd be no point dressing them up in ten-ton clothing. Still, when you do get up to speed, your momentum means chaos. It's slo-mo destruction, carnage wrought by poor brakes, bad steering and inevitability. And while watching cars spin out under your unstoppable force is entertaining for the first ten minutes or so, soon you'll be looking for something else to thrill.

Aside from the Versus game, which is straightforward and fun as two-player options have a tendency to be, there are three separate modes. The first is the straight arcade game, which has you hauling different deliveries through four separate stages across America. The second, a form of circuit racing where bonuses are scored for crushing the right kind of car, sees your truck flying around one of four circuits in an attempt to beat its own record. The third is perhaps the strongest, and involves you parking your truck against the clock. Odd that a racing game's finest moment is the bit where you try really hard to slow down. Something's wrong.

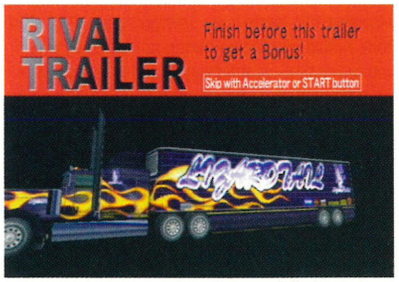
And it's not in the conversion, or at least not in the code – Acclaim have done a fine job in recreating all of *18 Wheeler*'s destructive beauty, from New York through Dallas to Vegas. The problem is that, although Sega design great arcade games (and *18 Wheeler* is a great arcade game), that's exactly where something this insubstantial belongs: the arcade.

It needs the cabinet, the horn, the overstated presence. Even with the support of Logitech's GT Force steering wheel, the PS2 version can't hope to match the arcade original. All the sensations are muted, there's no performing to the crowd – truck-riding gods need a congregation, after all – and it's much, much too short. Trading a pound for ten minutes of show-off deity is one thing. Buying it for forty is something else. ☐ **Ste Curran**

SLIPSTREAM

Not just Mark Hamill's überwork.

Find yourself behind a big enough vehicle, and you can move faster by staying in their slipstream. Where most games rely on your own instinct to inform you if you're taking advantage of the lack of drag, *18 Wheeler* politely flashes up 'Slipstream' on the screen. It's a little redundant though, since you really ought to notice the speed boost it gives you, particularly against the evil rival truck; manage to beat them to the finish line and you'll receive a bonus item for your efforts.



Successfully beat Lizard Tail to the finish line and you'll win add-ons for your truck.

18 WHEELER

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Big, brash, colourful, and very, very heavy, but without enough substance to please all but dedicated haulage fans.
- Happy memories of the arcade cabinet - Strangely compelling parking mode - Really Big Trucks	- Slow-paced for an arcade racer - Lightweight gameplay	

Graphics	Arcade perfect, big and shiny	08
Sound	Not much wrong here, either	08
Gameplay	Instantly amusing, but tires quickly	06
Life span	You won't keep coming back	05

06

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

Each match-up is an unending string of tussles, fist fights and body slams.

NHL HITZ 2002

Meet the child of Jane Torvill and Attila the Hun...

From the makers of *Ready 2 Rumble* and *NBA Hoopz* comes another sports game gone bad. This time, arcade kings Midway enter the rink with *NHL Hitz 2002*. Right from the intro, it's clear violence is rewarded over skill. Smash an opponent to find space, win face-offs with a punch and manipulate a four-button control system to edge in-match brawls. Add manic commentary and it's not just an assault on the senses, but your sanity.

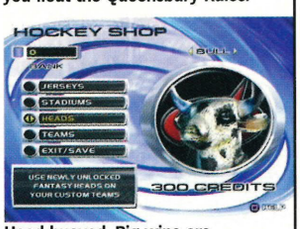
The gameplay is frenetic and brutal, with the player controlling teams of three players, plus the goalie, on a mini rink. For extra pace employ a turbo boost then check, 'deke' and spin your way to victory. In Exhibition mode success nets you points that you exchange for extras including alien heads and bizarre venues such as the Coliseum.

When you're bored of that, try out Franchise mode and win stats for your team of no-hopers – reminiscent of *Speedball 2*. Like a weak echo of that future sport hit, *NHL Hitz*'s gameplay is founded on aggression, persistence, speed and a basic shooting dynamic. For balance, there's a progressive training section and a traditional Championship mode enabling you to guide a real NHL team to Stanley Cup glory.

Without breaking new ground, *NHL Hitz 2002* is a satisfying if short-lived laugh, especially in Two-player mode. Unfortunately, you'll master the controls and tactical dimension all too quickly and the gruelling end-to-end sway of hockey's latest incarnation is simply too repetitive. ☐ **Lee Hall**

Publisher: Midway
Developer: Black Box
Price: £39.99
Players: 4
Out: Now
Web site:
www.midway.com

Fight night: things turn ugly when you flout the Queensbury Rules.



Head buoyed: Big wins are rewarded with crazy bonuses.

NHL HITZ 2002

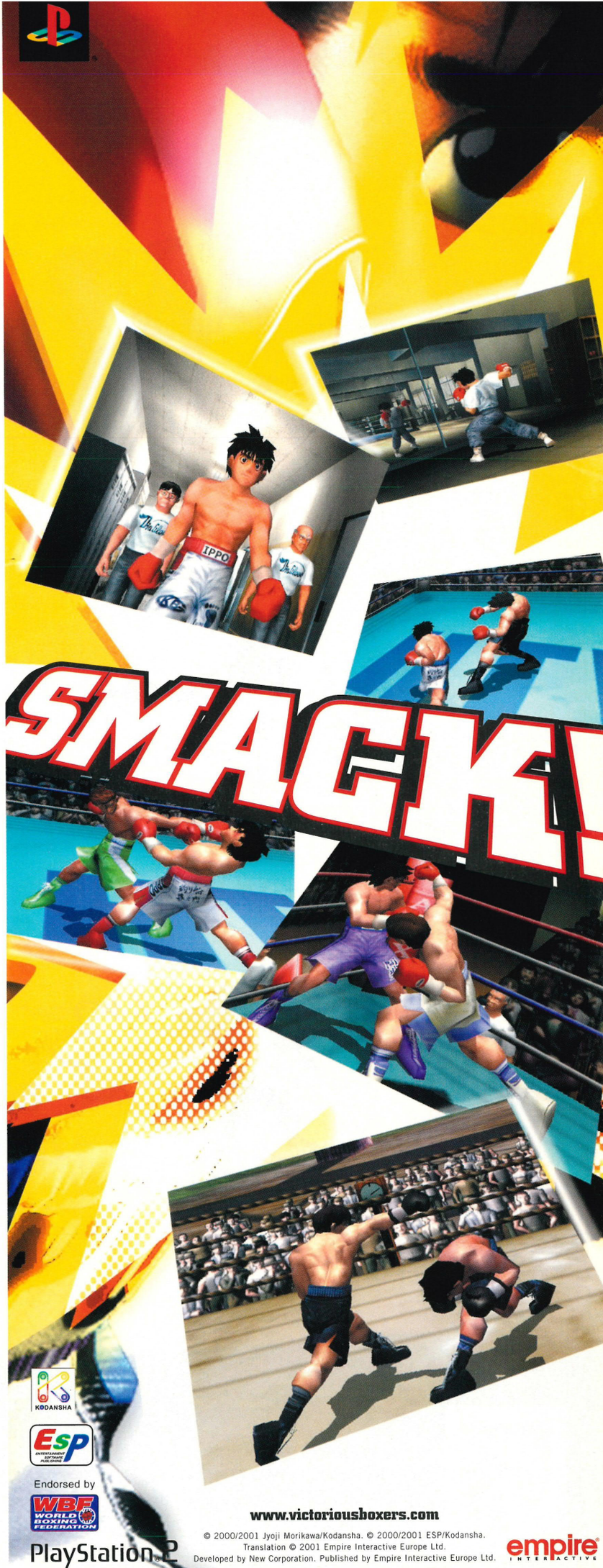
Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:
- It's pure Midway - Unlockable goodies	- Samey gameplay - Few original touches

Graphics	06
Sound	07
Gameplay	06
Life span	06

Lacks enough depth to secure a high score. Buy *NHL 2002* instead.

06

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT



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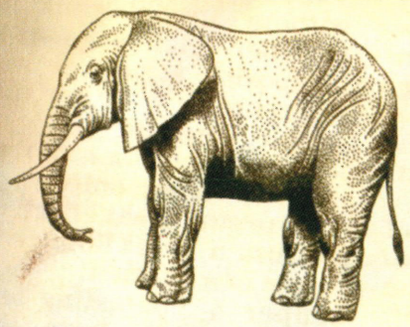
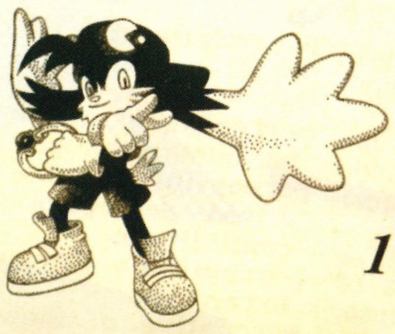
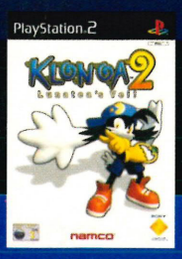


40% Ears
100% Memory

20% Ears
100% Cute



60% Ears
100% Superhero



Klonoa's not your everyday superhero, but then he's not from your everyday world. He inflates enemies like balloons and uses them as space hoppers. His giant ears propel him to dizzy heights in this surreal world. He's a new breed of superhero and he's back. Just don't call him big ears.

www.uk.playstation.com

PlayStation.2

Come last and you earn no cash... and get chastised by other drivers.

By some miracle of science this large stone won't even dent your Jeep.

TEST DRIVE: OFFROAD WIDE OPEN

Angel Studios return with a game that looks quite a bit like their other one.

Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Angel Studios
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2
Out: Now
Web site: www.uk.infogrames.com

Back story
Angel Studios previously worked on the similarly free-roaming racers *Smugglers Run* and *Midtown Madness* (which appeared on the PC).

Quite why anyone would want to make a hobby out of offroad driving is a mystery. Not only is there the constant threat of your vehicle tumbling onto its roof, or skidding into a bear, it's a filthy way to pass time. Just you ask any offroader; they may be safely cocooned within their Range Rover, but that mud has a habit of working its way through the smallest crevice. Of course, the way to avoid this threat of injury and dirtiness is to play the latest instalment in Infogrames' *Test Drive* series, *Test Drive: Offroad Wide Open*.

Developed by Angel Studios, the team behind the free-roaming *Smuggler's Run*, there's a smell around *Test Drive: Offroad* – and it isn't the smell of ruptured bear intestines cooling on a Jeep's radiator. It's the stench of familiarity. But nice familiarity, like a kindly uncle coming into your bedroom to say goodnight in own his special way.

Here's how it is: taking control of some 16 licensed vehicles, *Test Drive: Offroad* thrusts you into 30-odd go-anywhere races, where the aim is to reach the next checkpoint, no matter what. Though you get a Free Drive option, the main single-player game is more tightly structured than *Smuggler's Run*. It divides the races into two types; those where the checkpoints are dotted randomly around the landscape, and those where you benefit from following a more linear course.

Though they're broken down into the aforementioned races, there are only three main maps in the game: Hawaii, Yosemite National Park, and Moab, Utah. Suffice to say, each is huge, and packed with features such as rockslides, volcanoes, trains, oncoming traffic and waves crashing against rocks. Indeed sightseeing in the Free Drive mode is highly recommended. Unfortunately, large as these maps may be, there are only three of them, and by the time you've completed every race, you'll possibly be sick of seeing the same hills, valleys, short cuts, troughs and scrubby brush.

Also, though it purports to have 'realistic physics' this realism doesn't appear to extend to the law of physics relating to falling 5,000 foot from the top of a mountain. Admittedly, the way the vehicles shrug off such impacts is part of *Test Drive*'s fun, but anyone expecting a realistic simulation will be disappointed. Similarly, some may feel let down by the basic customisation system, where fine tweaking of engines makes way for a simpler, incremental method of upgrading.

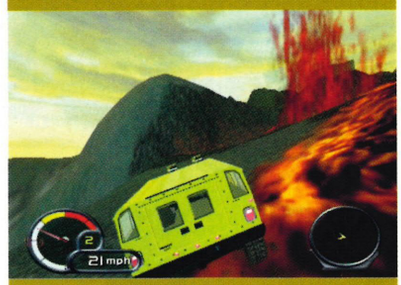
Ultimately, *Test Drive: Offroad* is a relatively good offroad sim. It feels a bit like *Smuggler's Run*, but benefits from refinements to the gameplay, and the visuals of the landscapes make up for the paltry three locations. Until *Smuggler's Run 2* sees the light of day then this is the best Jeep fix you'll get for your PlayStation 2. ☐ **Paul Rose**

WISH YOU WERE HERE

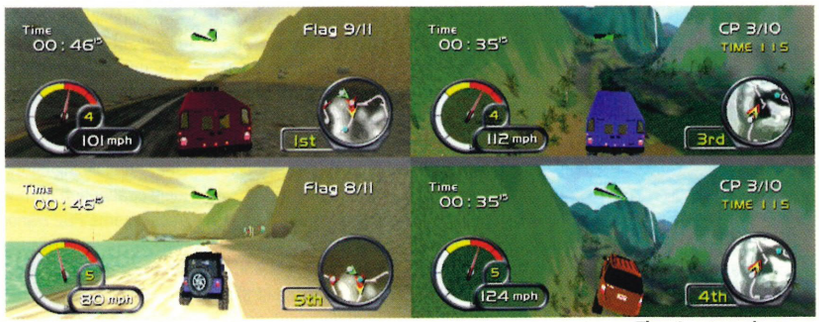
Of all the maps in *Test Drive: Offroad*, Hawaii is undoubtedly the best looking. Here's the *OPS2* pick of the sights you can see.

The Beach: Hold your breath as you marvel at the roaring beauty of the sea. See the waves smash majestically onto the rocks, like albino horses braining themselves without a second thought.

The Valley: Is there a more pastoral and relaxing scene than this? Two mighty rivers, reaching their apex, and spilling over a cliff edge like glistening, silver vomit.



The Volcano: Behold its fiery power! See Mother Nature disgorge burning milk from her blackened breast! Be astonished as your apparently asbestos vehicle fails to burn!



There's a two-player option but no *Smuggler's*-style battle mayhem.

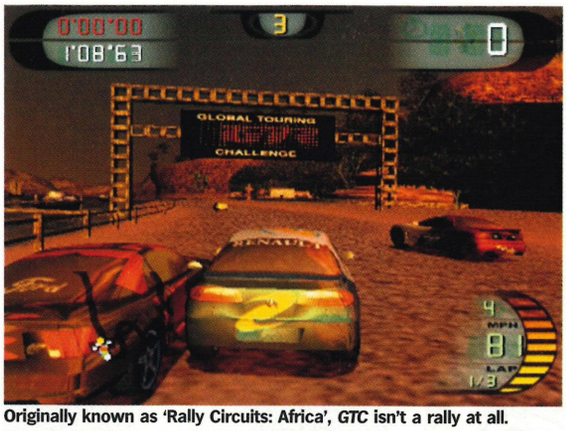
TEST DRIVE: OFFROAD WIDE OPEN

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	It's a racing game that's quite unlike any other racing game on the PS2. Except for *Smuggler's Run*.
- Spectacular views - The offroad racing game of choice	- Limited to three areas - The graphics are pretty but plain	

Graphics	Stunning, for their scope if nothing else	07
Sound	The usual mix of dirge metal	05
Gameplay	Don't take it seriously and you'll have a blast	07
Life span	More maps would've been nice	05

06

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT



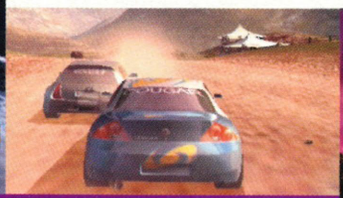
Originally known as 'Rally Circuits: Africa', *GTC* isn't a rally at all.

No time for tourism here, just keep your foot on the pedal.

Clouds of dust obscure the way ahead on desert tracks.

GTC: Africa does provide some spectacular vistas.

Because the circuits aren't too long, a two-player race can become a cat-and-mouse game.



ON THE DVD

GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE: AFRICA

Rage's touring cars sim shows gamers 'the real Africa'.

Publisher: Rage
Developer: Rage Warrington
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2
Out: November
Web site: www.rage.com

Back story
Rage's first PlayStation2 outing was *Wild Wild Racing*. Reviewed back in issue #001, it too used diverse and unpredictable terrain as a basis for its tracks. Unfortunately it wasn't as good as similar titles – the same can also be said for *GTC*.

If we were to believe the majority of racing games that feature Africa as one of their stages (often referred to simply as 'the Safari level') you would be forgiven for thinking the continent is nothing but an arid, featureless dustbowl. Aside from the odd zebra of course. Respect due to Rage's *GTC: Africa* – a touring car title that not only shows off the picturesque scenery of the country, but puts it to good use within some well realised courses.

Offering a 19-circuit trip from point to point across Africa, and taking in levels based in Zambia, Egypt, South Africa and Morocco, *GTC* shows us the continent's landmarks as sleek Ford Focuses and Mégane Coupés enjoy a journey that dispels many a gaming myth. Similarly, when necessity does take the cars into the barren areas, it is only to show that the courses are not just flat, straight desert roads, but that they boast gentle hills and tight corners every bit as tortuous as those of the urban stages.

While *GTC: Africa* avoids the visual stereotypes normally associated with its host continent, it features some overly-familiar gameplay. Although the sublime handling offered by the analogue sticks does allow the player to throw the cars around in a suitably robust manner, the game follows a predictable route. Everything boils down to speed, negating the essence of real touring car tournaments where getting through in one piece is paramount. This is further emphasised by the short course lengths and a lack of visible damage to the vehicles. Despite the cars repeatedly side-slamming each other and bouncing off walls, they remain showroom clean throughout, further distancing *GTC* from the sport it claims to mimic – yet again the demands of car manufacturers have diluted the essence of a touring car contest.

However, as a straight – if predictable – racing game, there is nevertheless something very appealing about *GTC*. This is best demonstrated as clouds of dust obscure your vision as you pelt around a tight corner. At times it feels like *Ridge Racer V* in undesirable conditions, but with the fast pace adding the buzz Namco's game lacked. In the meantime, graphical tricks such as the sunlight glancing off the cars' bodywork also deflect attention from what is effectively the same racing game PS2 owners have been playing since November 2000. It's hard to dislike a game that provides exciting racing round such lush and diverse circuits as those in *GTC* – no matter how little it advances the genre. ☐ **Steve Merrett**

CHALLENGING TIME

You need never go to Africa after playing this game.

1. Carthage
These Roman remains are seen in Tunisia, although the amphitheatre may be artistic licence.

2. Casablanca
A dash round the romantic Moroccan city – you'll just want to play it again, Sam. (Sorry)

3. Victoria falls
Visit one of the most spectacular sights of the natural world – then drive straight past it.

4. The Sphinx
Rage just couldn't resist winding its Egyptian track between the pyramids and Sphinx at Giza.

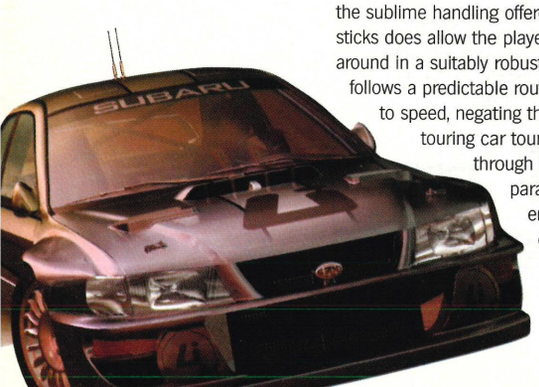
GTC: AFRICA

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	An otherwise unspectacular racer is lifted by clever use of interesting locations.
- A fast, undemanding racer - The six CPU cars are no pushover - Fun two-player - Cars handle well	- Not exactly original - No car damage. - Short courses lack depth	

Graphics	Subtle hues enrich the well-realised courses	08
Sound	The world music borders on naff, but it works	07
Gameplay	Straight A-to-B racing, no frills	06
Life span	19 short courses	07

07

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK VERDICT



If it looks this good on the outside...
GTC
Rage
GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE
GTC
AFRICA
Rage
www.rage.com
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PlayStation®2

***Splashdown* has some of the best water effects yet seen in a videogame.**

Riders display obvious disappointment if they put in a poor performance.

Be careful not to beach your Sea-Doo.

SPLASHDOWN

Some of the best water effects ever... but is there a game in there somewhere?

Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Rainbow Studios
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2
Out: 16 November
Web site: www.rainbowstudios.com

Back story

The people at Rainbow Studios are a busy bunch. Before they began slaving over the incredibly complicated construction of *Splashdown*'s water effects, they made *ATV Offroad* for SCEE on PS2 and a whole host of PC titles. Most notable is their debut (and in the current climate, the most controversial) *Air Havoc Controller*, an off-kilter game that put you in charge of a sky full of jumbo jets.

To be a success, it's fair to say a game needs a hook. Something that people talk about. You know. It's the type of conversation that goes, "Oh, that game, I've heard that's interesting because..." A few examples? *World Rally Championship*; it's got tracks you can see stretching out before you for miles. *Burnout*; you get points for crashing. *Final Fantasy X*; you can't tell the difference between pre-rendered animation and in-game graphics. The *MGS2* demo; well, pick your own.

With Angel Studios' Sea-Doo sim *Splashdown*, it's in the water. For a better description of the effort that went into making the most life-like water in a videogame, see someone who knows about physics. Alternatively have a look at the screenshots here. And it's even more impressive when you see it in action.

The more astute gamer might find after the initial novelty has worn off, there's a realisation this water ain't quite perfect. The ripple effect, the spray, the wake of other Sea-Doos, the waves – they are all confined to the middle portion of the screen. Where the water touches the bank or the coast it can appear flat. It doesn't slosh about enough, it doesn't lap the shore quite enough. Pedantic maybe, but after a feature has had such a big build up, it demands criticism. The *feel* of the water is in fact the more impressive achievement.

Following the rigmarole of selecting to play Arcade-style or build a career, you pick a Sea-Doo and it's colour matched driver, hit the brine and...

Woah! New gaming experience. *It actually feels like your craft is buoyant.* You bob up and down with the same dynamics as you would when floating in real life. This is clever and at the same time satisfying. The handling is directly affected by waves and wake causing you to lose balance or speed and forcing you to adjust direction. This makes it necessary to 'work' the Sea-Doo round courses, rather than simply apply gas and steer.

This effect holds up for a while, and distracts from circuits that quickly become monotonous. Because a three lap qualification is necessary before each race (which is also three laps), you can often do the same track up to 12 times before progressing to a new location. Unfortunately, these courses sometimes scream 'afterthought'.

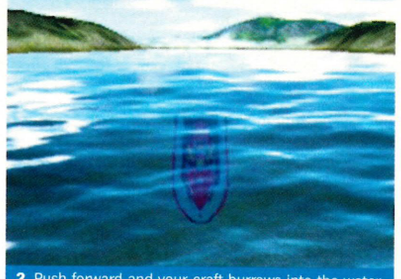
You can imagine the developer finally nailing the water and realising that doesn't make a game in itself – you need something to race through or around. Highlights include Maui and an Australian coral reef. In these locations, the whole experience adds up: Clear blue sky, palm trees and that fluorescent aquamarine sea that normally only exists in picture postcards of some exotic isle. The depth of the water is carefully considered, alternating between the sandy shallows and the darker and deeper areas where rocks and weed lie. The fact the waves defy laws of science and roll at right angles to the shore is forgivable – you'll be too ensconced in the lushness of it all to care.

Compare this to a muddy and featureless German river in the rain and you'll see where the

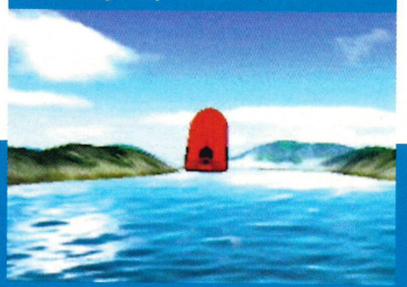
BUOY, OH BUOY

Here's how the water can help you perform a clever loop the loop trick.

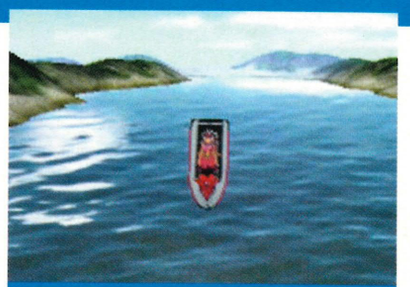
1. Find a nice straight stretch of water and reach a speed of about 100 km/h.



2. Push forward and your craft burrows into the water before forcing its way back to the surface.



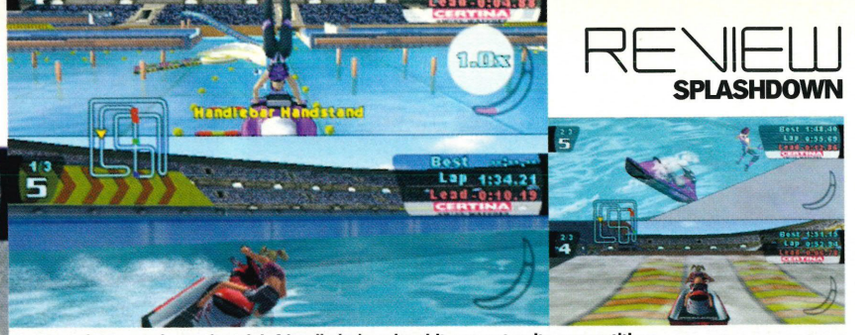
3. As you rise pull back and you'll loop round...



4. ...through 360° and as long as you can level out in time you've just performed a rather fancy move.

Hit a ramp at the right speed and angle and you can find yourself at some dizzy heights.

The dreary German river level features some bizarrely placed buildings.



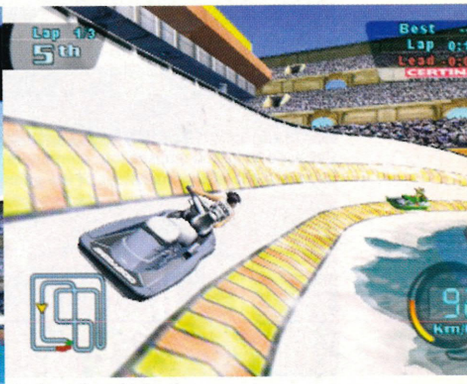
In Two-player mode on the trick friendly indoor level it can get quite competitive.

Arena-based levels like this are a nod towards the *SSX* school of arcade racing.

The Maui level is one of the best examples of how good the water can look.

Pulling tricks like this isn't really much of an option on more complicated courses.

Quite a neat jump by the man in yellow – but he's completely missed the next part of the track.



And we thought Sea-Doos weren't supposed to work out of the water.

//Splashdown lacks the arcade sensibility that diversifies racing titles like *SSX* and *Burnout//*

designers' imaginations ran dry. When there is no sense of depth to the water the effect is somewhat diluted and the game loses impact. It rapidly becomes a case of accelerate, slow down, jump a ramp, land, finish. The buildings, trees, docks and boats you pass appear to have just been randomly dumped there by a bored town planner. It's in levels like this that the clever subtleties of *Splashdown* can be easily exposed as brilliant parts of a not so brilliant game. "Great," you say. "It feels right, it looks right. Why am I getting bored?"

Most likely because the game offers little more than a racing game on water. We're all admittedly a little genre-tired when it comes to racing games and *Splashdown* lacks the arcade sensibility that successfully diversifies other spin-offs like *SSX* and *Burnout*. Training mode explains a few skills to add variety to your runs, such as the Bunny Hop, and the Loop The Loop, which both rely on action of water displacement on your Sea-Doo – think forcing a football under water and letting go (See Buoy, Oh Buoy). It's also possible to perform aerial tricks following a jump. These tend to involve letting go of the handlebars or shifting around in your seat in some manner. Breathtaking? Not really.

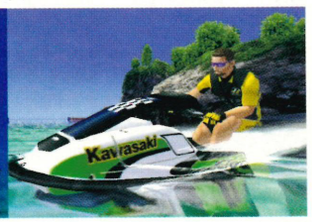
It's only fair to mention here that there are a few graphical glitches, most notably when you drive into or under walls and the game camera gets lost. Plus during racing the AI of opponent Sea-Doos can be a little daft. Sometimes you find you can win a race without putting in much effort at all, in other races it's virtually impossible to get anything above fourth place. A little consistency wouldn't have gone amiss.

So, has *Splashdown* lived up to its accolades? Yes, but only to a degree. It has achieved an aim – to turn lines of computer code into water and set a standard to follow (most notably, for Eidos' *Jet Ski Riders*). Yet somehow Rainbow Studios has failed to complete the equation and add the gaming element that would have made *Splashdown* a roaring deluge. As it stands it's more of a slightly dangerous stream. ☐ **George Walter**

SEA-DOO, JET SKI DON'T

There's a difference between these speedy pleasure boats.

The **Sea-Doo**® is manufactured by Bombardier which was the first company to commercially produce a sit-down watercraft. That was in 1968, when it was advertised with the tagline "As playful as a dolphin." The company also manufactured a snowmobile called a Ski-Doo.



JET SKI® is the water craft brand of motorsports manufacturer Kawasaki. The company claims to have been the first to make a stand-up JET SKI which was introduced in 1973. If you fancy a go on one check out our preview of *Jet Ski Riders* on pg.33, of which this is a screenshot.

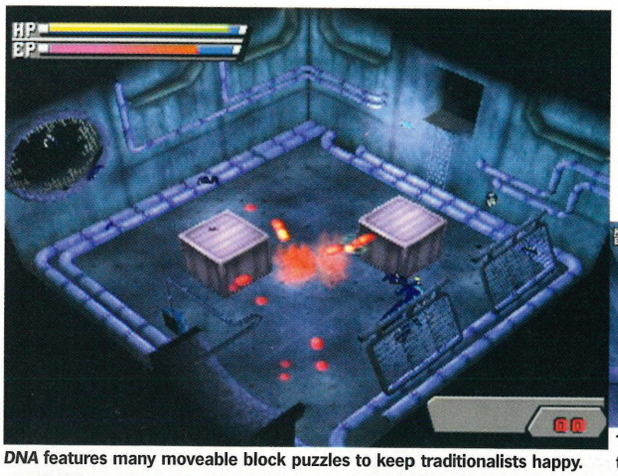
SPLASHDOWN

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	*Splashdown* does what it set out to do graphically but has neglected to include similarly impressive gameplay.
- To experience the water - It's the PS2's first water-based racer - Realistic handling	- Uninspiring gaming - Monotonous tracks - Odd AI	

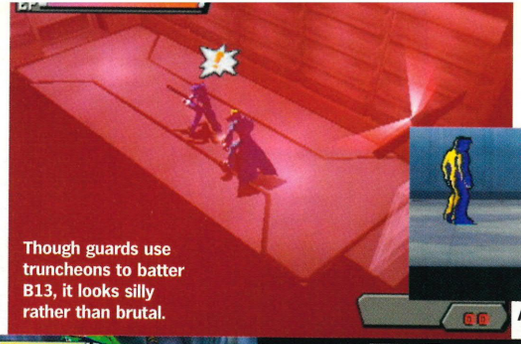
Graphics	Standard-setting water, good motion capture	08
Sound	Tedious high-school rock	04
Gameplay	The handling is well executed	07
Life span	Loads of circuits but you might get bored	06

07

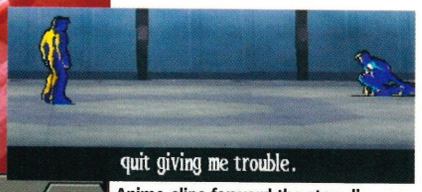
PlayStation 2 VERDICT



DNA features many moveable block puzzles to keep traditionalists happy.

