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MONSTER PREVIEW!

SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2008

FIRST VERDICT INSIDE!

JACKASS

FIRST REVIEW!

+ PURSUIT FORCE: EXTREME JUSTICE MOTO GP 2007 BOOGIE SONIC RIDERS 2 FIFA 08 WILD ARMS 5 RESIDENT EVIL'S SCARIEST MOMENTS MORE!

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CRASH, AHA! SAVIOUR OF THE UNIVERSE...

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N-GIN
SLUDGE
SCOROPILLA
CORTEX

This is living

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PLAYSTATION 3

WELCOME

△ REVIEWS ○ PREVIEWS ✕ FEATURES □ ALWAYS FIRST FOR PS2

THE ONLY UK MAG THAT'S DEVOTED TO PS2

To be perfectly blunt, I'm not a fan of Crash Bandicoot. I've nothing against him personally, and I'll admit that many of his games have been corkers, but there's a large problem.

It's his PS1 racer, Crash Team Racing. Why? Well, it's the only game my wife will ever play (*ever*) and she takes great delight in beating me *every single time* that we race each other, on any track. Wounded pride? You betcha.

Game on

However, there are no karts to be found in Crash Of The Titans, reviewed on p80, so maybe I'll give him a second chance. Maybe.

One game I would thrash the wife at is FIFA, which returns this year in fine form. The review's on p100 and next month we'll have a playable demo, along with a PES 2008 demo.

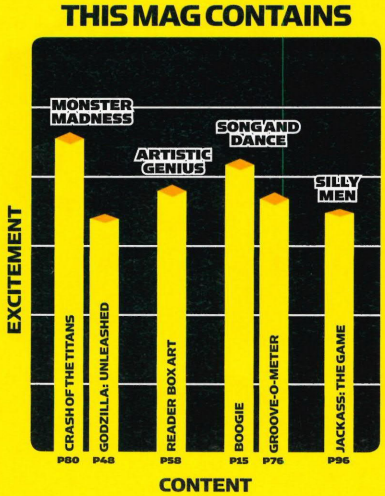
It's the biggest derby of the season and the two games are more closely matched than ever before. Game on!

Finally, thanks for all of your comments about the new look of the mag. Keep 'em coming.

NICK ELLIS
EDITOR
nick.ellis@futurenet.co.uk

'FRESH IDEAS AND NOT A KART IN SIGHT'
CRASH OF THE TITANS P80

THIS MAG CONTAINS



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MEET THE TEAM

NICK ELLIS
EDITOR
With the new FIFA and PES titles arriving in the office, Nick spent many an hour glued to his PS2 before being sacked for drawing a match with Rosenborg.
PLAYING NOW FIFA 08
CAN'T WAIT FOR The Simpsons

ANDY HARTUP
DEPUTY EDITOR
Andy's been biting his nails a lot lately, working on features about Resident Evil and Godzilla. He says he's not scared of Godzilla. We don't believe him.
PLAYING NOW NBA Live 08
CAN'T WAIT FOR Pursuit Force: Extreme Justice

SOPHIE MASON
PRODUCTION EDITOR
Poor Sophie had a bout of tonsillitis this month – at least, that's the excuse she gave for having foul breath and spending three days in bed playing ICO.
PLAYING NOW Crash of the Titans
CAN'T WAIT FOR Sims 2 Castaway

MIKE STERRY
STAFF WRITER
'So, dear, what did you do at work today?' 'Well, this morning I raced shopping trolleys on a rooftop, then I played Chicken with my hand and a huge knife.'
PLAYING NOW Jackass the Game
CAN'T WAIT FOR Guitar Hero III

KIM RICHARDS
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
The awesome power Kim wields as Facebook group admin seems to have gone to her head: she just tried to ban Nick from the office for using the word 'deadline'.
PLAYING NOW Disgaea 2
CAN'T WAIT FOR Wild Arms 5

JOHN STRIKE
DESIGNER
Being Team OPS2's resident guru of all things crayony, John was chief judge in our box art competition (p58). So if you didn't win, it's John's fault.
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Boss Hog, David Brent and Bruce Springsteen: all bosses, but not in our list of top PS2 bosses

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SEE P46

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ON THE DISC

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

STUNTMAN IGNITION

PUB THQ OPS2 SCORE 6/10 WEB stuntmanignition.com

CAN YOU DO THIS? Complete the Lava Flow level without getting any strikes

WHAT IS IT? THQ's second release in the Stuntman series. Step into the boots of a Hollywood stuntman and master the tricks of the trade, driving dangerously through three levels: Escape, Lava Flow and No Ice. Dodge explosions, weave through traffic and make death-defying jumps, all while looking cool.

PERFORMANCE TIPS
Don't pound the acceleration button all the time, because sharp turns and last minute obstacles come hard and fast. Lift off the gas, and you'll deal with these challenges better. Finally, get nice and close to the danger to give the director the exciting shots he wants.

CONTROLS
L2 and R2 Change camera angle
R1 Fire weapon
Left thumbstick: Move vehicle
◎ Brake
⊗ Accelerate
□ Reverse

CRASH OF THE TITANS

PUB THQ ETA 23 October WEB crashofthetitans.com

CAN YOU DO THIS? Find all three spybots and destroy them!

WHAT IS IT? A generous helping of the fabled bandicoot's latest platforming adventure. You'll find our exclusive review of the full game on p80.

PERFORMANCE TIPS
Try your hand at 'jacking' the larger creatures (jumping on them and using their special abilities). It'll help you survive the frantic one-on-everyone battles.

CONTROLS
R1 Block
START Pause
SELECT Combo list
Left thumbstick: Move Crash
Right thumbstick: Move camera
△ Somersault attack
◎ Jack creature
⊗ Jump (double tap to double jump, continuous tap to hover)
□ Punch

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

PUB EA OPS2 SCORE 9/10

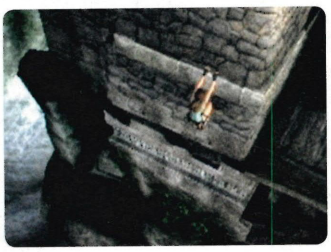
CAN YOU DO THIS? Complete the level without losing any teammates

WHAT IS IT? Liberate America from the Soviet Union with the help of your squad of rebel recruits in this classic piece of shooting action.

PERFORMANCE TIPS
After blowing up the depot, you'll find a courtyard full of Soviets. Take out those on machine gun posts first, then use their weapons to cause carnage.

CONTROLS
R1 / R2 Fire/Melee Attack
L1 Jump or Climb
L2 Crouch
Press left thumbstick: Steady aim
Press right thumbstick: Inventory
SELECT Map
⊗ Use/Action
△ / ◎ / □ Single recruit attack/ defend/follow (press for single recruit, hold for all recruits)

TOMB RAIDER ANNIVERSARY



WHAT IS IT? Explore the Lost Valley of Peru while being wary of its dangers in this remake of a true PlayStation classic.

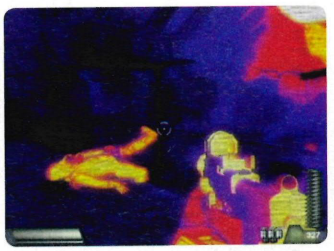
BEYOND GOOD & EVIL

WHAT IS IT? Sci-fi action as Jade, a journalist with a talent for martial arts, shoots up aliens and sneaks through enemy bases.

THE SIMPSONS HIT & RUN

WHAT IS IT? Grand Theft Simpsons! Fetch ice cream for Marge and race to get Lisa's project to school on time.

KILLZONE



WHAT IS IT? Hyped as a Halo-beater, this demo lets you play as one of three heroes and gives you a taste for Helghast blood.

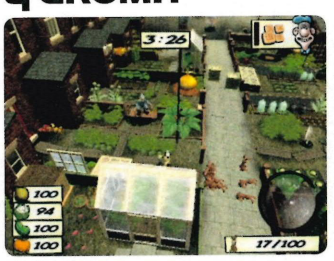
AMPLITUDE

WHAT IS IT? Rhythm action in which you jump from track to track hitting the notes in time to keep the song going.

REZ

WHAT IS IT? Make music, not war: in this trippy, multi-sensory shooter your weapons play tunes instead of going bang.

WALLACE & GROMIT



WHAT IS IT? Adventuring with the intrepid duo, who must investigate strange goings-on in the churchyard and chase rabbits.

FAQ

How do I use the disc?
Switch on the PS2, put the disc in the tray and the demo menu should automatically appear.

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

DISC CHALLENGE

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

THE CHALLENGE

STUNTMAN IGNITION: HIGHEST SCORE

Secretly, we all wish we could be stuntmen. Or, in Kim and Sophie's cases, stuntwomen. The next best thing is to be the greatest stuntman on the 'Lava Flow' level of Stuntman Ignition. Speed your way to the end and beat our score of 98,694; the highest proved score bags the prize, and in the event of a tie, the person with the highest stunt string (the number at the top left of the screen) wins.

HOW TO ENTER

1. BY TEXT
Snap a pic on your mobile phone, attach it to an MMS and text CHALLENGEDISC (then a space) followed by your name and address to 07738 647177. Cost: 50p plus your standard network tariff rate.

2. BY EMAIL
Take a pic, attach it to an email and send it to psnation@futurenet.co.uk with 'Disc Challenge' in the subject line. Don't forget to give us your name and address too!

3. BY POST
Take a pic, print it out, stick it in an envelope with your name and address and send it in to **Disc Challenge, OPS2, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW**

Closing date: 7 November 2007
For competition rules and full terms and conditions see p127

ISSUE 89'S WINNERS

THE CHALLENGE: FIREFIGHTER FD18 FASTEST TIME

NAME	TIME
1 Simon Coton, Chippenham	1:37:05
2 Steven Euden, Slough	1:54:22
3 Lee Tambs, Lichfield	2:01:06
4 Chris Johnson, Belper	2:16:52
5 Gerard Grimes, N Ireland	2:23:26

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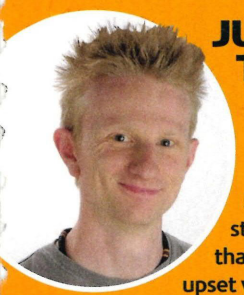
UPFRONT



JUST GIVE US THE GAMES, MM-KAY...

Life is about choice. Coke or Pepsi, PC or Mac, PS2 or... well, I'll stick with PS2 for now, thanks. Naturally, we get upset when that choice is taken away.

What am I babbling about? Harvey Birdman, that's what. Like lots of people, I've watched the hilarious show on the internet, and I'd like to play the game, because it looks just as great as the cartoon.

Choice of the nation

But sadly that choice looks to have been taken away from me because I live in the UK and Capcom, the game's publisher, probably won't be bringing Attorney At Law to Europe (see p10).

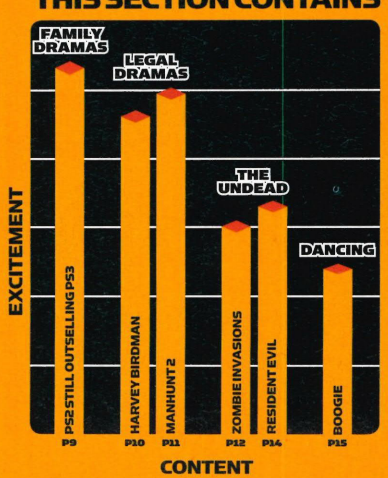
Its reasoning is financial, of course. Will Capcom make more cash selling the game than it costs to localise it and distribute it in PAL territories?

It would probably be a close call, so I guess the publisher can't be blamed for playing it safe.

Still, I'm keeping my fingers crossed that Capcom has a sudden change of heart. Even if it turns out to be merely average, I still want the option to buy it – because I probably would.

ANDY HARTUP
DEPUTY EDITOR
ahartup@futurenet.co.uk

THIS SECTION CONTAINS



PS2 stays on top

New games to keep on coming as Sony backs PS2 drive for world domination

It may be eight years old, but the PS2 is alive and well, despite PS3 hogging the limelight, and the stream of new games will not dry up any time soon.

That was the message from Sony president Kaz Hirai at the recent Tokyo Games Show.

When he stepped up to give his keynote speech, most were expecting him to talk about a big next-gen game or announce a PS3 price cut.

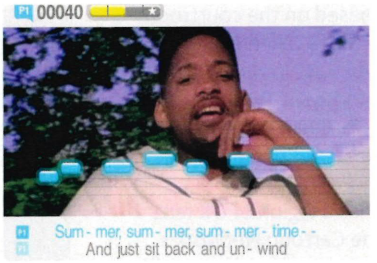
Instead, he talked proudly about the PS2, which recently passed the 120 million sales mark worldwide.

Rising sums

He spoke about how the current-gen console continues to sell well, consistently beating PS3 in Japanese and European hardware sales.

And he said Sony will continue supporting the machine with fresh games and pushing sales in new territories. In other words, PS2 is going to take over the world!

With manufacturing costs for the machine plummeting, Sony can afford to drop the price and swell the PS2's user base even more.



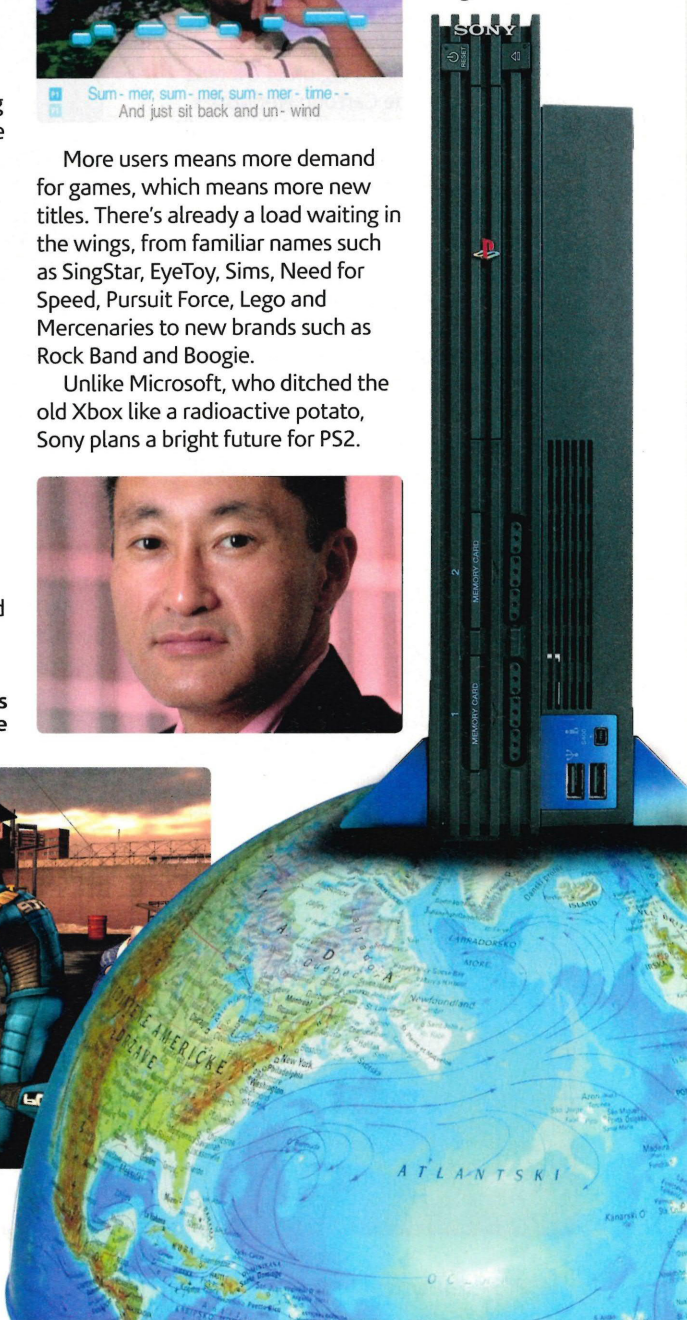
You haven't heard the last of SingStar on PS2

More users means more demand for games, which means more new titles. There's already a load waiting in the wings, from familiar names such as SingStar, EyeToy, Sims, Need for Speed, Pursuit Force, Lego and Mercenaries to new brands such as Rock Band and Boogie.

Unlike Microsoft, who ditched the old Xbox like a radioactive potato, Sony plans a bright future for PS2.

Sony president Kaz Hirai promises continued support for the console

Pursuit Force: Extreme Justice is one of PS2's hotly anticipated titles



UK release jeopardy for Harvey Birdman and Aqua Teens

British gamers to miss out on exciting US games

When it comes to PS2 releases, the UK gets the crappy end of the stick. Final Fantasy XII? The Japanese were playing this classic back in March 2006, but we didn't see it until a full year later. Yakuza 2? According to Sega, we'll never see it in Blighty.

So unless you delve into the expensive (and legally grey) area of imports, we British gamers miss out on some true classics.

Now it seems Harvey Birdman: Attorney At Law, the game based on the courtroom superhero cartoon that's taken America by storm, won't be published in the UK, either.

Publisher Capcom says it "has no plans to release the Harvey Birdman game in Europe". because the cartoon is yet to be aired on terrestrial TV here.

The fact that it has a legion of UK fans who watch it on the Cartoon Network's Adult Swim thread seems to make no odds.

Teens unseen

Midway's Aqua Teen Hunger Force: Zombie Ninja Pro Am game is in a similar position. Grown-up cartoon ATHF is yet to be shown in the UK, and that is putting the European release of the game in doubt.

It's a worrying trend, and to lose games as anticipated as these is a real blow to Brits.

Harvey Birdman won't be released in Britain even though the TV show is popular

Denied: Aqua Teen Hunger Force may not get a UK release because the TV show isn't on here

The Harvey Birdman game, in particular, closely follows the structure and humour of the show, so it would seem a perfect springboard to build up Birdman popularity in the UK before the inevitable airing of the cartoon on terrestrial TV.

After all, with nearly 10 million PS2s sold in this country, surely the console is as good a place as any to promote a new franchise?

We haven't lost all hope of seeing Harvey Birdman just yet, and we'll be lobbying Capcom hard to get it released over here because we love the show.

You can with Japan

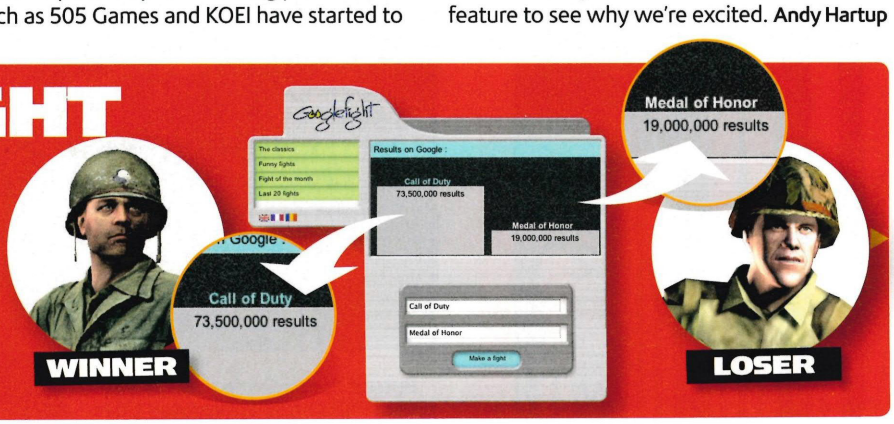
On the other hand, there is good news for Japan-o-philes. Up-and-coming publishers such as 505 Games and KOEI have started to release more and more obscure Japanese classics in this country.

Last month saw the release of GrimGrimoire, a bold, if flawed, real time strategy. And recently 505 announced it will bring underrated roleplayer Wild Arms 5 to the UK in early 2008. Check out next issue's feature to see why we're excited. **Andy Hartup**

GOOGLEFIGHT

This month: Call of Duty vs Medal of Honor

Our Google Fight results never fail to surprise us. And this month, as two legendary Nazi-nobblers go head to head, is no exception. Despite being originally written and endorsed by Steven Spielberg, Medal of Honor trails at a mere 19 million search hits. Meanwhile Call of Duty blasts ahead with an explosive 73.5 million. Conclusive!



Changes made to Manhunt 2 mean you more than likely won't get to see what happens next

Manhunt 2 is released in America

USA gets toned-down version of Rockstar's controversial slasher

Manhunt 2 will go on sale in the USA at the end of this month, despite having previously been effectively banned there and in the UK.

In June, Manhunt 2 became only the second title in 10 years to be refused a rating by the UK's ratings board, the BBFC, because of what the board described as its "unremitting bleakness and callousness of tone".

Following this ruling, several other European countries banned the game too. US ratings board ESRB awarded it an AO (Adults Only) certificate, effectively preventing it from being sold.

Publisher Rockstar has appealed against these decisions, and is enjoying some success.

The appeal is still under consideration by the BBFC in the UK, but the ESRB has approved a modified version of the game for sale in the USA.

So on 31 October, North American gamers will be able to buy Rockstar's stealth game, although it'll still be illegal to bring it into the UK, even in its watered-down form. But what's the cost to the gamer?

M for murder

Several sources have played the new, M-rated, Manhunt 2, and report that the brutality has been significantly reduced.

The more savage kills have been completely removed and the nastiest finishing animations have been blurred.

You can still hear cracking bones, but because the visuals are disguised, you have to fill in the blanks with your imagination.

It's likely this edited version will be the one we see in the UK, should it be approved for release.

Watch this space to see if we'll ever get the chance to bust out the brutality with Manhunt 2 star Daniel Lamb.

Dr Kratos' Kosmetic Klinic

- Have the gods abandoned you?
- Gained unsightly battle scars?
- Painful red orbs need removing?

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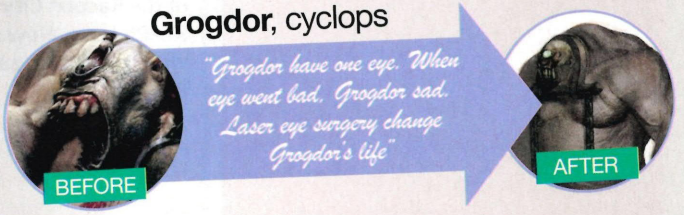
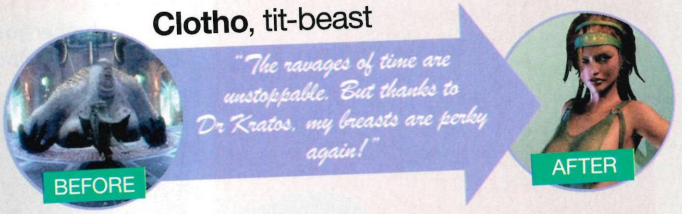
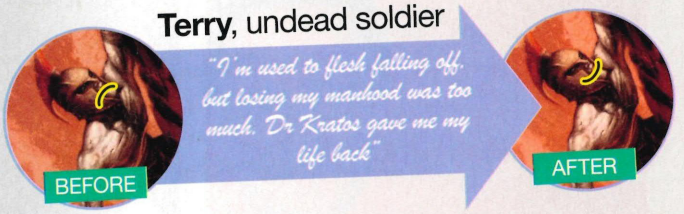
Grogdor, cyclops



Clotho, tit-beast



Terry, undead soldier



"Death during surgery is still an honourable death"

MOUTH PIECE

'Gamers need not fear politicians' says OPS2's Mike Sterry

Good news from the world of politics, everyone! Prime Minister Gordon Brown is inviting the public onboard a videogames review body – one of his oddly titled 'Citizens' Juries'. So we can look forward to thoughts gleaned from a the minds of a dozen non-gamers sitting round a table sipping tea and tut-tutting over Tomb Raider. Really, why do politicians bother?

Are violent games a hot-button issue for parents nationwide? No. Does the UK press like to think they are? Yes.

Nothing sells papers or swings votes more than a bit of moral panic – there are still certain countries in which people believe electric fans can kill you while you sleep, or that vampires are infiltrating the government based purely on nonsense spouted by the dailies.