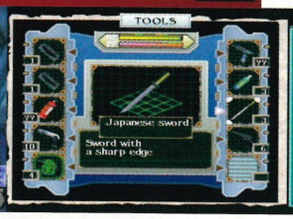


Though guards use truncheons to batter B13, it looks silly rather than brutal.

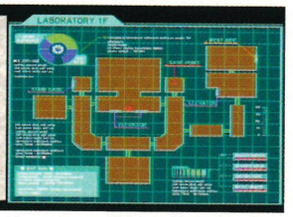


Anime clips forward the story line.

The cel-shaded graphics lend the game its distinctive style.



Weapons are novel and include swords and fire extinguishers.



Maps are available to help cut down on some of the wandering.

Get used to inserting discs into computers – it becomes one of the mainstays of the game.

DNA

Pull your genes inside out in this fiendish cel-shaded adventure game.

Publisher: Virgin Interactive
Developer: Hudsonsoft
Price: £39.99
Players: 1
Out: 30 November
Web site: www.virgininteractive.co.uk

Back story
DNA is from one of Japan's most venerable videogame companies, Hudsonsoft. More observant gamers will remember that its most popular franchise is *Bomberman*, which celebrated its tenth anniversary this year. Strangely enough, the laying of bombs in *DNA* is a vital element of the gameplay.

Let's cut to the chase. This game will appeal to a very small minority of people. You see, *DNA* (Dark Native Apostle) contains puzzles. Not a bad thing per se, but these are the kind of problems General Studies teachers hand out in end of term lessons as farewell holiday 'gifts'. You know the sort of thing, 'If two horses gallop at 30 mph past a car travelling the distance it takes a third horse to canter 20 metres back to Lady Montague's horse box, then what is the distance travelled by the owner's pet spaniel?' For most, this is an excruciating experience. But there are always a few – the type that sit at the front of classrooms with bubble-heads – who would probably find such conundrums a delight.

The puzzles in *DNA* are very, very elaborate. An early problem involves putting a password on to a computer disc. If only it were that simple. No, the disc has a virus which must be eradicated by inserting it into three separate PCs. After discovering the PCs (which takes some onerous exploration) you then insert the disc into the computers in the correct order. Rather bizarrely, finding this sequence involves you looking at clocks to ascertain their ticking speeds. Frankly, it all gets a bit silly.

At least the premise of *DNA* shows some imagination. The hero is a victim of human genome research which has transformed him into a secret military weapon. Waking up in a cell with no memory – except that his code name is B13 – the hero must piece together the mystery of how he developed certain special powers. Interestingly, B13 has four slots in his hand that can be programmed with special bio-chips. These chips are discovered throughout the game and after some experimentation will grant the hero powers to overcome mini-puzzles (see Fan Boy).

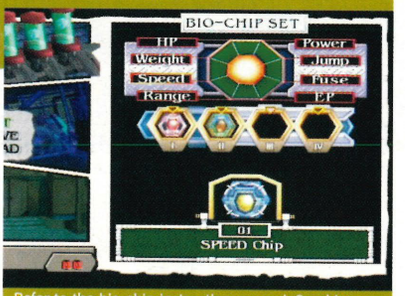
Early investigation unearths a multitude of bio-tech freaks, from gelatinous blobs to samurai sword-wielding guards. A handy bomb can be dropped to dispatch enemies, and cleverly, a timed fuse can be set to kill more persistent followers. Unfortunately, the combat soon becomes repetitive, and because enemies respawn there is little motivation for clearing rooms. Eventually, it just becomes easier to travel through rooms avoiding the multitude of chasing foes, a situation which results in giving much of the action the appearance of a manga-style Benny Hill sketch.

Although clues can be discovered to help solve the game's ridiculous riddles, too many of the problems require laborious backtracking and trial and error. The novel touches are endearing, the game design flaws regrettable. Unless you are a bit of a bubble-head, you'll be better off with Core Design's adventure, *Project Eden*. ☐ **Mark Walbank**

FAN BOY

Many puzzles in the game can be solved by rearranging the bio-chips in the hero's hand. There are four slots available, and with some tinkering a great number of special powers can be triggered.

These whirling fan blades blow B13 into a nasty ditch whenever he gets close.



Refer to the bio-chip instruction manual. Combine EP, Power, Speed to activate a speed burst.

That mysterious doorway can now be reached with a quick sprint past the industrial fans.

DNA

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	You'll need to wear a hat for all the head-scratching, but for those who persist it can be rewarding.
- Some clever puzzles - Compulsive narrative - Lengthy	- Some annoying puzzles - Too much backtracking - Shoddy combat	

Graphics	Derivative and rough cel-shading	05
Sound	Gentle tinkling background music	05
Gameplay	Brilliant highs, terrible lows	06
Life span	Long, especially if you're thick	06

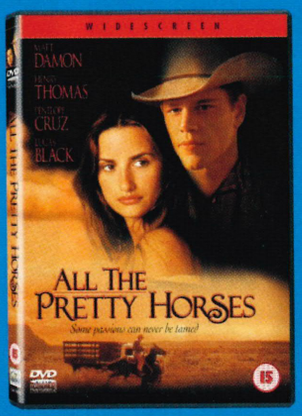
06

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

GREAT MOVIES THIS MONTH ON DVD VIDEO

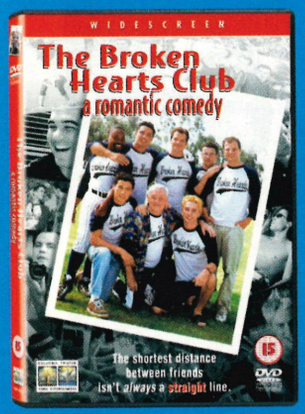
From the team that brought you Deuce Bigalow: Male Gigolo and Big Daddy - Abandoned by his parents as a kid, Joe Dirt takes any job he can to scrape a living while he crosses America to find them, encountering some unlikely 'friends' along the way - then a local DJ puts him on air for some cheap laughs, but the audience goes wild for Joe's wacky yet genuine take on his life and travels. Maybe they can help him find a better future than the one he was looking for? Also featuring Brittany Daniel and comic cameos from Rosanna Arquette, Joe Don Baker, Christopher Walken and Kid Rock. Fantastic DVD extras include Director/Star commentaries, deleted and alternate scenes, outtakes and weblink.

RELEASE DATE: 5th November



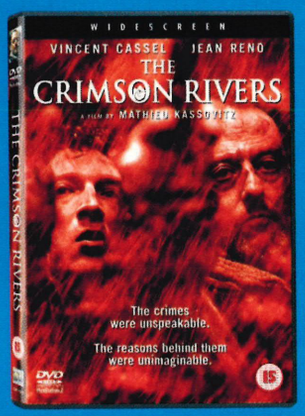
Academy Award®-winner Matt Damon (Good Will Hunting) and Penelope Cruz star in director Billy Bob Thornton's action-filled tale of love and loss set against the oppressive heat of the Mexican ranches. Based on Cormac McCarthy's best-selling novel, DVD Special Features include trailers, filmographies and animated menus.

RELEASE DATE: 5th November



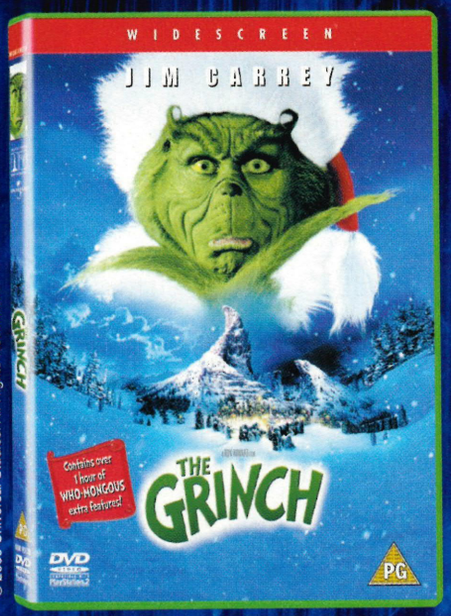
In an endearing and funny coming-of-age story, Dennis, a promising photographer who can't quite decide if his friends are a blessing or a curse. To an outsider it may seem the only thing these friends have in common is playing for the same team, but when tragedy strikes, these unlikely friends prove they are more like family. Special Features include 7 deleted scenes, director/producer commentary, trailers and filmographies.

RELEASE DATE: 5th November



Jean Reno (Leon, Ronin) and Vincent Cassel (Doberman) star in this tense thriller as two policemen working on separate grisly murders who discover the cases have something very dark in common. This brilliant 2 disc DVD has over 2 1/2 hours of bonus footage including 10 Featurettes with a Making of Documentary, Behind The Scenes, Multi-Angle Explorations, Director/Cast Commentary plus much more!

RELEASE DATE: 26th November



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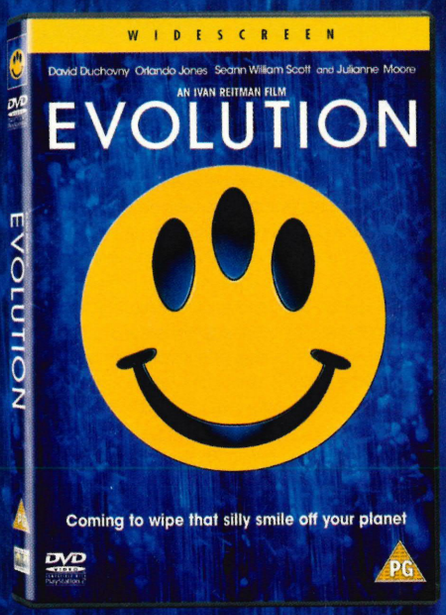
The hilarious Jim Carrey spectacularly brings The Grinch to life in this live-action remake of the classic Dr Seuss book about a bad-tempered green hairy creature intent on stealing Christmas. Annoyed by the out-of-control Christmas festivities in the village of Whoville one year, The Grinch conspires to deprive the Whos of Christmas...but soon learns that the true spirit of Christmas goes much deeper than tinsel and toys...

www.thegrinchmovie.co.uk

Includes incredible extra features - behind the scenes, interviews with cast and crew, visual effects, make-up and set design featurettes, 10 minutes of deleted scenes, hilarious outtakes, music video and an interactive fun and games segments for kids.

Release Date: 19th November



From the director of Ghostbusters Ivan Reitman, Evolution is a hilarious look at the chaos that ensues when single celled organisms, brought to Earth on a meteorite, undergo 5 million years of evolution in a single month. David Duchovny, Orlando Jones, Seann William Scott and Julianne Moore star as the band of misfits trying to save the earth in this hilarious action-packed sci-fi comedy.

DVD extras include two behind the scenes featurettes, 20 minutes of deleted scenes and a commentary from Ivan Reitman

Release Date: 26th November

Available from

Virgin megastores

www.cthe.co.uk

UNIVERSAL

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COLUMBIA TRISTAR HOME ENTERTAINMENT

Targets can be ground-based as well as aerial. Here, we destroy a tank.

The more daring pilot will try to fly through that gap in the rocks.

You'll be too busy trying to control the plane to concentrate on acting out your *Top Gun* fantasies.

Blowing up a power station isn't very good for the environment. But it's your job.

When bombing you get this top down view.

Go on. Try to get excited about scoring a direct hit. Hard isn't it?

TOP GUN: COMBAT ZONES

It won't so much take your breath away, as cause you to release a weary sigh.

Publisher: Virgin Interactive
Developer: Digital Integrations
Price: £39.99
Players: 1
Out: 9 November
Web site: www.virgininteractive.co.uk

Back story
Top Gun is loosely based on Tom Cruise's breakthrough movie from way back in 1986 – a film that has spawned several games over the years. All of which have been forgettable, unlike the film's particularly memorable soundtrack.

These are uncertain times in which we live. Once more, the forces of goodness and light are facing off against unspeakable evil, and the threat of global war and devastation hovers over the civilised world like a nose-bogey strung over a luncheon meat sandwich. However, the wily games producer already has dollar signs in his eyes. As has been proved in the past, international conflicts have not only provided the template for a thousand hit games, they've boosted sales of titles with military themes. Would EA's *Desert Strike* have been half as successful without the Gulf War?

Indeed, it's a form of mass hysteria that makes us cringe and fawn before the American flag, so – in theory – the patriotic military posturing of the game *Top Gun* should hit the zeitgeist bang on. Except it's based upon a licensed property that's only slightly less irrelevant than *Dunston Checks In*, and beyond its military aviation theme, this game has about as much to do with the 1986 *Top Gun* movie as, well, *Dunston Checks In*.

It's an arcade-slanted shoot-'em-up with simulation aspirations. Think Namco's *Ace Combat*, only not quite as good. Over some 30-odd missions, you get to dogfight with Cold War Mig-29s, drop bombs on terrorist weapons plants, and disrupt enemy communications. The missions are split into the requisite training stages and curiously spread across three barely discernable eras of aviation history. There is also a variety of locales, from sub-arctic tundra, to crowded cities.

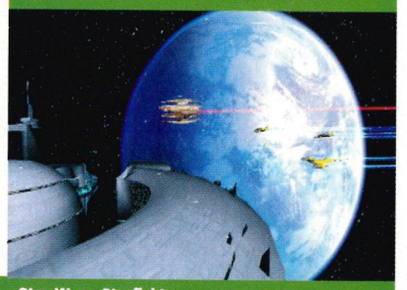
You begin at the controls of a contemporary US Navy Tomcat, though as you progress you unlock a commendable array of aircraft. It's the one area where *Top Gun* excels.

Although the developer has clearly set out to make a game that appeals to simulation freaks while also being accessible to trigger-jockeys, the end result is something of an underpowered mess. At no time does it feel like you're in control of an aircraft. Indeed, for the most part, it's more like piloting a pair of crosshairs around a screen. Too often your missions will end not with an enemy rocket up your exhaust pipe, but because you've been unable to pull out of a dive soon enough and have crashed into the ground. Even if you can tolerate the uninspired handling, it's likely you'll tire of the 30+ missions before you've seen them all. The operative word here being 'repetitive'.

Depressingly, *Top Gun* can't even boast lovely graphics to compensate for the gameplay issues. The planes look relatively nice, but the background visuals are flat and blocky. Worse still, *Top Gun* wins the award for the Least Impressive Explosions Ever Seen In A Game. It's not so much a case of getting bang for your buck, as getting a waterlogged roman candle. ☐ **Paul Rose**

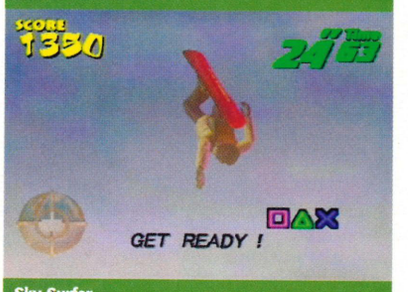
INTO THE DANGER ZONE

Top Gun: Combat Zones **isn't the only choice for the sky-hungry PS2 owner. Here are three other alternatives.**



Star Wars: Starfighter
With aerial combat missions that occur both over land and in space, *Starfighter* shows *Top Gun* how a movie-based, arcade-slanted combat flight sim should play.

Sky Odyssey
With very few guns but plenty of planes, *Sky Odyssey* is the closest thing to a proper flight sim on the PS2. For the dedicated pilot only.



Sky Surfer
No planes, no guns, but lots of sky. Think snowboarding, but without snow. Or the mountains. Or the surfing. But plenty of spinning around in the air with an ironing board strapped to your feet.

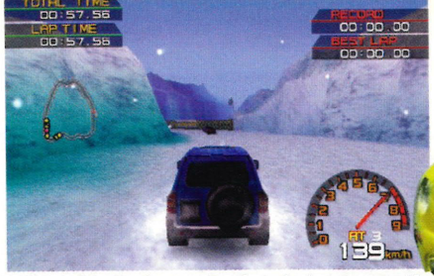
TOP GUN: COMBAT ZONES

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	A flight sim that appears to have been designed by people who've never flown a plane. Now, how much for that *Breakfast Club* licence?
- *Ace Combat 4* isn't out yet - We're some sort of weird Tom Cruise completist	- No two-player dogfight option - It's really quite tedious	

Graphics	Not awful, but the backdrops are bland	05
Sound	Okay – better than the graphics at least	06
Gameplay	*Crash* is a more accurate aircraft simulation	04
Life span	Plenty of missions, but they're very samey	05

04

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT



Is it possible for the new Beetle to look more squat?

The cars may look cute, but the challenges are dull.

PENNY RACERS

It's a pygmy *Gran Turismo*.

Publisher: Midas
Developer: Takara
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-4
Out: Now
Web site: www.midas interactive.co.uk

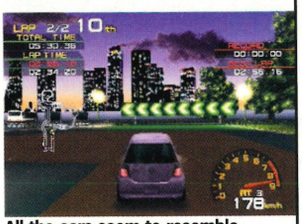
The Japanese use the term 'Super-Deformed' to describe cartoon characters who have had their proportions distorted so they're all squat and stocky with big heads. Though there are no recognisable human characters in *Penny Racers*, the vehicles bear all the terrifying hallmarks of super deformity.

Jeeps, Porsches, Volkswagens, trucks, buses – all are squashed alter-egos of their real-world counterparts. Indeed, once you get your teeth into the game, it's a criticism that can be levelled at most of *Penny Racers*.

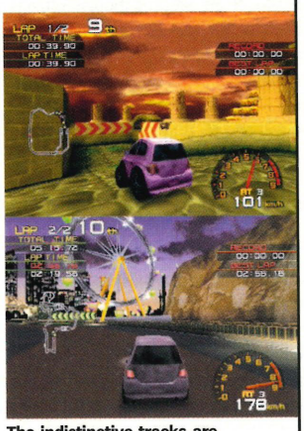
It boasts a gameplay structure similar to *GT3*, wherein you get a quick and easy Arcade mode, a four-player Race mode, and a single-player game that requires you to win driving licences before progressing. There are tune-up options, garages where you can buy and trade cars and even a paint shop where your vehicle can be customised.

However, for all that, at no time does *Penny Racers* take itself seriously. The tracks are a curious mix of the very bland, and less commonly, the rather pretty. Some tracks feature stretches of water, or yawning chasms, which your car reacts to by transforming itself into a boat or a glider. Yet a good 50 percent of the tracks are dull ovals, with few features and fewer challenges.

It's this patchiness that is *Penny Racers*' downfall. It tries hard to be novel and exciting, but for too much of the game you'll be wondering why you're bothering. Best advice? Don't. ☐ **Paul Rose**



All the cars seem to resemble Nissan Micras after a while.



The indistinctive tracks are monotonous to race around.

PENNY RACERS

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:
- Novelty of super-deformed cars	- Ultimately bland and futile

Graphics	03
Sound	02
Gameplay	04
Life span	04

A half-baked, underfed and weedy racer, with a few good tracks.

04

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

Victorious BOXERS
Ippo's Road to Glory

"...is arguably more true to the sport than Knockout Kings"
Official PS2 Magazine

"Smart and likeable"
Gamesmaster

"Knockout stuff!"
"Anyone who loves beat-'em-ups should love Victorious Boxers"
P2

"...dynamic encounters of which Tekken can only dream"
"Smart boxer which happens to K.O. Knockout Kings 2001"
Play

"...the best boxing action I've seen yet"
PSi2

KODANSHA
ESP
Endorsed by
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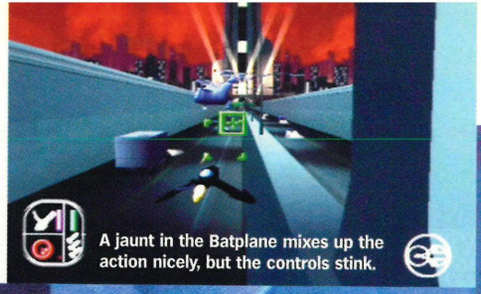
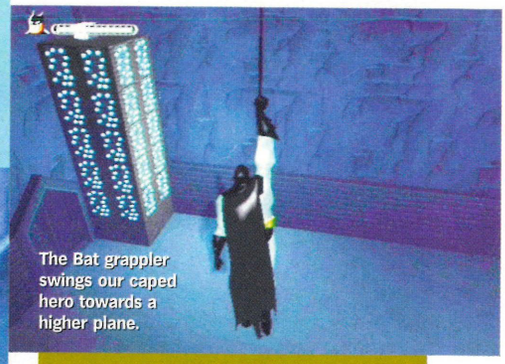
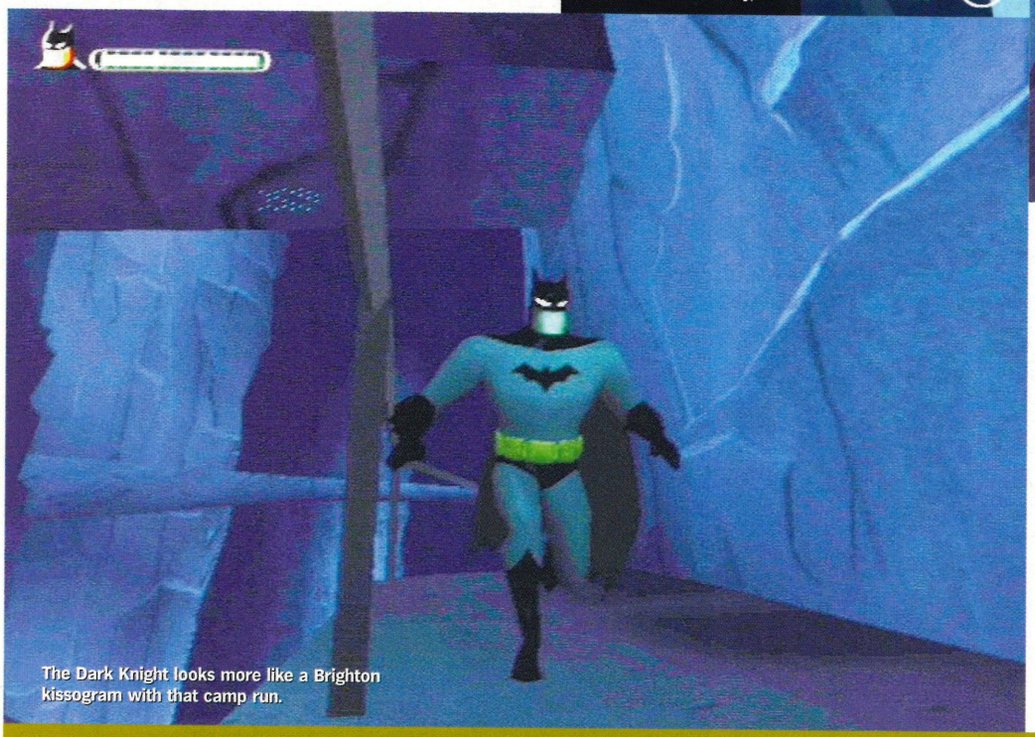
PlayStation 2
www.victoriousboxers.com
© 2000/2001 Jyoji Morikawa/Kodansha. © 2000/2001 ESP/Kodansha.
Translation © 2001 Empire Interactive Europe Ltd.
Developed by New Corporation. Published by Empire Interactive Europe Ltd.
empire INTERACTIVE



A jaunt in the Batplane mixes up the action nicely, but the controls stink.



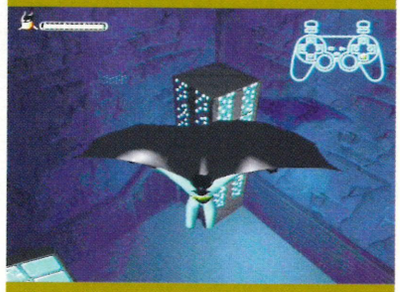
The Bat grappler swings our caped hero towards a higher plane.



The Dark Knight looks more like a Brighton kissogram with that camp run.

TRAVELLING WITHOUT MOVING

Your guide to getting about in Gotham City without wearing your shoe leather out.



Take a glide
The Caped Crusader uses his wings to good effect when you hold ⊗ in the air to ease yourself to your destination.

Aye, four wheel
The trusty Batmobile makes an appearance, complete with a Bat grappler to get you round tight corners and a spike shooter to nail baddies.

Make like a bat
You'll also get a chance to fly the Batplane, a sleek, if unsophisticated Stealth Bomber lookalike. Check out the laser and air-conditioning (probably).

BATMAN VENGEANCE

Use the utility belt. Drive the Batmobile. Be Batman. What's the catch?

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Ubi Soft
Price: £39.99
Players: 1
Out: November
Web site: www.ubisoft.com/batmanvengeance

Back story
Batman Vengeance is based on the animated television series, *The New Adventures Of Batman*. It's the latest in a string of Bat licences dating back to the Spectrum era and just one game in a multi-format raft of Ubi Soft Bat offerings.

Batman's transformation from the camp Sixties tubster to the dark gothic anti-hero of the Nineties was hardly surprising in a world so full of uncertainty, menace and evil intent. Less surprising still is the Caped Crusader's recent development into a part-edgey, part-slapstick, square-jawed good guy who inhabits the cartoon world of kids TV. Enter Ubi Soft and its penchant for safe, branded games for the younger folk.

Not that Ubi Soft has completely destroyed the magic, because not only do the kids like what they see, but most PS2 owners will fondly recall Saturday mornings watching a porky Adam West mincing about in ill-fitting spandex in the original TV series. Luckily, the desire of the older generation to fiddle with the utility belt, wipe The Joker's smile of his face and rev the Batmobile has not been lost on Ubi Soft. But can the developer please grumpier PS2 owners desperate for a mean, steel-chested incarnation of the Dark Knight as well as fans of early morning catfights?

Well, they've tried. The result is a game that will appease all of the people some of the time, founded on very familiar gameplay. In fact, *Batman Vengeance* fits all-too snugly into the standard remit for the genre. There's little in the way of gameplay innovation, with a series of fetch-and-carry levels, viewed from the third-person, frequently interspersed with top notch cut-scenes

//Batman strides around with reassuringly deliberate heroic manoeuvres//

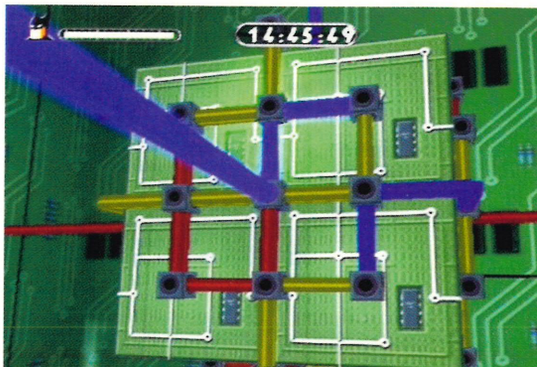
and culminating in boss levels. Even Ubi Soft's attempt at variety has a distinctly familiar feel – first-person targeting.

The good news is that all the familiar trappings of Batman's existence are present, though Robin is replaced by a female Bat assistant for a more wholesome relationship between hero and sidekick. The utility belt, the Batcave and the cool Batmobiles are all faithfully represented, but the simplistic controls and iffy physics underpinning the Bat vehicles reek of an opportunity missed.

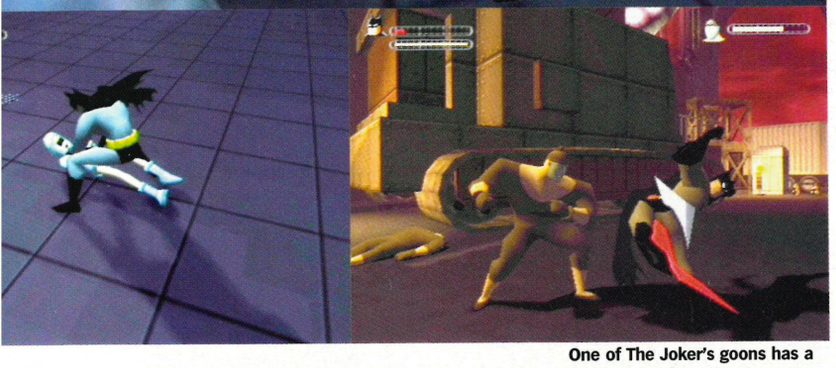
All the top baddies are present, too, as you bid to foil the machinations of Mr Freeze, Poison Ivy and initially The Joker. To beat them you invariably wander environments, entering close combat with henchman and dispatching them with a basic array of kicks and punches. Fortunately, you are rewarded for advancement through the game with much more impressive combo moves.

The upside of the simple gameplay and flexible protagonist (he can grapple, glide and motor around Gotham City's skyline) is that Ubi Soft has lovingly created a sense of true style. Your cape

A little puzzler gets the noggin working – pity there's not more of this for variation.



Those crazy Amsterdam discos offer up more bizarre viewing.



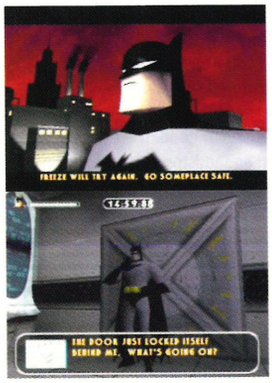
One of The Joker's goons has a crack at our hero. Don't worry – a few well-placed jabs later and Batman's back on top.

unfurls and swooshes beautifully and Batman strides around with reassuringly deliberate heroic manoeuvres. It's a sense of empowerment only truly dented by a lack of graphical detail, which means it's often difficult to work out what you're supposed to do, just because you can't see 'that pesky ladder'.

To make matters worse, Ubi Soft has introduced overly friendly directions, such as a flashing icon that effectively means 'Use your grappling hook now'. Had the developer focused on making this more intuitive the game would feel less like PSone's *Spider-Man* on stabilisers and more like an essential purchase.

There are other disheartening features, such as a platforming section rendered nigh-on impossible by wobbly graphics. And it's a shame there aren't more puzzles in the vein of the simple Rubik's Cube-style brain-teaser that crops up as you chase Mr Freeze. Perhaps the least rewarding aspect is the fighting itself which, despite unlockable combos, too often feels like a turn-based substitute for genuine, skilful scrapping.

Ubi Soft's deserved reputation for taking cartoon creations and dumbing them down is evident in traces here, but the game's style, pace and the fact it fulfils many a childhood fantasy make it a game worth a few hours of your time on a Saturday morning. However, the very simplicity of *Batman Vengeance*, its occasional frustrations and its failure to throw up many surprises means it doesn't quite qualify for the big league. ☐ **Lee Hall**



Top cut-scenes use in-game looks to maintain continuity.

BATMAN VENGEANCE

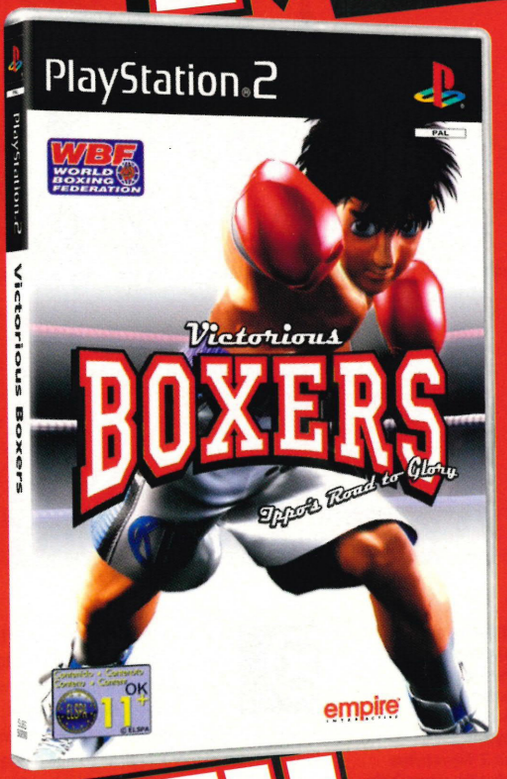
Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Despite the cool superhero setting, this is an all-too-typical cartoon conversion. A moodier edge and less mollycoddling could have made it a winner.
- Tons of Bat gadgets - Echoes of *Spider-Man* on PSone - You feel like a superhero	- Too much guidance - Breaks no new ground - Basic fighting - Some frustrating elements	

Graphics	Pretty basic and functional. Details get lost	06
Sound	Nice cape swooshes and good music	07
Gameplay	Does convey that superhero feel	06
Life span	Enough to keep you entertained	07

06

PlayStation.2 VERDICT

HIT ME



WITH YOUR BEST SHOT

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Translation © 2001 Empire Interactive Europe Ltd.
Developed by New Corporation. Published by Empire Interactive Europe Ltd.

PlayStation.2

empire INTERACTIVE

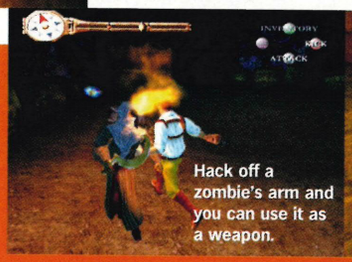
And the surly beardy bloke pops up later on. Pity the voice acting's so cheesy.

YOU CARRY A HEAVY CURSE WITH YOU, MY LORD. THE PHAROAH AND THE ANCIENT GODS ARE NOT PLEASED.

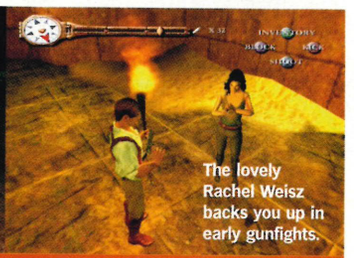
And nor would you be if you had to wear a stupid wig like that.

Dumb zombies crowd around a huge squashed scorpion.

That soul-suck attack – entertainingly nasty at first, but it soon gets tedious.



Hack off a zombie's arm and you can use it as a weapon.



The lovely Rachel Weisz backs you up in early gunfights.

THE MUMMY RETURNS

Shooting, puzzling and monument desecration are familiar enough... but where's Lara?

Publisher: Vivendi Universal
Developer: Blitz Games
Price: £39.99
Players: 1
Out: 2 November
Web site: www.blitzgames.com/games/TheMummyReturns/MR_index.htm

Back story
Blitz are already responsible for the uncannily similar *Mummy* license on PSone. *The Scorpion King*, the third film in the series, comes out next summer, starring People's Champ Dwayne Johnson in the title role. Hidden *SmackDown!* character, anyone?

Watching the film version of *The Mummy Returns*, it's difficult to shake the nagging suspicion that it was written *specifically* for ease of conversion into a videogame. Globe trotting locations, armies of identical goons, plot-advancing sub-missions, heroes who pocket every ancient artefact they come across in case it comes in handy – it practically writes itself. But only, of course, if you're catering for Lara-starved grave-robbing junkies who can't wait for *Tomb Raider: Next-Gen* for another fix.

Yes, it's another third-person action/adventure, but rather than ogling at Ms Croft's polygonal hotpants, you'll have to make do with staring at Rick O'Connell or a bald bloke in a loincloth. If macho yank posturing's not your thing, you can play as Imhotep, with a completely different set of levels and objectives to tackle. He's also the most fun to play – each character gets an AI-controlled sidekick, but while Rick's with Evie or Oded Fehr, Imhotep can order zombies to do all the rotten jobs. Unfortunately, power has its price – he also decomposes constantly, needing to suck souls from innocent bystanders, *Soul Reaver*-style, to keep from withering like a scalded grape.

There's a five second animation *every time* he drains someone – not ideal when you're trying to get excited about a four-way scimitar duel. Rick's powers are the more traditional shooting and kicking, but he's no match for Lara. She's a tightrope-walking, twin-handgun toting acrobat, he's an elephantine lump who has trouble jumping more than shin-high. She can tiptoe up to ledges, he never quite seems connected to his surroundings. It's a sad state of affairs when a PS2 game compares unfavourably to a PSone franchise, but *Tomb Raider*'s collision detection and controls seem to have the edge on this.

Cerebrally, though, it's a slightly different matter. Although the missions are largely still of the Fisher Price slot-the-block-in-there school, occasional glimmers of intelligence shine through. Early on, you have to cross some quicksand. There's no obvious switch to pull – but what about that big pillar and your knapsack full of dynamite? A burst of lateral thinking and a big explosion later, you've got a makeshift bridge. Elsewhere, torches come in handy for fending off scorpions and a severed arm comes in handy as an impromptu club.

While it's a solid enough game, the irony is that *The Mummy Returns* fails to deliver any of the things that made the film good. There's no tidal wave, no spectacular sandstorm, no epic clash between the armies of Anubis and the good guys – the game engine's simply not up to it. Rather than making a death-defying leap across a chasm to evade a swarm of scarabs, Rick's barely up to dodging one or two asthmatic scorpions. And as for the classic scrap between Evie and Anaksu-Namun, the combat's just poorly-implemented button bashing. A decent stopgap measure for frustrated archaeologists, but another shoddy film licence for everyone else. ☐ **Sam Richards**

THE MUMMY RETURNS

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	Want high adventure? Get *Devil May Cry*. Want by-the-numbers puzzling? Stick with the *Tomb Raider* collection.
- Passable puzzling - It's nice to play the bad guy occasionally - Tomb-defiling kleptomania	- Nothing grabs us and bellows 'next-gen' - The control system feels awkward	

Graphics	Nice detail, but the animation's woefully clunky	05
Sound	Atmospheric music, terrible voice acting	04
Gameplay	Shoddy control ruins the excitement in places	04
Life span	Two mediocre games instead of one good 'un	05

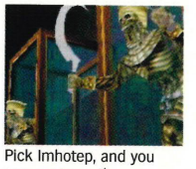
05

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

MONSTER MASH

Mummies, zombie pygmies, punchy museum security guards – *The Mummy*'s enemies are nothing if not diverse...

The snarling legions of Anubis are perfect videogame fodder – even in the film they conveniently disintegrate when killed. Tidy.

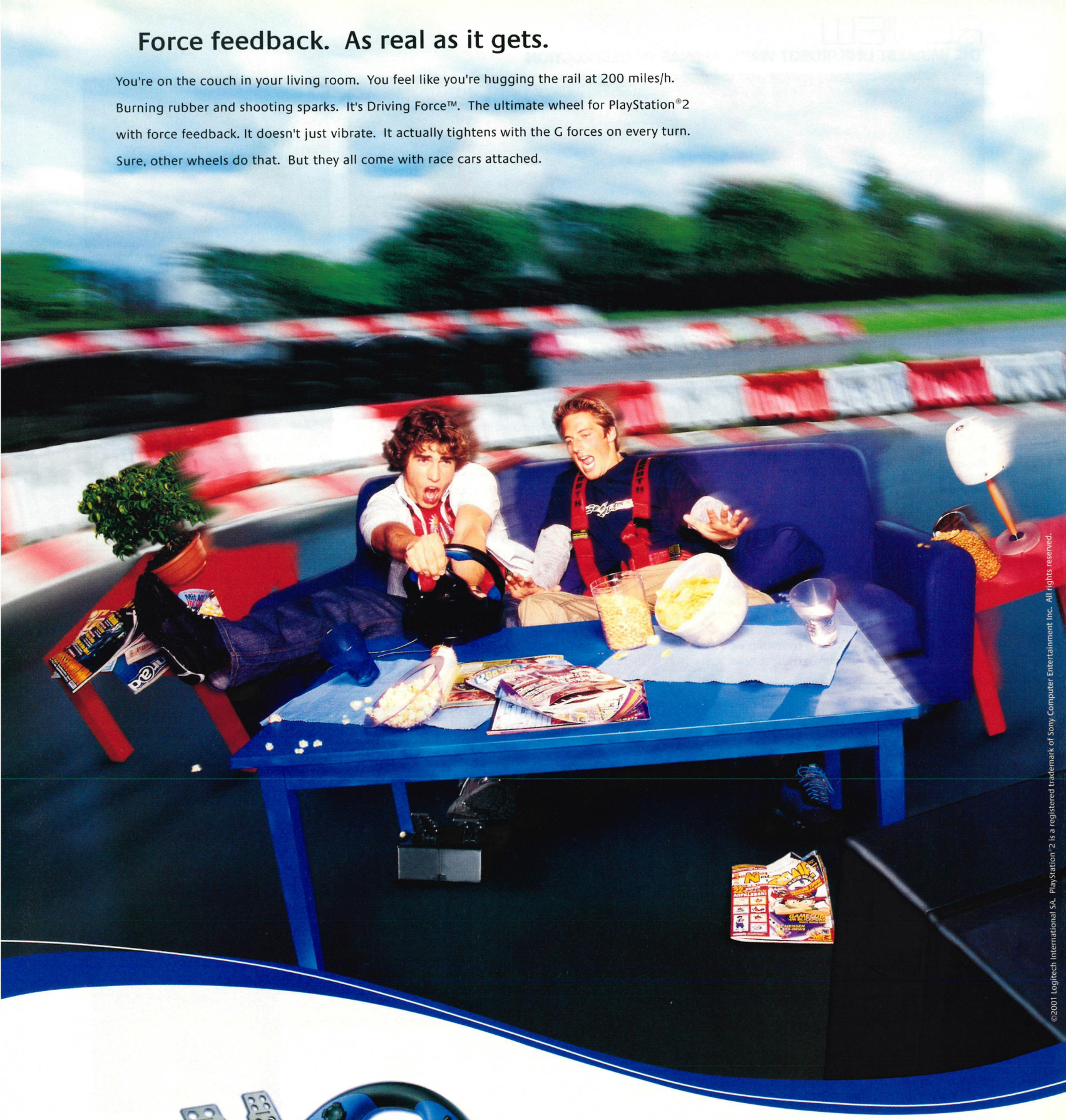


Pick Imhotep, and you can summon the Emperor's elite guard from their glass cabinets. Rick, of course, has to fight them.

Whichever character you choose, the finale's a ruck with the Scorpion King – watch out for The People's Pincer. But will you save the world, or rule it?

Force feedback. As real as it gets.

You're on the couch in your living room. You feel like you're hugging the rail at 200 miles/h. Burning rubber and shooting sparks. It's Driving Force™. The ultimate wheel for PlayStation®2 with force feedback. It doesn't just vibrate. It actually tightens with the G forces on every turn. Sure, other wheels do that. But they all come with race cars attached.



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www.logitech.com/wheel

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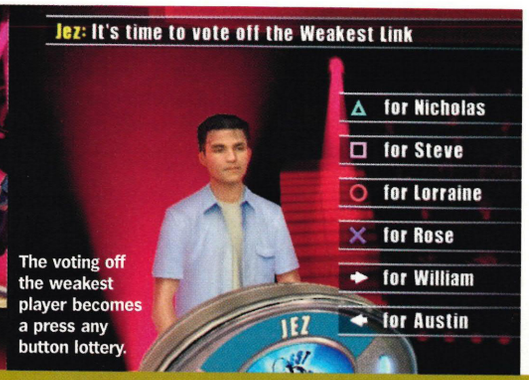
You'd think Ms Robinson would feel quite vulnerable there.



The voting off the weakest player becomes a press any button lottery.

THE WEAKEST LINK

Lazy TV tie-in takes the walk of shame.

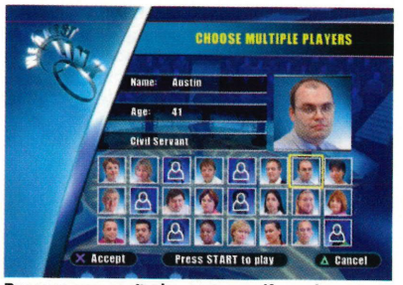
Publisher: Activision
Developer: Activision
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-7
Out: Now
Web site: www.activision.com

She may be the biggest bitch on telly, but Anne Robinson's trademark snarl just doesn't instil fear on a PS2 already populated by demons and zombies.

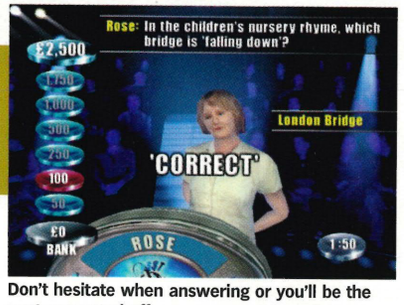
Hoping to emulate the success of Eidos' *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire* as a videogame spin-off from the popular TV quiz show, *The Weakest Link* is a multiplayer knock-out contest in which seven contestants answer questions to bolster the prize fund. When the timer expires on each quickfire round, players must nominate who they feel is letting the team down and risking them a ludicrous prize kitty, by voting off the weakest link. Up to seven players can compete on the same joypad and contestants are whittled down to two who then go head-to-head.

A vital ingredient of the TV show is the pressure put upon contestants to do well or risk the ginger winker's acid tongue. As you choose one of 24 pre-coded characters, you feel no such pressure. Each one dithers, spits out tiresome looped retorts and generally moves like C-3PO in an oil shortage. When it's your turn to answer, things aren't helped by the fact that only the first letter of the four possible answers is shown – meaning you have to take a wild stab or wait until the full answers are displayed, which won't please your team-mates.

The game is a fair recreation, but as you ultimately just want the questions and none of the other Robinson-isms, the fact that you're forced to endure too much of the latter just means you'll get bored after a while. ☐ **Lou Wells**



Because you can't play as yourself, you have to adopt one of these ugly personas.



Don't hesitate when answering or you'll be the next one voted off.

THE WEAKEST LINK

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:
– Testing questions – We're in Anne's fan club	– Generally boring throughout

Graphics	05
Sound	07
Gameplay	04
Life span	05

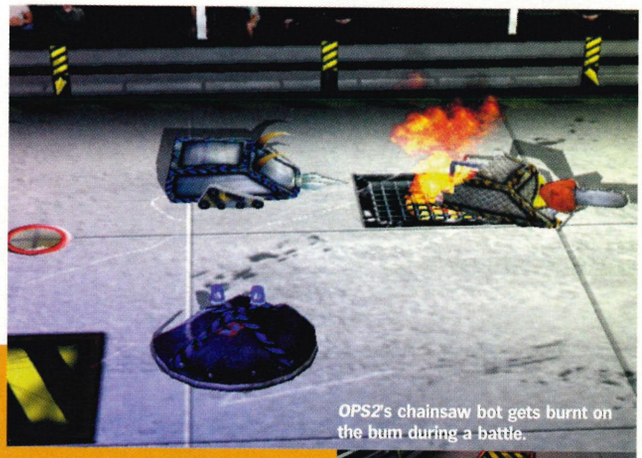
There's more enjoyment in playing along with the TV programme.

04

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

In keeping with the 'zany' nature of roboteers you can add a mascot to a robot.

There's a comprehensive selection of parts with which you can construct your machine.


OPS2's chainsaw bot gets burnt on the bum during a battle.

ROBOT WARS: ARENAS OF DESTRUCTION

Roboteers will unfortunately not be ready for this.

Publisher: BBC Multimedia
Developer: Climax
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2
Out: Now
Web site: www.robotwarsthegame.com

Robot Wars is something of a TV phenomenon. It's massive success is still surprising – the concept just reeks of geeky males getting their rocks off over a contraption made out of a wheelchair motor and a pick-axe.

That would be to grossly misrepresent the average *Robot Wars* fan though. Okay, no-one wants to to admit to it, but there are plenty of people who are secret, furtive obsessives. It's the whole smashing the hell out of something thrill.

Robot Wars, as a videogame, is aimed at those who fancy having a go but can't be bothered with doing it for real. The game gives you the option to create a robot from a number of preset materials – motors, wheels, weapons, frames – and it even lets you add 'funny extras' like teeth. You then precede to battle it out in a series of different competitions against famous robots from the TV series, and of course the notorious house robots.

It should be immensely entertaining – but it's not. The graphics are average at best, and bits of your robot fall off randomly bearing no relation to where you've been struck. AI is tuned so that other robots in a battle always seem to gang up on you, and although your robot can be made more formidable by winning money and buying new parts, it's hard to survive the initial onslaughts with a robot built on your initial budget.

Robo-fetishists should stick to their metallic construction in the shed, secret fans should stick to watching the TV show. ☐ **George Walter**

ROBOT WARS: ARENAS OF DESTRUCTION

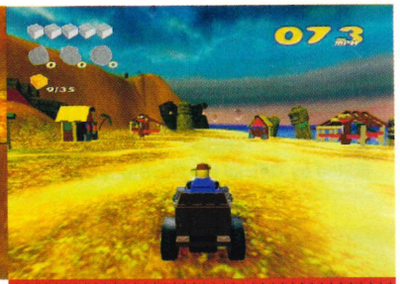
Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:
- To put Sergeant Bash in his place.	- It's more entertaining to watch on telly.

Graphics	05
Sound	04
Gameplay	05
Life span	05

We already have enough mech games thank you very much.

05

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT



To be honest, who ever shared their Lego? You can in this game.

"Nagdammit! Why can I never find the right legs for the right bodies?"

LEGO RACERS 2

You'll drive so fast, you'll be bricking it...

Publisher: Lego Software
Developer: ATD
Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2
Out: Now
Web site: www.lego.com

Lego's dead clever really. It's right simple, but at the same time complex creations can be fashioned from its little plastic blocks. Which is precisely why it's endured all these years, despite the technology at kids' fingertips today. But such is the lure of videogames that even Lego wants in on the action and after a previous outing on PSone, here's our first taste of Lego racing, PS2 style.

As you can imagine, this isn't very complicated. It's basic arcade racing (with *Mario Kart*-style power-ups) in angular plastic vehicles. These come in all shapes and sizes, from buggies and police cars to hovering spacecraft. The handling of each is best suited to a particular terrain, including a dinosaur infested atoll, the Arctic and the surface of Mars. An Adventure mode provides a more structured approach than the Arcade option requiring you to unlock new areas by winning races and collecting golden bricks. Time-trial and Multiplayer modes (with leagues and battles available) add extra longevity and the entertaining Car Construction mode is the game's best feature – great for reminiscing over lost youth.

Obviously this is a title aimed squarely at the younger end of the market, but *Lego Racers 2* is still better than some pitiful race offerings of late (please stand up *Stunt GP*). We doubt you'll be interested if you haven't got any children or are older than ten but it's entertaining enough to want to sit down and play it for an evening with the sprogs of the family. ☐ **Adrian Lawton**

LEGO RACERS 2

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:
- Car Construction mode	- Too basic for many - Better racers around

Graphics	06
Sound	04
Gameplay	05
Life span	05

It's Lego! Build cars and characters! Then race them! And that's it!

05

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

TopTones....

Steps • Chain Reaction	61193	Michael Jackson • U rock my world	61197
Britney Spears • I'm a slave 4 you	61225	Afro Man • Because I Got High	61223
City High • What would you do?	61198	Misteeq • One Night Stand	61231
Gorrilaz • Rock Da House	61199	Alien Ant Farm • Smooth Criminal	61194
Kylie • Can't Get U Outta My Head	61175	Limp Bizkit • Boiler	61255

Pop Tones

61170	Victoria • *Not such an innocent girl*		61166	Shaggy • *Luv me, Luv me*	
61240	Gabrielle • *Don't Need The Sun To Shine*		61217	Mariah Carey • *Never Too Far*	
61220	DJ Otzi • *Hey Baby*		61256	Natalie Imbruglia • *That Day*	
61211	Uncle Kracker • *Follow Me*		61265	Bell & Spurling • *Sven, Sven, Sven*	
61004	Pink, Mya etc. • *Lady Marmalade*		61264	Destinys Child • *Emotion*	
61027	Robbie Williams • *Eternity*		61053	Atomic Kitten • *Eternal Flame*	
61091	Nelly Futardo • *Turn off the light*		60128	Gorillaz • *Clint Eastwood*	
60194	Geri Halliwell • *It's Raining Men*		60185	Shaggy • *Angel*	
60043	Limp Bizkit • *Rollin*		61205	Liberty • *Thinking It Over*	
60200	S Club 7 • *Don't stop movin'*		60047	Bob the builder • *Mambo no 5*	
60163	Wheatus • *Teenage Dirtbag*		61253	Jennifer Lopez • *I'm Real*	

Dance

61146	Superman Lovers • *Star Light*	
61214	Jean Jaques Smoothie • *2 People*	
61208	Fat Boy Slim • *Ya Mamma*	
61150	Sophie Ellis Bextor • *Take me home*	
61235	The Streets • *Has It Come To This*	
61074	So Solid Crew • *21 seconds*	
61178	Kosheen • *Hide You*	
61237	Armand Van Halen • *Free Some Time*	
61005	Pied Piper • *Do you really like it*	
61072	Ian Van Dahl • *Castles in the sky*	
61055	Misteeq • *All I want*	
61258	So Solid Crew • *They Don't Know*	

R'n'B

61181	Mary J Blige • *Family Affair*	
61064	Eve • *Let me blow your mind*	
61050	Wyclef Jean • *Perfect Gentleman*	
61261	2 Pac • *Letter To My Unborn Child*	
61216	Lisa Roxanne • *Ex-Boyfriend*	
61191	Nate Dog, Ludacris • *Area Code's*	
61037	Destinys Child • *Bootylicious*	
61236	Usher • *You Got It Bad*	
61016	Usher • *You Remind Me*	
60024	Destinys Child • *Independent women*	
61241	Lisa Left Eye Lopes • *The Block Party*	
60034	Eminem • *Stan*	

Film&TV

60044	Mission Impos.	60204	Star Wars
61014	Big Brother	61129	Red Dwarf
60220	A Team	60205	James Bond
60219	Knight Rider	60127	God Father
60207	Italian Job	61127	Only fools+horses
60241	Pulp Fiction	60223	Exorcist
60298	X Files	61130	Star Trek

The following Nokia handsets can receive both tones & graphics. Nokia 3210, Nokia 3310, Nokia 61xx series, Nokia 62xx series, Nokia 71xx series, Nokia 81xx series, Nokia 8210 series, Nokia 88xx series, Nokia 9000 / 9110.
The Nokia 51xx series can receive graphics only.

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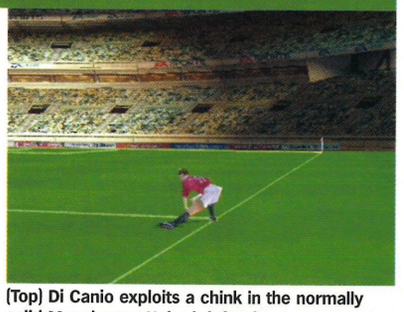
PSone™

Edited by *Official UK PlayStation Magazine*'s Lee Hall

The 'keeper is caught out after a ball is fired across the face of the goal.



(Top) Di Canio exploits a chink in the normally solid Manchester United defensive armour. (Bottom) A spot of pre-match stretching.

FIFA 2002

EA makes a pass as *FIFA* returns to the PSone Premiership.

Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Sports (Canada)
Price: £29.99
Players: 1-8
Out: Now

It's been a surprising season so far. The rather fragile-looking Manchester United haven't dominated as expected, while Bolton have replaced Ipswich as the upstarts who get promoted and then refuse to go straight down again.

Thus, it's rather apt that EA's *FIFA 2002* also delivers a few surprises. Gone is the reliance on flash visuals in favour of a more workmanlike appearance. Meanwhile the gameplay is totally unrecognisable from the spoon-fed action of past *FIFA* outings.

Continuing with the experiments started by *FIFA 2001*, the 2002 edition runs on field in a vastly improved form. The most notable returnees are the small player graphics and a more distant use of cameras offering a better overview of the action. However, this remote coverage now serves a more important purpose and ties in with the greatest inclusion to a *FIFA* game ever – a passing system that doesn't treat the player like an idiot.

//Continuing experiments with *FIFA 2001*, *FIFA 2002* runs on field in a vastly improved form//

Previously every pass went straight to feet, while through balls invariably split the defence, leading to goal after goal. This time, however, *FIFA 2002* reveals a more subtle and effective system that hugely benefits the game. Both ground and aerial passes must now be weighted by holding the relevant button to determine its strength. The player is forced to search for space before making their move – a simple factor that truly opens *FIFA 2002*'s gameplay.

West Ham starlet Matthew Carrick lines up a spot kick conceded by a bungling Barthez.

The passing is easy get to grips with, and while the first few punts will be sprayed to an opposition player, the satisfaction of threading a ball in front of two defenders and poaching from inside the penalty area is worth much more than the slick visuals EA has sacrificed. There's a great deal else to celebrate, too. EA has finally ensured that there is a proper skill difference between its many teams. There is a world of difference between Manchester United and lowly Middlesbrough, with Sir Alex's Red Devils pelting up and down the pitch in comparison to Steve McClaren's languid 'Boro.

What's more, the referees let the game flow even if a few niggly tackles are used, while rightfully penalising blatant fouls from behind. This is coupled with a bright, if rather repetitive, commentary from John Motson and Sky's Andy Gray and more tightly balanced games with less ludicrous scorelines. EA has finally got the balance between control and aesthetics bang on. See, old dogs can be taught new tricks... ☐ **Lee Hall**

PSone™

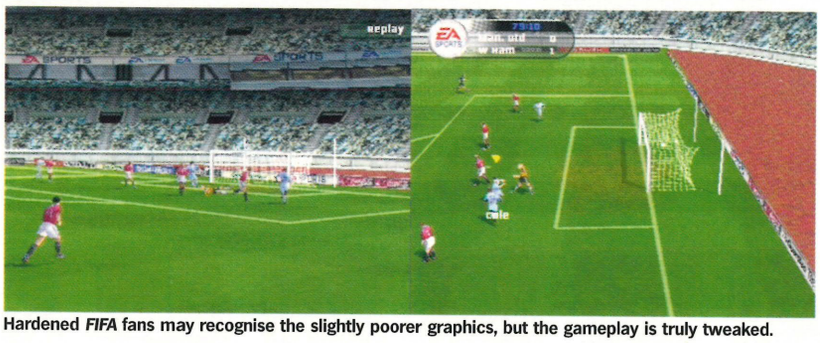
FIFA 2002

Graphics Small but effective players	07
Sound Tunes from Ministry Of Sound	07
Gameplay Well paced and rewarding	08
Life span New passing system adds depth	08

The extra control gives fresh legs to this old pro. Worth picking up again.

08

VERDICT



Hardened *FIFA* fans may recognise the slightly poorer graphics, but the gameplay is truly tweaked.

ONE PIECE MANSION

Play landlord to a loved-up fish and a fizzing robot.

Publisher: Capcom Eurosoft
Developer: Capcom
Price: £19.99
Players: 1
Out: 16 November

One Piece Mansion is a puzzle game which sees you take charge of an apartment block. Tenants move in and out constantly, and it's your job to house them where they're happy. Easy enough, but some characters are better neighbours than others. Some are good influences, others, like the Sumo wrestler, are a household nightmare.

You have to balance the positive and negative energy to create a happy vibe. Go to pieces in *One Piece Mansion*, and more than likely you won't recover. Cruel, perhaps, but it's ultimately worthwhile – you'll want to revisit, you'll want to reshuffle, you'll want to make people happy. A rewarding and distinctly different title. ☐ **LH**

The Japanese crazy puzzle genre in it's purest form – bright, mad and incredibly addictive.

PSone™

Not the perfect puzzle game, but still a lot of fun. As with many Japanese oddities it deserves more attention than it'll get.

07

VERDICT

ROCKET POWER TEAM ROCKET RESCUE

Not fit to clean Tony Hawk's toilet.

Publisher: THQ
Developer: Darkblack
Price: £19.99
Players: 1-2
Out: 16 November

Continuing THQ's habit of snapping up kooky kiddie licences and slapping a few bright colours and polygons down on a disc, *Rocket Power* hopes to enthral youngsters with its incorporation of all things extreme and sporty.

Playing through the game's main Story mode you start off with a spot of snowboarding. Characters are unresponsive and jerky while the tricks you're able to pull off are underwhelming. After the snowboarding comes a dire rollerskating level and from then on the game never recovers.

Even die-hard fans of the cartoon should steer well clear as there is little atmosphere or anything remotely quirky to link it to the show. ☐ **LH**

Another slice of gnarly skating action – minus the gnarliness and the action, that is.

PSone™

Absolute rubbish. Fire a rocket up its ass and send it straight back whence it came.

03

VERDICT

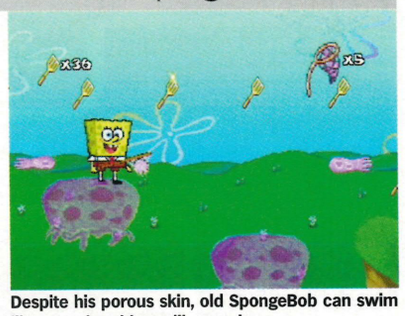
SPONGEBOB SUPER SPONGE

Damp platformer squeezed out of cartoon sponge.

Publisher: THQ
Developer: THQ
Price: £19.99
Players: 1
Out: November

Despite the unnecessarily long name, Nickelodeon cartoon star SpongeBob's first foray onto PSone is a suprisingly playable platformer.

For what it's worth, Bob is attempting to bribe local superhero Mermaid Man into signing something as a present for his best pal. Unlike some cartoon adaptations the developer hasn't dumbed things down so your average three-year-old will be able to play. What you do get is basic platform elements – jumping, dodging, collecting (spatulas in this case) and predictable end-of-level bosses. A passably silly story line and a gentle learning curve make this a pleasant distraction from really meaty offerings. ☐ **LH**



Despite his porous skin, old SpongeBob can swim like an eel and jump like a salmon.

PSone™

A solid platformer with few aspirations, but still a bit rough around the edges. You are unlikely to play it more than a few times.