This kind of political pandering to the mainstream press does little more than uphold the antiquated views of the 'morally outraged' minority.

Brownie points

What is often forgotten in this debate is the simple fact that a 12-year-old cannot – in theory at least – rock up to a store and buy Manhunt. Only an adult can do this. The real problem is that uninformed parents often buy their children inappropriate material.

Sure, Gordon Brown's concern about "whether we need new rules for the advertising and sale of these products to children and young people" is a touch more on the mark than Tory leader David Cameron's spurious link between antisocial behaviour and Spyro.

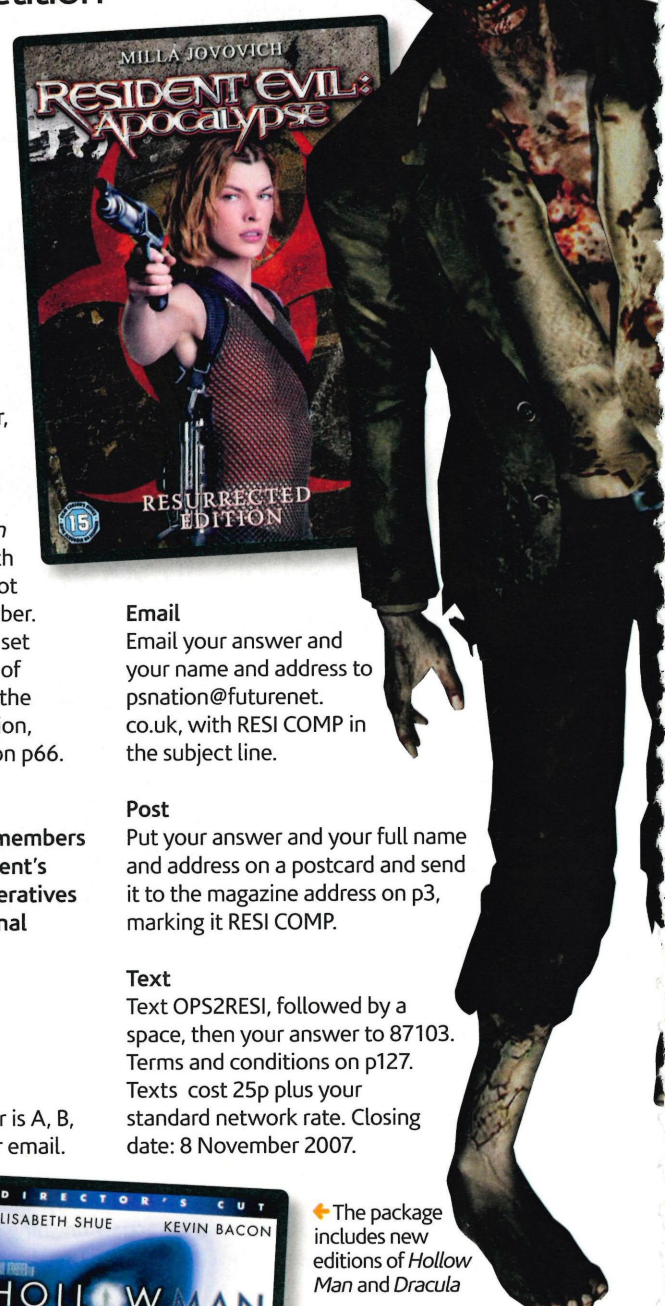
But with rumours of a snap general election this year, it all smacks of pre-election preening. We gamers have nothing to fear.

@EMAIL US

Send your comments to psnation@futurenet.co.uk

Win the ultimate horror package!

Celebrate Halloween with our monster Resi competition



The spooky season is well and truly upon us, and to commemorate it we've bagged a rather special prize to give away to one lucky reader.

Thanks to our macabre chums at Sony Pictures we've got a copy of Resident Evil 4 Limited Edition, a rare PS2 Chainsaw Controller, a Biohazard (the Japanese name for Resident Evil) art book and a trio of creepy films up for grabs. Phew.

Resident Evil Apocalypse: Resurrected Edition, starring Milla Jovovich, is available from 1 October, so if you don't win a copy here you can always nip to the shops for it.

Also in the package are DVDs of *Bram Stoker's Dracula Deluxe Edition* and *Hollow Man Director's Cut* – both classic fright-fests. Again, if you're not lucky, they'll be in shops on 22 October.

To bag all this terrifying loot, and set yourself up for the long, dark nights of winter, all you need to do is answer the question below. If you need inspiration, check out our massive Resi feature on p66.

Question

Most of Resident Evil's heroes are members of the Racoon City Police Department's STARS team. How many STARS operatives were there at the start of the original Resident Evil?

Answer:

A 10 B 6 C 12 D 5

How to enter

Tell us whether you think the answer is A, B, C or D. You can enter by text, post or email.

Email

Email your answer and your name and address to psnation@futurenet.co.uk, with RESI COMP in the subject line.

Post

Put your answer and your full name and address on a postcard and send it to the magazine address on p3, marking it RESI COMP.

Text

Text OPS2RESI, followed by a space, then your answer to 87103. Terms and conditions on p127. Texts cost 25p plus your standard network rate. Closing date: 8 November 2007.

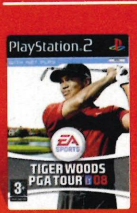
The package includes new editions of *Hollow Man* and *Dracula*

Resident Evil Apocalypse © 2004 Davis Films/Impact (Canada) Inc. and Constantin Film (UK) Limited. All Rights Reserved.
Hollow Man © 2000 Global Entertainment Productions GmbH & Co. Movie KG. All Rights Reserved.
Bram Stoker's Dracula © 1992 Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

PS2 UK CHARTS

1 TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 08



Tiger swings into first postition, keeping the baying Stuntman from the door, and toppling Transformers from the top spot. Hurrah for that.

EA Sports 7/10 New entry

2 STUNTMAN: IGNITION

Looks like Stuntman's fancy-pants TV campaign is paying off, because Ignition races into the charts to claim second place.

THQ 6/10 ▼ New entry

3 TRANSFORMERS THE GAME

Despite being a turgid tie-in, folks are still snapping up copies of Transformers like they're going out of fashion.

Activision 5/10 Last month: 1

4 RUGBY 08

The World Cup has been and gone but EA's egg-chaser is still sitting pretty near the chart summit – and has only moved one position down. Not bad.

EA Sports 7/10 ▼ Last month: 3

5 ROGUE GALAXY

This is easily the finest game on PS2 right now, so we're rather disappointed that this RPG gem hasn't managed to claim top spot. Go and buy it, punters!

Sony 9/10 New entry

6 TOMB RAIDER ANNIVERSARY

Ms Croft is fiercely clinging onto the chart but is nudging down little by little. Let's pray she doesn't lose her grip and fall into the sales abyss.

Eidos 8/10 ▼ Last month: 5

7 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX

Noes! Looks like Harry's falling... Somebody cast Wingardium Leviosa and get him up again.

EA Games 8/10 ▼ Last month: 2

8 VALKYRIE PROFILE 2: SILMERIA

Perhaps this hardcore roleplayer is a little too complex for UK tastes? A disappointing debut at number 8, even thought Kim bought it twice.

Square Enix 8/10 New entry

9 SPIDER-MAN 3

With Spider-Man: Friend Or Foe out next month, it looks as though Activision is going for the chart double with its web of releases. Lucky for us, eh!

Activision 5/10 ▼ Last month: 7

10 SHREK THE THIRD

He may be our favourite ogre, but Shrek is tumbling down the charts like a wrong-footed rambler on Snowdon. Perhaps his magic is wearing off?

Activision 6/10 Last month: 4

PS2 UK SALES TO DATE 9.5 MILLION

PS2 AMERICA CHARTS

POSITION		GAME	POSITION		GAME
1	▲	Madden NFL 08	6	NE	.hack//GU vol.3// Redemption
2	▲	Guitar Hero II	7	NE	Wild Arms 5
3	▼	Guitar Hero: Rocks The 80s	8	▼	Transformers: The Game
4	RE	God Of War II	9	RE	Final Fantasy XII
5	RE	Shin Megami Tensei: Persona 3	10	▼	Spider-Man 3

PS2 JAPAN CHARTS

POSITION		GAME	POSITION		GAME
1	NE	Another Century's Episode 3	6	NE	Beatmania II DX13 Distorted
2	NE	Sengoku Mosou 2: Moushounden	7	NE	DEAR My SUN!!
3	NE	Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories	8	NE	Will O' Wisp
4	▼	J League Winning Eleven 2007	9	▼	Jikkyou Pawafuru Pro Yakyuu 14
5	NE	Gintama Gin-San to Issho! Boku no Kabuki Machi Nikki	10	▼	FFXII International Zodiac Job System

TRADE IN

Stuff you could buy if you sold your old games

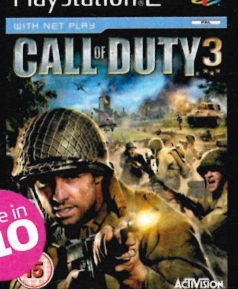
PlayStation 2

Trade in £18

HARRY POTTER & TOOTP
Five months old

+

PlayStation 2



Trade in £10

CALL OF DUTY 3
11 months old

+

PlayStation 2

Trade in £15

METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SUBSISTENCE
12 months old

=

RRP ~~£42.99~~

A 12IN REMOTE-CONTROL DALEK

GAME gameco.uk

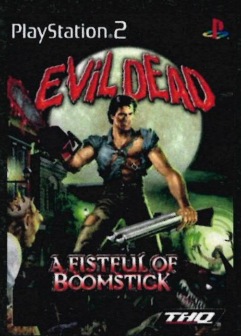
All trade-in prices with kind permission from GAME

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO PLAYSTATION

Don't dig zombies? Then avoid these destinations...

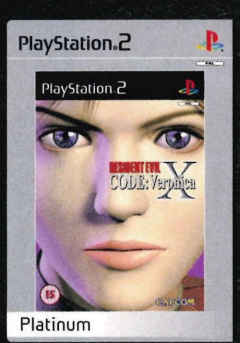
1 EVIL DEAD: FISTFUL OF BOOMSTICK
Michigan

You know you're in for a proper, full-blooded zombie invasion when the game you're playing is based on the *Evil Dead* movies. Set 20 years after the films, Ash Williams must once again save his beloved Dearborn from the nasty Deadites, armed with his trusty chainsaw arm and faithful boomstick (that's a shotgun to you and me). Cue lots of blood as you (as Ash) give the undead what for.



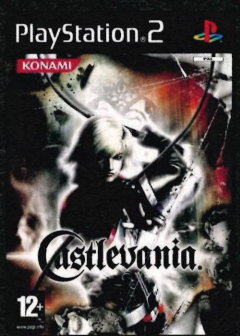
2 RESIDENT EVIL: CODE VERONICA X
Antarctica

Curse you, evil Umbrella corporation and your zombie virus research in this most celebrated of penguin habitats! And let us spare a thought for poor Resident Evil veteran Claire Redfield, who crashes in this barren landscape and has to go through her zombie nightmares all over again. This time, she's joined by Steve Burnside in fighting back the waves of lumbering brain-munchers.



3 CASTLEVANIA: LAMENT OF INNOCENCE
Transylvania

Being the home of Dracula, Transylvania is a dicey place to visit at the best of times, but with zombies and werewolves wandering about, too, it's a potential deathtrap. So you have to admire the balls of Leon Belmont, who ventures there in 1094 – to a castle located in the heart of the 'Eternal Night' forest – to save his loved one and give Dracula a good staking.

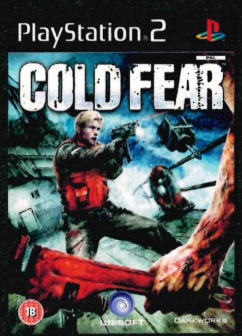


4 FORBIDDEN SIREN
Japan

In true Far Eastern-scare style, Forbidden Siren revolves around some folk stuck in a mysterious village that's full of 'shibito' (literal translation: 'corpse people') intent on resurrecting Datatsushi the Extraterrestrial. The whole place smacks of existential dread and you're constantly yelping 'What the hell was that?!', especially when you bump into the Inu Shibito, which is kind of like the lady ghost from *The Grudge*.

5 COLD FEAR
Bering Strait

Nobody likes the cold. And no one likes fear, either, no matter how much they tell you it's your friend. So imagine how US Coastguard/all-round Yankee flag-waver Tom Hansen feels, stuck on a cargo ship in a freezing ocean with nowt but a bunch of unfriendly Russians and mysterious flesh-eating creatures for company. Sure, these zombies are controlled by parasites, but that doesn't make them any less hungry for braaaaiiiins...



Boogie gets set to get down on PS2 by Christmas

Tracklist and details revealed for the newest kid on the karaoke block

A combined singing and dancing game, eh. But I have so little coordination that I can barely brush my teeth without stabbing myself in the eye.
Not to worry, Boogie is designed as a family-friendly game, so even if you're not exactly Justin Timberlake when it comes to cutting some rug, you'll find filling your Boogie Meter is a breeze. If that's too much, you can just play the game as karaoke.

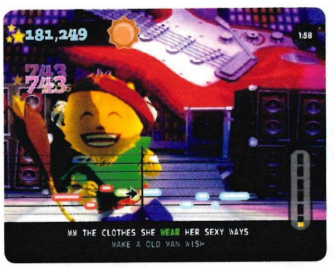
Can I just use the SingStar mic and Dance UK dancemat that I already have or will I have to fork out for new ones?
That's currently unconfirmed. But whether or not existing peripherals will be compatible, Boogie is sure to come packaged with all you need to play. Now, just follow our lead.

My, you're graceful. I wish we could dance like this forever.
You're in luck. With the PS2 version of Boogie, we'll be able to record our dancing via EyeToy, then make music videos with the built-in video editor, and keep them to show our grandchildren one day. They'll be impressed.

Groovy! What tunes will I be strutting my stuff to, then?
There are currently 39 confirmed songs, with the focus firmly on pop. They range from classic rump-pumpers including 'ABC' by The Jackson 5 and 'Le Freak' by Chic, singalong cheese such as The Weather Girls' anthem 'It's Raining Men' and the B52's 'Love Shack', to more modern fare such as 'Milkshake' by Kelis and 'Dontcha' by the Pussycat Dolls.

As yet there's no word on any PS2-exclusives, but we bet our platform shoes there'll be a few.

So, when does the party start?
This autumn, so you'll be able to Boogie all night long at your Christmas shindig. **Mike Sterry**



↑ Sing and dance in the first PS2 game to combine the two

→ Mike Sterry playing Boogie, yesterday

← In the streets? At home with the curtains shut, more like

SPOT THE... MOOGLE

It's like Spot the Ball, but with a moogle instead of the ball!

We have de-moogled this shot from Final Fantasy XII. But where was the moogle we removed? Get it right and you could bag a copy of Atelier Iris 3: Grand Phantasm!

HOW TO ENTER

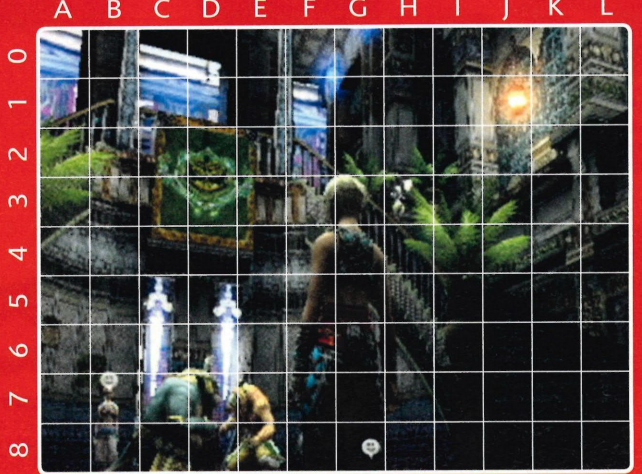
Tell us the grid reference (for example, C8) of the moogle. You can enter by text or email.

EMAIL

Email the grid number and your full name and address to psnation@futurenet.co.uk, subject line OPS2MOOGLE

TEXT

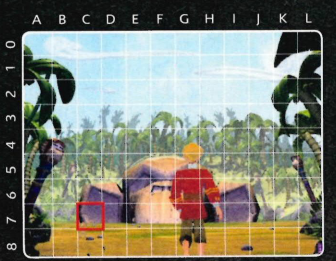
Text OPS2MOOGLE, then a space, then your grid number to 87103. See p127 for full terms and conditions. Closing date: 8 November 2007



LAST MONTH

So where was it?

The closing date for issue 90's Spot the Monkey hadn't passed by the time we went to press, so we won't be able to tell you the winner until next month. But we will! In the meantime, in case you're in suspenders, here's where that little ape was hiding!



PS2 SYSTEMS CHECK

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

ESSENTIAL ACCESSORIES

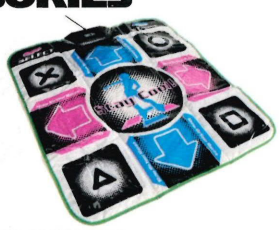
MEMORY CARD £14.99
Buy a memory card to stop all your progress being lost when you switch off the machine.

EXTRA DUALSHOCK
£19.99
You get one with your PS2 but you should definitely buy one more for playing with mates.

PS2 DVD REMOTE
From £2.50
To use a PS2's built-in DVD player, you could just use the DualShock, but this is better because it's got no wires and the buttons are clearly labelled.

PARTY ACCESSORIES

GUITAR HERO
With game £49.99/Guitar only £29.99
Thrash your guitar like a rock god. Hotel trashing optional.



DANCEMAT
With game £29.99/Mat only £14.99
Pull shapes with your PS2 and the brilliant DanceDance range.

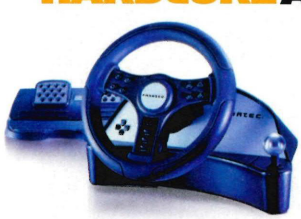
SINGSTAR
With game £34.99
Turn your PS2 into a karaoke machine with these mics.

EYETOY
With game £9.99 to £34.99
The Eyetoy games and camera make you the star of the game.

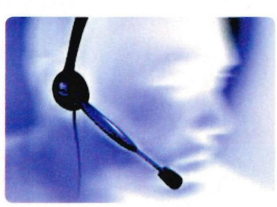
BUZZ!
With game £24.99 to £34.99
Buzz if you know the answer! The Buzz quiz games are a top laugh.

MULTITAP £29.99
Lets you plug in up to four PS2 controllers: essential if you want your whole gang to be involved.

HARDCORE ACCESSORIES



SONY SPEEDSTER 2 STEERING WHEEL £39.99
Compatible with all the latest, greatest driving games.



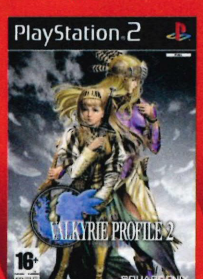
HEADSET £24.99
Use SOCOM 3's headset online to chat, offline to give squaddies orders. Works with Rainbow Six.

JOYTECH 8INCH LCD PORTABLE SCREEN £109.99
A battery-powered screen for playing games or watching DVDs.

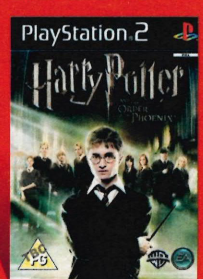
OPS2'S LATEST RECOMMENDED GAMES

ROGUE GALAXY
RPG
A deep, colourful, galaxy-spanning romp with talking cats.
OPS2 score 9/10

JUICED 2: HOT IMPORT NIGHTS
Racing
The PS2's premiere pimp 'em up racer.
OPS2 score 8/10



VALKYRIE PROFILE 2
RPG
Norse-themed side-scrolling RPG.
OPS2 score 8/10



HP & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX
Adventure/Kids
It's the best Potter game by miles.
OPS2 score 8/10

CRASH OF THE TITANS
Platform/Kids
A return to form for the PlayStation star
OPS2 score 7/10

METAL SLUG ANTHOLOGY
Action
A collection of bonkers 2D run 'n' gun fun.
OPS2 score 8/10

PLUG INS

Get the right PS2 cable for your TV

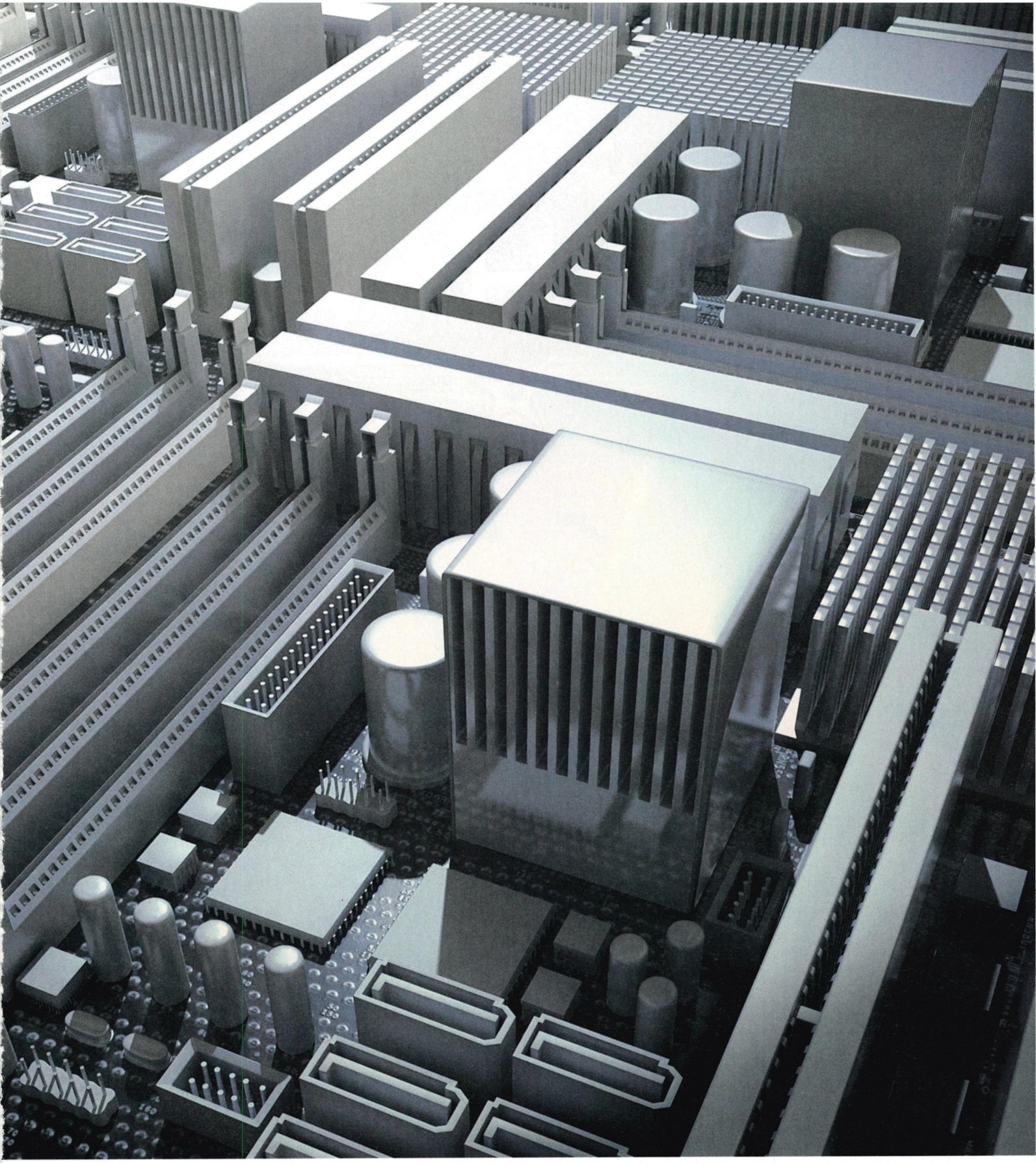
1 RFU ADAPTOR
This offers the lowest quality visuals but will connect a PS2 to any TV via the aerial socket.