05

VERDICT

ALSO RELEASED THIS MONTH...

More undercover terrorist quashing in **SYPHON FILTER 3**; A worm Armageddon in **WORM'S WORLD PARTY**; Cartoon alien hunting in **MEN IN BLACK THE SERIES: CRASH DOWN**; Rootin', tootin' and some shootin' in **LUCKY LUCKY WESTERN** adventure; Platform tomfoolery in **PLUCKY'S BIG ADVENTURE**; Sneaky World War II action in PC smash **HIDDEN AND DANGEROUS**. Don't forget, for all the latest PSone news, reviews, previews and playable demos see our sister mag **OFFICIAL UK PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE**...

PSone™ ROUNDUP

NEWS

BEING NASTY NIGEL

Millions watched ITV's *Popstars* with baited breath as Nasty Nige and Co booted out thousands of wannabes to form a chart-topping band. Now, *Popstars Maker*, though wholly unrelated to the TV series, let's you select a band and catapult them to fame.

The game, being published by Eidos, gives you the chance to pick your band and then lay down some tracks in the recording studio. Once you've packaged your tune you'll be caught up in the tension of Sunday night's chart announcement! *Popstars Maker* is due out in early December.

A QUESTION OF SPORT

Already the most in-depth, engrossing and addictive footy management game on PC, the *Championship Manager* brand comes to PSone as *Championship Manager Quiz*.

Developed by Sports Interactive, the team behind the PC series, Eidos' latest quiz game has players undertaking a 'game of football', answering one of 11,000 brain-teasers to pass the ball forward and score. You can even choose to play a long ball by answering a tougher question, while a one-two option removes two wrong answers from a selection of four like the 50-50 in *WWTBAM*. The game is due early December.

PREVIEW

TONY HAWK'S 3

Tony Hawk returns in an all-new adventure in skateboarding that will no doubt thrill fans of the first two games and convert the few gamers still not hooked on the series.

Based on a familiar pattern of level goals (45 in total) and a few competition tracks, *Tony Hawk's 3* is not hugely innovative. There are, however, a few new touches, such as a grind balance bar and stat points to collect, plus levels are larger and goals harder to achieve. The result is a more rounded game. Roll on 23 November.

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Edited by: Sam Richards and Lee Hart

media

DVD/INTERNET/PRINT/MUSIC

PS2 doesn't just play games, you know. Here's some other stuff you might like...

Text: Paul Fitzpatrick/Lee Hart/Sam Richards/Paul McKenzie/Oliver Hurley

PHOTO: KOBAL COLLECTION

THE GODFATHER COLLECTION

Paramount/£59.99/Out now

Film: An irrefutably magnificent gangster saga, no list of the greatest films of all time is complete without mention of *The Godfather* series. The first movie introduces us to the Corleone family: Godfather Don Vito (Marlon Brando); the wild Sonny (James Caan); timid Fredo (John Cazale); wise, adopted consiglieri Tom Hagen (Robert Duvall); and the intense Michael (Al Pacino). A rich, deeply-layered film contrasting the tenderness of family life with the violence of mafia life, *The Godfather* deserves all the acclaim that's been bestowed upon it.

If anything, *Part II* is even better. A complex study of the moral ties of family and the corrupting influence of power, it moves through time to show the parallel lives of Michael – now head of the family and an increasingly isolated, ruthless Godfather – and his father Vito (Robert De Niro) as a young man, turning to crime back in Sicily and eventually making the journey to America and mafiadom.

Director Francis Ford Coppola finally completed the story 16 years later, charting Michael's impossible dream to atone for his sins and gain respectability. *Part III* pales in comparison to its predecessors but compared to modern Hollywood epics, this is a hugely accomplished film and its grandiose Vatican finalé is a fitting climax to the saga. **LH**

Features: A Bonus Materials DVD packed with great extras. There's a Commentary by Coppola; numerous featurettes; an hour of additional footage and a fantastic documentary *A Look Inside* (see box).

Verdict: This collection is arguably the most essential DVD release yet. Watch the trilogy back-to-back and marvel at the breadth and brilliance of Coppola's vision. **10/10**

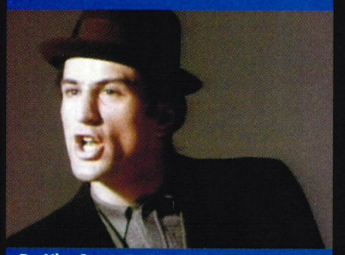
Don Vito dusts down his funeral outfit for the third time in a week. When he gonna learn, eh?

THE INSIDE VIEW

The 73-minute documentary *The Godfather Family: A Look Inside* is your one-stop guide to the saga. It features behind-the-scenes footage and casting sessions, production meetings with Coppola plus interviews with all the main cast and crew.

Nag's Head
Coppola reveals that one of the series' most famous scenes – Jack Woltz discovering a severed horse's head in his bed – only came about through a misunderstanding. In the novel, the head is deposited on the bed but Coppola read the passage incorrectly leading to his far more memorable version.

Casting
Olivier as the don? Robert Redford as Michael? They would've been if Paramount had gotten their way. Dead against Coppola's first choices – the difficult Brando and unknown Pacino – it was only through the Director's refusal to take no for an answer that he got the cast he wanted.



De Niro Screentest
Bob originally tested for the role of Sonny in the first movie before eventually playing the young Vito in *Part II*. As Coppola describes the test: "It was spectacular, it was Sonny, like a killer and nothing you could ever sell. But I never forgot that and later on when we were stumped on how to do the young Marlon, I thought that he could be the young Brando."

"Spider-Man! Come in Spidey! We've got Dr Octopus down here again and he's flashing his tentacles!"

UNBREAKABLE

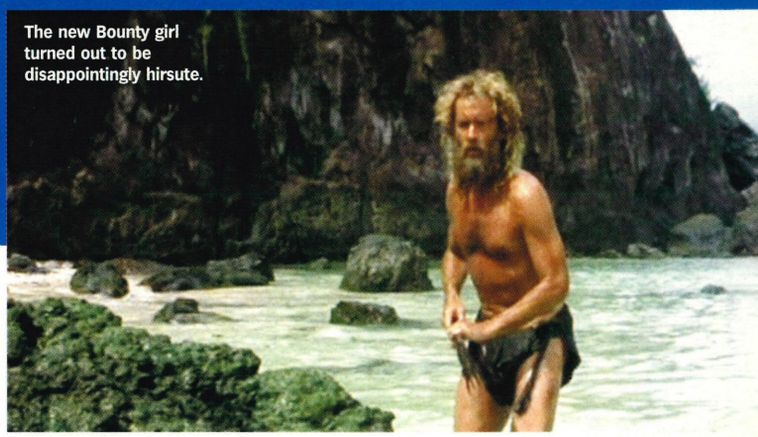
Buena Vista/£24.99/Out now

Film: M Night Shyamalan's follow-up to *The Sixth Sense* is another foreboding drama with a surprise ending and a lead role for Bruce Willis in haunted, whispering mode. This time Willis plays David Dunn, a security guard who walks away without a scratch from a train crash that kills everyone else. After prompting from brittle-boned comic-book nut Samuel L Jackson, David begins to believe he may be a superhero, that he might, indeed, be unbreakable.

Shyamalan must be admired for following his horror blockbuster with such an offbeat, low-key effort. But the film takes so long to get going and has such an oppressively portentous atmosphere – every shot, every word attempting to resonate with meaning – that by the time *Unbreakable* does begin to resolve its mysteries, most viewers will be past caring. **LH**

Features: There's a behind-the-scenes featurette and seven fairly dull deleted scenes, but the pick of the extras is the superb *Comic Books And Superheroes* featurette, looking at the crossover relationship between comics and movies.

Verdict: Clever, subtle but ultimately dreary non-event that wastes its premise. **6/10**



The new Bounty girl turned out to be disappointingly hirsute.

CAST AWAY

Dreamworks/£19.99/Out now

Film: In the most blatant, sustained example of product placement in film history, Tom Hanks is a workaholic employee of Fed Ex who travels across the world preaching the joys of prompt parcel delivery. On Christmas Day he says goodbye to devoted fiancée Helen Hunt to head on another such trip, but when his plane crashes into the Pacific ocean, it's one successful delivery he won't be making.

The sole survivor, washed ashore a deserted island that has a tidal barrier preventing easy escape, Tom has to adapt to his environment and overcome the loneliness and desperation of life as a cast away. The thought of spending the majority of a movie watching an actor potter about on an island with only a volleyball called Wilson for company isn't the most enticing prospect. But with Hanks in the starring role, this is a surprisingly enthralling film that effectively captures the unwavering conviction of the human spirit. **LH**

Features: A quality package with numerous Making Of featurettes, an interview with Hanks and a revealing group commentary.

Verdict: Drags in places but Hanks' terrific performance makes this a must-see. **7/10**

"Ho-ho! Those foolish humans. They can't even bend double and sniff their nether regions!"

PLANET OF THE APES COLLECTION

Fox/£49.99/Out now

Film: Forget Tim Burton's flashy but hollow 'reimagining'. It may have superior make-up but in every other department it's a spider monkey compared to the original 1968 great ape. The intriguing premise of a planet where apes are the dominant species and humans their simple slaves is the breeding ground for all manner of fascinating sociological ideas – not to mention gripping action and drama. As the astronaut who crash-lands on the world and rebels against the "damn, dirty apes," Charlton Heston carries the film with old school movie star gravitas. And the stunning climax is arguably the greatest surprise ending in movie history. Only the first of the four sequels, *Beneath The Planet Of The Apes*, does any kind of justice to the original, but this boxset is still worth buying just to get hold of the superb bonus DVD (see below). **LH**

Features: Exclusive to this collection is the *Behind The Planet of The Apes* DVD. Hosted by series stalwart Roddy McDowall, this two-hour documentary chronicles the entire history of the saga and is utterly essential.

Verdict: Top marks for the classic first film and the documentary, but the rest of the Collection is nothing to go ape about. **8/10**

The Marquis de Sade: not a twisted and sexually abusive pervert, just misunderstood.

QUILLS

Fox/£19.99/Out now

Film: Contrary to all accepted historical accounts, the father of sadism Marquis de Sade wasn't just a sick, cruel bastard. According to *Quills*, he was a loveable, sick, cruel bastard. The poor fella was misunderstood: he just wanted to be left in peace to write his pervy stories and smuggle them out of his asylum to free the minds of the unwashed masses.

Historical accuracy goes out the window then, but that really isn't the aim of this film. It's a bawdy romp that examines sexual repression and freedom of speech using the broadest of comic strokes before descending into tragedy. With the help of free-spirited laundress Kate Winslet and the indulgence of liberal priest and asylum keeper Joaquin Phoenix, the Marquis (Geoffrey Rush in a blistering performance) has free reign over the madhouse. However, the fun comes to an abrupt end when hardline doctor Michael Caine arrives with torture equipment, intending to 'educate' de Sade in the practices of polite society. **LH**

Features: A commentary by writer Doug Wright and four short featurettes examining the production of the movie and the liberties taken with the real story of de Sade.

Verdict: Hugely enjoyable tale of the world's greatest ever pervert. **7/10**

» ALSO RELEASED

The Fly/The Fly 2 (Fox/£19.99)/**Bounce** (Buena Vista/£19.99)/**The Age Of Innocence** (Columbia TriStar/£19.99)/**Girl Fight** (Columbia TriStar/£19.99)
Along Came A Spider (Warners/£19.99)/**Doctor Zhivago** (Warners/£19.99)/**Gone With The Wind** (Warners/£19.99)/**The Family Man** (Entertainment In Video/£19.99)

"This parrot's deceased! And now for something completely different! Spam! Ooh, I'm on a roll tonight."

PHOTO: KOBAL COLLECTION

TOP 10 COMEDY DVDS

Dr Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb
Columbia TriStar/£19.99
Film: General Jack D Ripper, perturbed by the Commies' attempts to steal his precious bodily fluids, launches a nuclear attack on the USSR. And despite the best efforts of comic genius Peter Sellers (in a three-role tour de force) it's too late to call off the strike. Thought-provoking and hilarious, Stanley Kubrick's masterful comedy is the last word on Cold War insanity.
Features: Documentary. Featurette. Interviews.

Young Frankenstein
Fox/£19.99
Film: After *Blazing Saddles*, Mel Brooks and Gene Wilder were reunited for this inspired parody of the old *Frankenstein* movies. A terrific cast deliver an endless stream of one-liners and Marty Feldman steals the show as the bug-eyed assistant, Igor.
Features: Commentary. Documentary. Interviews. Deleted scenes. Outtakes.

The Life Of Brian
Paramount/£19.99
Film: The funniest film ever (FACT!) and the Pythons' most sustained satire, this story of a man whose life parallels that of Christ is just an excuse for one classic sketch after another. 'Big nose', the stoning, ex-leper, Biggus Dickus… the laughs never let up. And remember: "He's not the Messiah, he's a very naughty boy!"
Features: None.

The Jerk
Columbia TriStar/£19.99
Film: Abandoned as a baby and raised by a poor black family – "You mean I'm gonna stay this colour?!" – stupid white-boy Steve Martin steps out into the big, bad world on his 18th birthday. He joins the circus, discovers his penis's 'special purpose', makes millions and then immediately loses it all, 'cos he's an idiot.
Features: Production notes.

Airplane!
Paramount/£19.99
Film: From the team that went on to give us *The Naked Gun*, this remains their most consistently funny slice of movie spoofery. Packed with sight gags, deadpan dialogue and an irresistible sense that the cast enjoyed making it as much as we enjoy watching it.
Features: Group commentary.

This Is Spinal Tap
MGM/£19.99
Film: Classic mockumentary of life on tour with fictional British rockers, Spinal Tap. Stupid haircuts, delusions of grandeur, amps that go up to 11, jazz odysseys, tiny Stonehenge sets – it's got the lot.
Features: Over an hour of deleted footage. Commentary. Interviews. Four music videos.

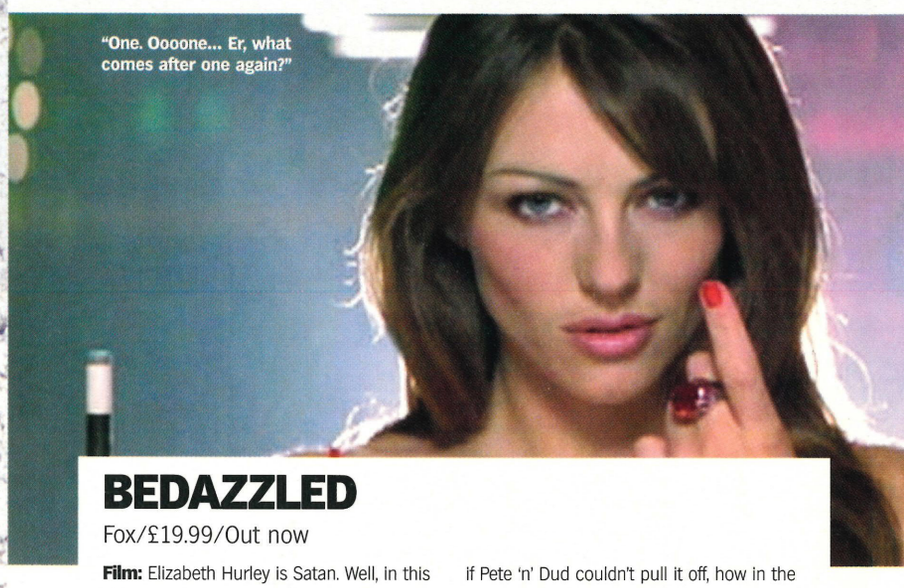
Raising Arizona
Fox/£15.99
Film: When hapless career criminal Hi and his prison warden wife discover they can't have children, they have no option but to kidnap one of the Arizona quintuplets and flee across the state with the law, the Lone Biker Of The Apocalypse and non-stop slapstick gags in hot pursuit.
Features: Theatrical Trailer.

Midnight Run
Columbia TriStar/£19.99
Film: The funniest, most foul-mouthed, action-packed buddy movie ever. Charles Grodin is on career-best form as The Duke, an embezzling accountant on the run from the Mob, while Robert De Niro is superbly world-weary as the bounty hunter trying to bring him in.
Features: None.

The Big Lebowski
Polygram/£15.99
Film: When two dumbass heavies piss on The Dude's rug, it's the start of a bizarro journey through LA involving a curmudgeonly tycoon, his wild teenage bride, a feminist artiste, Swedish nihilists and a bowling-obsessed pederast called Jesus. How could that be anything less than brilliant?
Features: None.

Rushmore
Buena Vista/£19.99
Film: One of the best films of recent years, this is an extremely clever and endearing comedy about Max, a precocious schoolboy whose reach far exceeds his grasp. Matters come to a head when both Max and his millionaire mentor (the great Bill Murray) fall in love with the same woman – Max's school teacher.
Features: None.

TEXT: LEE HART



"One. Oooone... Er, what comes after one again?"

BEDAZZLED

Fox/£19.99/Out now

Film: Elizabeth Hurley is Satan. Well, in this film she is anyway, and the devilish temptress uses her powers to grant wishes for pathetic geek Brendan Fraser that will help him win the girl of his dreams. But selling your soul to the Devil has a catch and whatever Brendan wishes for, there's always an oh-so-funny twist. For example, when he's turned into a big basketball star, he's got a twinkle-twinkle star in his pants.

An ill-judged remake of a mediocre Peter Cook and Dudley Moore vehicle – and if Pete 'n' Dud couldn't pull it off, how in the hell could Liz Hurley and Brendan Fraser? – *Bedazzled* almost works mainly due to the efforts of the likeable Fraser. Replacing sardonic legend Cook with the wooden Ms Hurley, however, was always going to be a recipe for disaster. **LH**

Features: Two commentaries, an overly-promotional featurette and a great deleted fantasy sequence with Fraser as a rock star.
Verdict: It's a film starring Liz Hurley. That should really tell you everything. **4/10**

"Hang on... Yes! Here it is, I knew I'd dropped a 20p down there."

PHOTO: KOBAL COLLECTION

MEET THE PARENTS

Dreamworks/£19.99/Out now

Film: Take a hapless male nurse named Fokker and a fiancée with a few skeletons in her closet. Have them stay for the weekend with her family which includes a father who's a control freak ex-CIA agent pretending to be a florist, and a dopehead brother. Throw in a too-good-to-be-true ex-boyfriend, an urn full of granny's ashes and a preening pussycat. Stir thoroughly, place in the oven on gas mark 'farce' and wait for the belly laughs to start cooking.

Full of memorable scenes and driven by two excellent performances – Ben Stiller providing the physical comedy as the accident prone Greg Fokker, and Robert De Niro stealing the film and all the best lines as his prospective father-in-law from hell – *Meet the Parents* is a consistently funny movie only let down by its predictably cosy final ten minutes. **LH**

Features: Of the two commentaries, the first, featuring Director Jay Roach and Editor John Poll, is a complete wash-out; full of long pauses and painstaking recollections. The second track with Roach chatting alongside Stiller and De Niro doesn't fare much better. Predictably, Bob barely utters a word and it's left to Stiller to just about save the day. The featurette is self-congratulatory to the extreme but the Gag Reel is well worth a look to see De Niro continually cracking up at Stiller's high-jinks.
Verdict: A comedy of disasters. You'll laugh, you'll cringe, you'll laugh some more. **7/10**

Westlife's latest makeover took them in a whole new direction.

"Damn it. I should've used a mirror when I put me lipstick on."

THE WIZARD OF OZ

Warners/£19.99/Out now

Film: *The Wizard Of Oz* is now just as famous for its behind-the-scenes events – budgets spiralling out of control, drunken Munchkins running riot, and tragic Judy Garland plied with uppers to keep her working and downers enabling her to rest before the next day's filming. Despite this, it remains a glorious monument to the golden era of Hollywood. A musical that is okay to love (largely because the song and dance numbers actually complement the story rather than disrupt it), the humour, pathos and sheer Technicolor magic on show here just highlight the dearth of imagination in most modern films. **LH**

Features: A huge selection of extras includes a brilliant, exhaustive Making Of documentary introduced by Angela Lansbury, rare outtakes and deleted footage, plus loads more behind-the-scenes goodies covering every aspect of the production.

Verdict: A wondrous fantasy classic from the days when Hollywood really was the Dream Factory. **10/10**

RAVENOUS

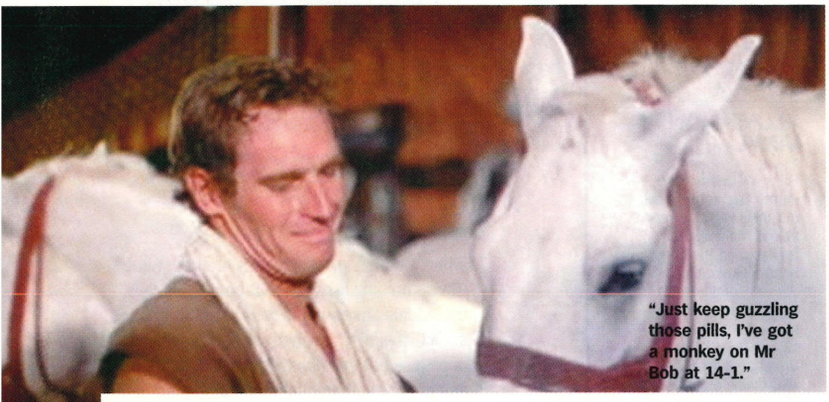
Fox/£19.99/Out now

Film: After winning a battle during the Mexican-American War of 1847, John Boyd (Guy Pearce) receives a promotion to captain, but when his superiors discover he triumphed through an act of cowardice, Boyd is transferred to the desolate outpost of Fort Spencer. The Fort's keepers are an oddball bunch of wastrels and the already strange events take a turn for the freakish when a ravaged Scotsman (Robert Carlyle) turns up, babbling about being the lone survivor of an expedition that ended in murder and cannibalism – fates that may well be in store for his new-found friends...

Ravenous is an intriguing metaphor for the cultural consumption of the US but its bizarre mix of horror and black comedy eventually peters out into extreme silliness. If nothing else, it at least deserves credit for trying something different. **LH**

Features: Three fairly decent commentaries and some understandably deleted scenes.

Verdict: A satirical, strange and fairly silly cannibal Western. **6/10**



"Just keep guzzling those pills, I've got a monkey on Mr Bob at 14-1."

BEN-HUR

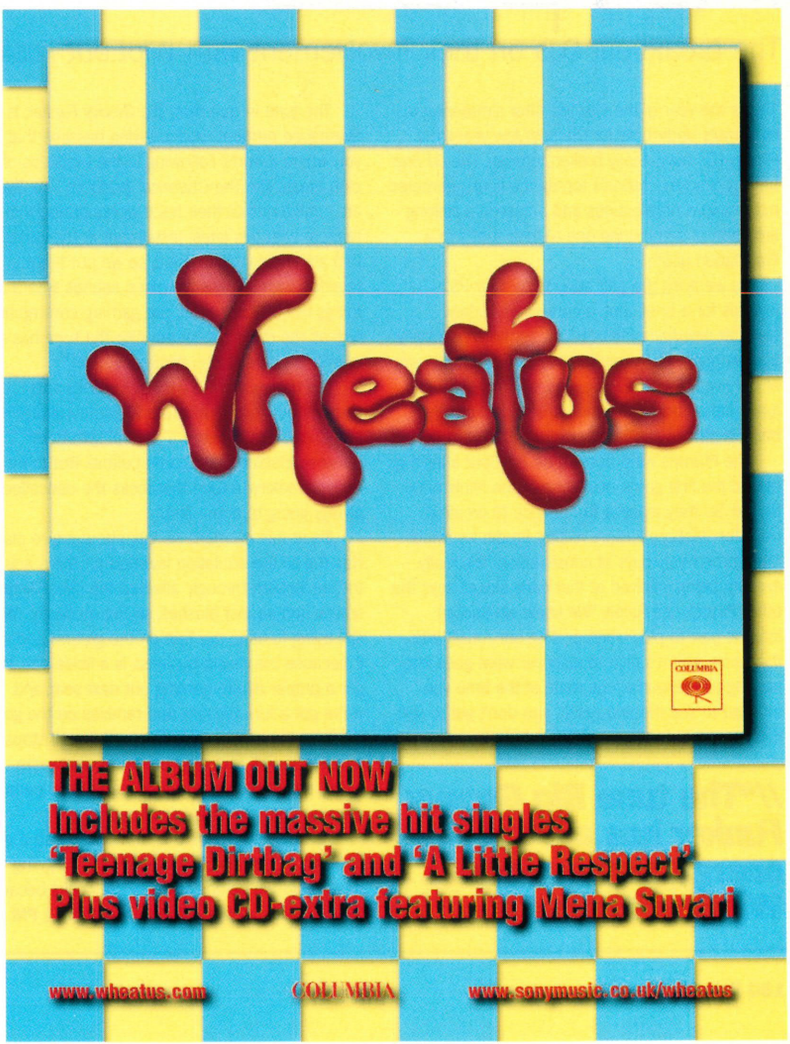
Warners/£19.99/Out now

Film: Granite-jawed Charlton Heston is Judah Ben-Hur, a Jewish nobleman betrayed by his Roman childhood friend Messala and cast into slavery aboard the galleys. Vowing revenge, Judah battles back to prominence, discovering true faith along the way and finally facing Messala in a brutal chariot race.

One of the great sword and sandal epics, *Ben-Hur* is a touch worthy and it undoubtedly drags during periods of its three-and-a-half hour running time, but it's more than worth getting a numb arse just for the climactic (and justifiably legendary) chariot race. Still one of the most exciting and visceral action scenes ever committed to film, George Lucas admitted it was his inspiration for the Podrace in *The Phantom Menace*. However, where that is asinine CGI with no sense of realism or danger, *Ben-Hur*'s original will have you on the edge of the seat; leaning into bends and yelling at the evil Messala as he tries to kill Chuck Heston with his spiked chariot. **LH**

Features: There are some rare screen tests (one of which features Leslie Nielsen), a great commentary by Heston full of info and anecdotes, and a superb, hour-long documentary tracing the roots of the story, the making of the film and its supposed homo-erotic subtext, with contributions from all the main players.

Verdict: A rousing, if occasionally po-faced, historical epic. **8/10**



Look! They're not even slightly rotund! Eat some pies, you skinny frauds!

PHOTO: MARTIN BURTON

Plump DJs

The breakbeat DJs on their involvement with *WipEout Fusion*.

This is the year of the Plumps. After simmering in clubland's underbelly for the past few years, the Plump DJs have finally broken through. The DJ duo have rocked the nation's top dance floors, garnered many award nominations and achieved a lifelong ambition of committing one of their tunes to a PlayStation game.

As we prise the pair away from their PS2 joypads for a brief chat, a contented Andrew Gardner, one half of Plump DJs, explains "We really are avid gamers. Computer games have been part of our lives since we were kids, starting off with funny little Atari tennis games. So now actually being a part of PlayStation project is all really cool."

The Plumps were hooked on *WipEout* after they played the first game on PSone at the Ministry Of Sound. So they leapt at the chance to create a track for *WipEout Fusion*, visiting Studio Liverpool during the nervy days of construction. "It's really exciting being involved at that early stage," says the other Plump, Lee Ralph. "We knew we had an integral part to play when putting our music into the game. And it's nice to discover what goes into making a videogame 'cos most of the time you only get to see the end result, you don't get to see the ins and outs. It's surprisingly complex."

//"The tune *Big Groovy Funker* has a lot of energy, and so does *WipEout Fusion*"//

The tune in question, *Big Groovy Funker*, is a fast-paced number with a driving bassline that hits you where it hurts. Following in the footsteps of club greats like The Chemical Brothers, The Plumps are confident that their track works perfectly in tandem with this latest instalment of the series. "We had a few samples in mind, so we put them together with some silly noises, sounds with a twist, things that will appeal to the gaming community as well as the clubbing community. The tune has a lot of energy and so does *WipEout Fusion*."

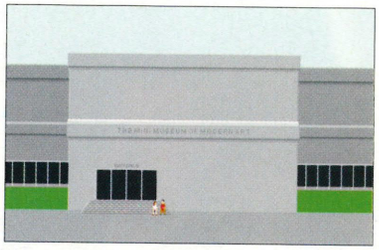
Will this newfound gaming success split loyalties between clubland and game culture? "Not at all," says Lee. "There's a natural symmetry between clubland and game culture. But to be honest, making a tune that rocks the dancefloor is always going to come first."

It's at this moment we talk about future plans. Has the all the adulation lavished on them now they've 'broken through' affected the boys? Andrew smiles and almost blushes, saying modestly, "We're still trying to keep our feet on the ground and enjoy it because the music business is a fickle one. We've got a proper album coming out next year, and we've got a few releases and remixes on the go. So we're having a wonderful time and if it all stops next week we'll just keep on doing what we're doing, trying to enjoy the music and keep people dancing. That's what it's all about to us."

Interview time over, the Plump DJs grab a cold one and recommence battle on PS2. It's going to be a tough job getting them to the decks because they're having a huge *WipEout* moment. ☐ **PM**

PLUMPS ON VINYL

For a full taste of the Plump DJs' sound, seek out their two albums. A Plump Night Out is available on the home of breaks, Finger Lickin' Records, and collects together the original tracks from all of their 12"s to date. Urban Underground Vol 1 (INCredible records) is a mix album combining Plumps originals and remixes with other sounds of the moment from the world of breaks. It also features the *WipEout Fusion* track *Big Groovy Funker*. The Plump DJs' tunes can also be heard as backing music for *Grandstand*, *Ski Sunday* and Sky Sports.



FLIP FLOP FLYIN'

www.flipflopflyin.com

You may already have heard of The Minipops: uncannily recognisable, minuscule images of musicians and stars of TV and film drawn with the smallest number of pixels possible. From The A-Team to ZZ Top the whole celebrity spectrum is here in all its space-saving glory. Minipops old hat? Well, Flip Flop Flyin' boy's site has other treats. How about a tour of the Mini Museum of Modern Art with world famous paintings and sculptures given the microdot treatment? And there's a whole lot more besides, including some fantastic, animated mini soap operas and even a chance to colour in your own pixellated scene. Log on now. **PF**

SPACED PENGUIN

www.bigidea.com/penguins/kids/k_spacedpenguin.htm

When it comes to mini games on the Internet there's nothing like a shot of novelty. Thing is, the oddities rarely come with any kind of addictive quality attached, while the addictive ones (*Electrotank Mini Golf*) don't exactly do anything new. Thank heavens for *Spaced Penguin*, found on kids' animation site, bigidea.com. Matching cute graphics with a game of genuine skill, *SP* has you launching the usually flightless bird through space using a Giant Penguin Slingshot. Points are awarded for accuracy and longest distance travelled. Levels are soon filled with planets whose gravitational pull spices things up no end. **PF**

THE TOP FIVE

Five of the best *Half-Life* Web sites to give you the inside edge.

1. sierrastudios.com/games/half-life-playstation2
The official site with solid report of the PS2 game.

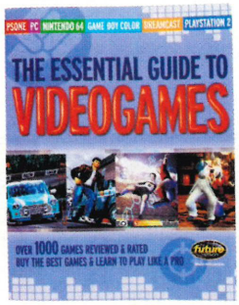
2. www.planethalflife.com/half-life/files
Good for the lowdown on weapons, characters etc.

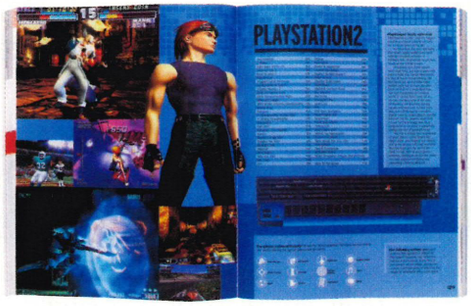
3. www.hlcenter.com
Thorough fan site with alien dispatching tips.

4. www.pcgame.com/super/halflife/walk.htm
Ignore the 'pc'. This is a fine game walkthrough.

5. hyperion.spaceports.com/bxb209
Barry's *Half-Life* site has basic production values but contains passionate information.

»PRINT





THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO VIDEOGAMES

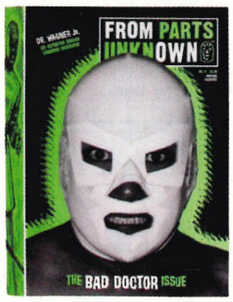
Editor: Emma Parkinson
Publisher: Carlton Books
On sale: Now
Price: £17.99

Brought to you by the people behind this very magazine (not to mention *N64*, *DC:UK*, *The Official PlayStation Magazine* and a slew of other monthly gaming bibles past and present) what could easily have been a glorified shopping catalogue is actually a thoroughly readable and informative tome.

The main body of the book covers the pick of releases on PSone, PS2, Dreamcast, Nintendo 64, Game Boy Color and PC over the last half decade. That's over 1000 concise reviews, many of which have been reappraised to give a very welcome shot of historical context. In addition, each entry gives details of budget releases, at-a-glance pros and cons, and either an essential cheat or the kind of 'did you know?' nugget of information that rapidly makes a quick dip into a half-hour read.

Alongside this refreshingly unpartisan digest of videogaming's recent, glorious history there are fascinating overviews of the hardware featured, and even informed appraisals of the upcoming Gamecube and Xbox. And if that's not enough, 150 reviews of retro games from coin-op classics like *Pong* to the glory days of home systems like the Atari 2600, Spectrum 48k, C64 and SNES will warm the nostalgic cockles. Finishing up with a database of essential gaming Web sites, this exhaustive volume pretty much tells you all that you wanted to know about videogames. ☐ **PF**

Mags we like



FROM PARTS UNKNOWN

Frequency: Occasional/**Price:** $3.95
See: www.frompartsunknown.net

While wrestling characters such as The Rock and Triple H are now mainstream, chances are you're not quite so familiar with La Parka or Dr Wagner Jr. For, outside its native Mexico, lucha libre remains a resolutely underground phenomenon. It's the eternal power struggle between good and evil depicted by six-man tag matches, corrupt referees, dangerously acrobatic stunts and *masks*. Almost every luchadore (Mexican wrestler) wears a mask, which is not only representative of the character they portray but also a handy tax dodge.

Whether it's the jaw-dropping in-ring stuntmanship of Psicosis or the campy B-movies of El Santo (a Mexican legend who was buried while still wearing his mask) *From Parts Unknown* has got it covered in a kitsch style. Even the editorial team remain true to the lucha tradition, with the editor pictured only while wearing a horned mask.

Its slimness and its monochrome pages mean you needn't worry about confusing it with *Wallpaper* but, if you're prepared to go through the rigmarole of tracking down a copy, *From Parts Unknown*'s sheer fan-mag enthusiasm and all-round strangeness (animated lucha porn, anyone?) won't disappoint. ☐ **OH**

Gaming Content: Ideal for the more unhinged edge of *SmackDown!* fandom and perfect source material for those Create-A-Wrestler modes.

*From Parts Unknown *is available via mail order from www.mpawson.demon.co.uk*

TEXT: SAM RICHARDS

»MUSIC

Andrew WK: Keep partying until your insides start to leak out through your nose.

SLEEVENOTES

Using the power of your PS2 with this month's best CDs.

ANDREW WK I Get Wet (Mercury)

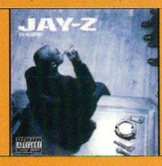
Who? Scarily intense NYC one-man-band who combines AOR metal with hyperactive synth pop to unsettling effect. Kiss meets Bis, if you like.

Highlights: *It's Time To Party, Party Hard, Party Til You Puke...* Mr WK sure likes a party and you'd be a miserable fool not to grab a beer and join him.

Lowlights: Carter The Unstoppable Sex Machine should currently be preparing their lawsuit.

Verdict: There's something endearing about this life-threatening dedication to the party anthem, but after three listens you kinda hope this party is his last. **7/10**

JAY-Z The Blueprint (Roc-A-Fella)



Who? Kingpin of a hip-hop empire – Roc-A-Fella – to rival Puffy's Bad Boy and Master P's No Limit. The Blueprint is Jay-Z's third US Number 1 album.

Highlights: Eschewing thug tactics in favour of sharp rhymes and soulful samples, *Never Change* and *Renagade* justify the 'nothin' but smashes' tagline.

Lowlights: His disses are the best in the biz, but Jay-Z boasts about his bank account once too often.

Verdict: Jay-Z has the talent to appeal to both mainstream and hardcore hip-hop heads, while even *Girls, Girls, Girls* is respectful towards the ladies. Nice. **7/10**

VARIOUS ARTISTS If I Was Prince (RexRecords)

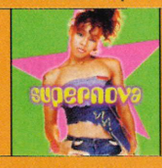
Who? Heroes of lo-fi and folktronica come together to pay homage to the potent purple one and to cover songs from when he was good (ie the Eighties).

Highlights: Foulmouthed female MC Peaches does the dirty on *Sexy Dancer*, but cream of the crop is Blue States' lush interpretation of *Alphabet Street*.

Lowlights: Given the richness of source material there should be no excuse, but *Broadway Project* and *Op:l Bastards* prove themselves unworthy.

Verdict: The shameless filching of Prince's pioneering pop is rife these days, so this tribute album was long overdue. A cool curiosity. **7/10**

LISA LEFT-EYE LOPES Supernova (Arista)



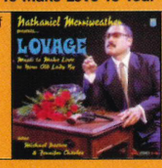
Who? Maverick third of permanently-on-hold R&B outfit TLC. For Left-Eye's debut solo album, she's ditched the ballads and chased the Kelis vote.

Highlights: Quirky pop production on *The Block Party* and *True Confessions* makes for an impressively fresh, street-sounding record.

Lowlights: She's still a better singer than she is a rapper, so 12 tracks of her naive rhyming is just a little too much.

Verdict: After TLC's problems, Lopes has decided to pretend her former group never existed. Supernova is a smart enough year zero. **7/10**

LOVAGE Music To Make Love To Your Old Lady By (Tommy Boy)



Who? Latest labour of love for hip-hop prankster Dan The Automator (Gorillaz, Deltron 3030, Dr Octagon) with Mike Patton from Faith No More on vocals.

Highlights: This is styled as a seduction record, but the obvious Serge Gainsbourg influences turn it into something altogether seedier.

Lowlights: For an ironic lounge concept album, *Music...* does outstay its welcome.

Verdict: Patton does a great Scott Walker impression and the skits are amusing, but Dan's Handsome Boy Modeling School LP remains a superior effort. **7/10**

» ALSO RELEASED
Royksopp Melody AM (Wall Of Sound)/**Angie Stone** Mahogany Soul (Arista)/**The Smashing Pumpkins** Greatest Hits Rotten Apples (Hut)/**Various Artists** Acoustic Chill Compiled By Chris Coco (Organic)/**Liberty** Doin' It (V2)/**Crackout** This Is Really Neat (Hut)

HARDCORE

Tips, tactics, tricks, cheats. Want to rip your new games to shreds? Welcome to the section that's strictly for the HardCore...

Hello and welcome to this month's all-singing, all-dancing HardCore (now with added cars and armed insurrection). This month we're taking you through the deliriously hard-boiled conclusion to our official *Red Faction* walkthrough and giving you one last glove compartment crammed with *GT3* tips. Of course you'll also find codes and cheats for the very latest and greatest titles around. Have a great month. See you next time.

Paul Fitzpatrick
Staff Writer

HELP ME!

Stuck? Frustrated? Lonely? If you're either of the first two (involving videogames) you're more than welcome to write to me and ask for my help. I'll do the best I can to unearth codes, secrets, walkthroughs or advice for any game you want. So, if you need a hand, just pick up that pen or keyboard and write to me at: **HardCore, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.** Galactic laserpost to **PS2@futurenet.co.uk**.

GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

In the third part of our continuing *GT3* Official Winners' guide we break it all down and give you a step-by-step primer for getting the best out of your essential driving skills.

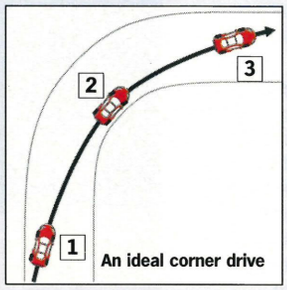
☐BROUGHT TO YOU IN ASSOCIATION WITH *GRAN TURISMO®3: A-SPEC THE OFFICIAL WINNERS' GUIDE*, PUBLISHED BY PIGGYBACK AND AVAILABLE IN THE SHOPS FOR £9.95.

YOU CAN WIN ONLINE!
The *Gran Turismo®3: A-spec* European Winners' League is now online at www.authorisedcollection.com. This competition will run for five months, and is open to all *Gran Turismo®3: A-spec* players from PAL territories. Each month, a new set of tracks will be unlocked on the site, and registered users invited to input their fastest lap and race times. The player who puts in the best overall performance across the entire track set will be deemed the winner – netting superb prizes!

piggyback

DRIVING THROUGH CORNERS

Steering into a corner



An ideal corner drive

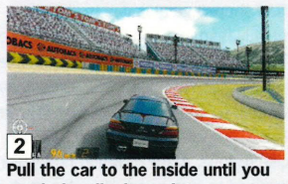
If you want to steer into a corner, you will often find that you simply have to turn the steering wheel. After all, since you want to drive through the corner at maximum speed, you'll need much more grip on your front wheels. Don't forget that, despite the high speed, they have to transmit the steering movement to the road.

Thus your initial task is to brake in order to shift the vehicle's weight to the front. The trick here is to not turn the steering wheel too early or too late. If you steer too early, you'll find that the main weight has not yet shifted to the front wheels, with the result that the wheels do not yet have maximum grip. If you steer too late – in the worst case scenario, if you don't brake at all – the weight is once again evenly distributed between the two axles, and it is no longer possible to take the corner at maximum speed.

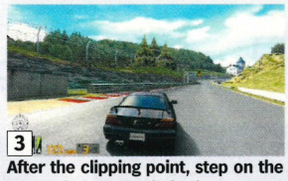
The point from which you turn the steering wheel while braking is decisive. This point varies from vehicle to vehicle. However, when braking you should remember this: if you brake too sharply and the tyres reach their maximum grip, they will no longer have any grip during a steering movement. The answer is quite simply: practise.

It might be best to take the vehicle of your choice and go into Test Drive mode. Seek out a course with plenty of corners and do a few laps. When you approach a corner, brake especially heavily, and keep an eye on the speed shown by your speedometer when you turn the steering wheel. Then release the brake in order to gain more grip for your steering movement. If you are using the Analog Controller (Dualshock®2) and therefore the Analog buttons, you simply need to lift your braking finger a little, rather than completely release the braking button.

Before the corner you must decrease the speed and then steer into the corner.

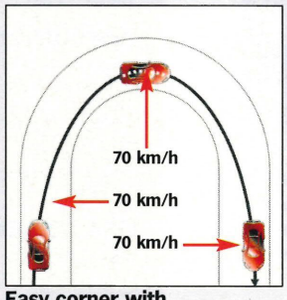


Pull the car to the inside until you reach the clipping point.



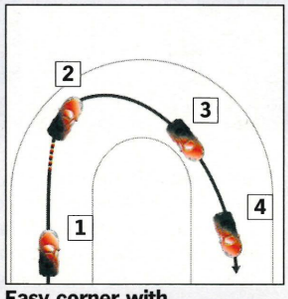
After the clipping point, step on the gas and steer gently in the direction of the outer track.

DRIVING LINES



Easy corner with 'Out-In-Out'

The easiest technique for driving through a corner is known as the 'Out-In-Out' driving method. This means taking the corner as wide as possible, in order to drive through it at maximum speed. As shown in the sketch, you approach the corner from far outside, then steer gently towards the inside track to arrive at the clipping point at the innermost point of the corner. From there, you allow yourself to be slowly carried to the outside again, by not steering-in as strongly. Finally, you again reach the outside and then exit the corner.

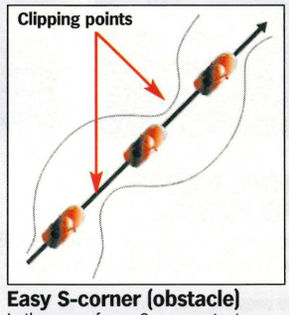


Easy corner with 'Slow In, Fast Out'

Although the distance driven is longer, your speed at the end of the corner is greater. Approach the corner from the far outside, but steer into the corner late. Brake before steering-in then make a steering movement when leaving the corner. Start accelerating out of the corner earlier.

Although, when using this technique, the clipping point of the corner is also on the inside, it tends to be closer to the exit of the corner section. This means that you need to steer less and accelerate more.

1. Brake point	**70 km/h**
2. Steering-in point	**60 km/h**
3. Clipping point	**65 km/h**
4. Acceleration point	**75 km/h**



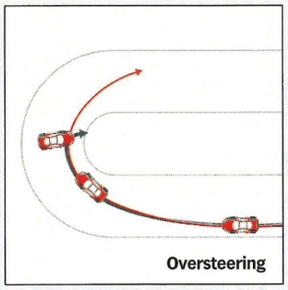
Easy S-corner (obstacle)

In the case of easy S-corners, try to imagine a straight and simply drive from the clipping point of the first corner directly to the clipping point of the second corner. This ensures that you do not lose any unnecessary speed due to braking or steering movements.

Depending on the type of S-corner, you may of course find that there is a minimal need for steering. However, such course corrections should really be so slight that there is no need for you to reduce your speed by braking. Otherwise, you are no longer dealing with an easy S-corner but with a sharp S-corner, and you then have to use a completely different driving technique.

OFFICIAL GUIDE: PART THREE

Oversteering – an error when steering-in

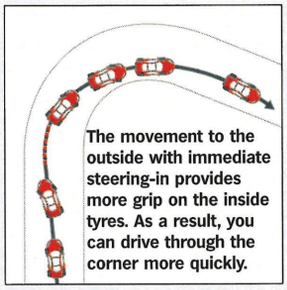


Steering into a corner too heavily results in an oversteer.

When steering into a corner, if you end up skidding, your speed is either too high, or you have shifted too much weight to the front axis, with the result that your rear wheels lose their grip and your rear goes into a spin. In the first case, you must brake a little earlier. If there is too much weight on the front axle, you must instead release the brake a little earlier, so that the weight is shifted more to the rear again. If your car goes into a spin, the vehicle has been oversteered. This is because the rear wheels no longer have sufficient grip to implement the forward steering movement together with the additional steering-in movement. This means that you have to ensure more grip, ie, more weight must rest on the rear wheels. You can achieve this by stepping on the gas and accelerating the vehicle.

The degree to which you accelerate depends on your current situation and the drive type of your car. If your car has rear drive, for example, the rear section of the car is automatically heavier than the front. This means that you only need slight or gentle acceleration in order to ensure that the rear wheels have grip again. Cars with front drive get into a spin more easily, and are more difficult to stabilise, since the main weight rests on the front wheels and the rear is thus more likely to fall into a spin. In order to counter this, you should brake especially early and/or gently before corners, so that the rear axis gains some more weight.

More grip in a feint motion



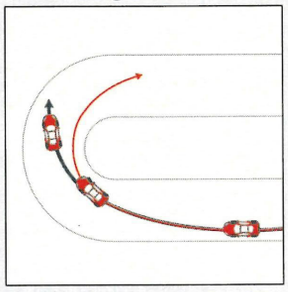
The movement to the outside with immediate steering-in provides more grip on the inside tyres. As a result, you can drive through the corner more quickly.

A feint motion when steering-in offers an effective option for gaining more grip on the inside track wheels when you are taking corners. This means that you first steer to the outside, as though you wanted to drive in the opposite direction. The car will then swing slightly to the outside.

You then turn the steering wheel in the direction of the corner, with the result that the car now swings onto the inside track. This swinging movement also shifts the weight to the inside tyres – and it does so much more heavily than a normal steering movement.

This means that the tyres on the inside have a greater grip, and you can take the corner more tightly and at a greater speed.

Accelerating out of a corner



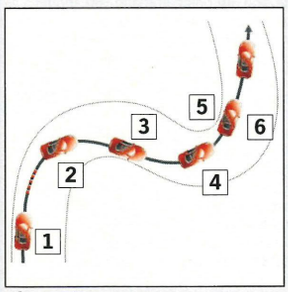
If you drove optimally into a corner, your next challenge is to drive optimally out. Your vehicle is unstable when steering into a corner. You can either go into a spin, or you may brake too heavily. In a normal scenario you break optimally, shifting the main weight of your vehicle to the front wheels. These now have more grip and can transmit your steering movement to the road. Shortly before the clipping point, step on the gas in order to drive into the straight at maximum speed.

Understeering is a common error in corners. The result is that you do not take the corner tightly enough, driving a longer distance. Although your vehicle's rear is relatively stable on the road, the proportion of grip value assigned to a steering movement is not optimally exploited. This is exacerbated once you shift more weight to the rear axis by accelerating. The grip of the front tyres is quickly exceeded, with the result that your vehicle does not react as desired to your steering-in.

Understeering: If your car's steering movement is less than required by the route of the corner – eg due to excess speed – your vehicle will understeer and be carried out of the corner.

Counter this by braking to shift the weight to the front ensuring grip. During the following lap you should brake more heavily or longer in this corner, and turn the steering wheel further.

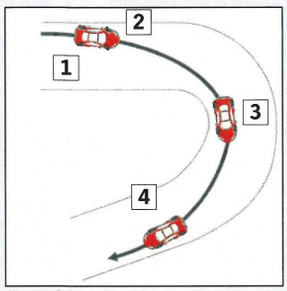
Understeering often occurs in cars with front drive, as the driver is avoiding a spin. The rear of such cars is relatively light, and braking can reduce the weight and grip of the rear wheels. Therefore take care not to accelerate out of corners too early.



Sharp S-corner

The 'Slow In, Fast Out' technique is ideal for sharp S-corners. Approach the first corner from the outside, and do not steer in too early. Otherwise, you would leave the first corner very late, and would then be too far on the inside track of the second corner when entering it. Depending on the arrangement of corners, don't accelerate too heavily when exiting the first corner, since that would propel you too far to the outside, and thus again onto the inside track of the second corner.

1. Brake point
2. Steering-in point
3. Clipping point
4. Steering-in point
5. Clipping point
6. Acceleration point

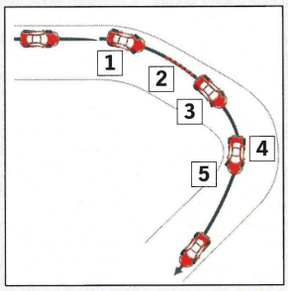


Opening corner

Your best bet is to drive through an opening corner using the 'Slow In, Fast Out' technique. This allows you to accelerate again early on, and to use the exit of the corner in order to accelerate to top speed.

After braking, steer into the corner in order to reach the clipping point as early as possible. From there, step on the gas again and allow yourself to be carried gently to the outside. This approach also guarantees that your vehicle gains increasing speed.

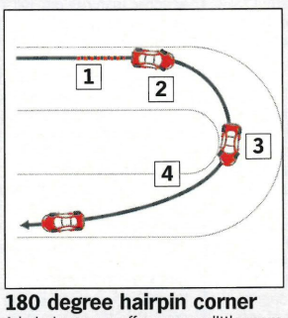
1. Brake point
2. Steering-in point
3. Clipping point
4. Acceleration point



Tightening corner

These are tricky, especially if visibility is reduced. Your best bet is to prepare to take two corners. In the case of the first one, drive along the outside track and only brake shortly before entering the corner. As soon as the tightening section of the corner is in front of you, brake more sharply and steer in heavily. As soon as you have passed the clipping point, you can step on the gas again and thus exit the corner at maximum speed. This means that you negotiate the rear, tighter section using the 'Slow In, Fast Out' technique.

1. Steering-in point
2. Brake point
3. Steering-in point
4. Clipping point
5. Acceleration point

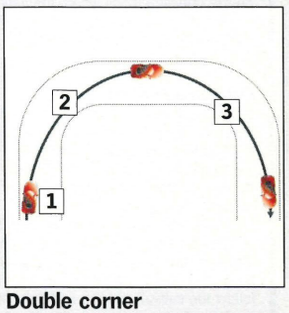


180 degree hairpin corner

A hairpin corner offers you so little room for steering that you are forced to reduce your speed significantly below 100 km/h. In order to then be able to exit the corner at maximum speed, use the 'Slow In, Fast Out' technique.

In the case of hairpin corners you have to brake and steer-in even later during your approach. This means that you reach the clipping point of the corner early on, and from there (or shortly before) you can step on the gas again. This early acceleration ensures that you have maximum speed when exiting the corner.

1. Brake point
2. Steering-in point
3. Clipping point
4. Acceleration point



Double corner

You can negotiate a double corner using the 'Out-In-Out' driving technique. Steer in early on, and in a wide arc, in order to steer onto the outside track between the corners, past the clipping point of the first corner. From there, pull your car back to the inside of the second corner and pass the clipping point of the second corner. Further acceleration also propels you gently to the outside: this means that you lose no speed.

1. Steering-in point
2. Clipping point
3. Clipping point

WALKTHROUGH PART FOUR

RED FACTION

Are you ready to hook up with Parker for the final push? Hold on tight now, this isn't going to be easy...

Parker realises it's time to buy a new washing machine.

CAPEK'S INNER SANCTUM

Exit the elevator and creep towards the doors so they open, but don't go through. Three guards will be lured to them for you to kill. Move forward and stop in the doorway so that the doors stay open. Equip your sniper rifle and aim at the guard on the far left of the screen and go through the doors. Follow the path along the windows and run through the doors at the end of the hall. Kill the guard to your left, then run down the stairs. If you need it, kill the scientist for a Medi Pack.

Save your game and go through the door. Capek will appear in the centre of the room. He'll hover above the pillar firing energy bolts at you. Keep firing at him. Eventually, the shield will drop and he'll stand in the centre of the pillar while continuing to fire. He's dead when the cut-scene begins. Next run up the catwalk and go through the door, then follow the red lights to an airlock, which will lead you outside.

GRAND CANYON

Ahead is a jeep with a driver, jump onboard and man the Machine Gun as you go through the canyon. When you encounter the air fighters, ignore the guards on the ground (your driver will run them over) and keep your gun trained on the fighters. At the end of the canyon you'll see some light coming out from rocks to your right. It's a tunnel, run down it to enter the next area.

DRY WATERFALL

Drop into the small pool and swim through the tunnel. Fight the Rat Monkeys, follow the path and jump across the gap. A dead miner has Remote Charges and Health. Place a charge on the cave wall near the metal grate and blast a hole. Drop into the sewage tunnel and climb the ladder. At the top, drop down and run up the left tunnel.

GRAND CANYON (PART 2)

You'll find yourself back out in the canyon, get into the cable car, but don't press the button to activate it yet. Equip your sniper rifle and zoom in on the opposite ledge where the cables are headed. You should see two guards shoot them then activate the car. When you arrive on the other side, enter the airlock door.

COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

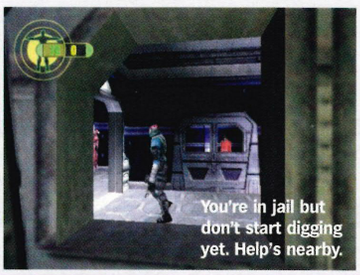
Open the door ahead and go up the lift. Once you enter the main room, take out the guards and go through the door ahead. Immediately turn left to kill a guard and creep ahead to destroy a ceiling turret. Take care of all the guards before going through the left door.

Take out the two guards behind the sandbag barriers, and one will drop a Precision Rifle. Equip that and run forward to kill two more guards (one from the left and the other from the right) then follow the catwalk around and enter the door to the left. Kill the mercenary directly ahead of you, and then enter the first door on your left and run up the hall.

COMMUNICATIONS TOWER

Go through the door and ride a lift. When it stops run fast (jumping helps) to your right and go through the right door. Use the bunker as cover while you kill all the guards. Beware of the sniper hiding behind the large tower in the centre of the room, equip either the Precision or Sniper Rifle, activate the scope, and slowly sidestep left until you can barely see him. If you have a clear shot, take it, and then leave the room.

Run up the centre staircase, shoot the turret and enter the Control Centre. Press the button on the middle console, fight your way back down the stairs, then enter the airlock to the left of the small door that you entered at the beginning of the area.


You're in jail but don't start digging yet. Help's nearby.

SHOOTING GALLERY

Save your game. You'll exit into a canyon where there will be a group of rocks and a couple of Miners getting blown to bits from two high-powered cannons mounted on top of a doorway. Hang back and use the Rail Driver to kill the mercs, run forward and use the rocks for cover. Keep moving and the gunners in the tower will be too slow to target you. Enter the door ahead and follow the hall to the left. Pause before the airlock doors using Rail Driver to kill the guards then run inside and press the button on the opposite door.

TRAMWAY TUNNEL

Save your game. Walk forward through the door ahead and turn left, run along the wall to the first alcove. Duck in quickly so the tram doesn't kill you. Inside is a lone merc, but he'll call his mates for help. Equip the Rail Driver and hide behind the door picking them off one by one as they come in.

Board the tram, run to the lower left-hand corner and duck down. Wait until the car stops at the next station, then equip the Rail Driver to shoot the guards in the next the wall. Save your game. When the tram moves again, you'll pass another car with two guards. One has a Rail Driver and the other one has a Heavy Machine Gun. After you pass it, the car will come back, dodge their attacks then use the Rail Driver from behind a wall to kill them. Once gone, the area will end.

MISSILE COMMAND CENTER

When the tram stops take out the merc with the Heavy Machine Gun, more mercs will pour out of the doors. Keep a steady stream of fire on them. Open the crates for Life and Armor and and go through the door. Press the button near the window to open the double doors, then head through. Take out the turrets and mercs and return to the hall, follow it to the right to two more doors.

Save your game. Press the button to open the doors and a large group of enemies appear. Use a rocket to rip through them, then enter the next room. Activate the middle console near the window, then run out. Kill the scientist who will try and stop the launch. Return to the tram. After it crashes exit via the window and turn left. Creep against the left wall then destroy the ceiling turret and three mercs then run up to the Control Room. Press the button against the wall. Enter the large vehicle and drive to the airlock door. Go inside and drive towards the next door.

ANCIENT RIVERBED

As you drive down the canyon ignore or run over the mercs with guns, the ones with Rail Drivers, Grenades and Fusion Rocket Launchers must be shot. At the end of the canyon, enter the airlock.

UNEXPECTED CARGO

Kill the mercs however you want, then equip your Precision Rifle and go through the door to your left. As you jump onto the grating, two mercs will need killing, now run along the conveyor belt. Dodge the mercs rocket, kill him, then pick up the weapon. Take the lift on your left and open the doors to your left. Use the Fusion Rocket Launcher to kill the guards in the next room, then run forward to a dead end. On the left will be a switch for a lift to take you to the next level. Run to the left where there is a small hatch on the floor. Open it and drop inside.

SPACE STATION HUB

You're in the shuttle and have docked with the space station. Exit the shuttle by jumping to the lower level and running out the corridor, and you'll be in the docking hub. Take out the guards in the Control Room, the two on either side of the glass walkway, and the security bots.

Wise choice. They don't look like friends do they?

Get Ammo from the small room on the right, then go through the circular doors and the door that's labelled 'Reactor'. Walk forward and make note of the door to your left that is also labelled 'Reactor' (you'll need to return here later) then climb the ladder and enter the circular door. Run down the hall.

SATELLITE CONTROL

Climb up the ladder while destroying the security bot. Go through the Security door, then through the door on the right. Next take a right at the end of the hall into the Control Room. Destroy the computers then climb up the ladder that's on the right, go through the door and destroy the computers in this room.

Return to the ladder, climb to the next level and go through the Security door. Walk forward, go through the left door and then go through the second door to your left to find a console. Press the button to unlock the lower levels, return to the ladder and leave the way you came in and go way back to Space Station Hub area.

SPACE STATION HUB (PART 2)

In the Reactor area, go to the bottom and flip the switch on the wall, then go up one level from the entrance level and flip another. A timer will begin to count down. Run down the orange tunnel shaft and into the open passage. Run through the doors, then climb down the ladder to the bottom. Go through the escape pod doors, kill the three mercs, then enter the right escape pod.

CRASH SITE

Jump out of the pod, grab the Life and follow the miner. Strafe right to avoid the steam then go into the tunnel. Walk forward and there'll be one merc on your right and two to your left. If you have Rail Driver Ammo snipe them through the walls. If not, toss a couple of Grenades then save your game.

Turn right and a sniper will kill two miners. Arm either the Precision or Sniper Rifle, and crouch down. Activate the scope and creep forward while looking toward where the gunfire was coming from until you see the feet of the attackers. Then slowly move until you have a good shot, but you are still behind cover. Kill the guards then run to the far tunnel hugging the wall to your left. When you come to the area with two miners launching rockets, use their fire for cover as you follow the path into a tunnel to the left. Run forward to the next room, and there will be a merc on a bridge firing a Fusion Rocket Launcher at you. Keep running and his rocket will explode behind you.

Run up the next tunnel, kill the merc, collect the Health and Armor, then run up the tunnel with the metal supports. Turn left at your first chance and follow the tunnel until it loads.

Run up the ramp, kill the merc, go across the catwalk, and then leap into the tunnel. Kill the guard in one with a Rail Driver charge or Fusion Rocket launcher, then go through the doors to your right. Open the airlock, press the opposite switch and back away. Poisonous green gas will flood in, you'll pass out, and then wake up in the next level.

MERC PRISON CELLS

You'll wake up with no Armor or weapons. You'll hear "RED FACTION!" and be freed. Immediately run forward and grab the Precision Rifle from the downed miner, and kill the guard. Grab the Armor on the locker and activate the Machine Gun to kill the mercs that are coming. Run through the to room with the lift to the right and a Control Room to the left. Shatter the windows to find Fuel Canisters, a Heavy Machine Gun, Health and Armor, then go into the lift.

Thank heavens bombs on Mars use PS2 symbols.

MERC BARRACKS

The first door on your left holds three mercs, while the one on your right houses four. Halfway through the hall will be the Mess Hall where you'll have to face at least four. The left door before the end of the hall houses three, the right two, and behind the final door in the hall there are two as well.