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

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

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

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



Without your computer expertise we wouldn't get off the ground.

The RAF uses some pretty impressive hardware. As a result, we rely on some even more impressive software. We need Communication and Information Systems Specialists to supervise and oversee one of the biggest, most technologically advanced networks in the world. This net needs to draw in all available battle information and link it to our aircrafts' weapons systems. It isn't only vital to the RAF. It's vital to the country. Simply put, without you, the RAF can't take off.

Text SYSTEM followed by your email address to 88RAF (88723)
rafcareers.com

ROYAL AIR FORCE

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YOU'RE ALWAYS SOMEBODY'S PREY

Sure you could try and go it alone in a 32 man battle. Just don't come crying when the other guy's organised an ambush with a tank and a Warhawk. Form a coalition, talk and organise yourself against enemy clans. Instruct and coordinate your squad actions by using the JABRA 135 Bluetooth® headset bundled with the Blu-ray disc version of the game. It's compact, easy to use and has up to 8 hours talk time. It's the perfect ally. Playable online for free* exclusively via PLAYSTATION®Network, you can also bring your friends along with 4-way split screen mode. Now decide if you are the hunter or the prey.

MULTIPLAYER ONLY: ONLINE-LAN-SPLIT SCREEN

Incognito entertainment

Free to play online*

www.warhawk.com

This is living.

PLAYSTATION 3

PREVIEWS

△ EXCLUSIVES ○ FIRST LOOKS ✕ HANDS-ON PLAY □ LATEST INFO

REASONS TO BE EXCITED ABOUT PS2: # 837,296

Cor blimey, these are a bunch of big fellas, aren't they? I mean, I like a man with a bit of meat on his bones but this lot are just scaring me, and not in a good way.

But I'm told by our wrestling correspondent, Matthew Pellett, that SmackDown fans should be very excited about the new game. He explains why over the page.

Pursuit of happiness

And ol' Smackers is just one of dozens of releases that we can look forward in the next few months and into 2008.

In fact, we've not even reached the madness of the Xmas rush and I'm already looking forward to 2008 because there are so many promising titles lined up.

Sony's Pursuit Force: Extreme Justice is one such game due for release next year, and you'll find fresh screens and new info on p32.

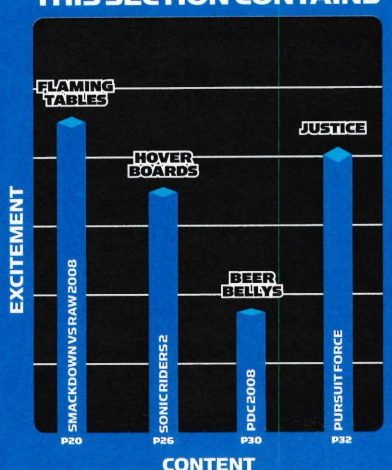
I have to deal with all manner of idiots on the road every day, so its 'traffic cop with attitude' premise is particularly appealing!

SOPHIE MASON
PRODUCTION EDITOR
smason@futurenet.co.uk

'WEAPONS PLAY A BIGGER PART'

SmackDown 2008 P20

THIS SECTION CONTAINS



IS IT NEARLY READY YET?

THE KEY STAGES OF GAME DEVELOPMENT

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

PRE-ALPHA
Early test levels provide proof of concept

BETA
A second playable version ready for final testing

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

RELEASE
The current release date but liable to change

COMING SOON!

PRO EVO 2008	26 OCT
TONY HAWK'S PROVING GROUND	2 NOV
THE SIMPSONS	2 NOV
NFS PROSTREET	6 NOV
REALPLAY SERIES	DEC
ROCK BAND	FEB
LEGO INDIANA JONES	FEB
STAR WARS: THE FORCE UNLEASHED	FEB

SHOCK AND RAW

With **SmackDown vs Raw 2008** the wrestling series gets an Extreme makeover

PUB THQ **DEV** Yuke's Media Creations **ETA** November **WEB** thq.co.uk

Whether you love or loathe the sweaty spectacular that is professional wrestling, there's one undeniable truth: it makes for a damn fine game.

SmackDown vs Raw 2008 will be the ninth title in the SmackDown series and the seventh on PS2. And such a lengthy, and huge-selling, series hasn't stayed on top by regurgitating the same game time and time again.

In issue 88 we had a chance to grapple with the new fighting styles and improved struggle-submission moves. Now we've had a lengthier hands-on session, in which we sampled the ECW part of the game, and we're amazed how much of a change ECW's inclusion has made.

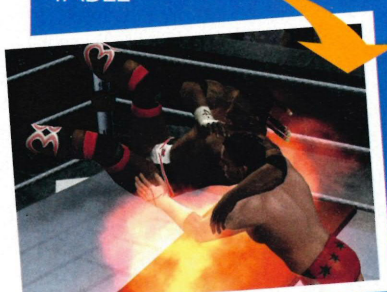
→ Each wrestler's entrance has been painstakingly recreated

Extreme prejudice

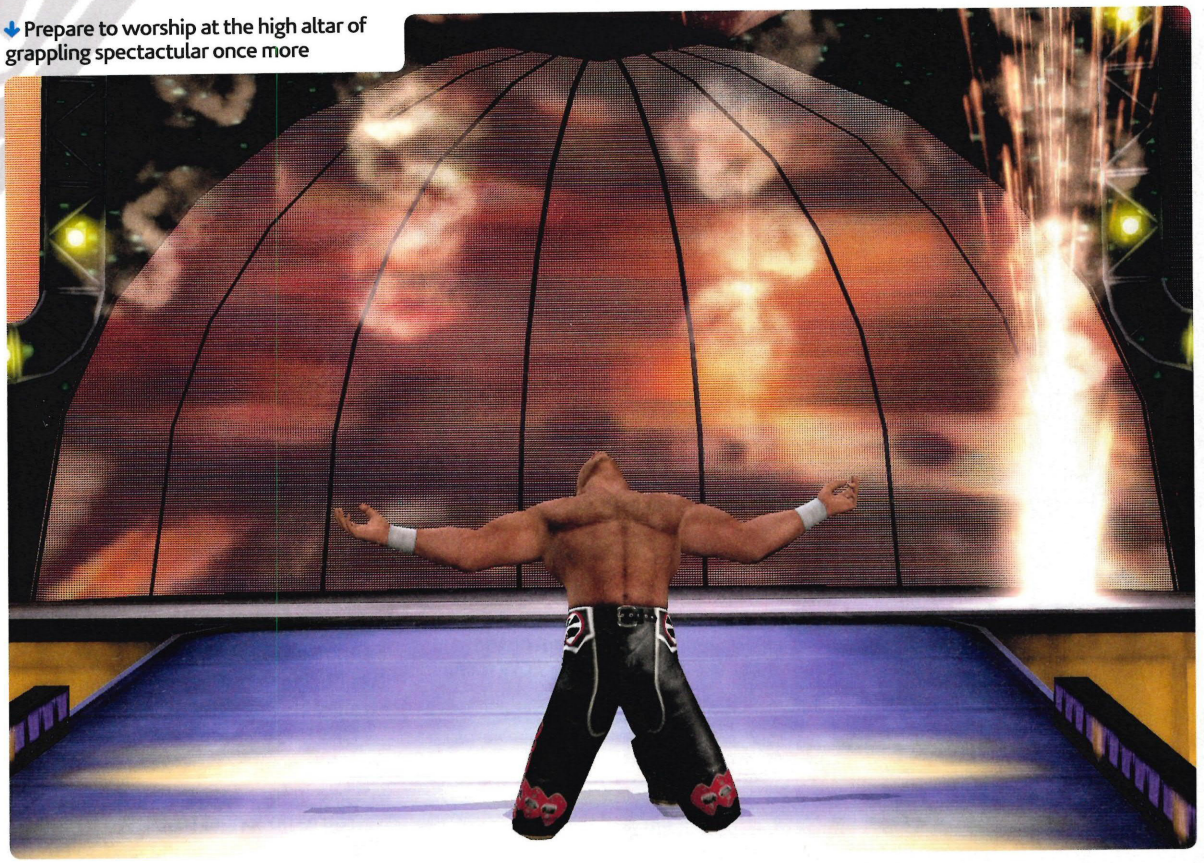
Going by the game's name you'd imagine that the new ECW sections would play a minor role compared to the rest of the game. They don't.

SCENE STEALER

SLAMMING CM PUNK THROUGH A BURNING TABLE



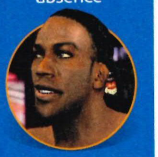
Prepare to worship at the high altar of grappling spectactular once more



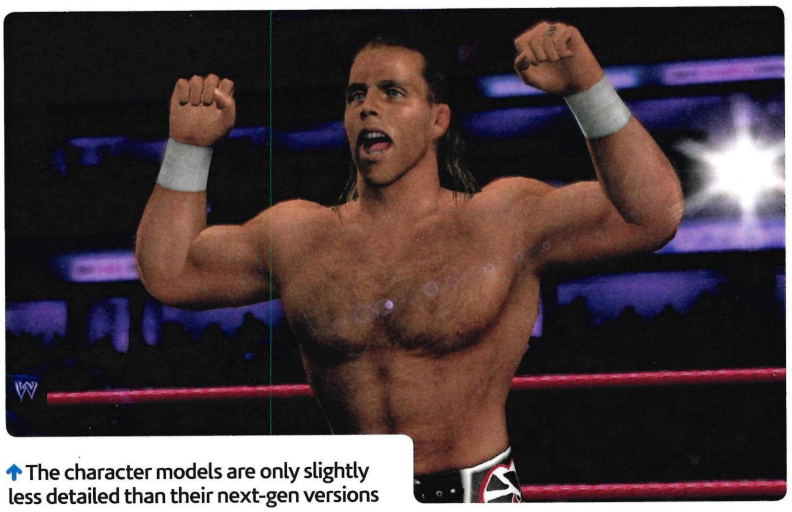
CAST LIST

CM PUNK
The new ECW Champion and crowd favourite

JEFF HARDY
The high-flying IC Champ returns after a four-game absence



ELIJAH BURKE
The Paragon of Virtue and New Breed creator is an ECW debutant.



The character models are only slightly less detailed than their next-gen versions

We'll never understand how he can fight in leather trews

"The ECW mode makes up a full third of the product," explains Keith Kirby, vice president for product development at publisher THQ. He's guiding us through an extreme rules match, detailing the changes that have been put in place.

All the major ECW superstars and sets play key roles in Career mode. "Weapons also play a bigger part than ever before," says Keith with a grin.

THE ECW SUPERSTARS ALL PLAY KEY ROLES IN CAREER MODE

Sure enough, it isn't long before Sandman (who has since parted ways with the WWE) ducks out of the ring and checks under the apron. A scroll wheel pops up and we see a much wider array of weapons than featured last time.

Sensing the danger, his opponent Jeff Hardy leaps over the ropes and both men clatter down to the ground.

In one short move, the new fighting style has subtly come into play. On one hand, Sandman has pulled a steel chair out from beneath a ring, a weapon with which he could wreak havoc thanks to his extreme fighting style. But Jeff has countered with his high-flying abilities and disarmed Sandman, making the scrap equal.

BONUS INFO

THQ is "working closely with the WWE to release even more titles." Apparently. No further info yet on the genres or planned consoles, but we're praying that a sequel to WWE Crush Hour isn't on the cards...

Crowd trouble

A brawl then ensues outside the ring: one that would favour a dirty fighter, as Keith explains. "You can use the crowd to your advantage; they'll hand you a drink and you can spit it in your opponent's face."

That's not the only thing you can borrow. Lay your opponent on top of the security barrier and you can steal a crutch from a fan and use it to smash the other guy over the head!

Back in the ring things are getting even more brutal. Sandman has a

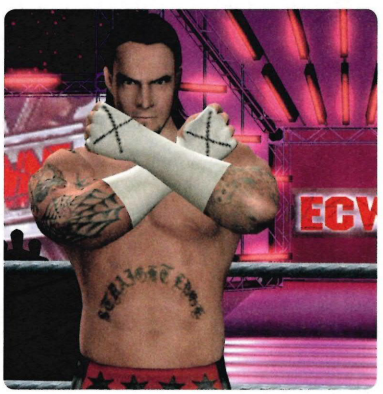
WHAT'S NEW?

This year's new and improved features

ECW
ECW has invaded the WWE, but the extreme matches add more than just weapons to the game.

STRUGGLE SUBMISSION
Bye, button-mashing. Submissions are now controlled by a thumbstick.

FIGHTING STYLES
Eight unique fighting styles, with sub-divisions, mean you have to approach each opponent differently.



↑CM Punk and Elijah Burke headline the new ECW roster

←The ECW arena's been jazzed up a little. Mmm, pink!.

↓'Smell my shoe. Go on, have a sniff. I think I stepped in something. Am I right?'

A QUICK STOMP TO A CHAIR LEG SQUEEZES JEFF'S ANKLE IN A VICE

chair in hand and begins to show us the plethora of new moves.

Last year you'd have had to settle for some swipes and, should you wish, a finisher. But this time around, just like in the WWE, we see a variety of attacks that utilise the blue steel.

Fight flyer with fire

After knocking Jeff to the floor Sandman jumps onto Hardy's stomach, using the chair to 'cushion' the blow. Then he opens up the seat and encases Jeff's left ankle in steel. A quick stomp to one of the chair's legs leaves us wincing as Jeff's ankle is squeezed in the makeshift vice.

By attacking the feet, Sandman is not only able to injure Jeff, but hinder his high-flying offence too.

The greatest addition to the extreme match is, however, saved till last. With Hardy out of it, Sandman takes the time to place one table upon another. Then in a scene fit for Wrestlemania itself, he douses the wood in lighter fluid and sets the tables on fire. We watch amazed as Sandman takes Jeff over to a turnbuckle and superplexes him straight through the flaming structure!

One three-count later and the match is over, but we want more, so we pile in for a ladder match.

You're no longer restricted to eight directions when running, and so by holding run (now assigned to L1) we can dash round our adversary with ease. As a result, the game feels much more natural.

The same can be said for the new struggle-submission system. By rocking the right thumbstick, we apply pressure and ease up before losing grip.

But the end of the ladder match leaves us reeling somewhat. Just like last year, the belt has a health bar and, by standing on the ladder and reaching up with the analogue sticks, we have to keep hold of the title until the bar had depleted. But this takes far, far too long.

The match seems to go on forever and, dare we say, dragged a little. It should be easy to fix though, so we aren't too worried.

A legend in the making

The new WWE 24/7 mode wasn't on display, but THQ did reveal some new information about it.

It's essentially an amalgamation of last year's Season and General Manager modes, with you striving to complete multiple sub-goals to strengthen your wrestlers, win over the crowd and, eventually, get a place in the WWE Hall of Fame.

Last year's career mode was fairly substantial, but 24/7 will be far longer and more involving.

All the way through, SmackDown vs Raw 2008 definitely looks the ▶

WHERE IT STANDS

Can SvR 2008 live up to PS2's wrestling legacy?

WWE SmackDown vs Raw 2007
8/10

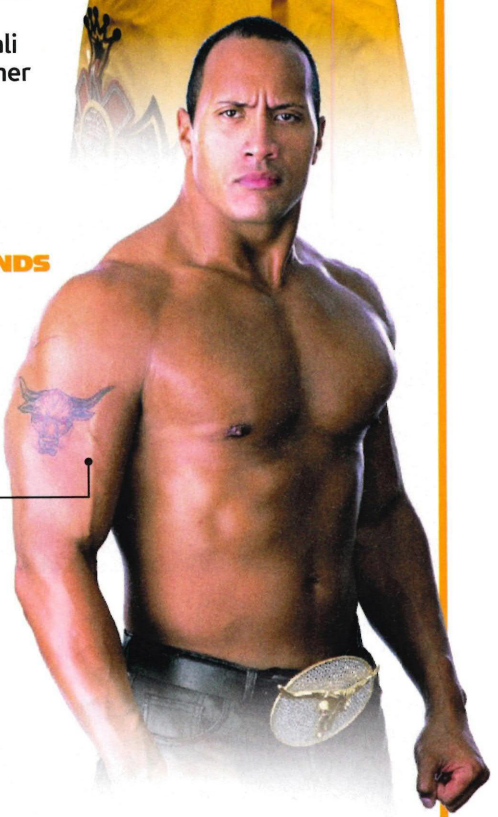
WWE SmackDown vs Raw 2006
9/10

Legends of Wrestling
5/10

Backyard Wrestling: Don't Try This at Home
4/10

CONFIRMED ROSTER

There have been more ins and out at WWE this year than ever before



CURRENT SUPERSTARS

Ashley
Batista
Bobby Lashley
Booker T
Candice Michelle
Carlito
Chavo Guerrero
Chris Masters
CM Punk
Edge
Elijah Burke
Finlay
Gregory Helms
Jeff Hardy
John Cena
Johnny Nitro
JTG
Kane
Kelly Kelly
Ken Kennedy
Kenny Dykstra
Marcus Cor Von
Mark Henry
Matt Hardy
Melina
Michelle McCool
Mickie James
MVP
Randy Orton
Rey Mysterio
Ric Flair
Sandman
Shad
Shawn Michaels
Snitsky
The Great Khali
Tommy Dreamer
Torrie Wilson
Triple H
Umaga
Undertaker
William Regal

WWE LEGENDS

Bret Hart
Mick Foley
Rick Rude
Roddy Piper
Sabu
Steve Austin
Terry Funk
The Rock

ALREADY DATED?

The roster's accuracy has always been a problem in WWE games, but it's especially so this year because the revolving door of World Wrestling Entertainment HQ has been working overtime.

Even before the game hits the shelves, its roster is looking out of date. Four superstars that are making their first appearance in the game series have already left the firm in real life.

Sabu's gone (hence his move to the Legends roster in-game). Sandman, who was used to show off many of the ECW sections of the game, has also left the WWE. So too have Cryme Tyme members Shad Gaspard and JTG.

MISSING IN ACTION

Having brought the ECW show into the mix Yuke's should have bumped up the roster.

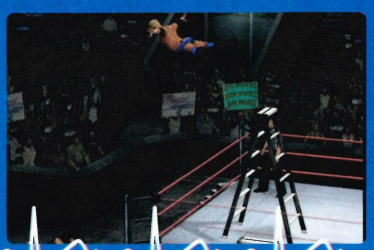
Instead the number has shrunk to just 50 wrestlers, with a lot of current WWE talent not included. Cade and Murdoch, London and Kendrick, Deuce and Domino and office-favourite Shelton Benjamin are all surprise omissions, especially considering the lengthy title reigns they've enjoyed.

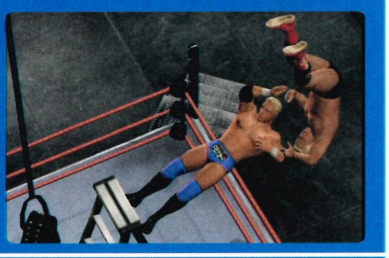
Even the always-small women's roster is a couple of divas short of a catfight, thanks to Victoria and Beth Phoenix not playing a part.

Perhaps the only really understandable no-show is current Cruiserweight Champ Hornswoggle: his tiny stature would require Yuke's to rewrite the entire code to allow him to wrestle.

GAME E.C.G.

Ladder matches: The best and worst of SmackDown vs Raw 2008



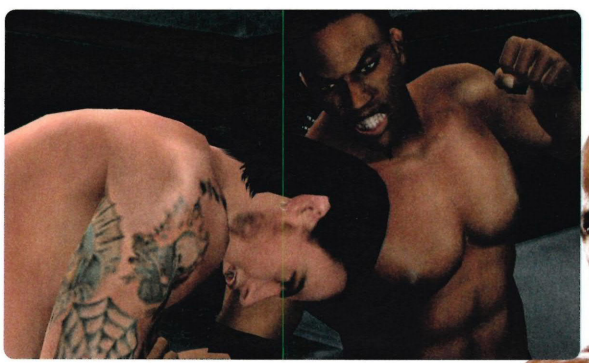


PULSE RACING...
Question: You're on the ladder. He's on the floor. What should you do? Answer: A death-defying drop that should snap your back. Fantastic!

FLATLINING...
Winning the title afterwards should be easy – but it's not. It takes *forever* to get the belt. You'll be stopped again. And again. And again...

The Pepsi tat's missing but the rest are there

Burke is one of the stronger additions to the 2008 roster



Pulling out earrings isn't an offensive option but we think it should be

THERE'S A NOTICEABLE LEAP IN GRAPHICAL QUALITY SINCE 2007

part. There's a noticeable leap in graphical quality since the last title.

The new motion capturing methods have added a more natural element, although we'd be lying if we said that everything looks different.

Some animations have been recycled, but that could be because they weren't all finished by the time we played the game.

The commentary certainly wasn't in place in the build that we played, but that could be a good thing because last year's commentary wasn't wonderful. For 2008, it's all being re-recorded and that is a very good thing.

The unstoppable force

There was still some room for improvement elsewhere, too. In particular, the collision detection wasn't quite right. Very probably the yet-to-be-optimised animations were to blame, but we saw a few too many limbs flailing through objects and ropes for our liking.

Our table bugbear is still around too: as soon as a table's smashed, it disappears. When will we start to see the broken pieces stick around to be kicked out of the ring?

However, aside from an inaccurate roster (see p23) there's not much else to warrant concern, and what with the to-ing and fro-ing at WWE of late you can't really blame developer Yuke's for having trouble keeping up.

If we learned one thing during our play test it's this: SmackDown vs Raw 2008 has had much more than just a cosmetic makeover and isn't showing any signs of slipping up.

Considering the great wealth of improvements that are piling up on top of an already decent series, this year's WWE title is looking set to be one very competent and very exciting grappler indeed. **Matthew Pellett**

FIX THIS!

COLLISION DETECTION
See Carlito's foot disappearing into Shawn? Arms, legs, bodies and ropes pass through each other more than they did last year.