MERC COMMAND CENTER

As the door opens kill the merc and head forward. Enter the first door on your left and walk around the computer to meet up with Hendrix. Save your game. Exit the room and run into the elevator.

MERC POWER PLANT

Enter the first door to your left and take out the turret and mercs. Climb down the ladder in the middle of the catwalk. Find the 'Power' button and press it. Hendrix opens a door at the end of the hall, and you'll have to run forward and kill the enemies before he'll follow you.

After the door, there will be two mercs. After the next door there will be a ceiling turret and two more guards, followed by another turret and two more mercs. Once Hendrix hacks the doors, you can continue to the next area. Save your game.

DOCKING BAY ENTRANCE

Run along the left side of the room to kill another merc. Equip the Precision Rifle and tear through the other mercs, then go through the far door. Save your game. Follow the next hall and kill the mercs, then go through the next door and press yourself against the right barrier. Equip the Rail Driver and use it to snipe the mercs on the small shack. Go inside the shack and press the button to cause the fighter to drop down. Board it, and go through the door ahead. Save your game.

MISAKO'S LAIR

Okay, this is it. The final stretch. You'll be in a fighter and will have to deal with enemy after enemy. Save here. Stick close to the ceiling in the first hall. If you get to the end of the first hall with 600-700 Life, you are doing fine and you should save your game once you pass through the docking bay. If not, reload and try again.

In the second hall, there are fewer mercs on the ground and two fighters up high. Fly through and turn right at the fork and enter the final room. If you enter it with 200-300 Life, you'll have a good run to the end and should save here. If you get in there with less than 100 Life, reload from your last save and try again.

Shoot down two fighters, then Misako will appear in her own fighter. Use a combination of Machine Gun fire and missiles to take her down, then she will start to float in an energy shield similar to Capek's. By the two lifts is a ladder – run up it and Misako will stop moving and float. Tear down her shielding with the Precision Rifle, Assault Rifle or Rockets, then duck behind the ledge once she is on the ground. She's equipped with a Precision Rifle and is extremely accurate. She'll run against the wall under where you are standing, equip the Rail Driver to kill her in one hit. Or jump down with a Heavy Machine Gun blazing and strafe to the left and right.

Once she is dead, run over to the left lift and press the button. You'll see Eos and she'll tell you about the bomb. SAVE YOUR GAME before pressing the action button in front of the bomb. You'll have to enter two codes which are randomly generated. The first one is four-digits, and the second is seven. It's a memory game. If you miss a button, the code will clear and you will have to start over. So just remember what buttons were working and figure the code out using memory. Once the bomb is disarmed, the ending will play and the end credits will roll. Congratulations.

TWISTED METAL: BLACK

You'll have no trouble steering your preferred maniac to glory with these cheat codes, but unlocking extra characters is a little trickier. Which is why we've included all the Story mode level locations of all of the secret psychos, so you can free them at your leisure.

Cheat Codes
The following cheats must be entered whilst you are actually playing (not after pausing). Before entering a code, you must first hold down L1 + R1 + L2 + R2 before typing the sequences below. If the code has worked then a message will appear at the top of the screen.

Cheat	Code
Invincibility	↑, ↓, ←, →, →, ←, ↓, ↑
Unlimited health	→, ←, ↓, ↑
Mega Machine Guns	⊗, ⊗, △
One-hit kills	⊗, ⊗, ↑
God mode	↑, ⊗, ←, ○
Weapons for health	△, ⊗, □, ○

Unlock Yellow Jacket
Whilst playing on the Junkyard level, shoot the plane that circles the arena. If you hit it with a Flame or Homing Missile, it'll burst into flames and gradually start descending before crashing into the building on the lowest level (down in the quarry). Go to the wreckage and drive through the hole in the building. You will eventually come to a sewer with a pillar in the middle. Shoot the control panel in front of the pillar and a message of congratulations will appear informing you that Yellow Jacket has been unlocked as a playable character and added to the Character Select Screen.

Unlock Axel
Whilst playing on the Freeway level, destroy most of the opposing vehicles and go to the construction yard. In this area you'll see two large cranes – one holding a crate, the other a pipe. Use the mounds to aim your weapons at the control panel on the crane holding the pipe and if you successfully hit it, the crate will be lowered into the yard. Now drive over to the crate, blow it open and a message of congratulations will appear informing you that Axel has been unlocked as a playable character and added to the Character Select Screen.

Unlock Manslaughter
Whilst playing on the Prison Passage level, wait until the ship has docked at the asylum before driving down the ramp and down towards the bottom of the boat. From the ramp, take a right, drive back around to the hull of the boat and you will see a stack of crates with a Health power-up on top. Shoot the crates (the one-hit-kill cheat must not be activated otherwise you'll just destroy all of the crates) and they'll form a ramp, drive up it and shoot a hole in the side of the boat. Now drive inside and you'll see a pillar in the corner. Shoot the control panel in front of the pillar and a message of congratulations will appear informing you that Manslaughter has been unlocked as a playable character and added to the Character Select Screen.

Unlock Warthog
Whilst playing on the Suburbs level, go to the carnival where the ferris wheel is situated (you can shoot this wheel to send it on a destructive trundle through town!) Once at the carnival, turn around and you should see a bank with a Gas Can power-up on it just to the right of the hill leading back down to town. Aim yourself at this power-up and jump off of the bank. You should land on top of one of the factories. Shoot the raised section of the roof and then drop down inside. Now shoot the control panel and a message of congratulations will appear informing you that Warthog has been unlocked as a playable character.

Unlock Minion
To unlock Minion as the final secret character, you must first complete Story mode with all of the standard and hidden characters. When you complete it with the last character, a new FMV will run showing Minion being reconstructed and the message "Beware of Minion" will flash up on screen. Minion will now be added to the Character Select Screen.

Special Attacks
Every once in a while, your opponents will hit you with something meatier than the standard weaponry which is on offer to you all. These are secret attacks and every vehicle has them…

Special Ability	Command
Freeze	↑, ↓, ↑
Jump	L1 + R1
Land mines	→, ←, ↓
Charge mines	→, ←, then hold ↓
Invisibility	←, ←, ↓, ↓
Shield	→, →, ↓, ↓
Rear fire	←, →, ↓ + Fire

Unlock Extra Multiplayer Arenas
There are a plethora of extra arenas to unlock for use in multiplayer mode and to unlock then you must locate the black cubes that are hidden on some of the levels in Story mode. Here are two of the harder to find locations for these cubes:

Highway loop: Go to the raised bridge and shoot the first round storage container in the chemical plant next to it. This container will now roll out onto the road, jump the bridge and form a hole at the entrance to the tunnel. The cube to unlock the Elevators level is inside.

Junkyard: Shoot the large pizza man and his box will form a ramp to get on top of the trash compacter. Once on top, wait until it is raised and then jump across to the building. The cube is situated here to unlock the Power Plant level.

TIME CRISIS 2

It's currently the best shooting game available on PS2 and there are loads of hidden modes that'll only become available to the sharpest of shooters.

Unlock Mirror Mode
Complete Story mode without using a single continue.

Unlock Crisis Mission
Complete Story mode – it doesn't matter if you continue.

Unlock Music Test
Complete Crisis Mission (this will also unlock Final Mission 2).

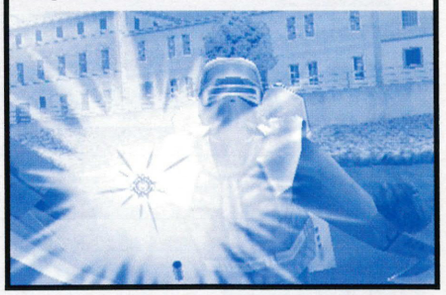
Extra Quick And Crash Mini-games
Get a top five score in any of the existing Quick and Crash mini-games.

Infinite Ammo
Successfully complete Story mode three times.

Wide Ammo
Successfully complete Story mode four times.

Shoot Away 2 Extra Mode
Get a high score in Shoot Away 2 Retro mode.

Infinite Credits
Intentionally die in Story mode and the next time it is played your number of credits (continues) will be increased by one. Once your have obtained a total of nine credits, the game will go into Free Play mode and your credits will be infinite. Also, once the Free Play mode has been unlocked, your number of lives can be increased to nine. There can surely be no excuses for not completing the game now!



PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER

There are a selection of classic teams to unlock in this fantastic footy game. All you have to do to unlock them is win certain competitions with certain teams.

Win the European Cup with England	**European Classic team**
Win the European Cup with Holland	**Holland Classic team**
Win the European Cup with Germany	**Germany Classic team**
Win the American Cup with Brazil	**Brazil Classic team**
Win the American Cup with Argentina	**Argentina Classic team**
Win the International League	**World All-Stars team**

MX2002 FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL

A selection of tasty tricks guaranteed to blow even the in-game cardboard crowd off their feet!

Bar Hop	**Hold trick and press △, △**
Can Can	**Hold trick and press □, □**
Cat Nac	**Hold trick and press ⊗, ○, ○**
Catwalk	**Hold trick and press □, △**
Cliff Hanger	**Hold trick and press ○, △**
Coffin	**Hold trick and press △, ○**
Cordova	**Hold trick and press ○, △, △**
Disco Can Can	**Hold trick and press □, □, □**
Heart Attack	**Hold trick and press ⊗, △**
Heel Clicker	**Hold trick and press △**
Helicopter	**Hold trick and press ⊗, △, △**
Indian Air	**Hold trick and press ⊗**
Kiss Of Death	**Hold trick and press ○, ○**
La-Z-Boy	**Hold trick and press ○, ⊗**
McMetz	**Hold trick and press △, △, △**
Mulisha Air	**Hold trick and press ⊗, □**
Pendulum	**Hold trick and press □, ○**
Saran Wrap	**Hold trick and press △, □**
Superfly	**Hold trick and press ⊗, ⊗, △**
Superman Indian	**Hold trick and press ⊗, ⊗, ⊗**
Switchblade	**Hold trick and press □, ⊗**
Rocket Air	**Hold trick and press ⊗, ○**
Seat Grab	**Hold trick and press ⊗, ⊗**
Rodeo Air	**Hold trick and press △, ⊗**

KLONOA 2

There couldn't possibly be cheats to make it any easier, so here's what you can unlock simply by completing it.

Unlock Mometsuto
Complete the entire game to unlock Mometsuto as a playable character.

Boss Battle
Complete the fairground levels to unlock a new area that allows you to battle against previously defeated bosses. Should you want to.

Bonus Levels
Collect six stars in any level to be awarded a Momett Doll. When you get eight and then 16 of these dolls, two new bonus levels will be opened up.

Unlock Gallery
Complete the fairground levels to unlock a new option called 'Gallery'. If you collect all 150 Gems in any level, that level's pictures will be added.

SPYHUNTER

An assortment of cheats and fancy extras are to be found in Midway's classy spy caper, but you've got to complete those missions at breakneck speed to unlock them. Here's the complete cheat grid.

Level	Time	Cheat*
1	3:40	A hidden video featuring US nu-metal band, Saliva, performing the *Peter Gunn Theme*.
2	3:35	Green HUD
3	2:40	A hidden video once again featuring Saliva (Midway really got its money's worth out of them!) this time performing Your Disease.
4	3:15	Night Vision
5	3:32	A hidden 'Early Anatomic Test' video.
6	3:45	Extra Cameras
7	3:10	Rainbow HUD
8	3:05	Inversion Camera
9	3:45	A hidden 'Concept Art' video
10	3:15	Fish-eye View
11	3:10	Camera Flip
12	3:30	Puke Camera
13	2:15	A hidden 'Making of…' video.
14	5:10	Tiny Spy
Complete all levels		Hover Spy
Complete all 65 objectives		Unlimited Ammo/Invincibility

*When you unlock a hidden video, this will be added to the Extras menu and when you unlock a cheat, this will be added to the 'Cheat Grid' in the Extras menu. To play all videos, choose the 'Movie Player' option in the Cheat Grid.

SILENT HILL 2

By completing the game under certain conditions, strange things happen the next time you play. Here's just a few examples...

Get A Chainsaw
Beat the game on the Normal difficulty level. Then when you start a new game, search the logs near the Cemetery.

Get A Secret Book
Beat the game once and search the newspaper stand near the Texxon Gas Station to get the *Book of Lost Memories*.

Get A Goblet
Beat the game once and search the shelves at the Historical Society building for the Obsidian Goblet.

Clearer Picture
Beat the game once then go to the options menu and press L1 + R1 to reveal a hidden options menu. Here you'll see a new option to turn off the sinister filters.

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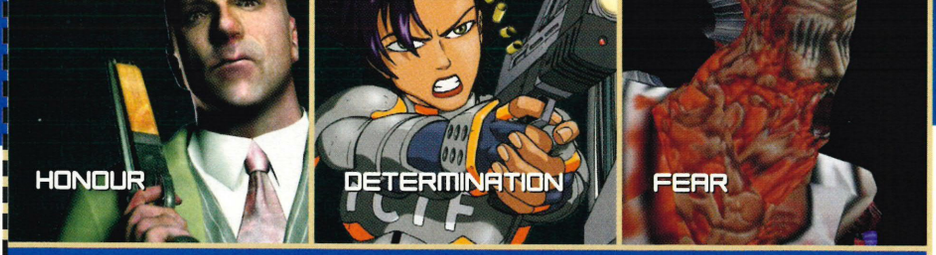

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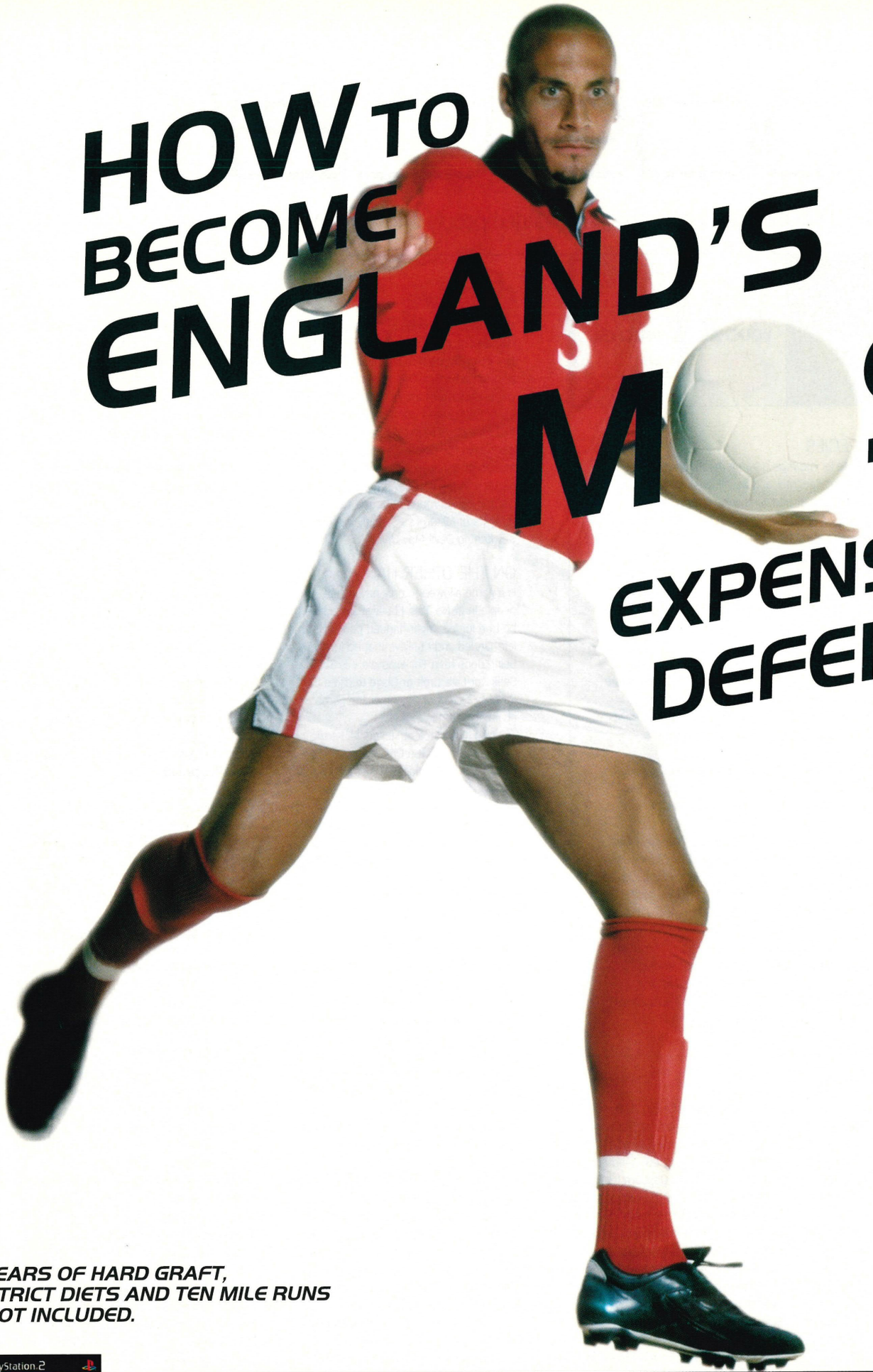

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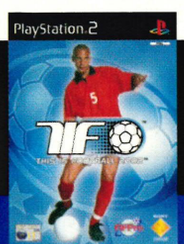

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PlayStation.2
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postal

This month: angry ladies, angry left-handed people and angry WWF fans...

Got something you want to get off your big ol' mind? Then tell us and win a prize! The winner of the Star Letter each issue gets a voucher for £50 to spend at V Shop. All other full letters printed receive a £5 voucher for V Shop. Send your letters to the Editor, Mike Goldsmith, c/o Postal, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Email us at our new Postal email address PS2postal@futurenet.co.uk or alternatively text us your PS2 rants, raves, ramblings and faves on 07764 175886 for our new Postal Bytes section. Please note: this phone number is for Postal Bytes only! TXT US NOW!

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STAR LETTER: EMAIL OF THE SPECIES

This is really a plea to my husband, Chris... Please let me have a go on the PlayStation 2! I know I'm at home all day, but I'm looking after our daughter and we all know you can't play when there's a one-year-old trying to press the buttons or constantly hitting Start. So when you come home and play *World's Scariest Police Chases* non-stop, please let me have a go at my games! Don't say "after this go" or "I'm at a really important bit."

And by the way, yes, I'm female and enjoy the 'girly' games, but I also like scary stuff such as the *Resident Evil* series and *Silent Hill*. I'm brilliant at *Diablo* and *Quake* on the PC and can kick arse at *Point Blank* and *Time Crisis 2*! Don't put all us girl gamers in the same category, saying that we hate games and would rather be talking about bras and make-up. I bet if I tried I could lay the smackdown on any of you.

Leanne Ball, via email

Given that OPS2's Designer, Operations Editor and Publisher (not to mention the lioness' share of our crack advertising squad) are all of the wonderfully female persuasion, we are a magazine that's more than in touch with its feminine side than most. Talk of bras and make-up does crop up from time to time but that's more to do with Sefton than anyone else.

So what else is there to say? A few things:

(i) We have never ever ever "put girl gamers in the same category, saying [you] hate games." Okay, there was Fitz's What If? thing a couple of issues ago but that was more like The Two Ronnies' The Worm That Turned *than anything truly malicious. Honest. He's got a dead nice girlfriend and everything.*

(ii) Having seen the OPS2 *ladies hammer the likes of* Quake III *and* Kengo*, we have no doubt that a 'smackdown' could indeed be laid on any male member of the team at any time – and truly we would deserve it. Girls play* Quake *as much as they play* Hugo The Happy Pixie*. S'true.*

(iii) CHRIS, FOR GOD'S SAKE LET LEANNE HAVE A GO ON THE PLAYSTATION 2 BEFORE SHE HOOFS YOUR SORRY ARSE FROM HERE TO CHELMSFORD. THE WOMAN'S GOOD AT QUAKE*, NAGDAMMIT – SHE COULD HAVE YOUR FAMILY JEWELS FOR EARRINGS BEFORE I SAY 'OHMIGOD, SHE'S PACKING HEAT!' OHMIGOD, SHE IS PACKING HEAT!*

(iv) Leanne, we hope all the above clarifies any misunderstanding. Hopefully the gift of a £50 voucher for the lovely V Shop will allow you to add another game to your collection and persuade your fella that you should have more time with the PlayStation 2. And if that doesn't work? Then it's time to withhold favours of the carnal kind. Works every time, we hear. □

TOUCH OF EVIL

Recently on my sad little look through the seemingly endless rumours on the Internet and through the best PS2 mag (*OPS2*, of course) I happened upon something that is totally evil. *Resident Evil* is leaving the PlayStation for Gamecube!

I was shocked. Even more horrified than hearing Westlife sing again. So what am I to do once *Resident Evil Code: Veronica X*, *Silent Hill 2*, *Onimusha 2*, and *Devil May Cry* have graced our fair shores and we have finally got bored of them (about December 2002). Are we to expect loads and loads of *Onimushas* and *Devil May Crys* (which are both first rate stuff but just don't fill *Resi*'s shoes) or, dare I say it, will other developers try and have a go (like Square's pitiful attempts with *Parasite Eve 2*). What will I and the rest of the world do for survival horror, knowing that Konami won't make another *Silent Hill* until PS3 *[And how do we know that? – Ed]*. Will Capcom let the genre die, with it my dreams of crushing the head of a zombie beneath my foot?

Please comfort me before I settle for the second-rate stuff that the other developers will turf out now that Capcom and *Resident Evil* have thrown in the towel on PS2 and have gone for the kiddie console.

Dan Herbert, South Cerney

Sad to say but yes, for the time being Resi *is off to pastures new. Expect Claire, Chris and undead chums to all start resembling monkeys, plumbers, magic dragons and other such nonsense in the near future. Will we see our heroes again? The official line from Capcom is that the deal is not a permanent thing. The agreement is currently for six* Resi *games only, with no other PS2 games affected. Even then, it includes ports of the previous four* Resis *– and given the decidedly iffy Gamecube launch in Tokyo, who knows what could happen in a few years time? It's a shame, but for the moment, taste the heady delights of Mikami's PS2-only creation, the bewitching* Devil May Cry.

ON THE OTHER HAND

Is a game allowed to only have white people in it? No. This, I believe should also be true for left-/right-handed people! I am left-handed and I believe that no justice is being done here. For example – is Solid Snake or Lara Croft or Claire Redfield or Revolver Ocelot or any other top game character left-handed? No!

Also if you look at Fingers McKenzie (*TimeSplitters*) on the Character Selection screen, you will notice that he's left-handed, but when playing as him, where does he hold the gun? On the right! Some FPS games on PC give you the option of having a left-handed character while actually playing the game, so why not on the PS2? Please tell any producers that you know my feelings and we will see if this continues.

Paul Rolleston, Sutton-On-Sea

Although some people may view this type of discrimination against southpaws as being on a par with ethnic cleansing, we're more tempted to believe the lot of you are witches and have you drowned in the nearest village pond. Seriously though, you have half a point – it'd be far easier for left-handed characters to sneak and shoot around certain corners in stealthy adventures, with your choice of character thus directly affecting gameplay. Will it happen? There's no reason why not.

IT'S IN THE GAME – MAYBE

As a gamer of some years, I would like to have a rant about an issue that has just started to chafe my chuddies. After owning a Spectrum and a MegaDrive in my youth, games were acquired very infrequently or only when they had been out for years and were being practically given away.

With the advent of PSone and full-time employment I started to buy games because of their merit, and usually on release day, such is my passion. I'm sure many fellow gamers will sympathise with me when I mention the dreaded release day broken promise. I refer most recently to *Operation Winback*, which at the time of writing has still not been released to my knowledge. This was reviewed back in issue #07, and while I understand putting back release dates benefits the gamer by ironing out glitches etc, it is at the same time hugely frustrating.

I understand that a terrorist-based game probably would be shelved in light of recent events, but that doesn't explain the previous delays. Anyway, I don't think those that would be offended by the release of this game would be buying it in the first place, do you?

I know it may not be the PS2's greatest game but I have wanted to check it out for ages. At this rate, I'll probably be playing Kojima's inevitably vastly-superior *MGS2* before *Winback* hits the shops.

Thanks for answering this. Us gamers never appear to be satisfied do we? Give 'em the most powerful games platform around and they still sound like they're complaining about *Jet Set Willy* crashing!

Brent Carpenter, Barnstaple

We reviewed the game in good faith, believing a release was imminent. Thankfully, Winback *is finally now in the shops. The reason for the delay? Midas says: "Certain contractual issues with the developer became apparent and unfortunately these factors lead to the game slipping. Midas apologises for the delay but emphasises that it was due to unforeseen circumstances out of our control." Want to complain? Take a trip to page 174 for our Database of company 'phone numbers and then let fly.*

A GRAN SCHEME

I would like to suggest an idea that you could pitch to Polyphony Digital, the Japanese developer of the *Gran Turismo* games. How about making a 24th Century driving game called *Gran Futurismo*?

You could ask today's car manufacturers if they would like hovering interpretations of their present day vehicle line-up or you could avoid licensing costs altogether and make up fictional 24th Century manufacturers. Present day stuff concerning drive types could be replaced by proton or ion-driven engines.

The race tracks could consist of future versions of Tokyo and Seattle and various fictional ones. I believe *Gran Futurismo* could blow away other future-based racers like *WipEout Fusion* and *Extreme-G 3*. However, there would be no weapons in *GF*, as it is a driving game only, just like its

V SHOP

For information on V Shop's 'two games for £60' deals turn to page 38 now.

present-day predecessor. I am not interested in getting money out of these suggestions. I would just like to see this idea out there on shop shelves, as I believe it is an imaginative new take on a bestselling franchise.
Paul Holden, Preston

"Hi, is that Kazunori-san? Yeah, it's Mike at OPS2. I've got this ace idea for a futuristic version of Gran Turismo *– Gran Futurismo! Yeah, it's good isn't it. All our own work? Of course it is – why do you ask? Anyway, forget that and let's talk cold hard cash..."*

SMACK DUMB

Please tell me this isn't true. Less than two months before the release of *WWF SmackDown! 'Just Bring It!'* for the PlayStation 2, the World Wrestling Federation decides to change its previous SmackDown! logo for some futuristic 'italic' text format, and its current show into a giant fist. Please find a way to inform the developer.

WWF fans don't want to play a game that is totally out of date and not accurately recreated by the time it is released! Remember, we would rather wait another six months than play a dated looking game.
Kazunori Goto, London

Given the buckets of cash involved in WWF these days, we're pretty sure that THQ and Yuke's are more than aware of any logo changes. As last issue's cover and this issue's playable demo show, 'Just Bring It!' *comes with the old logo but all the new Superstars™, arenas and face-mangling moves. Embrace that, rather than an incorrect font. And while we're here, are you sure that's your real name? Sounds a wee bit familiar to us...*

ELITE FORCE

Please can you tell me if there are any 3D space games in development for the PS2? Specifically the kind of games I would like are variants on *Elite*, *Frontier* and *Privateer* – not just space combat games like the excellent *Star Wars: Starfighter*. When *Elite 2: Frontier* was released on the Amiga, it fitted on one 720k disc and was a fantastic game for its time – it makes you wonder what could be achieved on the PS2. However I have heard nothing of this genre being developed. I'm fed up with variants on racers, RPGs and shoot-'em-ups!
Terry Brown, via email

A version of David Braben's fabled Elite *has been touted for just about every new games console since the BBC, with contractual problems preventing its appearance for the most part. However a quick shufty at Braben's Frontier Web site (www.frontier.co.uk) reveals that a multiplayer game by the name of* Elite 4 *(working title, natch) is currently being developed for "undecided" platforms, although PlayStation 2 is a "likely candidate" when the game hits some time in 2002. We'll bring you more on* Elite 4 *in Spy when details firm up.*

BETTER THE DEVIL, Y'KNOW

I would first like to say well done with your magazine. I've bought every issue so far and can't wait for the next. Keep it up. I would like to comment on the *Devil May Cry* demo that came with the *Resident Evil Code: Veronica X* game. The demo is so great it made my mouth water. It's what I've wanted from a game for so long.

The gameplay is outstanding. You can do combos and swing around to attack multiple enemies with your sword, or shoot the crap out of them with your two guns that can also be used when moving. The combos are great, the way you can strike at one and then another in a fluid movement is just so cool.

This is what I wanted from *Onimusha* but it never delivered. It was glide into enemy and strike, glide into enemy and strike – no fluid movements at all. From my point of view, a game should be as realistic as possible with only some futuristic or odd gameplay where appropriate.

Devil May Cry does this perfectly and is a must-buy game for any PS2 owner. *Resident Evil Code: Veronica X* is also great and is one of the best games out on the PS2 so far, including *GT3*. Can't wait for *GTA3* and the long awaited (still) *MGS2*.
Rhys Stonuary, Abertillery

Can we take it that you're pretty chuffed about this issue then, Rhys?

POSTAL BYTES

Text us your abbreviated wds on 07764 175886, including your name and town. Remember, this line is for Postal Bytes only.

My mate David makes fun of me cause I'm driving a mx5 in gt3 and I liked moulin rouge. Is he over compensating? _ Ps2 dudes. Please tell my house mate craig to stop playing gt3 we share the console and I want a go! He might listen to you! Eynstone from Abingdon… _ I'm trapped on riven… chaos all around no hope but wait whats this? myst 3 exile. salvation! ah damn! It's on pc will it reach ps2? _ I am 30 when I play my ps2 I feel young. Love ur mag subd from issue one. Ps 4 ever. Fish london _ no resi 4 on ps2 no no no! jon _ Hello 2 all at opsm2 iss12 of ur mag woz da best yet I luv my ps2 & I can't wait 4 these games ariblade, burnout mgs2, oo7, t.hawks3 etc…Carl G _ Feeder rubbish? Wot a load of nonsense! You can tell mr brown that the music in gt3 is brill and feeder are one of the best bands ever. Chaz _ Mitsukai from preston ere. Ffx looks purty. Me droll over ur mag. Any news on suikoden3? Tekken4 is anutha must hav4me. No Jin but wiv kazuya. I will kik arse! C'mon _ I want a free copy of final fantasy ten or I will eat all your magazines _ I just played ffx and you know what? I didn't have a bloody clue what the game was about cos I aint Japanese. But it was impressive - Nick _ Bought dark cloud 2day. Cant sleep must go on!! Darn rpgs. Why so addictive? Franco Spins _ I just wanna say that gt3 has lost me my job! Oh dear!! _ Spy Hunter demo rocked! _ Howz about you printing my name in big letters next month and i will send you a mini disc of me djing… simon toogood, Derby _ Oh my god i am in heaven it is wonderful and full of loud noises like tyres running against tarmac and lazers blasting my opponents… Lee Dewar _ Texting OPSM2? NO need 2 write or email? It just feels weird (but somehow liberating) Rich, Bournemouth _ Freak out … now wot the hells that all about?

AROUND THE WORLD

I'd just like to say that your mag is an absolute lifeline. Because I live in Antigua there isn't a whole lot to do, so the middle of every month I come home from school and look to see if my magazine has come yet. If it has, nobody will see me for a few days. Not only do the demos keep me occupied for hours, but your mag is so easy to read and has so much useful stuff in it. I read it from cover to cover.