CAN THEY FIX IT?
☐ YES ☐ NO ☑ MAYBE

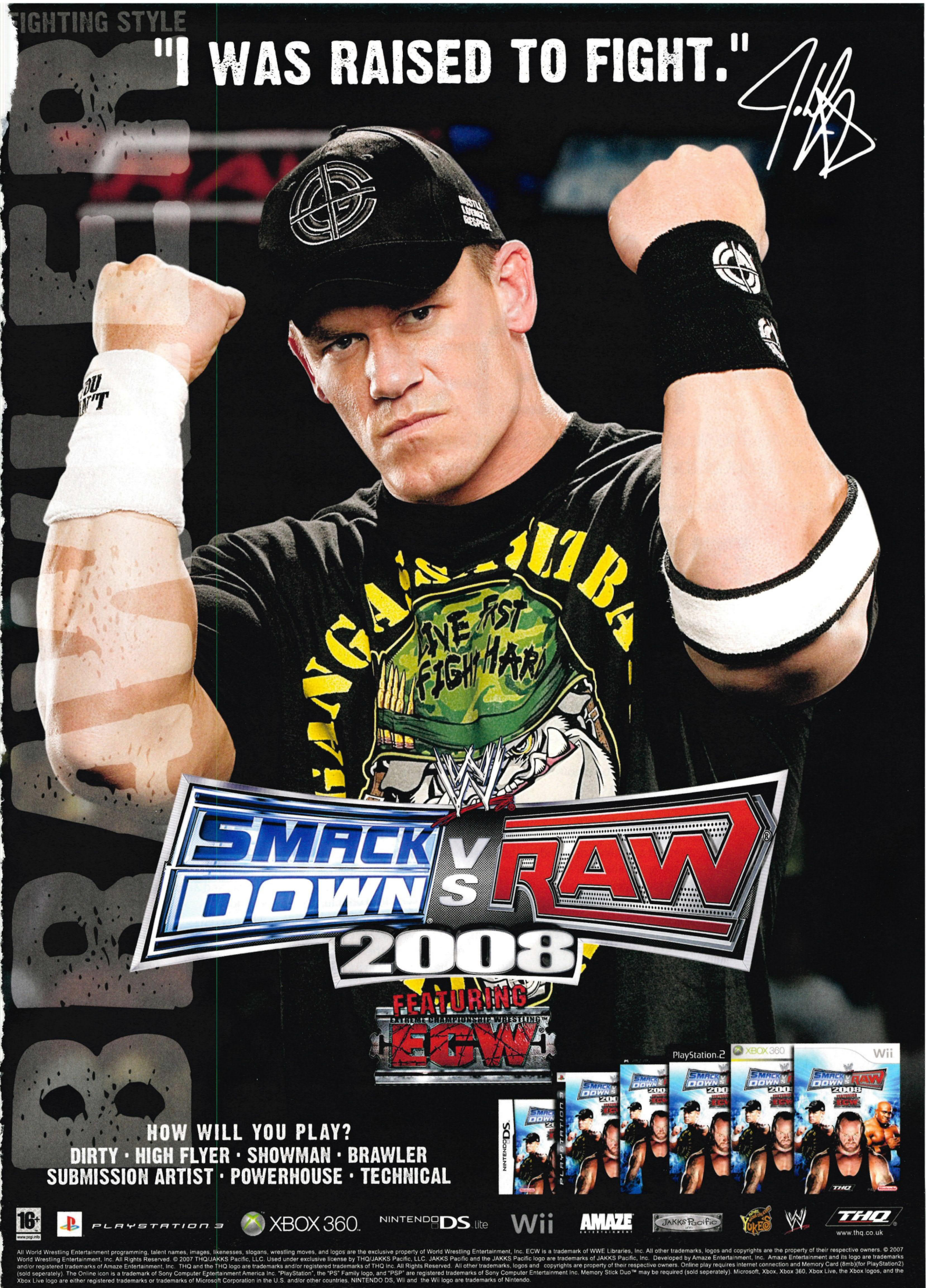
HOW COMPLETE?

SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2008

CONCEPT · ALPHA · BETA · RELEASE

PRE-ALPHA

NOV



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BOARD OF THE RINGS

Tony Hawk? Too slow! **Sonic Riders: Zero Gravity** is set to take skate-racing out of the 'burbs and into the future

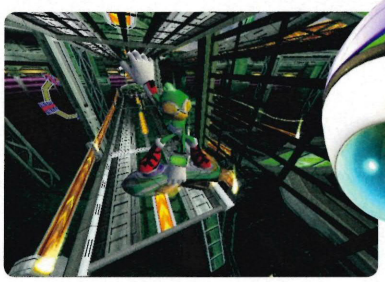
PUB Sega **DEV** Sonic Team **ETA** February 2008 **WEB** sega-europe.com

The original Sonic Riders was a solid racer that made up for what it lacked in originality by taking Sega's faithful mascot away from the dire 3D platformers that were killing his career.

It thrust him into the 21st century with a skate game where, rather than out-tricking your opponent in a Tony Hawk's style, the aim was to win races on super-charged boards.

Now Sonic Riders is back, and this time you can manipulate gravity as you're racing around each circuit. So you can stop and change angle in mid-jump, thus avoiding the frustration of steaming off a ramp at a wonky angle and ending up falling off the track edge.

This is great news, because the lack of control was one of the first game's main bugbears.



↓ The focus is on being the fastest but pulling tricks will still be important

Secondly, the tracks will be more twisty and elaborate than the ones we played in Sonic Riders' first outing.

Loops I did it again

We're expecting loops, spirals and upside-down sections aplenty: all to be tackled at mind-bending speeds.

Zero Gravity looks like the kind of game that'll make you lose your lunch and bleed profusely from your eyeballs, which is why we like it.

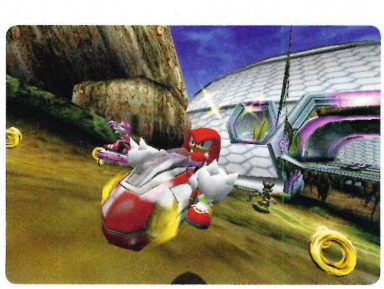
Another area where this sequel will differ from the original is in its list of characters. Riders featured a comprehensive cast from the Sonic universe, and Zero Gravity is promising even more.

Only seven core boarders have been announced so far, however. Sonic, Tails, Amy and Knuckles make up the good guy contingent; Jet the Hawk, Storm the Albatross and Wave the Swallow (aka the Babylon Rogues) return as their opposition.

Also new is the use of hover-bikes instead of boards, which seems kind of like cheating to us.

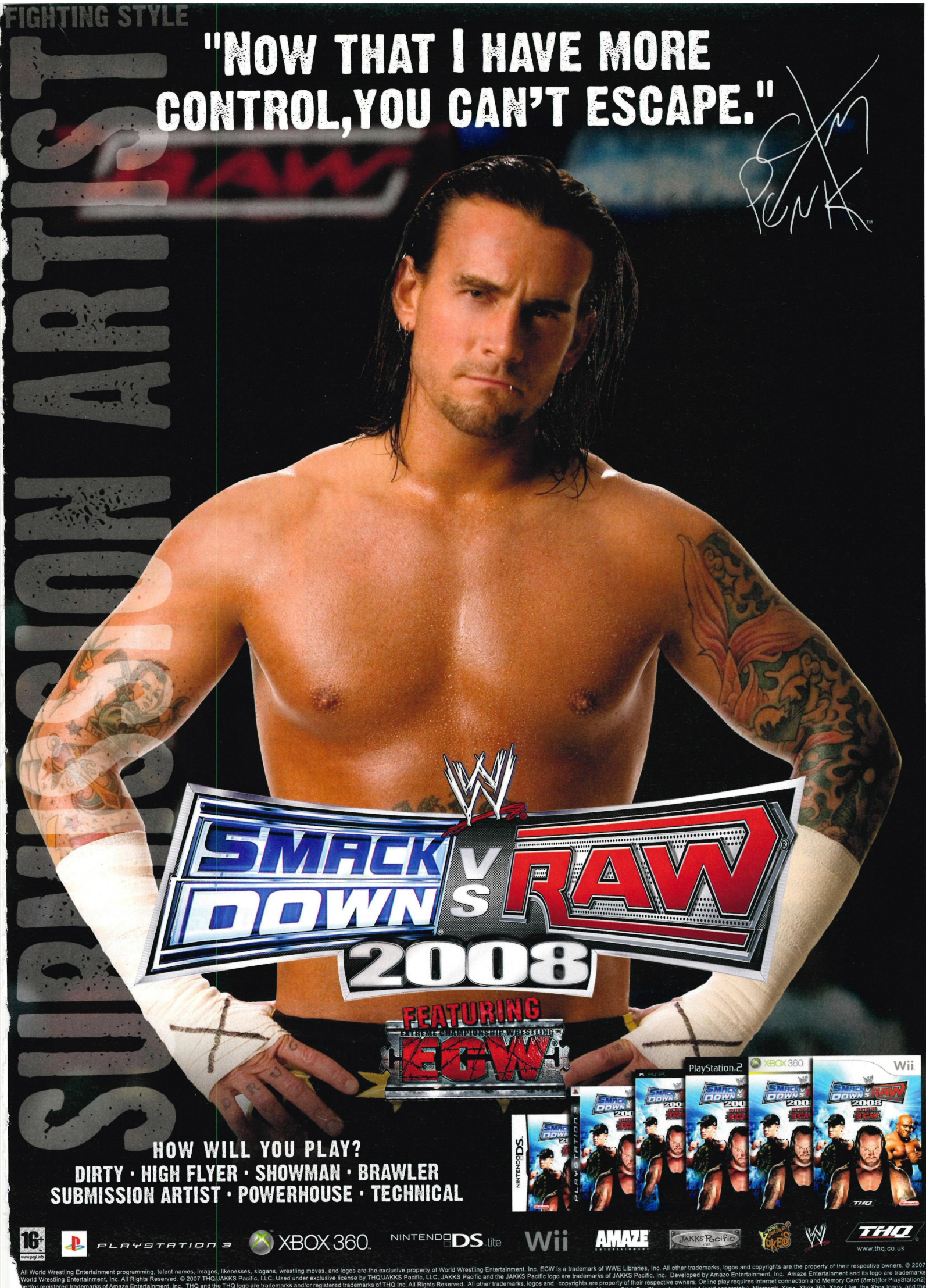
But then, we've never worked out why Sonic needs a skateboard anyway when he's so super-fast with nothing but a pair of trainers. **Andy Hartup**

↑ Jet the Hawk plays the role of chief baddie



↑ A hover-bike at a skate race, Knuckles? That's hardly fair, is it?

HOW COMPLETE?
SONIC RIDERS: ZERO GRAVITY
CONCEPT ALPHA RELEASE
PRE-ALPHA BETA FEB



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RELIGHT MY FIRE

Bend a little air with us in Aang's new game, **Avatar: The Burning Earth**

PUB THQ **DEV** THQ Studio Australia **ETA** 26 October **WEB** thq-games.com/uk/game/show/2378

This blue-bonced lad is Aang, an Airbender (person who can manipulate air). You may remember him from his cartoon show and previous game, Avatar: The Last Airbender.

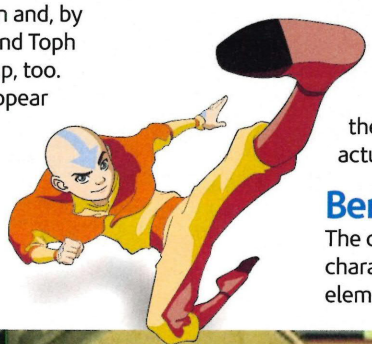
The Burning Earth picks up during season two of the show, as Aang continues his quest to become a Master Bender and defend the Earth Kingdom against the Fire Nation.

For fans, there's a ton of new stuff to be excited about. Central characters Aang, Katara and Sokka return and, by popular demand, Jet, Momo and Toph are now in the playable line-up, too. Plus flying furball Appa will appear in 'dramatic air battles'.

You can play singleplayer with an AI pal (switching between two characters) or cooperatively with a mate.

There's also a battle arena for unlimited deathmatches and the option to fight bosses you've already defeated.

→ Aang's special attacks look less impressive in the game than on TV



It all sounds good on paper. But actually playing the game, as we have, reveals it to be a lazy franchise relying more on the success of the TV series than actual gameplay quality.

Bend in the clowns

The cartoon is beautifully animated: characters move fluidly and their element-bending attacks pack real visual punch. But the game fails to capitalise on this potential.

What should be Aang unleashing Avatar fury looks like a cat farting. For 'dramatic air battles', read 'generic arcade shooter levels'. And, oddly, nobody's lips move during cutscenes.

You bash ◻ to beat stuff up, solve the occasional puzzle, and collect orbs to charge your power-ups. As you go, enemies will get stuck in scenery and the camera has its own agenda.

We understand this game is aimed at younglings, but why should they settle for second best? Fix the glitches, tune up the visuals, turn up the challenges and this game could be a solid adventure. **Kim Richards**

↑ The story has potential for action beyond the button-bashing on offer

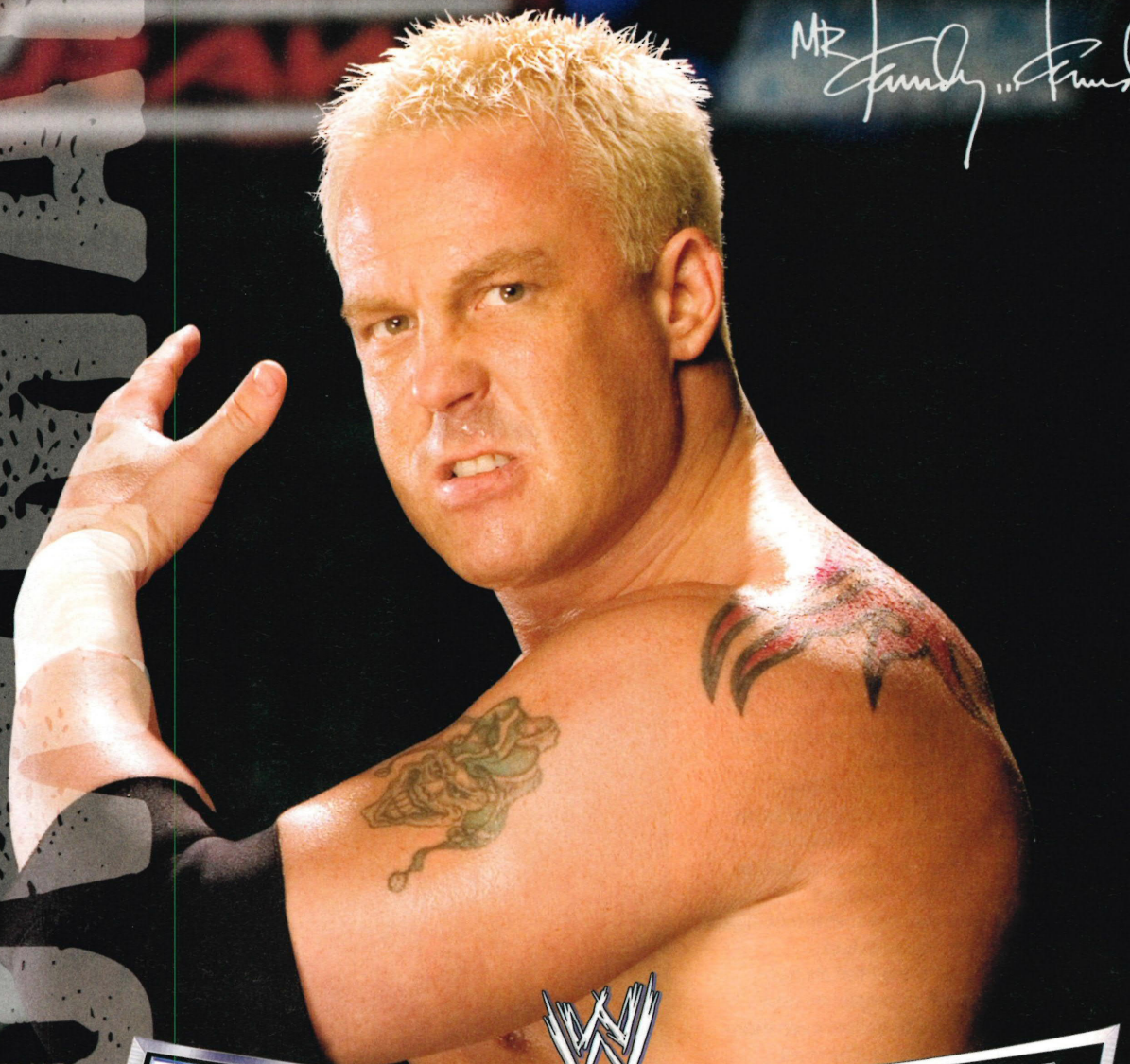
↓ The characters' different abilities are essential for solving puzzles

FIGHTING STYLE

"THE SPOTLIGHT SHINES ON ME."

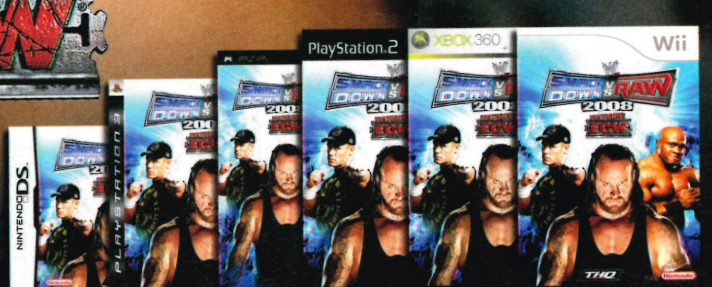
MR Hardy... Hardy!!

SLAMMAN



WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2008

FEATURING EXTREME CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING ECW



HOW WILL YOU PLAY?

DIRTY · HIGH FLYER · SHOWMAN · BRAWLER

SUBMISSION ARTIST · POWERHOUSE · TECHNICAL

16+ www.pegi.info

PLAYSTATION 3 XBOX 360 NINTENDO DS lite Wii AMAZE JAKKS Pacific

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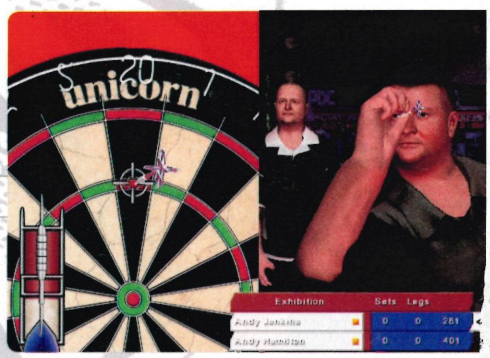
ON THE BULL

The fat and the furious return in **PDC: World Championship Darts 2008**

PUB Oxygen Interactive **DEV** Mere Mortals **ETA** 7th December 2007 **WEB** oxygengames.net

The game is presented just like the real thing is on Sky Sports, tattoos and all

Throwing your dart is executed by carefully flicking the analogue stick



Why do they insist on calling darts 'arrows?' Why is raging obesity a pre-requisite for pro-status? And why are the fans at darts tourneys usually more drunk than a George Best fan club?

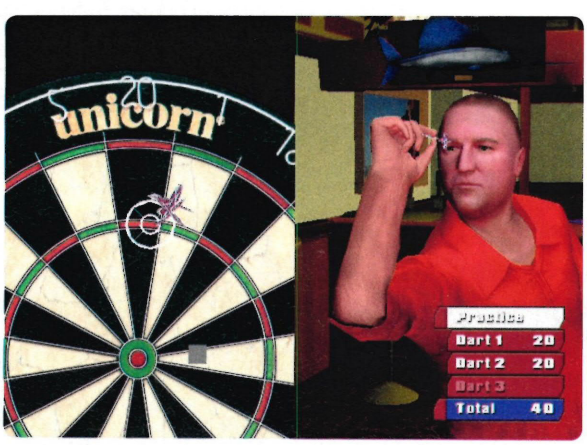
These are just some of the questions that PDC 2008 makes no attempt whatsoever to answer. However, If it's an improvement on last year's realism-focused interpretation of the metal-lobbing sim you're after, you're in luck.

Developer Mere Mortals has emerged with a completely new engine in order to deliver even more authentic gameplay. The most improved gameplay element (well, it is really the *only* gameplay element) is the enhanced throwing physics.

Not only can players select different barrel weights to influence how their darts fly, but the new physics system means the darts now move much more convincingly through the air, showing realistic amounts of wobble and so on.

A new Master mode has been added too, which removes the power aids and makes for an even trickier proposition than Pro mode in last year's outing.

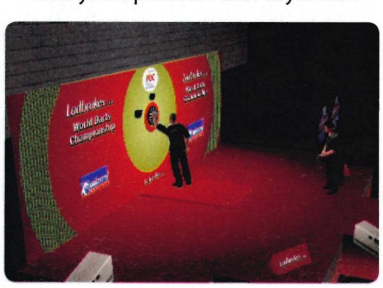
Bonus games take place in the boozer



Talk the chalk

Complementing these improvements are smooth mo-cap animations to replace last year's frankly comical ones and a deeper career structure that accurately reflects a player's progression through the darts calendar.

Last years pitiable Flash-style mini-games have been overhauled, so you can now play all your favourite darts' variations, such as Cricket or Killer, in a proper 3D 'back room of The Badger and Cabbage pub' scenario.



If we've got one issue at this stage, it's the decision not to include wiring (bouncing a dart clean off a wire or another dart) as it's considered too random and frustrating a gameplay mechanic.

But why not have this as an option that can be disabled for the impatient player? There's still time for this to be rectified before release, so lets hope the developer sees sense and make sure this feature is included for a truly authentic experience. **Duncan Leigh**

HOW COMPLETE?
PDC: WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DARTS 2008
CONCEPT ALPHA RELEASE
PRE-ALPHA BETA DEC

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SWIFT JUSTICE

Take to the crime-filled streets and deal out rapid retribution in **Pursuit Force: Extreme Justice**

PUB Sony **DEV** Bigbig Studios **ETA** February 2008 **WEB** tinyurl.com/2xwrs5

Justice: it's all relative. In Ohio, for example, you look forward to a spell in jail should you be found getting a fish drunk. And who can forget the cautionary tale of the Sudanese gentleman caught in a compromising situation with his neighbour's goat last year, only to be forced into marriage with it?

In the world of Pursuit Force, though, justice simply means jumping from your police cruiser to a perp's vehicle at 160mph, shooting him in the face and commandeering his ride.

If that seems a little extreme, that's because it's meant to be. This is *extreme* justice, baby – this ain't your grandma's Pursuit Force.

The original Pursuit Force was far from perfect. But, like a cartoon take on a Jerry Bruckheimer blockbuster, it was still eye-wateringly fun.

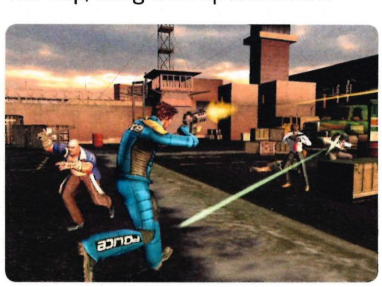
And the good news about this here follow-up, Pursuit Force: Extreme Justice, is that developer Bigbig Studios has listened to every single complaint about the original and done its utmost to address them all.

Perhaps the most exciting change to the Pursuit Force formula is within the boss battles.

Rather than facing crime-lords puttering about in the same vehicles as foot-soldiers, bosses will pilot some seriously impressive kit: from Soviet tanks to heavily armed hovercraft to our favourite, a battle atop a massive cargo plane.

Top of the cops

The main guy from the original game, The Cop, has grown up and is now



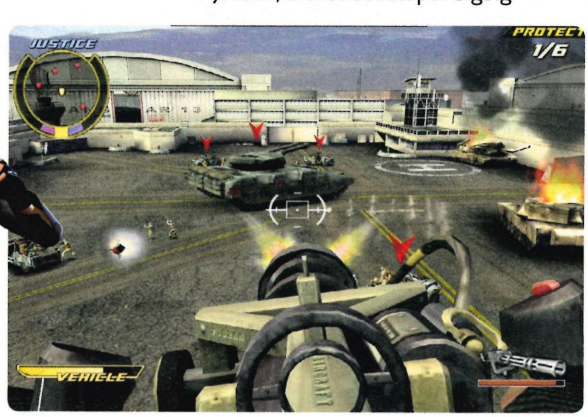
CHARACTER PROFILE

Everything you ever wanted to know about The Cop

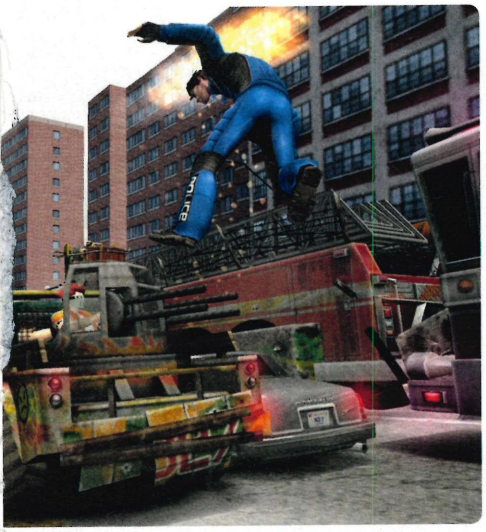
HE HASN'T GOT A NAME
Well, you can call him Sir. Or Cop. Or Mr Cop Sir.

HE LIKES JUSTICE
But only when it's of the *extreme* variety, naturally.