Subscribing to your mag has saved me a lot of money already because I can't just go into the nearest city and try out the latest releases, I have to guess really, but your reviews section gives me the final word. If I want to get a game and it gets a good review, I'll get it, but if it gets a poor review, no thanks. I also remember seeing a letter a while ago in the Postal section regarding a prize to the furthest away reader, which is actually the main reason I wrote in seeing as Antigua is further away than Croatia, but I thought I might as well give a bit of well deserved praise at the same time.

Anyway, if the DVD keeps on improving like it has with the October DVD, then I don't see why anyone should buy any other magazine. I look forward to seeing some more great demos, especially *Silent Hill 2*, now that *Resident Evil* has moved over to Gamecube. Keep up the good work.
Philip Sharpe, Antigua

Given Antigua is located in the Eastern Caribbean, that means the rest of you are gonna have to go some way to match our Philip's claim. Think you can beat Antigua? Write in and let us know! C'mon, there must be one of you lot playing Extermination *in Antarctica...* □

To be eligible for the Star Letter prize, remember to include your full name and address. *OPS2* reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and style.

back issues

Want to get your hands on the issues people are discussing in Postal? Come raid our warehouse for issues you've missed. All issues feature playable demo discs.

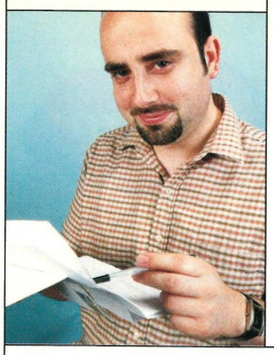
TEN: *Resident Evil Code: Veronica X* exclusive UK review, PS2 preview roundup and a playable demo of *Le Mans 24 Hours.*

ELEVEN: *Deus Ex* world exclusive preview, in Japan with *WWF SmackDown!, Tekken 4* news and a huge demo of *Lotus Challenge.*

TWELVE: Huge *Final Fantasy X* feature, *Project Eden* reviewed, *WWF SmackDown! 'Just Bring it!'* previewed, five playable demos.

THIRTEEN: World exclusive *WWF SmackDown! 'Just Bring it!'* review plus four collectors' covers. Seven playable demos on the disc!

To order back issues of *OPS2*, write to *Official PlayStation 2* Back Issues, Future Publishing, Cary Court, Somerton, Somerset TA11 6TB, or call 01458 271184. Back issues are priced £5.99 (UK), £6.99 (Europe) and £7.99 (Rest of the World). Supplies limited.



postal: surgery

Every issue, *OPS2*'s Dr Paul Fitzpatrick heals your gaming fractures.

1. In issue #011 you said that the Hard Disc Drive is to be released in Japan soon and that they are going to release both an external and internal one for around £100. When it is released here it will cost £200 so I was wondering if the Japanese internal Hard Disc Drive will work on UK/PAL PlayStation 2s as this would be a saving of almost £100.
2. Also since I live in a very remote part of the UK it looks like I'll have to make do with the 56K modem option. Will this be good enough to play PS2 games without any trouble?
Ash Norman, via email

1. *In theory it sounds like a good idea but given the potential incompatibility pitfalls of broadcast region (NTSC/PAL) operating software and even difference in electrical current between UK and Japanese PS2s, it's extremely unlikely that the HDD unit would work.*
2. *Although Broadband is ideal for games that require quickly-updated, data-heavy graphics (like racers), and for downloading large media files, it isn't necessary for large multiplayer games of the* Everquest *type. For these, and for Internet/email/messaging services the network adaptor's 56k modem will be more than adequate.*

1. Please tell me when *Gunslinger* is out, because there was a lot of hype – then zilch.
Daniel Porter, South Wales
1. *Like the man with no name, the initially promising-looking third-person Wild West adventure* Gunslinger *has slipped over the horizon and into legend. Production has been cancelled before elevenses let alone high noon.*

1. I'm trying to buy a PS2 console for my grandson who lives in Germany. Unfortunately I'm getting conflicting reports from sales staff. Can I buy it in England? If not, why not?
2. Is there a reliable Internet site that I can purchase a German version from?
3. Will the English games work on a German PS2?
Leigh, via email

1. *From a broadcasting point of view Britain and Germany are both PAL territories so a PS2 bought here will be identical to one bought over there. The only thing you will need to add to the gift is an adaptor for the plug end of the power lead.*
2. *You could do worse than go for the computer area at Amazon's German site (www.amazon.de). At time of going to press the PS2 is selling for just shy of 800 DM, which is marginally cheaper than the UK price.*
3. *As the answer to question 1 suggests, software that's bought in the UK will work on a PS2 bought in Germany as well as it does here.*

1. Will there be a re-release for *Final Fantasys VII, VIII* and *IX* on PS2 and if so will they come with any extras?
2. Will the G-Con 2 light gun be sold with *Time Crisis 2* or will you have to buy it separately?
Kyle Mortimer, Bridge of Earn-Perthshire

1. *Although Square did overhaul* FFIV *and* Chrono Trigger *packaging them for the US PSone market as* Final Fantasy Chronicles *there are currently no plans to give the already superb* VII, VIII *and* IX *the next-gen treatment.*

2. *The gun peripheral will be available to buy separately or as part of a* Time Crisis *2/G-Con 2 bundle for £49.99.*

1. I tried to play a DVD with my old PSone TV connector and a Memory Card in the slot. The DVD didn't work and when I tried to play a game I found my Memory Card had been wiped. Why?
Ti Amo, Guernsey

1. *Did the DVD play but with a green screen? If the PSone connector you used was a SCART that would be the reason. If the DVD didn't work at all however it could be a number of things: Was the DVD a Region 2 PAL disc? It should be. Have you tried to play a bootleg disc? In which case it might be labelled as DVD but it will probably be a Video CD which won't play on PS2. As for the Memory Card that's the first case we've heard of. Have any other readers had the same experience? If so, let us know.*

1. Help. I'm having a few problems with *Resident Evil Code: Veronica X*. I can't get into the safe that's in the office. I've read the memo but it frustrates me when I follow the instructions and nothing happens. What should I do?
2. Also, what is the password for the computer? I have a hunch it's in the Biology room but I can't get in there.
3. And lastly, what's the piano paper for? It's driving me mad!
Ben S, via email

1. *You need the Safe Key that can be found outside the Military Training Facility in the Bathhouse. Beware the hideous naked zombies enjoying a sauna.*
2. *Hmm. There's a fair few computers in the game but we're taking a wild stab in the dark and assuming you mean the computer in the Main Office? Anyway, the security code for that machine is 1971. Input the number, a secret door opens and a Bandersnatch attacks through the window. Watch out!*
3. *In the Casino room you have to use the Music Sheet to start up the piano. This opens a slot on the instrument allowing you to collect the Blue Ant figurine (which should be taken to Alfred's bedroom and placed on his music box).*

1. Why is *Pro Evolution Soccer* out in Japan and not in Europe? Wouldn't we appreciate it more?
2. When the Hard Disc Drive comes out will you be able to use it to make game saves instead of using a Memory Card?
3. Why has the price of PS2 games been the same since the machine was launched 12 months ago?
Jonathan Higgins, County Galway

1. *Not sure about the Japanese not loving their footy as much as the rest of us but as for* Pro Evolution Soccer *in Europe, perhaps you'd be interested in our review on page 108?*
2. *Absolutely. That, and saving new game levels, photos, movies, music, stats and probably scans of the kitchen sink by the time developers warm to the possibilities before them.*
3. *If you're talking about a PS2 Platinum range, Jonathan, it (or a similar scheme)* is *on the cards, but SCEE is still to decide on how many units of a particular game have to be sold in a year to qualify. However, now PS2 has passed its first birthday in the UK the time is definitely ripe. Keep your eyes on Spy.*

1. My friend and I have had some mad split-screen races in our *GT3* style F1 cars, but what we really want to do is to have an i-Link battle. We've got two PS2s, two TVs and two copies of *GT3*, but we can't find an i-Link cable in the shops. Where can you get one?
Andrew Cooper, Chessington

1. *Your local Electronics Boutique should have one and if they don't, or you don't have a store near you can buy online at www.eb.uk.com. For the whereabouts of an official Sony i-Link cable call the PlayStation Careline on 0990 998 877.*

1. I am having trouble getting Dolby Digital to work on my PlayStation 2. I have a Yamaha digital amp connected to my PS2 via an optic lead. The amp switches automatically when a digital signal is detected but when I play DVDs the sound comes out in Pro Logic. Please could you help me?
Keith Jones, Snaith

1. *It sounds like you haven't yet activated Digital Out on your PS2. To do this firstly boot up the machine without a disc inserted and enter the System Configuration menu. Once here make sure that 'Digital Out (Optical)' is on. Now insert a DVD and press* SELECT *to bring up the on-screen menu. The icon under the number 7 will take you to the Setup sub menu in which you'll find 'Audio Setup'. Select this. Now all you need to do is make sure that both 'Digital Out' and 'Dolby Digital' are activated and you'll be all set.*

POSTAL SURGERY DROP IN

Savlon and a fabric plaster applied to your minor game related grazes.

***Winning Eleven 5*? No, *Pro Evolution Soccer* in the UK.**

Philip Bayliss wants to know how to nobble the Tyrant in the cargo hold in *Code Veronica*. Well, equip the bow gun and alternate firing arrows with dashing to keep your distance. Shoot the last few from the closed end and then flick the glowing switch. Bye bye Tyrant. Meanwhile, **Greg Morrison** is having hassles with flickering DVD playback through his TV/video setup. If the PS2 is connected through the VCR that will be the cause. Try hooking it up to the TV directly. **Lee Sliney** is wondering what's happening with the *Thunderbirds* game being developed by SCi. No release date as yet Lee, but when *OPS2* spoke to Jerry Anderson recently he said he'd been shown some early work on the title and was impressed. Finally, **Mark Harrison** wants to know why he can't find any mention of *Winning Eleven 5* in the UK. That's because it's kicking off over here as *Pro Evolution Soccer*. Talking of which, **Gabriel Gonzalez**? For the answers to your *Pro Evolution* questions turn to the review on page 108 now! See you next month...

1. Is there a possibility of a *Stargate SG-1* game coming to PS2 and if so when is it likely to be?
2. When will the mighty *Final Fantasy X* fall upon us?
3. Finally when the Internet comes to PS2 will there be more games on the strategic side online, for example *Command & Conquer: Tiberian Sun*?
4. I'm not sure which game to purchase: *SSX* or *Hologram Time Traveller*. Can you help me?
Andrew Hume, via email

1. *Nothing has materialised as yet but considering the game-friendly format of the show it wouldn't be a surprise.*
2. *The latest information we have is that* Final Fantasy X *will be released in the US in January and come to us in Europe towards the end of Spring.*
3. Almost certainly, although given its console heritage it's unlikely that PS2 will ever be flooded with point and click titles. That's for the likes of Xbox. However, while we're waiting you may be interested to know that Erik Yeo, Lead Designer on the *Command & Conquer* series, is working on Midway's Arthurian, real-time RPG *Legion: Legend of Excalibur*. It's out next year.
4. *Ho ho ho. If you're seriously asking (you're not are you?) then it's just possible you're beyond help! SSX of course!*

1. I keep getting 'Disc Read Error' coming up when I try to load some of my games. I'm pretty careful about not getting smudges on my discs. Does this mean I've got a dodgy PS2?
Fran Gordon, via email

1. *Probably not. There are a couple of things you should try before falling back on your warranty. First off, try putting the PS2 in the horizontal position (if it's not already). Failing that the problem is likely to be a dusty laser lens. Invest in a CD lens cleaner and give that a go. Chances are, that will solve your problem.*

1. When I play DVDs on my PS2 I'm getting that out of sync problem. I know that pausing and restarting sorts it out but is there anything else I can do, because it's a pain to have to keep stopping and starting?
Simon Morris, via email

1. *While we're waiting for Sony to bring out a lip-sync-correcting, updated DVD driver there is one other thing you might try to correct the problem. Before you play a DVD reset the PS2. This clears the machine's RAM (ready to be filled with DVD data as it's read). According to a number of readers this stops the problem. Let us know if it works for you.*

1. With the PS2's ability to hook up with a keyboard and mouse will this mean developers will make 'true' flight sims of the kind that are so popular on PCs? I know that *Ace Combat 4* is on the horizon but having an aircraft with 30-plus air-to-air missiles doesn't really sound right.
Scott Taylor, Birmingham

1. *As you point out, in theory the PS2 could become the home of the kind of doorstop manuals, flaps and ILS approach flight sims that are two-a-penny in the desktop-beige-box market. However, despite its more grown-up approach to armchair gaming, PS2 is, essentially, a console. And as such, its sims are likely to remain true to the accessible gameplay spirit that sets them apart from the usual, ponderous but involving PC fare.*

1. Help! I'm getting some snow like distortion when I use the PS2's DVD playback. It's not major but I can't believe it's supposed to be there. I think my TV set up is okay. Is there anything you can suggest?
David Murphy, via email

1. *As it happens your PS2 DVD driver may already have a built-in solution. Put a DVD in your PS2 and press* SELECT *when it starts to roll to bring up the on-screen menu. Highlight the Setup icon (it looks like a suitcase) and then select the Screen Setup icon in the sub menu. See the letters DNR? They stand for Digital Noise Reduction. There are two levels of DNR which help with the kind of 'snowing' or hiss that can occur when playing a film. Good luck.*

1. Will the RPG masterpiece *Diablo 2* be coming out for the PlayStation 2?
Ross Lovie, via email

1. Never say never, but there are no current plans for Blizzard to bring the game to PS2.

Send all your game and technical queries to: Surgery, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Or email PS2postal@futurenet.co.uk, marking it 'Surgery'. Get writing now!

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the shortlist

If it's for PS2, and on sale in the UK then we've played it, argued about it and played it some more. Want the definitive verdicts on the 149 PS2 games available right now? Then welcome to The ShortList.

OPS2 AWARDS

To make it even easier for you to filter out the gems from the swine, *OPS2* has introduced a brand new colour coded ratings system for the ShortList.

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK GOLD

GOLD
Only awarded to games that score the full 10/10.

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK SILVER

SILVER
Awarded to titles that score 9/10.

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK BRONZE

BRONZE
Awarded to titles that score 8/10.

4X4 EVOLUTION
(Take 2/Terminal Reality)
Flash but slack off-road racer that fails to make a satisfying or lasting impression.
Reviewed **OPS2#06/Overall 05**

7 BLADES
(Konami/KCEJ)
Ninja-styled adventure with repetitive gameplay.
Reviewed **OPS2#05/Overall 06**

AGE OF EMPIRES II: THE AGE OF KINGS
(Konami/Microsoft/Ensemble Studios/KCET)
PC-style real-time strategy with great depth but difficult to control with the Dual Shock 2.
Reviewed **OPS2#13/Overall 07**

ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2002
(Acclaim/Acclaim Studios Austin)
An enjoyable all-round game of baseball with oodles of depth.
Reviewed **OPS2#07/Overall 07**

ALONE IN THE DARK: THE NEW NIGHTMARE
(Infogrames/Darkworks)
The first survival horror returns, but fails to scare on PS2.
Reviewed **OPS2#13/Overall 06**

AQUA AQUA: WETRIX 2.0
(SCi/Zed Two)
Addictive, well-realised update of the N64 title *Wetrix*.
Reviewed **OPS2#01/Overall 07**

ARMORED CORE 2
(Ubi Soft/From Software)
Infinitely-tweakable first-person mech shooter.
Reviewed **OPS2#04/Overall 07**

ARMY MEN AIR ATTACK: BLADE'S REVENGE
(3DO/3DO)
Dullsville helicopter game.
Reviewed **OPS2#09/Overall 02**

ARMY MEN: GREEN ROGUE
(3DO/3DO)
On-rails shooter which manages to plumb new depths of tedium.
Reviewed **OPS2#08/Overall 01**

ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2
(3DO/3DO)
Poorly realised shooter.
Reviewed **OPS2#07/Overall 03**

ATV OFFROAD
(SCEE/Rainbow Studios)
Quad bike stunt racer with wonky AI and a poorly-controlled, uneven ride.
Reviewed **OPS2#10/Overall 06**

BLOODY ROAR 3
(Virgin/Hudson Soft)
Beast battler with a lot of fur, but a lack of teeth.
Reviewed **OPS2#09/Overall 06**

BURNOUT
(Acclaim/Criterion Studios)
OutRun grows up, and learns how to crash properly. Thrilling, edgy race action.
Reviewed **OPS2#13/Overall 08**

CART FURY CHAMPIONSHIP RACING
(Midway/Midway)
Arcade racer rammed with crazy physics and high speeds.
Reviewed **OPS2#10/Overall 06**

CITY CRISIS
(Take 2 Interactive/Syscom)
Innovative helicopter airlift adventure with neat control system, but short on levels.
Reviewed **OPS2#10/Overall 06**

CRAZY TAXI
(Acclaim/Sega/Acclaim)
Pure arcade thrills. If you want speed, buy this now.
Reviewed **OPS2#07/Overall 08**

DARK CLOUD
(SCEE/Level 5)
The new 'best RPG on PS2'. Enthralling story, atmospheric music and a fantastic world-building element thrown in for good measure.
Reviewed **OPS2#11/Overall 07**

DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2
(Acclaim/Z-Axis)
Orthodox but impressive, this BMX sim has an inventive array of tricks.
Reviewed **OPS2#12/Overall 07**

DEAD OR ALIVE 2
(SCEE/Tecmo)
Blistering beat-'em-up famous for its collection of extremely well-endowed lady fighters. Includes a 60Hz option.
Reviewed **OPS2#02/Overall 07**

DISNEY'S DINOSAUR
(Ubi Soft/Ubi Soft)
Poor movie spin-off. Don't inflict the kids with this.
Reviewed **OPS2#03/Overall 04**

DONALD DUCK: QUACK ATTACK
(Ubi Soft/Disney Interactive)
More 'cack' than 'quack'.
Reviewed **OPS2#04/Overall 04**

DRAGON'S LAIR
(Digital Leisure/Cinematronics)
Unplayable retro adventure. Should have stayed on the Laser Disc it started on.
Reviewed **OPS2#03/Overall 02**

DRAGON'S LAIR II: TIMEWARP
(Digital Leisure/Cinematronics)
Painfully dull arcade sequel.
Reviewed **OPS2#03/Overall 01**

DRIVING EMOTION TYPE-S
(EA/Square)
Dismal, *dismal* racer. Fails to evoke *any* emotion at all.
Reviewed **OPS2#05/Overall 04**

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2
(Midas Interactive/KOEI)
Epic battler mixing strategy, sword-slashing, horse riding and shooting people.
Reviewed **OPS2#02/Overall 07**

EPHEMERAL FANTASIA
(Konami/KCEJ East)
Bemani-flavoured RPG where periodically whipping out a guitar and playing a solo is integral to the plot.
Reviewed **OPS2#10/Overall 07**

ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND
(Activision/LucasArts)
Lengthy adventure with smart visuals, witty script and intelligent puzzling.
Reviewed **OPS2#09/Overall 08**

ESPN INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD
(Konami/KCEO)
Graphically impressive athletics sim with dodgy AI. Most fun of the events is the Bemani-style Rhythmic Gymnastics level.
Reviewed **OPS2#01/Overall 06**

ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT
(Konami/KCEO)
Gameplay kinks put this below its more formidable EA Sports rival.
Reviewed **OPS2#05/Overall 06**

ESPN NBA 2NIGHT
(Konami/KCEO)
For basketball heads only.
Reviewed **OPS2#05/Overall 06**

ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING
(Konami/KCEO)
Not-very-extreme skateboarding sim with some unsightly graphical glitches Won't trouble *Tony Hawk's*.
Reviewed **OPS2#13/Overall 05**

ESPN WINTER X-GAMES SNOWBOARDING
(Konami/KCEO)
Lifelike snowboarder, ruined by bland graphics, unresponsive controls and a lack of excitement.
Reviewed **OPS2#01/Overall 06**

ETERNAL RING
(Ubi Soft/From Software)
Unoriginal Japanese RPG. As painful as its title.
Reviewed **OPS2#05/Overall 03**

EVERGRACE
(Ubi Soft/Crave Entertainment/From Software)
An ultimately depressing role-playing game, that fails to engage the player at any meaningful level.
Reviewed **OPS2#06/Overall 02**

EXTERMINATION
(SCEE/Deep Space)
Alien-inspired survival horror-fest set in a deserted Antarctic research base. Positively crawling with design innovations.
Reviewed **OPS2#08/Overall 07**

EXTREME-G 3
(Acclaim/Acclaim)
A great future racer that will do more than just stop the gap between now and Studio Liverpool's long-awaited *WipEout Fusion*.
Reviewed **OPS2#11/Overall 08**

F1 2001
(EA Sports/EA Sports)
Another solid PS2 F1 title, but ultimately rather soulless.
Reviewed **OPS2#13/Overall 07**

F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000
(EA Sports/EA/Visual Sciences)
Hardcore F1 fans will find this a little too easy.
Reviewed **OPS2#03/Overall 06**

F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP
(Video System/Ubi Soft)
Good attention to detail but a lot less fun than its (many) competitors.
Reviewed **OPS2#06/Overall 05**

FANTAVISION
(SCEE/SCEI)
The world's first fireworks game. Not enormous, but of rare and random beauty.
Reviewed **OPS2#01/Overall 07**

FIFA 2001
(EA Sports/EA Sports Canada)
Great graphics, but second division gameplay.
Reviewed **OPS2#02/Overall 06**

FORMULA ONE 2001
(SCEE/Studio Liverpool)
Tons of depth, but it'll feel just too 'simmy' for some. Still, the best F1 game on the PS2 yet.
Reviewed **OPS2#07/Overall 08**

FREAK OUT
(Swing!/Treasure)
Unique cartoon action-adventure with a kooky Japanese twist.
Reviewed **OPS2#12/Overall 07**

FUR FIGHTERS
(Acclaim/Bizarre Creations)
Cute fluffy creatures armed to the teeth with shotguns, blast each other to pieces.
Reviewed **OPS2#08/Overall 08**

GAUNTLET: DARK LEGACY
(Midway/Midway East Games)
Dated gameplay negates any innovative additions.
Reviewed **OPS2#08/Overall 05**

GIFT
(Cryo Interactive/Ekosystem)
New take on a 3D platformer, but lets its imagination get in the way of its gameplay.
Reviewed **OPS2#10/Overall 06**

GRADIUS III & IV
(Konami/KCET)
Dull 2D arcade shooter.
Reviewed **OPS2#01/Overall 02**

GRAND THEFT AUTO 3
(Rockstar Games/DMA Design)
The original crim sim goes 3D and it's a complete riot.
Reviewed **OPS2#13/Overall 08**

GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC
(SCEE/Polyphony Digital)
If you didn't know already, *GT3* is the greatest driving game in the world. Buy it now.
Reviewed **OPS2#09/Overall 09**

reader's choice

WHY EVERYONE SHOULD OWN... **MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 2**

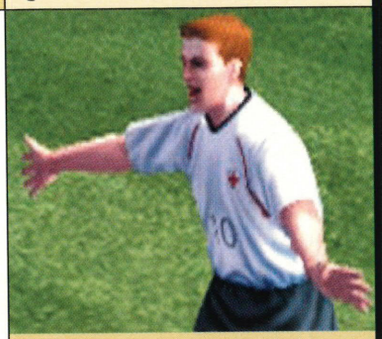
Nominated by *OPS2* reader **ALAN NICHOL**, Southampton
"I even recorded the 'ding' of my microwave."

"The PS2 game with 100% replay value; as complicated or as simple as you want it to be. Whether you are Norman Cook or you are tone deaf, this game will make a budding DJ out of anyone. Decide to use any of the 10,000 pre-recorded samples, from trance to R&B or sample ANYTHING that makes a noise yourself. I even recorded the 'ding' off my microwave in one of my tunes! Make your perfect tune, record it, and play it where you want."

What's the PS2 game you think everyone should own? Write to Reader's Choice at the usual address or email your suggestion to PS2@futurenet.co.uk. Enclose name, address, age and photo to win a copy of *GT3*.

six of the best

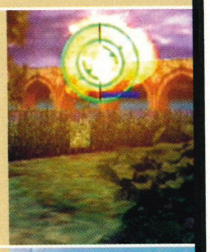
QUICK-FIX GAMES



1. PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER

The best way we can think of to use up ten minutes of your life. It should be suggested that doctors start prescribing a game of this as an antidepressant – feeling low? Then boot it up and feel all happy again.

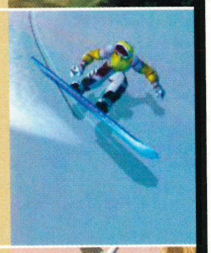
*Pro Evolution Soccer *is out now from Konami.*



2. SILENT SCOPE 2

The safest way of getting rid of any pent-up anger you may have brewing in your system. Be a sniper for five minutes and let the hate ebb away.

*Silent Scope 2 *is out now from Konami.*



3. SSX

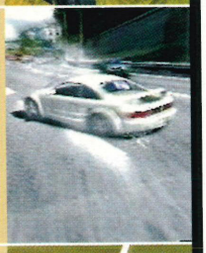
If it's instant exhilaration you're after, you can't beat snowboarder *SSX* for that wind-in-your-hair thrill. End your run and then indulge in a little après-'board.

*SSX *is out now from EA Sports.*

4. TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

Perfect for quickly settling any arguments. Can't beat a mate in terms of intellect or wit? Then cave their head in with Hwoarang's heel bone.

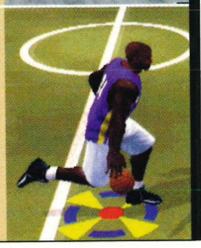
*Tekken Tag Tournament *is out now from SCEE.*



5. BURNOUT

The safest way to channel road rage and satisfy your morbid fascination of car crashes. So fast that the game may be over before it's finished loading. .

*Burnout *is out now from Acclaim.*



6. NBA STREET

Like most American culture this basketball romp is big, brassy, bold and only lasts about five minutes, yet still fits in all the alley-oops you could ask for.

*NBA Street *is out now from EA Sports.*

G-SURFERS
(Midas Interactive/ Blade Interactive)
Futuristic racer. Never threatens *WipEout Fusion* but has an innovative track editor.
Reviewed **OPS2#13**/**Overall 07**

GUN GRIFFON BLAZE
(Swing!/GameArts)
Another mech shooter for robot obsessives everywhere.
Reviewed **OPS2#03**/**Overall 07**

H30 SURFING
(Take 2/ASCII)
Inadequate surf sim with an infuriating camera angle.
Reviewed **OPS2#02**/**Overall 04**

HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC
(3DO/3DO)
Patchy PC-style adventure
Reviewed **OPS2#08**/**Overall 03**

HOLOGRAM TIME TRAVELLER
(Digital Leisure/Sega)
It may be classed as a 'classic', but you should avoid this like the plague.
Reviewed **OPS2#03**/**Overall 00**

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE SOCCER
(Eon Digital Entertainment/Taito)
Astoundingly rotten. Easily one of the worst footy sims ever to grace the PlayStation 2.
Reviewed **OPS2#10**/**Overall 02**

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER
(Konami/KCEO)
Genuine squads and more instant terrace gratification take *ISS* up to the PS2 level.
Reviewed **OPS2#01**/**Overall 08**

KENGO: MASTER OF BUSHIDO
(Ubi Soft/LightWeight)
A padded-out Training mode makes up for this smart ninja fighter's rather limited nature.
Reviewed **OPS2#07**/**Overall 06**

KESSEN
(Electronic Arts/KOEI)
RTS on an epic scale with up to 100 warriors on-screen at once. Might not be classified as 'entertainment', but certainly a work of gaming art.
Reviewed **OPS2#04**/**Overall 07**

KLONOA 2: LUNATEA'S VEIL
(SCEE/Namco)
Cute and undeniably cheerful platformer featuring the lovable glove-eared blue cat-rabbit hybrid.
Reviewed **OPS2#13**/**Overall 08**

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001
(EA Sports/EA Sports)
A more than competent boxing sim. Not really good enough to earn its royal status though.
Reviewed **OPS2#05**/**Overall 06**

KURI KURI MIX
(Empire/From Software)
A bizarre blend of two-player co-operation and cutesy platformer. *Kuri Kuri Mix* is a more than worthwhile addition to any collection.
Reviewed **OPS2#07**/**Overall 07**

LE MANS 24 HOURS
(Infogrames/ Melbourne House)
More accessible for the gamer daunted by simulation-style vehicle handling, but has depth and thrills in abundance.
Reviewed **OPS2#09**/**Overall 08**

MADDEN NFL 2001
(EA Sports/EA Sports)
PS2's most rewarding and complete NFL game. Could potentially convert non-believers to the sport.
Reviewed **OPS2#01**/**Overall 08**

MADDEN NFL 2002
(EA Sports/EA Sports)
Exemplary American football title, virtually faultless aside from being just another yearly update of a franchise.
Reviewed **OPS2#13**/**Overall 09**

MDK2 ARMAGEDDON
(Interplay/BioWare)
A unique, challenging adventure bursting with ideas and an inspired three-character format.
Reviewed **OPS2#07**/**Overall 08**

MIDNIGHT CLUB
(Rockstar/Angel Studios)
Speedy urban racing, boasting huge and action-packed NYC and London environments. Sadly, the game ain't much cop.
Reviewed **OPS2#01**/**Overall 04**

MODERNGROOVE: MINISTRY OF SOUND
(Ubi Soft/Moderngroove)
Entertaining lightshow generator, containing five full dance albums.
Reviewed **OPS2#11**/**Overall 06**

MOTO GP
(SCEE/Namco)
Gran Turismo on two wheels. A fantastic motorbike sim that rewards repeated plays.
Reviewed **OPS2#03**/**Overall 07**

MOTOR MAYHEM
(Infogrames/Beyond Games)
Unoriginal deathmatch-based vehicle blasting. Destined for the bargain bin from the day of its release.
Reviewed **OPS2#13**/**Overall 05**

MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 2
(Codemasters/Jester)
Home DJ sample/mixer music maker. Enormous fun and nigh on faultless. One of the most exciting and well put together PS2 releases yet.
Reviewed **OPS2#08**/**Overall 09**

MX 2002 FEAT RICKY CARMICHAEL
(THQ/Pacific Coast Power)
Polished and engaging MX sim that utilises its subject matter to great effect.
Reviewed: **OPS2#12**/**Overall 07**

MX RIDER
(Infogrames/Paradigm)
Motocross/supercross sim that lacks real excitement.
Reviewed **OPS2#13**/**Overall 06**

NBA HOOPZ
(Midway/Eurocom)
Instant arcade-styled basketball sim but not as good as *NBA Street*.
Reviewed: **OPS2#06**/**Overall 06**

NBA LIVE 2001
(EA Sports/EA Sports)
Solid and playable EA franchise. But where's the b-ball excitement?
Reviewed: **OPS2#05**/**Overall 06**