HE LOVES HISSAVLON
When you're prone to road rash, you need to keep the antiseptics handy.



↑ Boss battles have been made significantly more exciting since the last Pursuit Force, with all sorts of impressive weaponry



↑Drive really fast in awesome cars and then jump onto other vehicles to get personal with the perps: that's extreme justice!

WHAT'S NEW?

What's changed since the original Pursuit Force?

MULTIPLAYER

A glaring omission in the original PSP Pursuit Force was its lack of a multiplayer mode. Not anymore!

NEW RECRUITS

You won't be going solo this time. As commander of Pursuit Force, you'll have a whole team underneath you.

GOOD BOSS BATTLES

The boss battles in Extreme Justice are huge, multi-tiered affairs, requiring guts and guile to overcome.

BOSSES WILL PILOT SOME SERIOUSLY IMPRESSIVE KIT

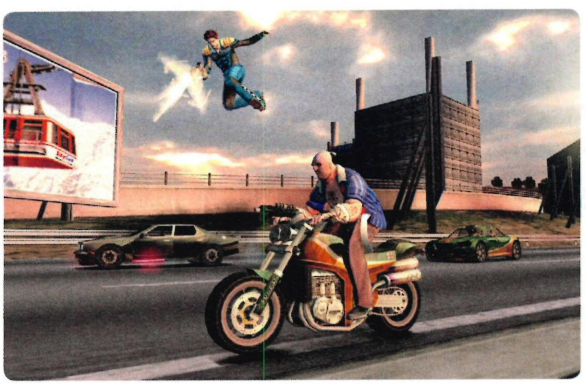
commander of Pursuit Force. But that doesn't mean he gets to spend the rest of his career chomping cigars and screaming at rookies.

No, the new job means more responsibility – such as making sure the Pursuit Force comes out on top against rival police faction, Viper Squad, who like their justice served in an even more extreme fashion than the commander and his team.

↓'Damn, I hate it when they move the car before I've landed on it...'

Team? Ah yes, you'll be heading up a squad. Each member is promised to not only lend a particular brand of AI support, but also a particular brand of (shudder) comedy.

Mind you, given the original game's successfully tongue-in-cheek humour, don't be too worried.



Pursuits you sir

The major thing that was lacking in the original was a multiplayer mode. But this time around there are four modes, two of which are unique to the PS2: Car Jackers, in which two players try to knock civilians out of their cars while fighting each other, and the rather limp-sounding Finders Keepers, where you scramble over enemy vehicles collecting gems.

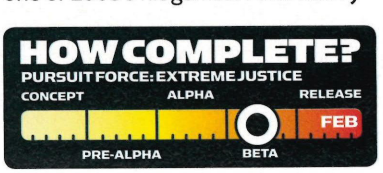
The other two, shared with all formats, are Rampage, an on-foot deathmatch, and Ram Jam, a 'cops and robbers' chase mode.

↑In the future, all police officers will wear padded, bum-hugging jumpsuits

Add in 12 driveable vehicle types, more than 30 weapons, a revamped control scheme and five gangs to bring down (three of which are new) and Pursuit Force is shaping up to be one of 2008's hit games. **Mike Sterry**

HOW COMPLETE?

PURSUIT FORCE: EXTREME JUSTICE



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The only magazine with a playable PS3 Blu-ray disc

Playable Blu-ray disc
Ten demos including Heavenly Sword, Lemmings, Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2 and Blast Factor.

First for PlayStation 3
This month's exclusives: first PES 2008 and Skate reviews, Kojima talks MGS4 bosses and a chilling first look at Silent Hill V.

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PLAYSTATION 3 PLAYSTATION PORTABLE **PLAYSTATION 2**

PLAYSTATION NATION

△ YOUR LETTERS ○ YOUR REVIEWS ✕ TIPS & SECRETS □ STUFF

GREETINGS, FELLOW CITIZENS!

Hot debate has been raging this month, as per usual, among the citizens of this, the PlayStation Nation.

From our postbag to our email inbox to our Facebook group discussion board, you've got plenty to say about games, about consoles and about OPS2 and our new look!

Our debate of the moment, though, is over which Metal Gear Solid is better: 2 or 3? There are some solid opinions on p38, so sneak over for a look.

There's also the usual array of wonderful and weird PS2 goodies created by fans worldwide, including John McCormick of Spennymoor's fantastic Final Fantasy collection. I've definitely got my eye on that...

And we've got a great selection of reader reviews on p40. Nice work guys, send me more!

As for me, I've got a holiday coming up, so finally I'll be able to get into the copy of Disgaea 2 that I recently bought (along with the tourist guide to Spennymoor and a crowbar). Hooray!

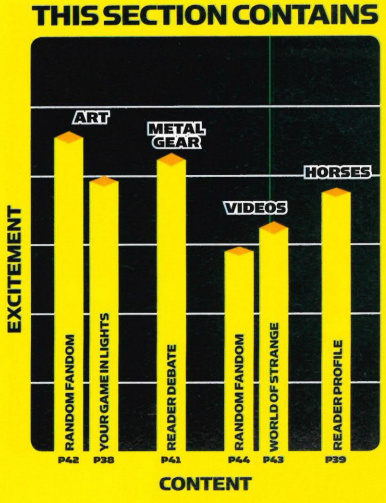
KIM RICHARDS
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
psnation@futurenet.co.uk

WHAT'S GOT YOU TALKING THIS MONTH

'INCY WINCY SPIDER, UP THE COLOSSUS' SNOUT'

DONNA STARLING P36

THIS SECTION CONTAINS



SEND US STUFF LIKE THIS

↑CHEATS AND SECRETS
Send us the cheeky PS2 easter eggs you've found (along with a pic) and we'll print the best

↑GAME IDEAS
Got an idea that should be a game? We want to know about it!

↑READER GOODNESS
Love us so much you'll make videos about us? Send them in!

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COLOSSUS CRAZY

STAR LETTER

Our whole family is obsessed with Shadow of the Colossus, but my five-year-old daughter Ellie takes the obsession way too far! Here are just a few examples of why.

We imported the Japanese soundtrack; but we couldn't translate the track listings. But Ellie could tell us which colossus each piece plays with or where you can hear each track.

She had a Gecko Colossus birthday cake at her party. During her school's discussion time, she started on about Sand Worms, Minotaurs and Sky Dragons. The teachers just sat there going 'eh?'!

Now she's singing 'Incy Wincy Spider climbed up the Colossus' snout'!

DONNA STARLING NEWBURY

Wow, Ellie is definitely the most hardcore SotC fan we've seen! And that Gecko cake looks mighty fine. And yummy.

Ellie in her Wanderer outfit. We are jealous

WIN THIS!

This month, all letters published in the main body of this section will receive a top PS2 game and an OPS2 Magazine T-shirt. The writer of the Star Letter gets four games and an OPS2 T-shirt.

STAR LETTER

RARE TREATS

As well as owning Dark Chronicle and Project Zero, I think I should get an honourable mention for owning French copies of Raw Danger and Rule of Rose (Raw Danger is in English and Rule of Rose has language select). I think their lack of availability in the UK makes them count as rare, too!

CHRIS K EMAIL

Here's your honourable mention, then, Chris! Nice work. Has anyone else got rare imports or just plain rare games? We want proof!

FUTURE PERFECT

I'm looking forward to the next Grand Theft Auto game so much! It looks amazing! But where do you think Rockstar should go with the game after this one?

Personally I think a futuristic version is the direction to go in. Imagine a futuristic vision of Liberty City, a cross between *BladeRunner*, *The Fifth Element*, and Coruscant from *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones*!

An environment that has five levels of traffic, above each other! That would be fantastic! Neon lights and futuristic hover cars! My mouth is drooling with just the thought of it!

JEREMY LITTLE WALES

Great idea, Jeremy! If Rockstar blended its phenomenal attention to detail (one of the reasons that we all love GTA so much) with a futuristic setting, it could be something very special.

LOOKING GOOD

I finished reading the new mag yesterday and I like it a lot. Well done guys! I find the new width rather pleasing, and having separate sections for PS3 and PSP is great. Makes more sense that way and people can ignore it if they like.

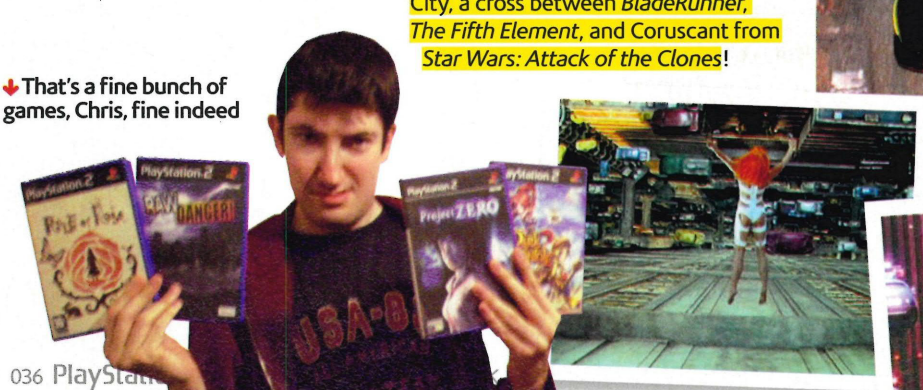
But I don't like the way you highlight bits of people's letters, it's naff. And who decided on the order of the Top 100? Surely that's just asking for arguments?

LIZZY MARTIN FACEBOOK

Thanks, it's good to know someone appreciates us! The Top 100 was hotly

The ingredients for the next GTA, according to Jeremy Little

That's a fine bunch of games, Chris, fine indeed



↑ Yowza! There are more goodies here than in the Sky Pirates' Den of FFXII!

debated by Team OPS2 over many, many beverages. We are very interested in hearing readers' opinions on it, so if anyone's got anything to say about it, let us know! We've even included a feedback form on the final page to make it really easy.

FINAL FAN-TASY

I noticed on p24 of OPS2 #88 the small story about the kid spending money on Final Fantasy figurines. Well, here's a photo of my personal stash (worth at least £1000, I would imagine: the Bahamut and Tifa statues alone total nearly £200). What do you think of it?

JOHN MCCORMICK SPENNYMOOR

PS: Got any Final Fantasy/Metal Gear Solid stuff lying around the office? I can give it a home.

That certainly is an impressive haul, John. Kim's drooling! And speaking of Kim, there was some FF tat, sorry, fascinating memorabilia, in the office, but it seems to have disappeared…

THE SHORT ANSWER

If I give you £5, will you pleeeease give me a copy of Music 3000?

NICK PARMAR FACEBOOK

No.

ACCESSIBILITY

Thanks so much for your article on gaming accessibility, and another step towards having accessible gaming recognised as a serious issue that doesn't go away. Fingers crossed that some developers will read your article and think a bit more about making their games more accessible.

Just one thing, though: my website was listed as oneswitch.com, but it is actually oneswitch.org.uk.

BARRIE ELLIS EMAIL

Sorry about the mistake Barrie. And thanks for your kind words, we really do hope we've

→ Barrie Ellis runs oneswitch.org.uk: check it out for advice on games and accessibility

RANDOM FANDOM

DODGY JPEG ALERT!

The good, bad and just plain ugly we found in the world of PS2 this month...

GREAT GOOGLY MOOGLY

Cosplay costume 'Kuporoth', created by Nicolas, is a Moogly Sephiroth with a penchant for killing Aeris. Interesting!

NICOLAS BLEDSOE

STITCH'N'BITCH

Beautiful and functional: the Amaterasu quilt. If you are really nice to your grandma, she might make you one. If she's very clever.

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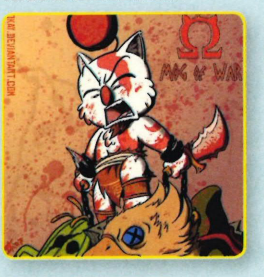
KOTAKU.COM



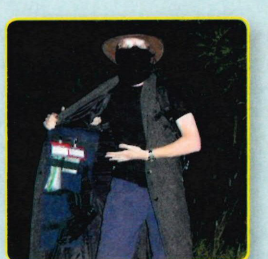
VICIOUSLY FLUFFY

It's violent but cute. What more do you want? 'Mog of War'; speaks to us on so many levels.

BRANDOKAY DEVIANTART.COM

DAMN YOU FLYING ELEPHANTS

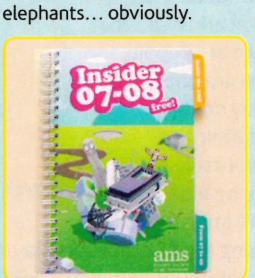
It's all in the title of this OPS2 fan vid created by Facebook grouper Mike Williams. It involves OPS2 and elephants… obviously.



THE MERCHANT OF MENACE

Phil here likes dressing up as the Merchant from Resident Evil 4 and asking strangers "Waddaya buyin'?" Yikes!

PHIL COBLEY BEDFORD



KATAMARI STUDENT-Y

It's great to be a student at the University of British Columbia, because you'll get this nifty handbook.

SPOTTED ON:
KOTAKU.COM

WE ♥ HAT-AMARI

This stylish headgear was created by Adelayde at deviantart.com. Everyone at OPS2 wants one, rather badly in Mike's case, so now you know what to get us for Christmas.

SHOW US YOURS!

Send your art and photos to **Fandom** at the address opposite or email your JPEGs to psnation@futurenet.co.uk

Sorry, we can't return any of the stuff you send

DEBATEBOX

Last month we asked you...

'WHICH IS BETTER: MGS2 OR MGS3?'

You answered in your millions. Here's a pick of the crop.

70% METAL GEAR 3

MGS2 just felt like filler.
JORDAN NOTON
MANCHESTER

I hated the story of MGS2, and there were too many cutscenes and codec conversations, too little gameplay, mediocre boss battles, much weaker characters compared with MGS3, and a whiney protagonist.
JOHN MCCORMICK
NEWCASTLE

In MGS3 you are in the jungle (and a few deserts) so there are more places to hide. The boss fights are gorgeous, particularly The Fear. There are plenty of weapons, so many unlockables that you can play the game two or three times, the cutscenes are amazing and the storyline is its strong point. Do you need more reasons?
MICHAEL PANAYIOTOU
FACEBOOK

30% METAL GEAR 2

MGS2 is best by far. It built on top of the first one so well, with better graphics and gameplay and a story I have yet to work out. MGS3 was more of the same really, with a tedious camo index and annoying stamina bar.
LEE BAKER FACEBOOK

In MGS3, the Russian soldiers had weird American Accents.
SIMON WILLIAMS
DORSET

The characters in MGS2 were by far the most interesting of the whole series. Everyone slags off Raiden but they were only trying to do something different, and the bosses are way more exciting than the ones in MGS3.
KATE STANLEY EMAIL

NEXT MONTH'S DEBATE
WHICH IS BETTER: FIFA OR PRO EVO?
EMAIL PSNATION@FUTURENET.CO.UK

brought some attention to an important issue that gets rather swept under the carpet.

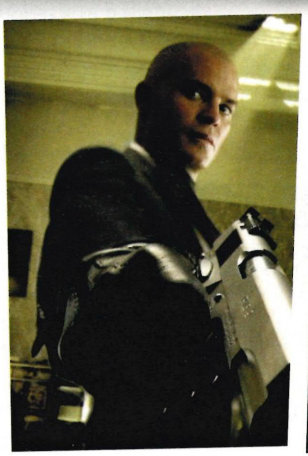
EMOTIONAL

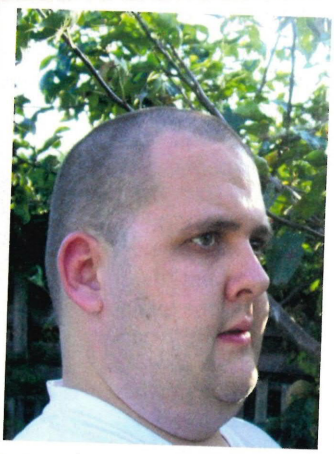
I found your feature about disabled gamers to be quite emotional. It broke my heart to see that there are people who are unable to enjoy doing something as pleasurable as playing videogames. I can't imagine not having my PS2 on every day. Could I cope if we switched places? Probably not. They are very brave people.
GRAEME STEVENSON BELFAST
It's great to know that there are people out there like Barrie at Oneswitch, Reid Kimball and Dr Michael Taylor, working to find solutions to the lack of gaming accessibility.

THE SHORT ANSWER
Is there ever going to be a Primal 2?
LYNETTE SMITH
EMAIL
No word yet. But we hope so.

HITMAN AND I

You know the guy in the upcoming Hitman movie? I took a picture of me and I look like Hitman's exact double. I've got the same eyes and the same dodgy hair. Just one thing: I look like Hitman after the fast-food run.
RICHARD DODDS EMAIL
Erm... anyone else think they look like a game character? Send in a pic!





↑ Left: Richard Dodds; Right: Timothy Olyphant, star of the new Hitman movie

NAZI BUT NICE

The first God of War said that every time an army went to war they did so under the eye of the new god of war. It also showed a clip about World War 2. So why not change it all and have Hitler setting his army against Kratos and leave it as you against Hitler's Germany? No Americans, no British, just Kratos and his blades and let Ares be reborn in Hitler's mind!
SHANE CURLEY
IRELAND
Hitler wouldn't stand a chance. What about a whole series of war games starring Kratos? Call of Kratos... Medal of Kratos... Battlefield 2: Ancient Greek Combat... Quick, get Tom Clancy on the phone, we're onto something here!

WORLD OF STRANGE

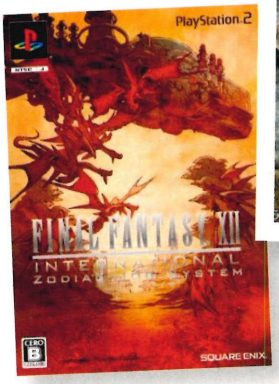
Sometimes, you make us cry. And not in a *Shawshank Redemption* way...

Along with several pages of PS2 maguffins and various pictures, Roger Meaklim sent us a DVD with his very own PS3 advert (featuring himself and friend Mark Allen), reasoning that 'I was going to make a PS2 advert, but the torch of gaming has passed along'. Your words cut us to the bone, sir. To. The. Bone. Nice ad, though.

CONTACT OPS2 MMS

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

These two pictures are probably as close to FFXII: IZJS that we non-Japanese speakers will ever get



GIS A JOB!

Are Square ever going to release Final Fantasy XII: International Zodiac Job System in the UK? If not, that's really unfair.

The option of assigning character classes and using new licence boards, gambits and to be able to control Summons would be absolutely awesome! Then everyone would stop complaining!

JOSH HADEN HULL

Unfortunately, there have been no USA/UK announcements, yet, so it's not looking too hopeful. We're keeping our fingers crossed, though.

THE SHORT ANSWER

Has Earthworm Jim on PSP been cancelled?

OLY SMITH AVELEY

It's currently on hold, we're waiting for more info.

soon enough, you are going to find yourself in the world of work, and let me tell you… it ain't pretty!

JAMES BEDFORD SURREY

Thanks for the defence! We know how you feel, James, because we've all had proper jobs in the past, too. Actually, even at OPS2 we're only allowed to play Guitar Hero in our lunch breaks. Sniff.

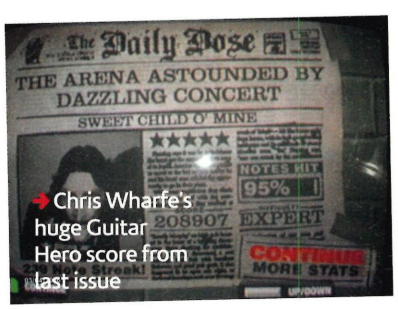
ZEROS PWND

Here are my scores for 'Sweet Child O' Mine'. I haven't played that song for a while, but it still thrashes the score you printed last issue.

I've thrown in 100% on Expert 'Parasite', too, for good measure. I've beaten every song except for 'Jordan' on Expert, I dunno if you guys have played it at all, but you'll see why I can't pass it when you reach the solo!

SAM GIBBON EMAIL

Legendary scores, Sam! And we feel your pain with 'Jordan'. It's banned in the office, after too many controllers were destroyed in frustration.



Chris Wharfe's huge Guitar Hero score from last issue

Sam Gibbon proves once again that Team OPS2 are Guitar Hero noobs

ZEROS DEFENDED

After reading the 'Guitar Zeros' letter in OPS2 #90, I felt discomforted. What Chris might not realise is that the good percentage of us have to go out and make a living.

I for one leave my house at 7:30 in the morning to catch the bus to college, and get back at around 6pm. Then I have to go to work.

I consider myself to be a gaming nut, but I never really get the time to play all the games I want.

Chris, you might have all the time you want to play games now, but

PLAYSTATION PROFILE

THOMAS ROCHE IS...

I'M FEELING

BLUNTLY REFUSING TO PUT HIS HANDS UP FOR DETROIT

BIRTH DATE	12/10/1988
HOMETOWN	BINGLEY
FIRST GAME	TOCA

MY FRIENDS

LUKE

CHARLIE

SIMON

KAFKA

FAVE GAMES

FIFA 07

POP: SANDS OF TIME

SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS

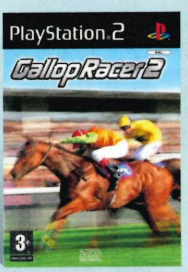
FAVE CHARACTERS

AGENT 47 HITMAN

AGRO COLOSSUS

PRINCE OF PERSIA

WHAT I'M PLAYING NOW



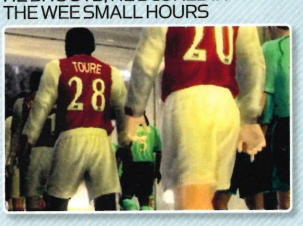
GALLOP RACER 2

So what if horse racing doesn't normally translate into an overly enthralling game? Look how colourful it is!

MY RATING 0 10

MY BEST MOMENT IN A GAME...

HE SHOOTS, HE SCORES IN THE WEE SMALL HOURS



While playing FIFA all night, scoring a half-volley from the halfway line with Touré at two in the morning

MY LOCAL GAME SHOP

GAME, KEIGHLEY

GAME PET

Spyro, because a little purple dragon beats a hamster hands down.

MY LIFE

INTERESTS
PLAYING GUITAR, FANTASY FOOTBALL, DOING WACKY STUNTS FOR CHARITY

MUSIC
ARCADE FIRE, THE VIEW, RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS, THE HOOSIERS, NIRVANA

FILMS
PAN'S LABYRINTH, LABYRINTH, ALMOST FAMOUS, REQUIEM FOR A DREAM

READING
HARRY POTTER, MAY CONTAIN NUTS, THE BOOK OF GENERAL IGNORANCE

Mi

WHAT I LISTEN TO WHEN I'M GAMING

RAZORLIGHT
UP ALL NIGHT

GAME CHARACTER MOST LIKE ME...

THE GIRL FROM SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS

She's peaceful, quiet, and asleep for most of the time.

SEE YOURSELF HERE!

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

READER REVIEWS

REVIEW AND WIN!

Every review we print wins an OPS2 T-shirt, and the star review also gets a top PS2 game! Email **psnation@futurenet.co.uk**

Games according to you! This month: why you must buy **Spartan: Total Warrior**

SPARTAN: TOTAL WARRIOR

REVIEWED BY **GEORGE HOWARD, YORK**
WE GAVE IT 9/10 IN OPS2 #64

You, the Spartan, must embark on the most dangerous and mysterious quest of all, across barren wastelands and ghostly cities of the dead.

The enemies you face will be tough, and you must stay close to the ones you trust.

This game is frightening, gripping and emotional throughout every twist and turn of the plot. You must slay warlords and evil sorcerers, and at the end of each main boss battle, you will gain another weapon to add to your powerful arsenal.

The graphics are amazing, and the battlefields are enormous; you can fight the battles your own way, whether lunging into battle with a huge hammer or staying well away from the thick of it, using a bow.

You have Spartan allies to help you out, and these beautifully computer-controlled soldiers really do justice to the words 'artificial intelligence'. The greatest war, the greatest army, the greatest game. Perfection has arrived.

10/10

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

REVIEWED BY **LIAM BIGGS, CHESTERFIELD**
WE GAVE IT 10/10 IN OPS2 #17

The graphics in Sons of Liberty are still fantastic for a game that was released so early for the PS2. They are some of the best graphics I've seen for a PS2 game. I was gripped straight from the off after watching the first cutscene.

The gameplay is superb, and the number of ways to play through each level are near endless.

Do you creep through the areas, avoiding intelligent AI guards, and only snapping their neck if it's your last resort?

Do you blast your way through the enemies with your pistol? Do you sneak around under a cardboard box?

Do you chuck grenades, lay down books to distract, knock on walls to get attention, use the tranquilliser gun, kick enemy units off ledges, leg it through the level swinging a sword? The answer is all of them.

The 30-minute cutscenes give the game an exceptional storyline, with many twists and exciting moments.

Even the boss battles keep you hooked. They're brilliantly constructed and not frustrating.

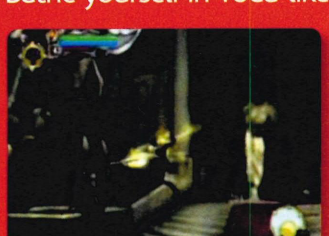
The story is endlessly replayable. Secrets, boss survival, cutscene editor: it is all there and packaged up to create an incredible game.

10/10

READERSECRETS

Bathe yourself in Yoda-like knowledge from fellow citizens of the PlayStation Nation

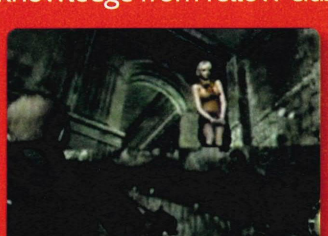
SEND US YOURS
We want your PS2 easter eggs. Email psnation@futurenet.co.uk with your secret, how you found it, and a pic if you can!



SECRET MESSAGE IN GOD OF WAR

In the final chamber where you sit on the throne, destroy the Ares and minotaur statues and a secret phone number is revealed.

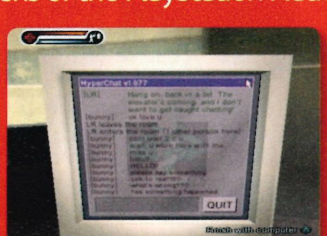
RHYS JONES
BAWDRIP



PERVERTED LEON IN RESIDENT EVIL 4

If you're ever on a lower level to Ashley, say at the bottom of a some stairs, aim your crosshair up her skirt and she'll cover it up and call you a pervert.

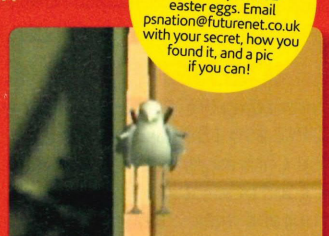
GORDON ROSS
PLAISTOW



CYBER CHAT IN SECOND SIGHT

In 'Exploration', after you've used the computer to disable the cameras, click Exit, then Hyper Chat. The dead guard's girlfriend will start chatting with you.

GEORGE YORK
ABERDEEN



EVIL BIRDS IN MGS2: SONS OF LIBERTY

If you shoot seagulls in the sky, they'll take offence and attack you. Your disgruntled colleagues will also call you on the radio to tell you off.

BEN ASHDEN
NOTTINGHAM

CONTACT OPS2 SMS
TEXT PSNATION, THEN A SPACE, THEN YOUR MESSAGE TO 87103

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

REVIEWED BY **JONATHAN MCEVOY, LONDON**
WE GAVE IT 9/10 IN OPS2 #37

MORE ABOUT THIS GAME: PS6

Soviet Russians have invaded New York, and you, a plumber turned freedom fighter, must create a rebel faction to reclaim your freedom.

At first, you can only recruit one person to fight by your side, but as you build up your Charisma (by completing missions and healing injured men) you can recruit up to 12 and give them commands.

As the game goes on, seasons change and so does the look of your character; his hair gets longer, his clothes get ripped. It's the small things that make you feel part of the action.

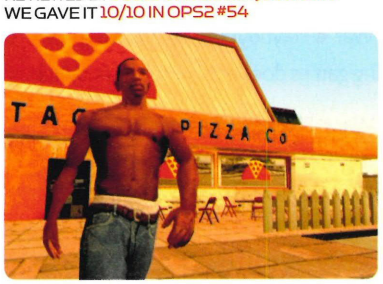
You really need to think. You can't always complete a mission straight through. For example on the first map you must liberate a police station and a post office. At the police station, officers are pinned down by snipers. Next to them is some C4 which you must use to blow up some fuel reserves on the post office level, which kills the snipers, giving you the chance to complete the police station.

With sharp graphics and crisp, clean sounds, FF is a brilliant game that requires your attention.

9/10

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

REVIEWED BY **JOSEPH SEMANA, LONDON**
WE GAVE IT 10/10 IN OPS2 #54



A ridiculous amount of people enjoy Grand Theft Auto, myself included. It's the idea of living a life on the glamorous edge, toying with knives, guns and mobsters and owning everything of tremendous worth. But I've been playing GTA for almost two years, I'm 75% into it and honestly, I'm sick and tired of killing, driving hot cars and modifying them, taking virtual girls out, owning everything, changing my outfit and appearance 100 times.

It gives me a headache because I'm not really bursting a man open with an AK-47. I can't feel the wind when I'm driving nitro on my car. I can't feel the girl when… well, you know.

Plus the colours can be very dim and lifeless in most areas and the relentless repetition of the cars and people sounds like a horrid buzzing.

The overtly long game without the balance of imaginative ideas means you'd have to be very resilient to finish it 100%.

8/10

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6

REVIEWED BY **JOSH JANVIER, LIVERPOOL**
WE GAVE IT 10/10 IN OPS2 #79

Pro Evolution Soccer 6 is one of the greatest games on PS2 because no other football game feels as balanced, no other football game makes it feel that you are responsible for when you win and when you lose and no other game draws you in so deep that you spend ages recreating kits and badges just so it feels even more real.

Some people say PES 6 wasn't a big leap from PES 5, but it was. The refs became less strict and this evoked a new era of free-flowing, hard tackling games as opposed to angry confusion.

With long-lasting Master League, the multiplayer friendly exhibition and random selection matches, PES6 shines whether you're on your own or when you have eight friends round. You'll still be playing it the day before PES 2008 comes out. I know I will.

10/10

WRITE FOR OPS2!

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

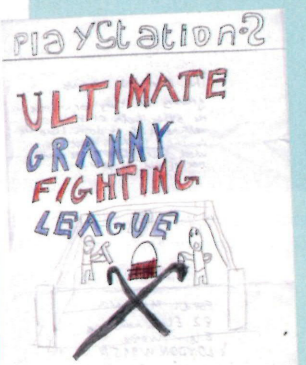
YOUR GAME IN LIGHTS!

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

ULTIMATE GRANNY FIGHTING LEAGUE

DESIGNER
FORD MAYNARD

THE PITCH
Pensioner punching at its finest, Ultimate Granny Fighting League does what is says on the tin. Featuring awesome items such as the False Teeth of Fury and the Walking Stick of Doom, there are also vehicles such as electric wheelchairs, buses to the supermarket and a hearse.



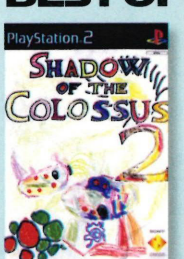
OPS2 VERDICT
We think this is a hilarious idea, and definitely a winner. The pick-ups sound brilliantly entertaining, although the idea of a hearse as a vehicle worries us a little bit…

DEAL OR NO DEAL?
DEAL!*
WE WANT TO SEE IT (AND SO DO OUR GRANS)

CHANCES OF **UGFL** BEING THE NUMBER-ONE GAME AT CHRISTMAS...

SLIM — REAL

BEST OF THE REST



SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS 2
ELLIE STARLING, NEWBURY
Find and battle the hidden colossi such as Gareth the Rhino.

NUCLEAR
JONATHON, STOCKPORT
You play the role of an industry tycoon who owns nuclear sites in this industrial god-sim.

MOLE DIGGER
J STAFFORD, KELLS
As Ernie the mole digs for food, he uncovers dark secrets…

SEE YOURSELF HERE

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

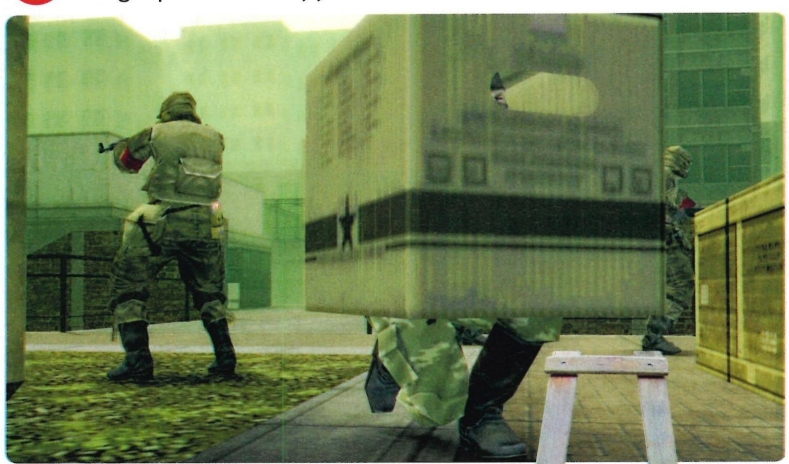
*Ultimate Granny Fighting League doesnt really get a publishing deal, but Ford does get a framed copy of our design for his game's box art

THE BRAIN DRAIN

Exercise your brain, reap the rewards! We've set the difficulty to maximum...

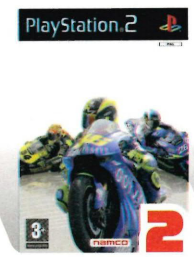
SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

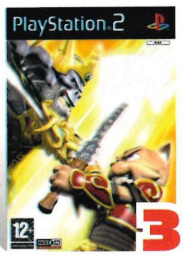
There's only one difference to find, but it's a toughie! Text OPS2SPOT then a single space followed by your name and answers to 87103.



NAME THOSE GAMES

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



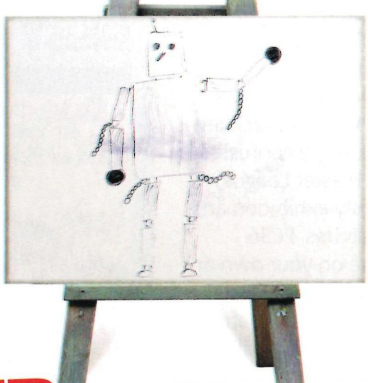


PS2 MATCH MAKER

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

NICK'S CRAP DRAWING OF THE MONTH

Yup, it's another drawing from budding artiste Nellis, good enough to make Van Gogh turn in his grave. Figure out which PS2 character he's drawn and see below for details of how to enter, because this is one of the seven Star prize questions.



MULTIPLE CHOICE

Answer the three questions and text OPS2CHOICE then a single space followed by your name and answers to 87103.

1 Which of the following games does *not* feature a sex mini-game?
A Fahrenheit B God of War C Playboy: The Mansion

2 Which of the following games does *not* feature a character named The Oracle?
A Fahrenheit B God of War C Playboy: The Mansion

3 In which of the following games is food *not* eaten?
A Fahrenheit B God of War C Playboy: The Mansion

HOW TO ENTER

STAR PRIZE

For your chance to win the star prize, you must answer ALL SEVEN questions that are marked with a ★. To enter by SMS, text OPS2STAR, then a space, then your name and answers to 87103. Or email your answers to psnation@futurenet.co.uk with OPS2STAR as the subject.

OTHER PRIZES

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

All texts charged at 25p plus your standard network tariff rate
Closing date: 7 November 2007
For full competition rules and text terms and conditions, see p127

VIDEOGAME MATHS

Do the PlayStation sum below and send us the number you come up with. This is one of the seven star prize questions: see below left for details of how to enter.

The smallest PS2 memory card size available		The number of Tomb Raider games released on PS2		The year in which Destroy all Humans! 2 is set		Issues of OPS2 that have been published (including this one)		TOTAL
	×		+		−		=	

WORD FINDER

Answer the questions, decipher the game-related anagram highlighted in red, and that's your answer. This is a star prize question! Entry details below left.

- The first name of OPS2's staff writer
- _____ Hill is the setting for a survival horror series
- The name of the company that makes PlayStations
- Complete the game name: Atelier ____ 3: Grand Phantasm

WHO'S YA BADDIE?

This bunch look pretty mean, eh? But fact is, only one of them is an actual baddie. Tell us which one. Text **OPS2BADDIE** thena space, then your name and A, B or C to **87103**.

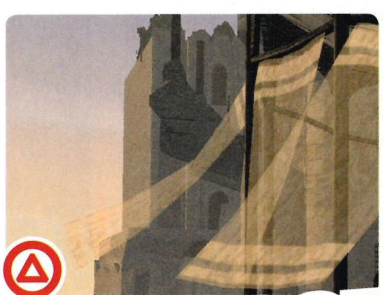


IMAGE ZOOM

Here's a little bit of scenery from a very big game. Do you recognise it? If you think you do, text **OPS2ZOOM** then a single space followed by your name and answer to **87103**.

VIDEOGAME PICTO-PUZZLE

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

PRIVATE PROPERTY

This has turned up in Lost and Found. Who could it belong to? This is one of the star prize questions. See left for how to enter.

WIN ALL THIS! THE PRIZES

Match the question symbols to the prize bundles, which this month include a bowling ball courtesy of 505 Games.

STAR PRIZE

A BRUNSWICK BOWLING

You must enter all seven star prize questions to be in with a chance to win the star prize – see entry details below left. A Brunswick Bowling Ball; Brunswick Bowling game; Ghost Rider DVD; Outrun 2006 game; The Plan game; Everybody's Tennis game; Dynasty Warriors 5 game; Shadowhearts poster; Digital Devil Saga Poster; Samurai Warriors notepad

PRIZE BUNDLE #01

Sega Classics Collection game; The Plan game; Shadow Hearts poster; Samurai Warriors notepad

Email your answer to psnation@futurenet.co.uk
Subject line OPS2SPOT

PRIZE BUNDLE #02

Sega MegaDrive Collection game; Shin Megami Tensei: DDS2 game; Digital Devil Saga Poster; Ghost Rider DVD

Email your answer to psnation@futurenet.co.uk
Subject line OPS2CHOICE

PRIZE BUNDLE #03

World Championship Snooker 2007 game; The Plan game; Samurai Warriors notepad; Digital Devil Saga poster

Email your answer to psnation@futurenet.co.uk
Subject line OPS2BADDIE

PRIZE BUNDLE #04

Let's Make A Soccer Team game; Shin Megami Tensei: DDS2 game; Shadow Hearts Poster; Ghost Rider DVD

Email your answer to psnation@futurenet.co.uk
Subject line OPS2ZOOM

ISSUE 89 WINNERS

SingStar 90s game and mic bundles: Robert Clarke, Devon; Rob Houghton, Leics; Dan Owens, Glasgow
Metal Slug Anthology challenge: Anthony Howell, Leeds
Tomb Raider Anniversary challenge: Suzanna Faraway, London
Shrek the Third challenge: Adrian Lawless, East Kilbride

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FREE STUFF! Just look at all the amazing cash-saving deals our partners are offering to the PlayStation Nation!

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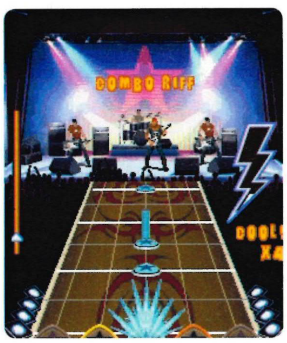
MOBILE GAME FOR JUST £3!

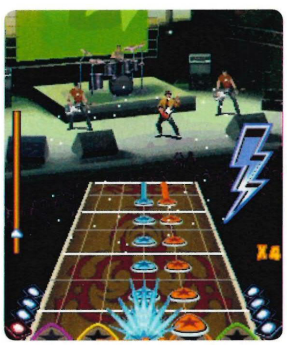
THIS MONTH'S GAME
GUITAR LEGEND: GET ON STAGE!

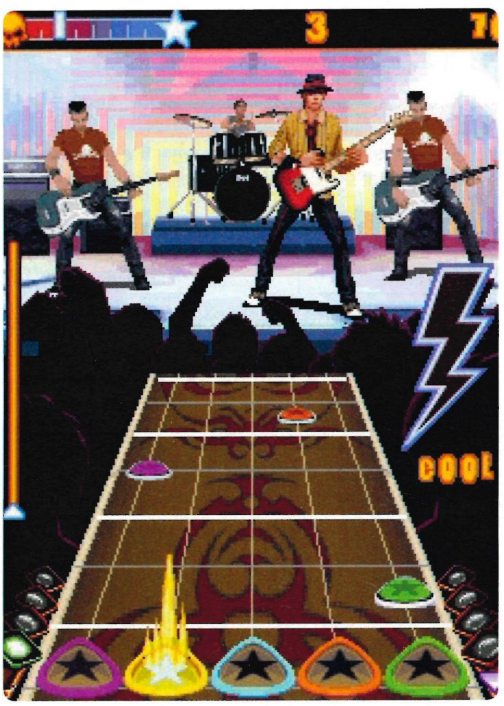
We've teamed up with Mad4Games to offer a great service for readers who play games on their mobile. Subscribe to OPS2 Magazine's 'Game of the Month' for £3 per month, and each month we'll send you the best game released that month, chosen by our team of reviewers. **To join, text OPSM2 to 62344.**

This month, our choice is Guitar Legend: Get on Stage! from Gameloft. You might think a mobile-phone spin on the Guitar Hero rhythm-action concept is a crazy idea but our friends at Mad4Games said it "works far better than you'd imagine".

And with a sterling musical line-up including songs from Iron Maiden, David Bowie, The Scorpions, Deep Purple, The Police and more, this is one game you'd never dream of playing with the sound off!







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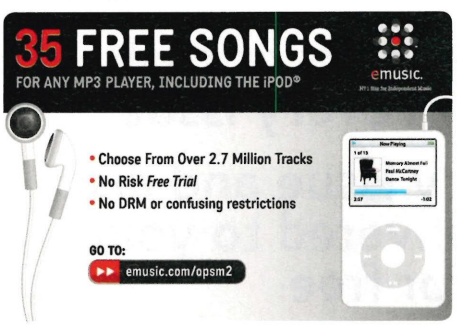

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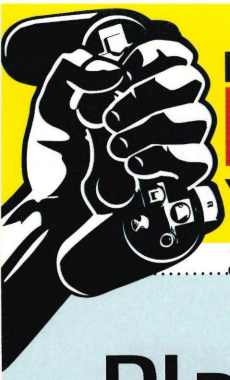

PLAYSTATION NATION

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PlayStation®2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

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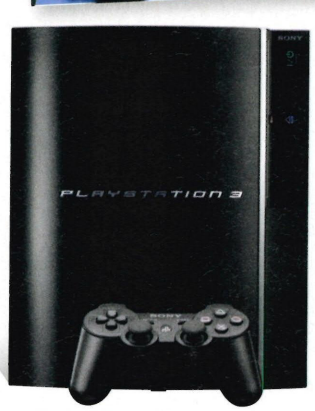

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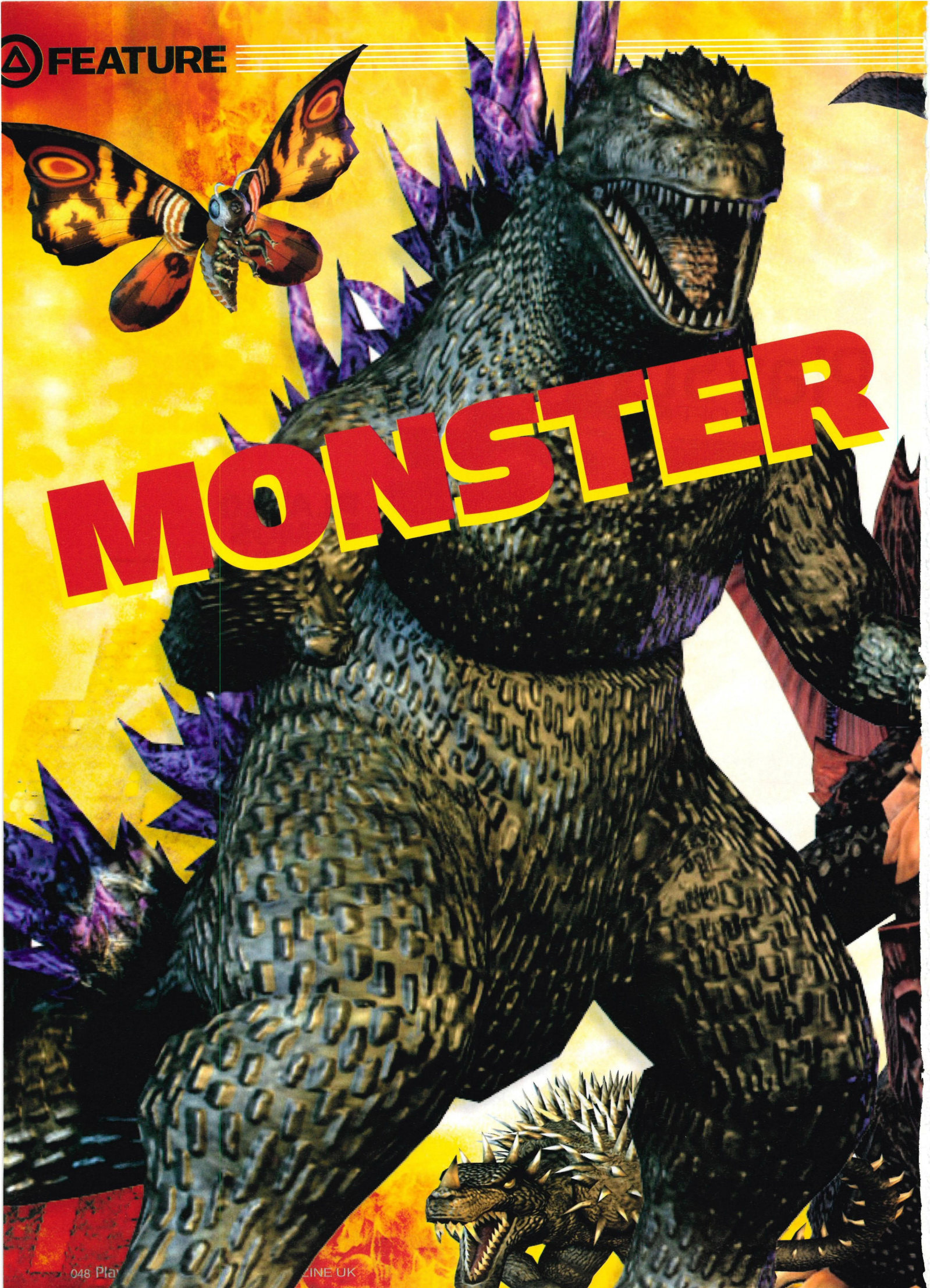
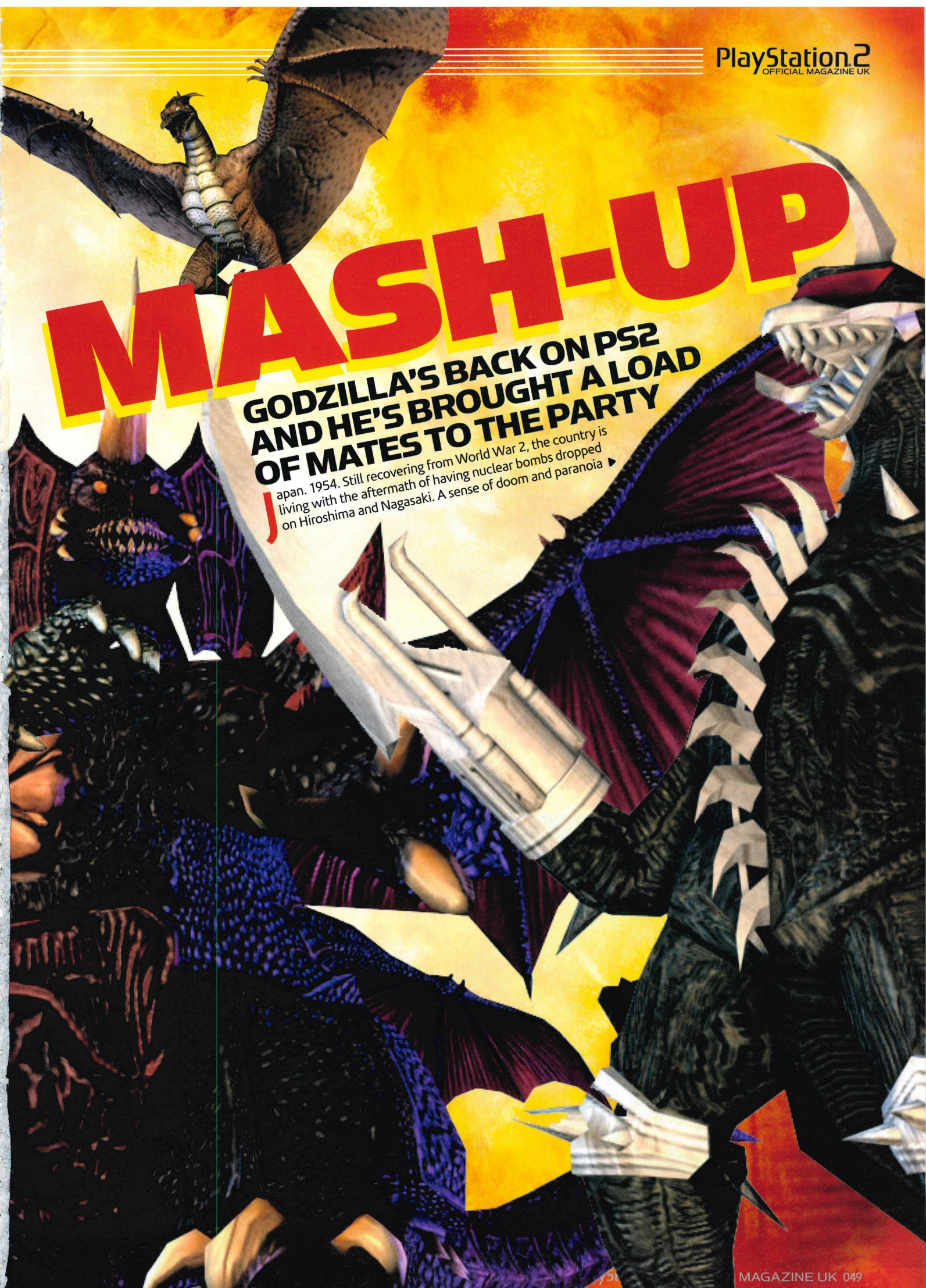