NBA STREET
(EA Sports Big/EA Sports)
Great looks, great to play, but not quite next-gen.
Reviewed **OPS2#10**/**Overall 06**

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB
(Acclaim/Acclaim Studios Austin)
Plenty of unique features, but unable to compete with EA's *Madden 2002*.
Reviewed **OPS2#13**/**Overall 08**

NHL 2001
(EA Sports/ EA Sports Canada)
EA Sports' perennial ice hockey licence hits the mark beautifully.
Reviewed **OPS2#02**/**Overall 08**

ONI
(Rockstar/Bungie Software)
Pioneers new character animation in an enjoyable third-person sci-fi romp.
Reviewed **OPS2#05**/**Overall 07**

ONIMUSHA: WARLORDS
(Capcom/Capcom)
Impressive survival horror that lets the PS2 run riot. Suffers form a poor PAL conversion.
Reviewed **OPS2#09**/**Overall 08**

OPERATION WINBACK
(Midas Interactive/KOEI)
Lacks variety, but still an enjoyable stealth shooter.
Reviewed **OPS2#07**/**Overall 06**

ORPHEN
(Activision/Shade Inc)
Disappointing anime-inspired Japanese RPG.
Reviewed **OPS2#01**/**Overall 04**

PARIS-DAKAR RALLY
(Acclaim/Broadsword Interactive)
Based on the marathon drive across Europe and Africa, this sim does little to inspire interest in the real race.
Reviewed **OPS2#13**/**Overall 05**

POOLMASTER
(Take 2/Ask)
Dull pool sim, despite some tidy ball physics.
Reviewed **OPS2#02**/**Overall 05**

PORTAL RUNNER
(3DO/3DO)
Vikki from *Army Men* notoriety gets her own title and it's the best of a bad bunch.
Reviewed **OPS2#13**/**Overall 05**

PROJECT EDEN
(Eidos/Core Design)
Look beyond some not great visuals and you'll lose weeks to this complex and satisfying
Reviewed **OPS2#12**/**Overall 08**

QUAKE III
(EA/id & Bullfrog)
In four-player mode, this first-person shooter is the best multiplayer yet. Runs like greased lightning and looks absolutely gorgeous.
Reviewed **OPS2#06**/**Overall 09**

RAYMAN REVOLUTION
(Ubi Soft/Ubi Soft)
Animation-quality graphics elevate this classic platformer worthy of PS2.
Reviewed **OPS2#02**/**Overall 08**

RC REVENGE PRO
(Acclaim/ Acclaim Cheltenham)
Last-gen graphics and lack of discernable speed adds up to an avoidable kart racer.
Reviewed **OPS2#02**/**Overall 03**

READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2
(Midway/Midway)
Marvellous arcade-based comedy boxing game, pitting ridiculous cartoon fighters against each other.
Reviewed **OPS2#01**/**Overall 07**

RED FACTION
(THQ/Volition)
First-person shooter melding *MGS*-style tactics and the all-out blasting of *Quake III*. Marred only by lazy design.
Reviewed **OPS2#08**/**Overall 08**

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X
(Capcom Eurosoft/Capcom)
A captivating story, cinematic atmosphere, kinetic action, frights, thrills and blood-spillage. Give in to its disgustingly depraved clutches.
Reviewed **OPS2#10**/**Overall 09**

RIDGE RACER V
(SCEE/Namco)
Initial high hopes scuppered by jagged edges, limited size and a general lack of originality.
Reviewed **OPS2#01**/**Overall 07**

RING OF RED
(Konami/KCE)
A mech RTS that's fun? Oh yes. A must-buy for the discerning robo-fetishist after something different.
Reviewed **OPS2#07**/**Overall 08**

ROBOT WARLORDS
(Midas Interactive/DaZZ)
Many other superior mech games make this redundant in a somewhat minority genre in the UK.
Reviewed **OPS2#06**/**Overall 04**

RUGBY
(EA Sports/ Creative Assembly)
More akin to *Madden* than *FIFA* in approach, a highly enjoyable and refined take on the sport.
Reviewed **OPS2#08**/**Overall 08**

RUMBLE RACING
(EA/EA)
Fast and furious arcade stunt racer with oodles of challenge and replay value in Two-player mode.
Reviewed **OPS2#08**/**Overall 08**

RUNE: VIKING WARLORD
(Take 2/Human Head)
Viking slash-'em-up that should have been confined to the Dark Ages.
Reviewed **OPS2#11**/**Overall 04**

SHADOW OF MEMORIES
(Konami/KCET)
Filmic adventure which keeps the surprises coming with a serpentine plot.
Reviewed **OPS2#05**/**Overall 08**

SILENT HILL 2
(Konami/KCET Team Silent)
Simply one of the most atmospheric, and genuinely frightening survival horror titles on PS2. Like all of your worst nightmares rolled in to one relentless videogame.
Reviewed **OPS2#13**/**Overall 08**

SILENT SCOPE
(Konami/KCEO)
Slick but simple shooting gallery-style game where you play a police sniper.
Reviewed **OPS2#01**/**Overall 08**

SILPHEED: THE LOST PLANET
(Swing!/Treasure/ GameArts)
Tedious top-down shooter.
Reviewed **OPS2#03**/**Overall 03**

SIR ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER 2002
(3DO/Anco)
Tactically adept footy management sim but lacks charm.
Reviewed **OPS2#12**/**Overall 06**

SKY ODYSSEY
(SCEE/Cross for SCEI)
A flight sim where you don't have to shoot anything, just complete crazy missions.
Reviewed **OPS2#06**/**Overall 08**

SKY SURFER
(Virgin Interactive/ Idea Factory)
Who ever thought that jumping out of a plane attached to a board would make a good game should be duly shot.
Reviewed **OPS2#04**/**Overall 03**

SMUGGLER'S RUN
(Rockstar/Angel Studios)
Mission-based fun in which you escape from the cops with a trunkload of booty around Impressive free-roaming environments.
Reviewed **OPS2#01**/**Overall 07**

SPACE ACE
(Digital Leisure/ Cinematronics)
Horrific and ancient arcade port, of which the original was only of cult appeal.
Reviewed **OPS2#04**/**Overall 01**

SPY HUNTER
(Midway/Paradigm Ent)
Captures the spirit of the original and adds further shiny next-gen knobs.
Reviewed **OPS2#12**/**Overall 08**

SSX
(EA Sports Big/EA Sports Canada)
Outrageous, inventive rainbow-coloured high-speed snowboard game packed with crazy courses.
Reviewed **OPS2#01**/**Overall 09**

STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER
(Activision/LucasArts)
Mesmerising 3D *Star Wars* blaster with engaging missions and film-perfect sound effects.
Reviewed **OPS2#06**/**Overall 09**

STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING
(Activision/ Lucas Learning)
Banal *Star Wars* cartoon kart racer. The force is weak with this one.
Reviewed **OPS2#08**/**Overall 05**

STREET FIGHTER EX3
(Capcom Eurosoft/Arika)
A decent enough cult 2D/3D battler. Has its devout fans.
Reviewed **OPS2#03**/**Overall 07**

SUMMONER
(THQ/Volition)
One of the best PS2 RPGs. A little ugly, but still a gem-like, sprawling epic.
Reviewed **OPS2#04**/**Overall 08**

SUPER BUST-A-MOVE
(Acclaim/Taito)
Another update of a classic game, but a pointless one as it adds nothing original to the timeless gameplay.
Reviewed **OPS2#02**/**Overall 04**

SWING AWAY GOLF
(EA Sports/T&E Soft)
Cutesy PSone golf sim let down by a poor conversion.
Reviewed **OPS2#02**/**Overall 03**

TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT
(SCEE/Namco)
Fantastically playable and graphically spectacular beat-'em-up. The tagging moves should keep the *Tekken* faithful happy till the next 'proper' instalment.
Reviewed **OPS2#01**/**Overall 08**

TG DARE DEVIL
(Kemco/Papaya Studios)
Mission-based retro car racer that manages to provide no
Reviewed **OPS2#02**/**Overall 05**

THE BOUNCER
(SCEE/Squaresoft)
A fun, accessible brawler whose adventuring elements are fairly limited.
Reviewed **OPS2#09**/**Overall 06**

THE FLINTSTONES IN VIVA ROCK VEGAS
(Swing! Entertainment/Toka)
Yabba dabba… don't. Ever.
Reviewed **OPS2#11**/**Overall 02**

THEME PARK WORLD
(EA/Bullfrog)
Take on the role of a theme park tycoon for a day in this engaging god sim.
Reviewed **OPS2#03**/**Overall 07**

THIS IS FOOTBALL 2002
(SCEE/Team SoHo)
An atmospheric, option rich and playable addition to a once weak series.
Reviewed **OPS2#12**/**Overall 07**

THUNDERHAWK: OPERATION PHOENIX
(Eidos/Core Design)
A brave attempt to blend arcade and sim with choppers.
Reviewed **OPS2#12**/**Overall 07**

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2001
(EA Sports/EA Sports)
Authentic golf sim with a random control system.
Reviewed **OPS2#06**/**Overall 06**

TIME CRISIS 2
(SCEE/Namco)
PS2's first light gun title sets the standard for others to follow.
Reviewed **OPS2#13**/**Overall 08**

TIMESPLITTERS
(Eidos/Free Radical Design)
Fast and frantic multiplayer first-person shooter. The PS2's first and best.
Reviewed **OPS2#01**/**Overall 09**

TOKYO XTREME RACER
(Crave/Ubi Soft/Genki)
Sedate, and thus dull, racer.
Reviewed **OPS2#11**/**Overall 04**

TWISTED METAL: BLACK
(SCEE/Incog Inc)
Everything you expect a *Twisted Metal* game to be on PS2 – and then some.
Reviewed **OPS2#12**/**Overall 08**

UEFA CHALLENGE
(Infogrames/Infogrames)
Everything that could go wrong in a football game is right here.
Reviewed **OPS2#10**/**Overall 02**

UNREAL TOURNAMENT
(Infogrames/Epic Games)
Satisfyingly gory, over-the-top, and immensely playable FPS.
Reviewed **OPS2#04**/**Overall 08**

VICTORIOUS BOXERS
(Empire Interactive/ESP)
Offbeat, story-based Japanese boxing title that sadly lacks the killer punch.
Reviewed **OPS2#12**/**Overall 04**

WACKY RACES STARRING DASTARDLY AND MUTTLEY
(Infogrames/Infogrames)
Misty-eyed fans of the series will love the visuals, the game ain't great though.
Reviewed **OPS2#09**/**Overall 06**

WALT DISNEY'S JUNGLE BOOK GROOVE PARTY
(Ubi Soft/Disney Interactive)
Go for the cheaper PSone version instead.
Reviewed **OPS2#08**/**Overall 04**

WARRIORS OF MIGHT AND MAGIC
(3DO/3DO)
Dreadful non-adventure/RPG.
Reviewed **OPS2#07**/**Overall 03**

WDL: THUNDER TANKS
(3DO/3DO)
An arcade tank sim which is an absolute romp in four-player Deathmatch mode. Lacks lasting appeal in one-player mode though.
Reviewed **OPS2#05**/**Overall 07**

WILD WILD RACING
(Rage/Rage)
Off-road buggy racing game with merely acceptable looks and initially discouraging handling. Stick with it though and the stunt mode can become quite addictive.
Reviewed **OPS2#01**/**Overall 06**

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2002
(Codemasters/Blade)
Extremely playable snooker sim that may convert a few sceptics yet.
Reviewed **OPS2#11**/**Overall 08**

WORLD DESTRUCTION LEAGUE: WARJETZ
(3DO/3DO)
Looks like an average PSone game and plays like a big sweaty dog.
Reviewed **OPS2#10**/**Overall 02**

WWF SMACKDOWN! 'JUST BRING IT!'
(THQ/Yuke's)
The most realistic representation of the WWF experience on a console yet.
Reviewed **OPS2#13**/**Overall 08**

X-SQUAD
(EA/EA Square)
Tedious team-based third-person shooter.
Reviewed **OPS2#02**/**Overall 05**

ZONE OF THE ENDERS
(Konami/KCEJ)
Cool mech thriller from *Metal Gear's* Hideo Kojima, with bonus *MGS2* demo.
Reviewed **OPS2#06**/**Overall 09**

database

Can't get hold of one of the games in ShortList? Something gone wrong? Need to check a release date? Here's the definitive list of all the UK PS2 publishers.

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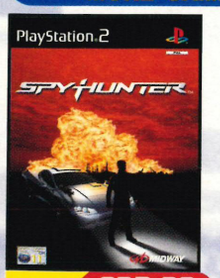

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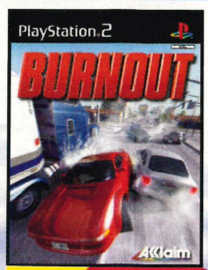

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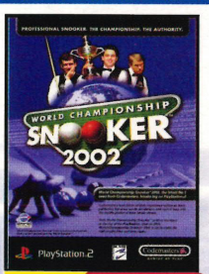

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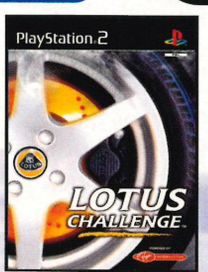

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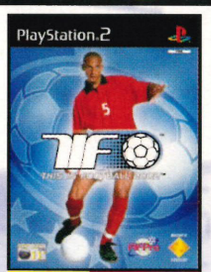

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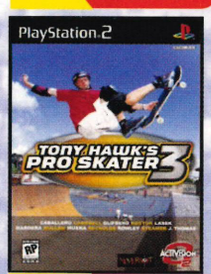

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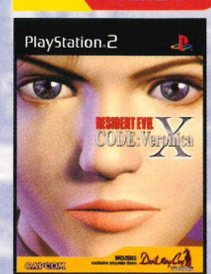

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High octane racing thrills are plenty in the game from the *Driven* film licence.

WIN!
A HOME CINEMA SYSTEM

We've teamed up with BAM! Entertainment to bring you a complete home cinema system and a copy of arcade racer *Driven*.

The TV your PlayStation 2 was made for.

DO YOU FEEL the need, the need for speed, but ironically can't be arsed to get up from the sofa and indulge your passion for movies and games? Well allow us to offer salvation in the form of this ludicrously generous prize in our *Driven* competition.

Simply send us the correct answer to the question below and you could be the lucky bleeder who takes delivery of not only a 28" widescreen TV and five-speaker surround sound home cinema system, but also a copy of BAM! Entertainment's *Driven*. Based on the upcoming Stallone/Renny Harlin blockbuster film of the same name, *Driven* combines 240mph race action with strategic team-play, spectacular Hollywood crashes and a story narrated by Greg Proops and Sly himself.

HOW TO ENTER:

1. Write your answer on a postcard and send to Driven Compo, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

2. Email us with the answer at PS2compos@futurenet.co.uk – remember to put 'Driven Compo' in the subject line.

3. Please include your name, address and phone number on all competition entries.

**If you don't wish your name to be used for marketing reasons, please state on your entry.*

THE QUESTION

WHICH FIGHTING FILM MADE SYLVESTER STALLONE FAMOUS?

a) *Raging Bull*

b) *Rumble In The Jungle*

c) *Rocky*

THE PRIZE

Hitachi home cinema system

- ☐ HTD - K150 DVD player with playback on DVD/VCD/CD
- ☐ Built-in receiver
- ☐ Dolby digital
- ☐ 5x 25W RMS output
- ☐ Subwoofer output 75W RMS
- ☐ Five-speaker surround sound system

Hitachi 28" widescreen TV

- ☐ Nicam stereo sound
- ☐ Super flat/super black tube
- ☐ Picture enhancement features
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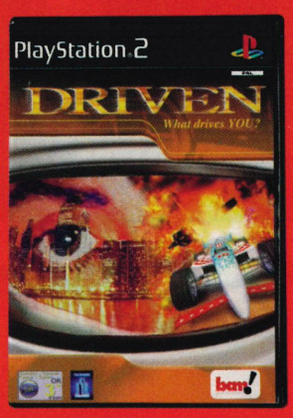
- ☐ Twin SCART connectors

Turn your living room into a virtual cinema – all you'll need to add is popcorn.



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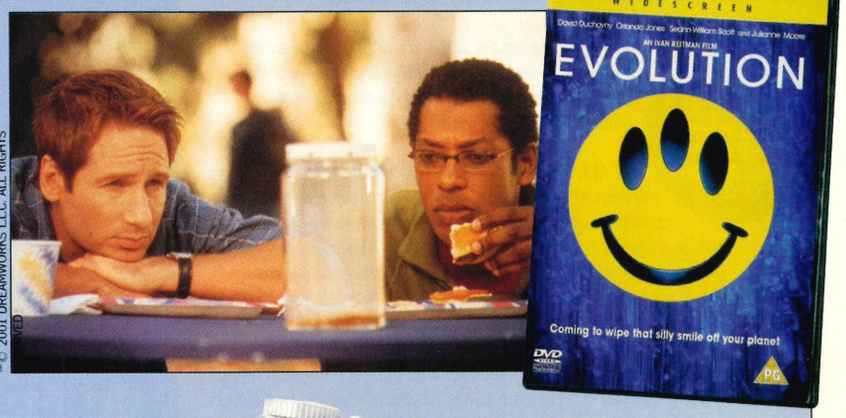
WIN! A DIGITAL CAMERA AND *EVOLUTION* ON DVD

Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment is releasing *Evolution* on DVD, and we're offering two readers the chance to win this great prize.

STARRING DAVID DUCHOVNY and Julianne Moore, *Evolution* takes Darwin's theory one step further. When a meteorite plummets to Earth it's found to contain a slime that is host to single-cell life forms. On studying these life forms, scientists discover that they evolve at an incredible rate. It isn't long before the life forms become marauding aliens ready to take over the planet and it's soon a matter of survival of the fittest.

Evolution is available to rent on VHS, and rent and buy on DVD (RRP £19.99) courtesy of Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment from 26 November. To celebrate, we are giving away a Sony CD Mavica digital camera and a copy of the film on DVD to two lucky readers who can answer the following question.



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THE QUESTION

DAVID DUCHOVNY STARS IN WHICH TV SCI-FI SERIES?

a) *The X Files*

b) *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*

c) *Battlefield Earth*

Competition Rules

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3. Please remember to include your name, address and phone number on all competition entries.

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Be snap happy with the Sony CD Mavica digital camera.

The Quiz

The brain is king! Let yours reign supreme with our right royal synapse tickler. Pray silence for its majesty, the *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine* Quiz. Bow ye puzzlers!

KNOW YOUR *PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER*

For clues, turn to the review on page 108.

1. Which Konami development team produced the game?

2. Aston Villa is one of the club teams featured in the game. True or False?

3. 'Get The Victory' is a banner that can be seen in the crowd. True or False?

4. How is the Argentinian striker Batistuta spelt in *Pro Evolution Soccer*?

5. How many 'classic' international sides does the game include?

TOP GUN TRIVIA

Which of these are the call-signs of pilots in the film and which are made up?

1. Maverick

2. Merlin

3. Goose

4. Chicken

5. Ice

THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE

Which celebrities played the following characters in *The Simpsons*?

1. Mindy (almost Homer's lover)

2. Mr Bergstrom (Lisa's substitute teacher)

3. Karl (Homer's PA)

4. Sideshow Bob

5. Jessica Lovejoy (Bart's girlfriend)

SWIMMING WITH THE FISHES

How well do you know Coppola's *The Godfather*?

1. When was *The Godfather* first released?

2. What was the movie studio head's horse called?

3. How many shots were fired at the Don?

4. Who protected Michael when he visited Sicily?

5. What are the first four words in the film?

THE CRYPTIC ROUND

Can you unscrambulate the game titles from the clues?

1. Sullen Trip Hop star goes to second board meeting.

2. Quick developments in an Irish bog?

3. Flipper! Flipper... flipper...

4. Superb firearm!

5. Doctor who rolls film cars.

NAH, NAH... BATMAN!

Riddle us the answers to these caped conundrums.

1. Batman villain Harley Quinn is which baddie's henchgirl?

2. Harvey Dent/Two Face sometimes has a third personality. Name him.

3. The Riddler, The Baffler, The Inquisitor. Which is *not* a Batman baddie?

4. Edward Nigma is The Riddler, but what was his original surname?

5. Mr Freeze became a cool customer trying to save his wife. What's her name?

ANAGRAM ROUND

What a sems! Unravel the game titles please!

1. Clench Pooh Tide

2. A Torpedo Pile

3. Can't Cider Hurt?

4. Caveman Agent Ben

5. Ryan Spencer

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?

Put these kings and queens in chronological order...

A. William the Conqueror

B. Victoria

C. Alfred the Great

D. George IV

PRINCE? SYMBOL?

Arrange these albums in order of release, and state the year as well...

1. Lovesexy

2. Come

3. Around The World In A Day

4. For You

5. Sign O' The Times

answers (USE A MIRROR)

Know Your Pro Evolution Soccer
1. Konami TYO
2. False
3. True
4. Batistiata
5. Five

Nah, Nah... Batman
1. The Joker
2. Janus, or The Judge
3. The Inquisitor
4. Nashton
5. Nora

Top Gun Trivia
1. True (Tom Cruise)
2. True (Tim Robbins)
3. True (Anthony Edwards)
4. False
5. True (Val Kilmer)

Anagram Round
1. Ecco The Dolphin
2. Polaroid Pete
3. Arctic Thunder
4. Bottman Vengeance
5. Penny Racers

The Simpsons: Road Rage
1. Michelle Pfeiffer
2. Dustin Hoffman
3. Harvey Perstein
4. Kelsey Grammer
5. Meryl Streep

Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?
A. Alfred the Great (871-899 AD)
B. William the Conqueror (1066-1087 AD)
C. George IV (1820-1830)
D. Victoria (1837-1901)

Swimming With The Fishes
1. 1972
2. Khartoum
3. Ten
4. Don Tommasino
5. "I believe in America"

Princey Symbol?
1. For You (1978)
2. Around The World In A Day (1985)
3. Sign O' The Times (1987)
4. Lovesexy (1988)
5. Come (1994)

The Cryptic Round
1. SSX Tricky
2. Polaroid Pete
3. Ecco The Dolphin
4. Top Gun
5. Stunt GP

your rating

35-50 Sirloin steak	**15-25** Stewing steak
25-35 Brisket	**0-10** Tripe

WHAT IF... VIDEOGAMES WERE ILLEGAL?

There's always some 'scientician' evangelising the evil social effects of playing with videogames, but what if button bashing was forced underground?

WORDS: PAUL FITZPATRICK/ILLUSTRATION: WILL BARRAS

THE DATE: **2101**

THE PLACE: **A WORLD WHERE 'GAME OVER' MEANS A STINT IN CHOKEY**

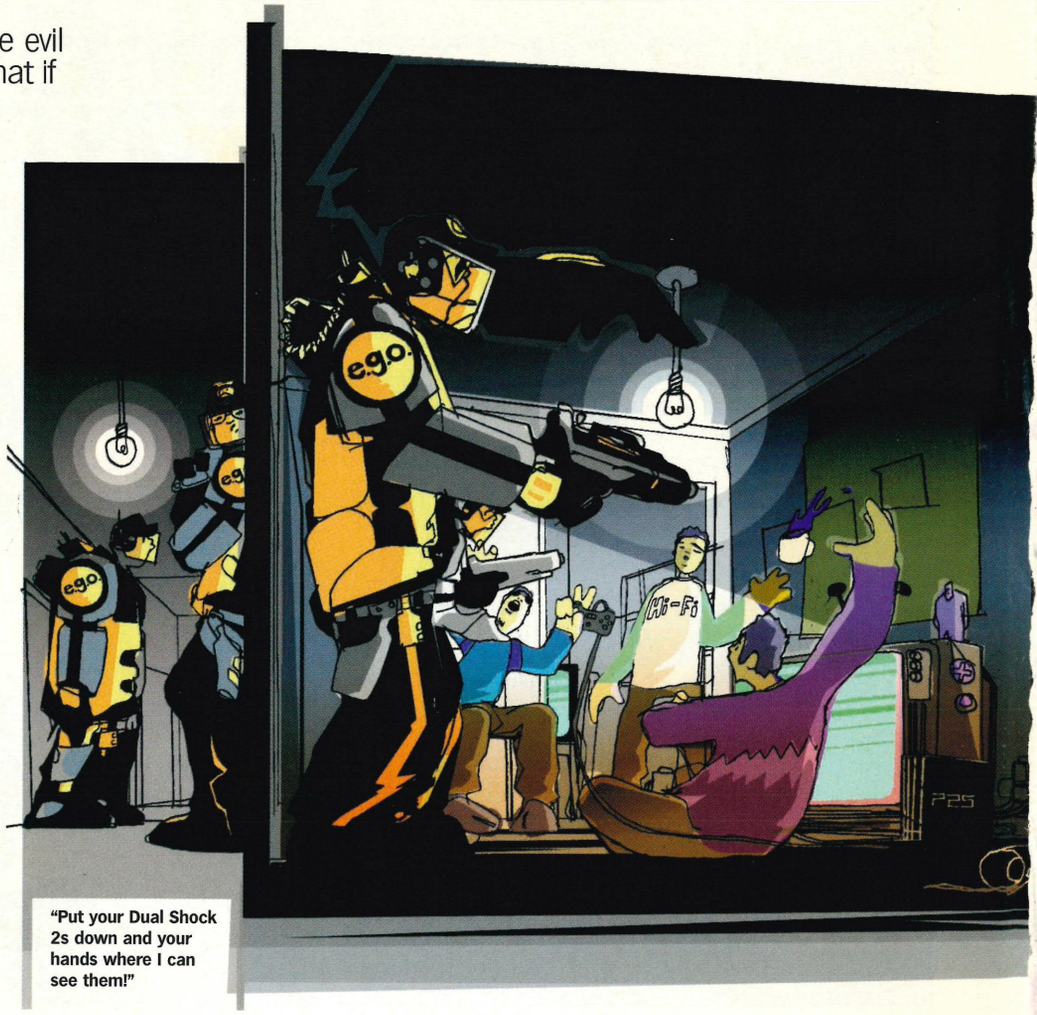
[The following excerpt is taken from a lecture given by Professor Jay Hickey on the 100th anniversary of the passing of the Yoshimitsu Resolution outlawing videogames, 21/07/2101]

"**IT ALL STARTED WITH THIS MACHINE**. It looks huge doesn't it? But in 2001 the PS2 was the cutting edge of console design. However, while gamers were very pleased with it, a powerful minority of critics used the early examples of photo-realistic graphics it could produce to argue that people would soon lose the ability to separate reality from games. Debatable, but when the US release of *GT4* coincided with Presidential Elections resulting in a turn out of only 253 people, governments the world over sat up and took notice. Within a month a worldwide ban on videogames was passed by the UN. As diehard console owners took to basements and attics, the newly created police squads (known commonly as 'Game Over' or 'GO' cops) patrolled the streets in vans equipped to detect the increased brain activity distinguishing gameplaying from passive TV watching. Anyone found in possession of an 'electronic game device' was sentenced to community service and 50 hours of long, bracing walks. 'Conspiracy to Multiplay' was punishable by pottery classes and two years of compulsory 'reality TV' viewing. Many people cracked faster than a badly fired glaze on a misshapen pot.

"Not surprisingly it wasn't long before a thriving black market in videogames was in place. At the seedier end of the underground console scene, men and women could be found on street corners offering gameplay relief at a price. A UK police report from the day states that 'Play Mates' as they were known would charge anything from £25 for a five minute 'handheld job' in an alleyway to £150 for an hour long home visit with a console and a choice of games. Multiple opponents could set you back upwards of £300. There was also a profitable trade in DVDs and videos showing hardcore gameplay, while games magazines traded hands for extortionate sums. A pristine, paper copy of the *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*'s WWF cover issue would have cost an underground gamer around £200. That figure may not buy you an intravenous bevvy-shot today, but it was a pretty penny back then.

"It was at the height of the videogame prohibition that the now infamous 'book shops' started appearing. Legitimate businesses on the surface, these were none other than fronts for arcade clubs. Gamers would be ushered into soundproofed vaults packed with table top versions of classic titles and a bar offering the latest games on portable units. When they were raided, a buzzer would alert club staff and the table tops would flip over to reveal Black Jack and Roulette tables while the bar would start serving drinks.

"But by now the cracks in the worldwide ban were showing. Once powerful economies were being crippled by deficits usually filled by software sales, and a generation of uncoordinated workers with shoddy manual dexterity and too much free time. Videogames were legalised again at 2.00pm on 17 October 2004. By 9.01am the next day 3DO had announced eight new *Army Men* titles." □



"Put your Dual Shock 2s down and your hands where I can see them!"

***//Official Playstation 2 Magazine's* WWF cover would have cost an underground gamer £200//**

NEXT MONTH IN THE CHRISTMAS ISSUE OF

PlayStation.2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

- ☐ Another review overload! **Tony Hawk's 3**, **SSX Tricky** and **James Bond 007 In... Agent Under Fire** lead the charge.
- ☐ Inside Namco! Under the skin of one of the world's greatest game developers – plus new **Tekken 4** info.
- ☐ The great videogame footy debate!

Plus! Onimusha 2, **Silent Hill 2** tips, big previews of **Rez** and **Headhunter** and another **MASSIVE** demo DVD!

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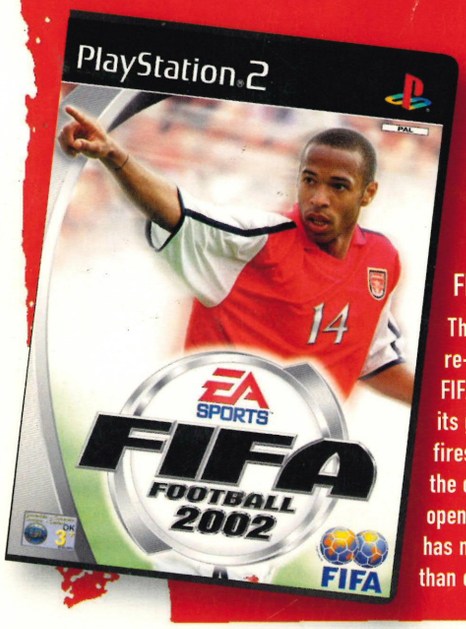
Klonoa 2

You are Klonoa, the adventurer who's chosen to save Lunatea. It is a world of dreams, tranquillity and beauty that is almost unimaginable, but now it's under threat from something dark and terrible.

GRAND THEFT AUTO III

Take to the fully three dimensional streets and work your way up the crime syndicate through a variety of underworld activities, including drug running, car jacking and hit jobs - be warned, GTA3 is extremely violent and controversial!

TAKE CONTROL



FIFA 2002

This year EA Sports has re-invented the best-selling FIFA series. Already known for its graphic excellence, FIFA fires its most powerful shot at the competition. With all-new open passing, the FIFA gamer has more control and precision than ever before

TIME CRISIS II

As Richard Miller, VSSE's top agent - you have been implicated in the assassination of the President of the small nation of Carbua. Suspecting a set up, VSSE has given you 48 hours to find the real killer before they must hand you over to the authorities.

WHATEVER TURNS YOU ON

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