MONSTER



MASH-UP

GODZILLA'S BACK ON PS2 AND HE'S BROUGHT A LOAD OF MATES TO THE PARTY

Japan. 1954. Still recovering from World War 2, the country is living with the aftermath of having nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A sense of doom and paranoia ▶

As building are destroyed, you can use the rubble as weapons

grips the whole country. Film studio Toho, desperate to make sense of the atrocities, decides to film a movie that sums up the nation's fear of the nuclear threat. And so Gojira (known as Godzilla in English) was born.

A physical manifestation of the American threat, Godzilla was a mutated dinosaur who emerged from the sea to terrorise Tokyo.

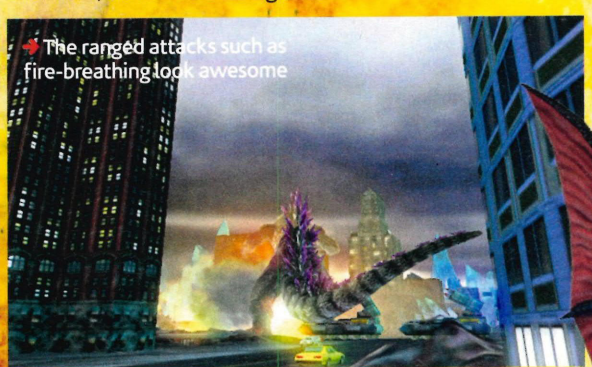
In later films he became a kind of anti-hero, as he faced off against other mutant monsters to save the city. Not out of compassion for the squashy people under his feet, but because Japan was his turf, and he wasn't about to share it with other colossal creatures.

CHARACTERS ARE MORE IN LINE WITH THE LOOK OF THE ORIGINAL FILMS

So, from his rather serious beginnings, the giant lizard we know and love became the icon he is today.

Now, 28 original Japanese films, two dire Hollywood remakes, and 24 games later, the beast is once again limbering up to tear our world a new one, in Godzilla: Unleashed.

The last Godzilla outing on PS2, Save The Earth, was a lukewarm affair. Clunky controls, shoddy visuals and a lack of atmosphere meant that the game played a limp second to the unlicensed War Of The Monsters.



The ranged attacks such as fire-breathing look awesome

Multiplayer scrapping is where Unleashed will come into its own

Zilla black

In Unleashed the looks, at least, seems to have been resolved by developer Pipeworks. Instead of the brightly coloured cartoon creatures of Save The Earth, this game's set of characters are more in line with the look of the original films: half savage, half camp, and very dark.

You can almost imagine a hot little man sweating away inside the Godzilla character model as he plods menacingly around Tokyo ripping up skyscrapers and trampling on buses.

In terms of atmosphere, Unleashed it shaping up nicely too. A quick glance at the first PS2 screens reveals that the game has a much more menacing feel to it.

When buildings collapse under the mega-mutants

You put your right foot in... your right foot out...

The overall look is fittingly dark but special attacks sparkle

as they wrestle for supremacy, there are some fancy smoke and dust effects to add that extra layer of visual flare to the proceedings.

What we'd like to see are some finer details, such as people falling out of buildings when Godzilla rips them from the ground to chuck at his enemies, or traffic swerving to avoid the monsters' heavy footsteps.

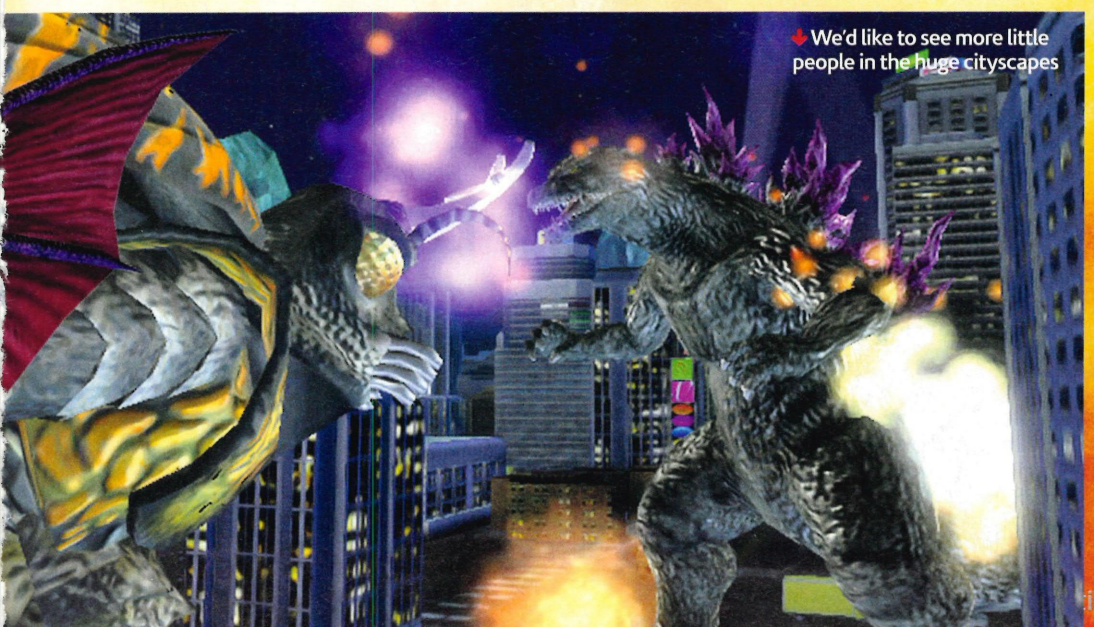
Oh, and how about a hammy 1950s soundtrack and Japanese voiceover? Well, no, that's probably not going to happen. But it should.

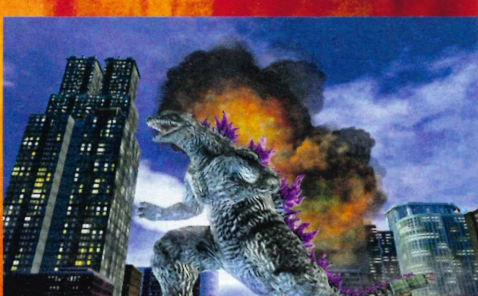
God of claw

Most importantly, Godzilla's fighting system has been entirely overhauled. Essentially, Unleashed is a monster wrestling game, with ranged moves and lashings of scenery interaction. You can pick up anything in the city arenas to batter or lob at your opposition, including small buildings, trucks, water towers and billboards.

Bigger buildings are used in slightly different ways. You can either throw your enemy into them, causing some serious damage, or you can smash them down to size and use the rubble as a handy heap of ranged weapons.

One major complaint we had about the last game was that the ranged attacks were far too powerful, so ▶


We'd like to see more little people in the huge cityscapes



10 THINGS YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT GODZILLA

1 He is a combination of three real dinosaurs: the Tyrannosaurus, the Stegosaurus and the Iguanodon.

2 When Godzilla reappeared in 1984 (after more than a decade of inactivity) he had grown from 50m tall to 80m.

3 Godzilla crossed the cinematic boundary and fought King Kong. Kong won. But we think he might have cheated.

4 Godzilla is vulnerable to electricity and has died from this in many films. In the original, though, he is killed by an oxygen bomb.

5 Gojira (Godzilla's Japanese name) comes from the combining of two words: gorira (meaning 'gorilla') and kujira ('whale').

6 In the original 1954 film, two men played the role of Godzilla: Katsumi Tezuka and Haruo Nakajima.

7 Lost Prophets, Blue Oyster Cult, Feeder, Michale Graves, Sepultura and Papoose all have songs with 'Godzilla' in the title.

8 When scientists unearthed the remains of an unknown dinosaur from the Triassic Period, they named it Gojirasaurus.

9 In 2008, IMAX theatres will premiere a 40-minute film called Godzilla 3D.

10 In 2004 Godzilla got a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The star nearest to it belongs to Drew Barrymore.

fights were often decided by a cheap blast of fire-breath in the dying seconds. Hardly sporting, and not particularly enjoyable if you're playing as a slow, up-close character who couldn't get near enough to his opponents to unleash those meaty melée-combat moves.

The good news is that with the new fighting system, ranged attacks have been pared back in favour of using the scenery to pummel your way through the game.

Hopefully this more balanced combat system will create a level playing field, giving fans a chance to pick their favourite characters from the 'Zilla universe and not feel at a disadvantage when facing off against creator favourites such as Kiryu and King Ghidorah.

There will be a grand total of 23 fighters to choose from, ranging from the legendary Godzilla himself to more obscure beasts such as Baragon or videogame-only Krystalak.

Publisher Atari promises there will be several brand new monsters in Unleashed, too, all of which having been approved by Toho, the makers of the original series of films.

Deciding which building to crush next can be a tough call

GODZILLA 3D WELL, KIND OF...

These pics of the same punch from two angles show how large the cityscapes are and how epic the combat is. Look how far Mechagodzilla is flying! That's what we call a right hook!

Dino-story

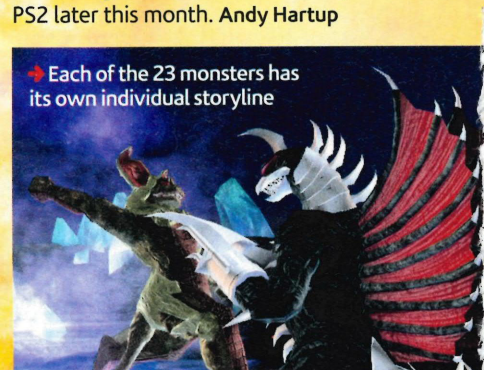
Surprisingly, Unleashed even offers a proper 'non-linear' plot line for each of the characters. We suspect this will amount to nothing more than fighting other monsters in a different order each time you play through, but we're not going to sniff at a spot of variety.

Hopefully each creature's story will expand on their histories, explaining where they came from and how they developed the powers they use.

It's a great chance for Atari to craft Unleashed into a proper fan-pleaser, and we're hoping the publisher grabs the challenge with both hands.

Unleashed will support multiplayer for up to four friends. Clearly, scrapping with your buddies has the potential to be the best feature of the game, because each battle will inevitably end up as frantic chaos as buildings fly around.

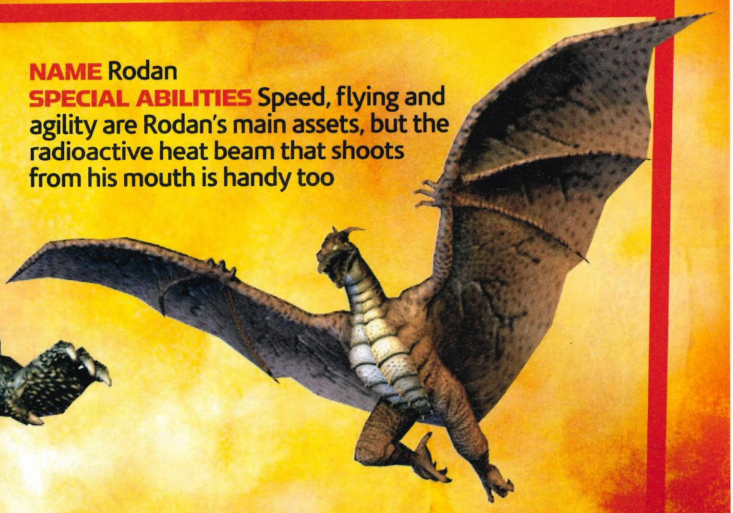
From serious beginnings, Godzilla has become one of the last bastions of silly fun on PS2. And this monster will be coming over the hills and onto your PS2 later this month. **Andy Hartup**



Each of the 23 monsters has its own individual storyline

MAUL OF FAME
MEET THE MONSTERS

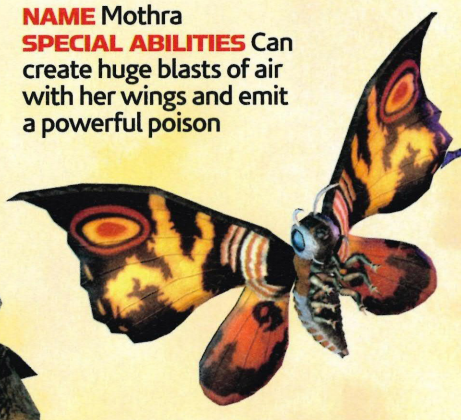
NAME Godzilla
SPECIAL ABILITIES As well as mastery over several martial arts (yes, really) Godzilla can shoot Atomic breath from his pie-hole



NAME Rodan
SPECIAL ABILITIES Speed, flying and agility are Rodan's main assets, but the radioactive heat beam that shoots from his mouth is handy too

NAME Destoroyah
SPECIAL ABILITIES Powerful horn to pierce foes, and can fire a Micro-Oxygen Ray from his mouth

NAME Megalon
SPECIAL ABILITIES Can shoot lightning from his horn and burrow underground to escape enemies



NAME Mothra
SPECIAL ABILITIES Can create huge blasts of air with her wings and emit a powerful poison

NAME Gigan
SPECIAL ABILITIES Has a laser gun mounted on his forehead and can fly short distances using retractable wings

NAME Angurius
SPECIAL ABILITIES No fancy powers for this guy – sharp teeth and a spiny carapace are all he needs

THE LEVEL

We celebrate a classic sequence in From Russia With Love

THE STORY SO FAR...

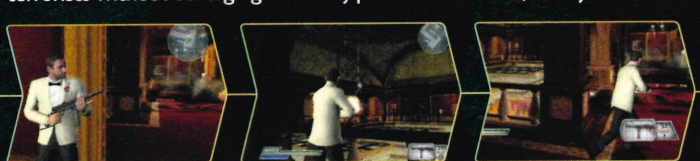
London, England. A party is under way in the Houses of Parliament. But the revellers are unaware that bad men are advancing, with a dastardly plan in mind: kidnapping the PM's daughter. Luckily for her, 007's on the guest list...

After a panoramic view of Big Ben, the action literally explodes as mysterious masked men crash the party and make off with the gal!

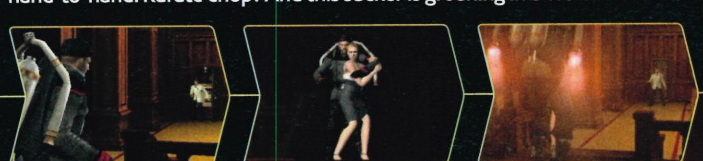
They went that-a-way! Thanks, generic military drone. Suavely peering round the corner, Bond spots an opportunity for headshot practice.

The chase continues as 007 helps the military chaps to despatch the terrorists without damaging too many priceless artifacts (or his jacket).

Of course, 007 training isn't just about guns, so Bond busts out a spot of hand-to-hand. Karate chop! And this sucker is groaning in a world of hurt.



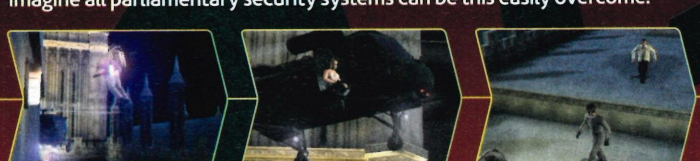
Bond's made it to the top floor, only to hear the sound of breaking glass. They're coming through the roof!



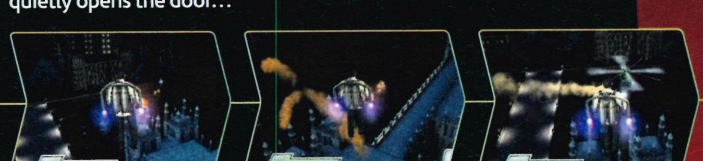
Ah, Mr Bad Guy, we've been expecting you! But before Bond can save the girl, the kidnapper uses his rocket pack to jet through the glass ceiling.

Bond must get to the roof. So, dashing to the door, he shoots the lock. We imagine all parliamentary security systems can be this easily overcome.

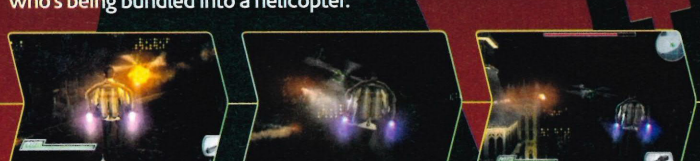
Finally, Bond breaks open the door to the roof. He runs up the stairs, and quietly opens the door...



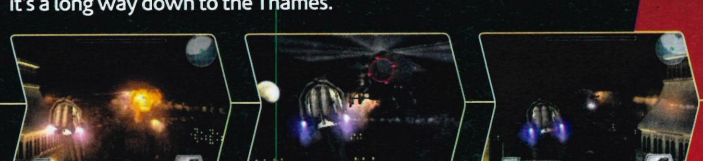
A man on a jetpack zooms past the entrance, towards our hapless heroine who's being bundled into a helicopter.



What a frightful inconvenience: more jetpacked foes. Watch out, chaps, it's a long way down to the Thames.



But there's no time to admire the view. There goes the helicopter, with the PM's daughter inside!



Why won't you die?! Bond's under pressure as the pilot tries to swat him out of the sky by ramming him head on.

That's it! The chopper is coming apart and turning into a ball of fire! Quick, fly in to grab the lady!

VOTE FOR YOUR FAVOURITE LEVEL AND WE'LL FEATURE THE WINNER! TEXT 'LEVEL' THEN A SPACE, THEN THE KEYWORD TO 87103

TEXT **GOD**

Pandora's Temple from God Of War

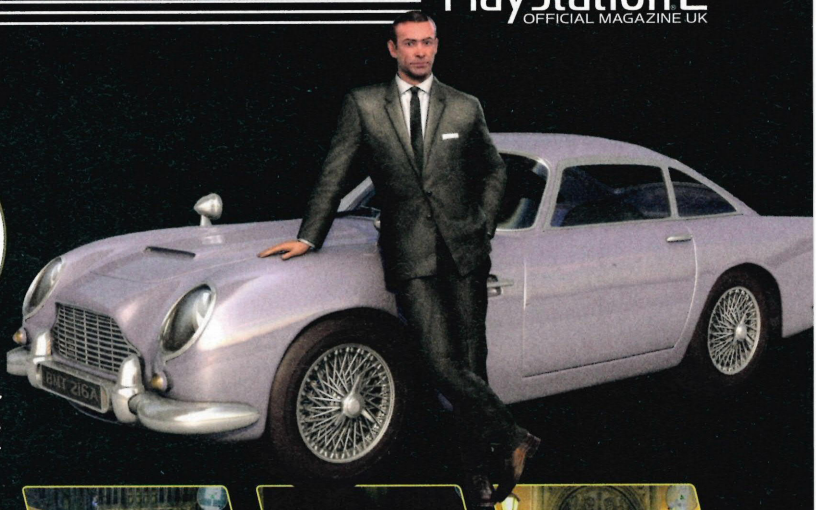
TEXT **KING**

King Kong's V-Rex river chase

TEXT **DARK**

Dark Chronicle's Venniccio chapter

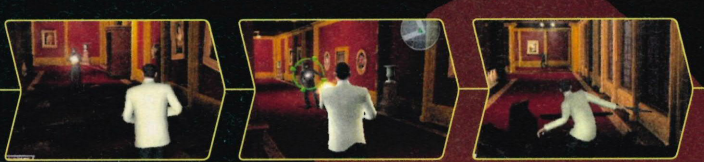
See p127 for text charges and full terms and conditions. Lines close 11 October 2007. You can also vote for your favourite level by email to psnation@futurenet.co.uk (put LEVEL in the subject line).



His vodka martini untasted and with a missile-launching chopper causing chaos, Bond dashes through the flames, dropping terrorists like flies.

Ignoring the oddly jetpacked lackeys, Bond dishes out the pain to anyone who's in his way, while simultaneously avoiding damage to his dinner jacket.

A swift dash up the plushly carpeted stairs and it's blammo! in the face of anonymous henchman number nine. Well, 007 does have a licence to kill.

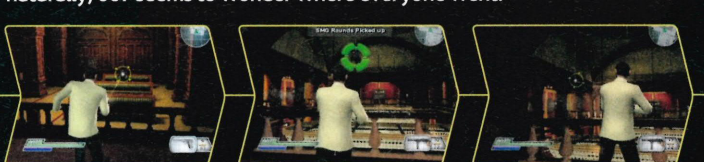


These guys just don't get the message, do they? Without missing a beat, Bond exchanges their threats for bullets, then vaults over the fallen debris.

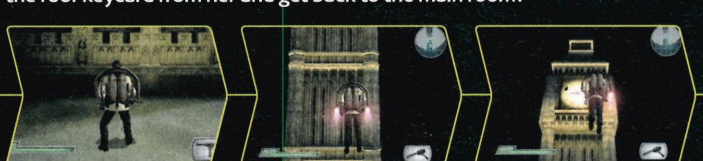
The broken flooring leaves no clear way to the roof, but that's no problem for Bond. No stranger to danger, he daringly leaps across the chandeliers.

Pausing on the other side to readjust his dinner jacket (still pristine, naturally) 007 seems to wonder where everyone went.

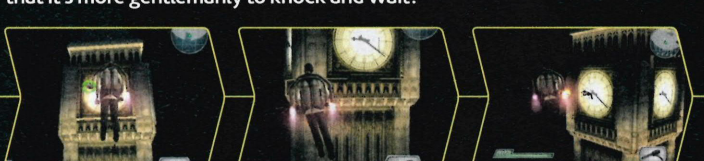
Why, a lady! But don't waste valuable seconds seducing her, 007! Grab the roof keycard from her and get back to the main room!



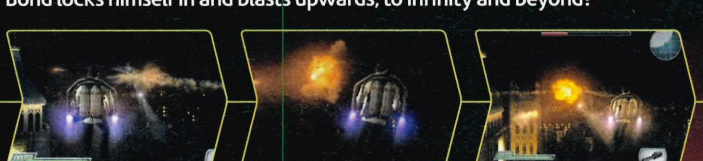
More abseiling terrorists bursting through the ceiling. Will they never learn that it's more gentlemanly to knock and wait?



It's time to strap on one of the most iconic Bond gadgets ever; the jetpack. Bond locks himself in and blasts upwards, to infinity and beyond!



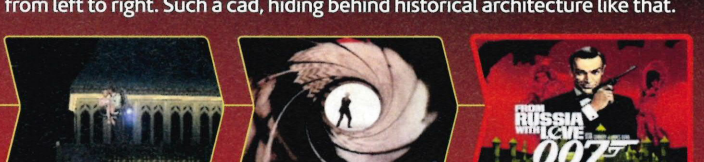
After taking in the breathtaking view of Big Ben, Bond deals with the terrorists swarming over its face, in the only language they understand.



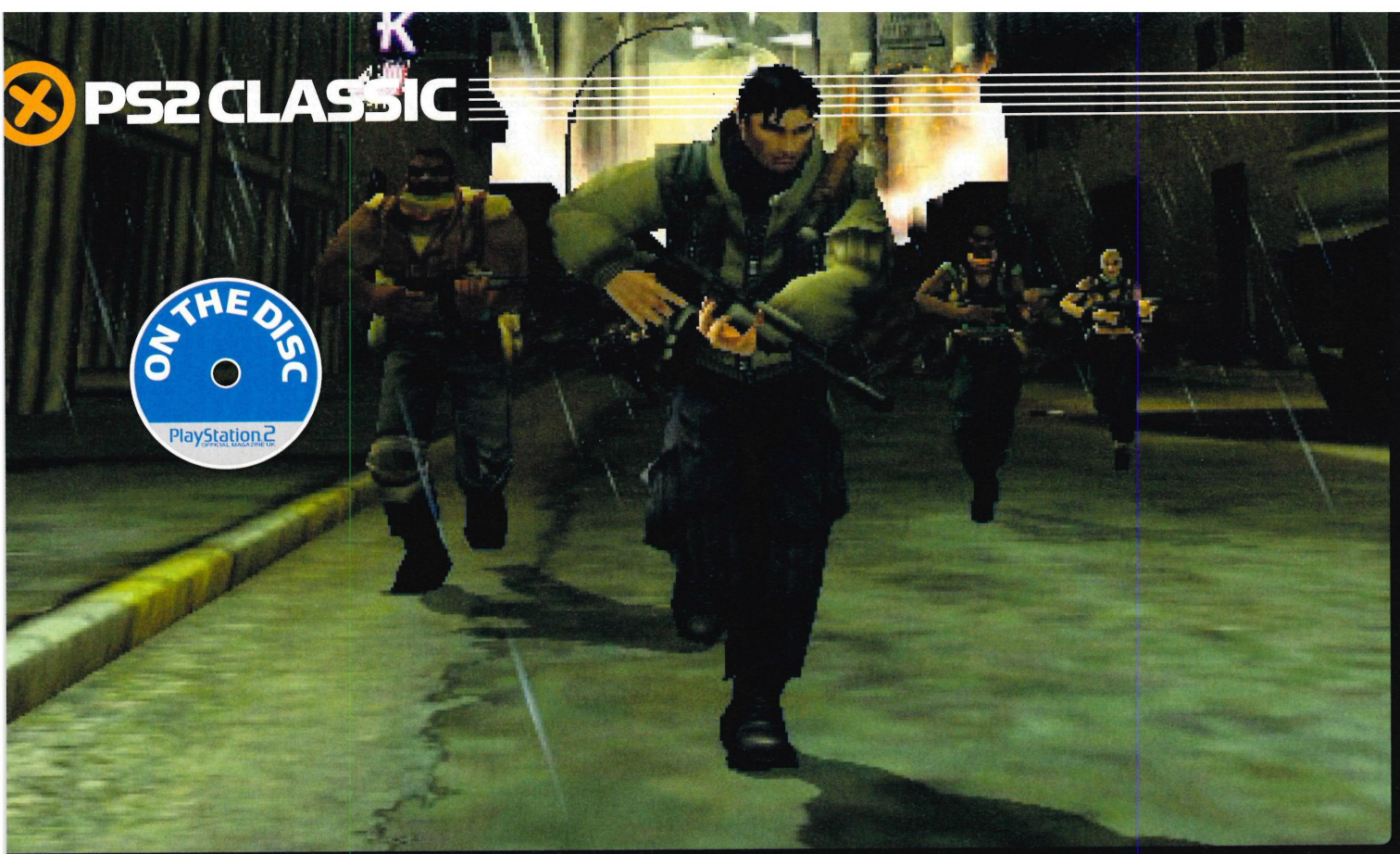
Some might feel that man vs machine is a bit unfair, but this is James Bond's jetpack so of course it is equipped with rockets, making one explosive fight.

Evidently the helicopter pilot doesn't like being shot at. He starts to feint from left to right. Such a cad, hiding behind historical architecture like that.

Boom! The helicopter explodes, but Bond has saved the girl. May she know who her rescuer is? 'The name's Bond. James Bond.' It's a classic moment.



But the story has only just begun. Up comes the most famous title sequence in cinematic history, and the adventure takes off in earnest…

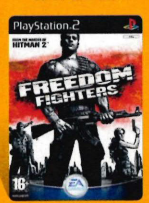


ON THE DISC
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

THE PS2 GAMES YOU SHOULD OWN #02

Freedom Fighters blends the cunning of Hitman with responsive squad shooting. The result: a true PS2 classic

KNOW THIS



Publisher
EA

Developer
IO Interactive

Genre
Action

Score
9/10 OPS2 #37

WE SAID...
'An utterly addictive and clever game experience. You must play this.'

NOW WE SAY...
A fantastic shooter that feels as fresh today as it did in 2003.

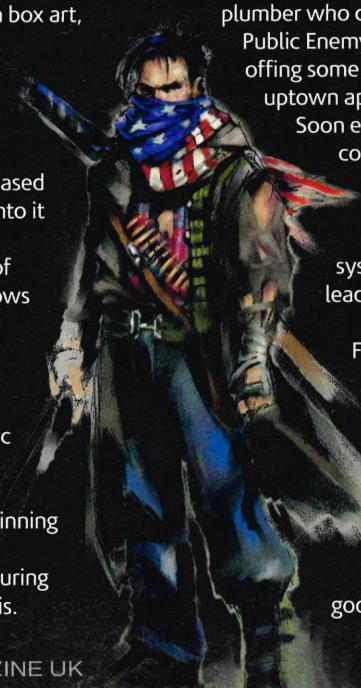
There's a ton of generic third-person shooters rattling about in the PS2's back catalogue and finding the good among the dross and the painfully average is a tricky task.

Bargain-bin rummagers will often pick up a classic, take one look at the generic man-with-gun box art, and throw it back into the pile.

But if you should chance across the very ordinary-looking Freedom Fighters, released by EA in 2003, cling onto it as if for your life.

The basic premise of Freedom Fighters follows a fictional, and intriguing, branch of history where the Russians ended WW2 by dropping the atomic bomb on Berlin.

They've grown in strength thereafter, winning the Cold War and dominating the USA during the Cuban Missile Crisis.



At the start of the game, which is set in 'present-day' New York, the Soviets invade the USA and take Liberty Island (a thinly-disguised Manhattan) by force.

Red alert

You play as Christopher Stone, a plumber who quickly becomes Public Enemy Number One after offing some Russian troops in an uptown apartment.

Soon enough, Chris makes contact with the resistance army, based in the city's sprawling sewer system, and starts to lead raids on the Reds.

In gameplay terms, Freedom Fighters is a typical third-person shooter. You run, you gun, you blow stuff up.

Each mission requires you to blast through a legion of Ruski goons and raise the Stars And Stripes atop New York's most striking public buildings.

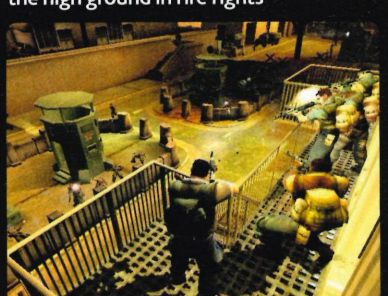
What sets it apart from the masses is its Charisma system, which allows you to recruit up to 12 followers and turn your one-man-army antics into full-blown squad action.

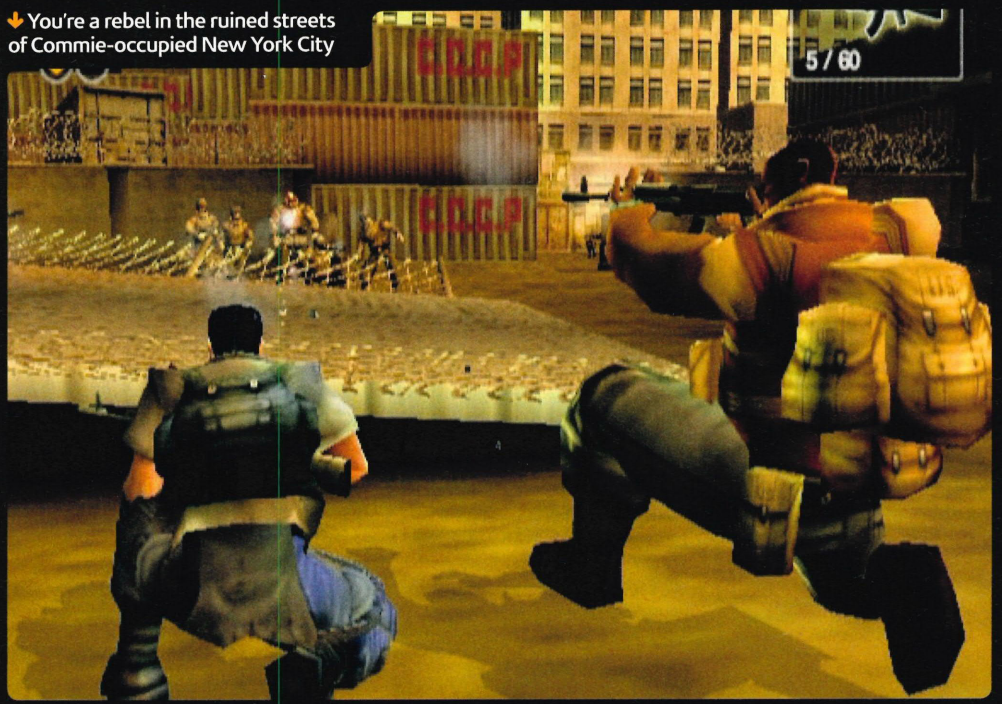
Sub-missions in each area earn you Charisma; the more Charisma you have, the more men will follow you.

Sure, we've all done squad commands, bonus missions and alternative histories many, many times before. But Freedom Fighters nails all its features with pinpoint accuracy.

The squad commands are simple (one order per face button) but

Your allies are smart enough to take the high ground in fire fights





You're a rebel in the ruined streets of Commie-occupied New York City

effective, thanks to the razor-sharp AI. You'll never turn around and see your buddies doing something stupid.

Unusually for console-controlled fighters, you won't see them standing in the middle of the street trying to shoot a distant sniper with a pistol, or running mindlessly into a wall. These guys are some of the smartest soldiers in games.

Lead by example

The mission structure is well thought out, too. Yes, you can run through the game without completing any of the sub-quests, but if you ignore them, you'll gain less Charisma and won't have many followers to take into trickier battles.

This elevates the importance of secondary objectives and presents you with not just moral choices, but gaming choices too – a balance that's rarely achieved.

The reason everything is so beautifully done is that Freedom Fighters was developed by IO Interactive, which made the Hitman series. IO's great at complex AI and elaborate storylines, and it shows.

Freedom Fighters never spawned a sequel, but we suspect IO's latest project, Kane & Lynch: Dead Men on PS3, will be its spiritual successor – and not just because Kane & Lynch is also a third-person shooter with moral choices and smart AI.

Freedom Fighters was so far ahead of its time, that we reckon IO can quite happily repurpose bits of the game and still keep it feeling fresh, four years on.

So why wait to play Kane & Lynch in shiny-o-vision? Delve into your local bargain bin and get the same experience (albeit, of course, with current-gen graphics) for under a tenner.

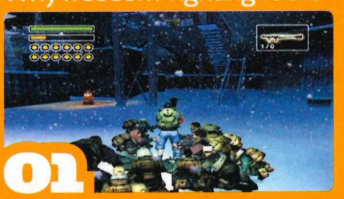
Andy Hartup

TOP FACT

The game's name was confirmed only a month before release. Its previous titles were Freedom: Soldiers of Liberty and Freedom: Battle For Liberty Island

3 REASONS TO OWN IT

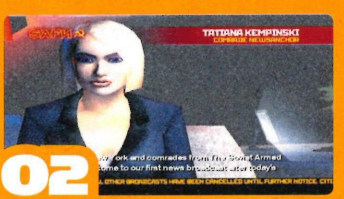
Why freedom-fighting rocks



01

RAZOR SHARP AI

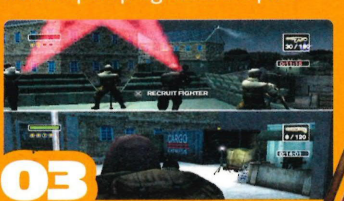
Your buddies won't get stuck behind walls or shoot at exploding barrels when they're standing behind them.



02

YOU'RE ON THE NEWS!

No badly acted cutscenes here: each time you clear a district, a Russian news report progresses the plot.

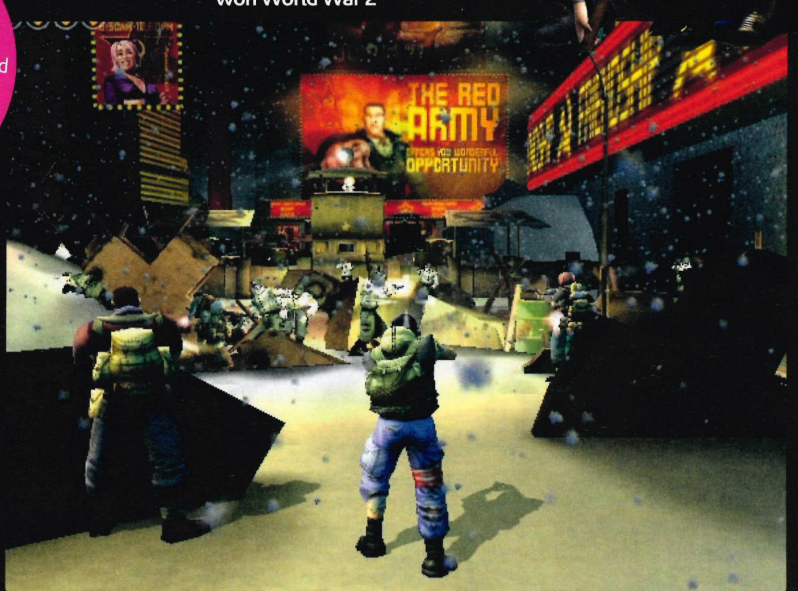


03

GREAT MULTIPLAYER

Up to four people can play split-screen on maps adapted from singleplayer. It's capture the flag, with a small AI squad to control.

The setting is an alternative 'now' in which Russia won World War 2



IN THE MIX

Ingredients for a Freedom Fighters cocktail

A SLICE OF...

... the Big Apple setting we love in **Grand Theft Auto III**

A SHOT OF...

... squad-based tactical shooting à la **Rainbow Six 3**

A DROP OF...

... the smart AI and sneaky play from **Hitman: Blood Money**

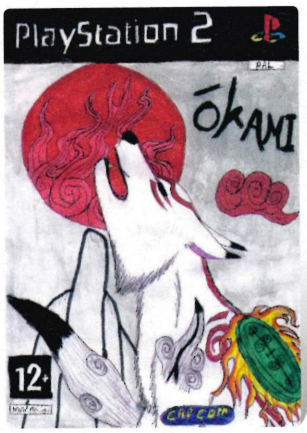
BOX ART BY YOU

THE RESULTS OF OUR BOX ART COMPETITION

Well, you've done it again! You've once more absolutely astounded us with your fabulous talent for artwork with the incredible standard of the entries we received for the art competition we set in OPS2#89.

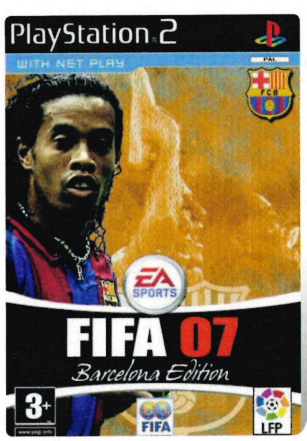
The challenge: to design the box art for a PS2 game, using whatever materials your heart desired. The result: a flood of artistic goodness into the OPS2 office. So much so, in fact, that we've had to create more prize categories than we planned!

Overleaf you can see the overall winner, the second and third prizes and runners-up. On this page and opposite are a selection of the best of the rest. Congratulations to everyone!



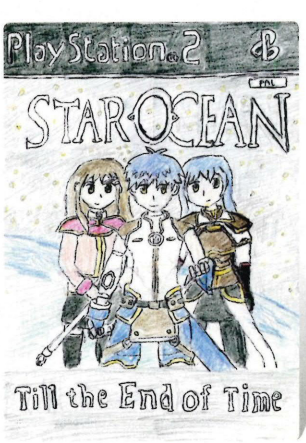
NAME **A LONGDEN**
FROM **GLASGOW**
GAME **OKAMI**
USED **PENCILS AND PENS, PAINT, BIRO**
We say: Beautifully drawn, capturing the essence of Okami in one picture.

NAME **CHRIS ALEXANDER**
FROM **LONDON**
GAME **SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS**
USED **BIRO**
We say: Despite using only a biro, the complexity and detail is stunning.

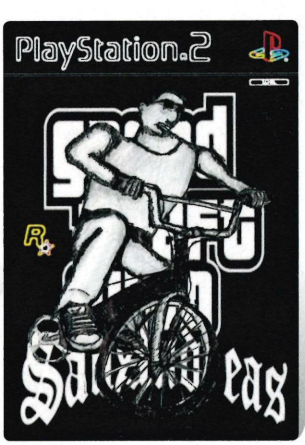


NAME **GUY COLEMAN**
FROM **HEYSIDE**
GAME **FIFA 07**
USED **PHOTOSHOP**
We say: Guy has branded his design effectively by the use of official logos and a legendary player.

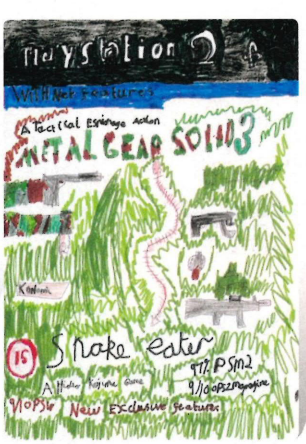
NAME **K CRANE**
FROM **EPSOM**
GAME **SILENT HILL 4**
USED **PENCILS, PAINT, MAGAZINE CUTTINGS**
We say: Pyramid Head is a great choice of character: intriguing fans and newcomers.



NAME **THOMAS FRETWELL**
FROM **SKEGBY**
GAME **STAR OCEAN: TILL THE END OF TIME**
USED **PENCILS, BIRO**
We say: Beautifully drawn and delicately coloured with a fey sense of innocence.



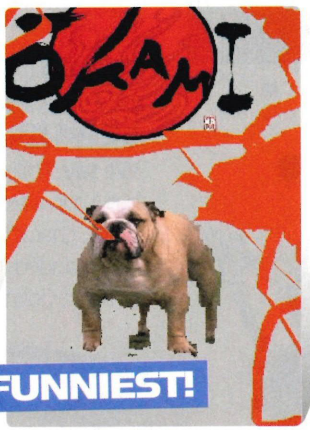
NAME **PAIGE SMART**
GAME **GTA: SAN ANDREAS**
USED **PENCIL, BIRO, PHOTOSHOP**
We say: The proportions on CJ and his bike are incredibly accurate; kudos for pulling off a tricky design, too.



NAME **JOSEPH JACKSON**
FROM **MIDDLESEX**
GAME **METAL GEAR SOLID 3**
USED **FELT TIP, PENCILS**
We say: Joseph's created a good sense of camouflage, capturing the essence of the game.

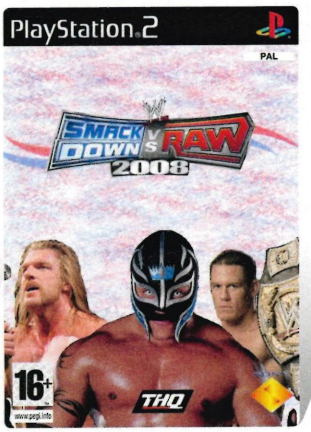
NAME **GEORGE MILNER**
FROM **HITCHIN**
GAME **GUITAR HERO 2**
USED **PENCIL**
We say: Simple, yet effectively sums up the game's appeal. We especially love the individual designs on the crowd's backs.

NAME **LUKE**
FROM **NEW MALDEN**
GAME **WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2007**
USED **FELT TIP, CRAYON**
We say: The iconic design of Rey Mysterio's mask creates a striking cover.

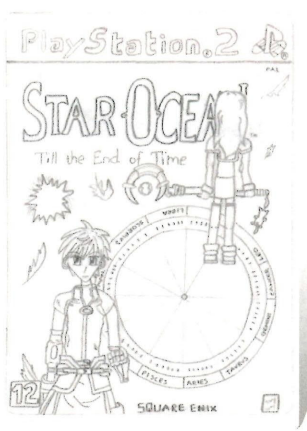


NAME **FREDDIE EDWARDS**
FROM **LONDON**
GAME **OKAMI**
USED **MICROSOFT PAINT**
We say: Freddie's choice of a bulldog to represent Amaterasu brought a gleeful tear to our patriotic eyes.

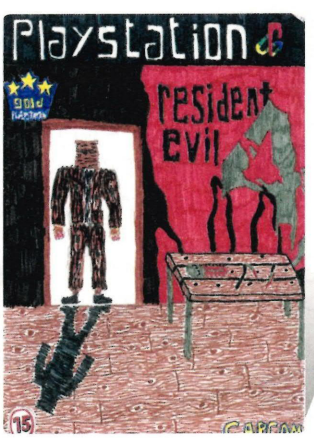
NAME **RADLEY STUCKEY**
FROM **DEVON**
GAME **FINAL FANTASY XII**
USED **PEN, FELT TIPS, PENCIL**
We say: Radley explained he wanted to merge both the UK and US artwork together and it's worked well.



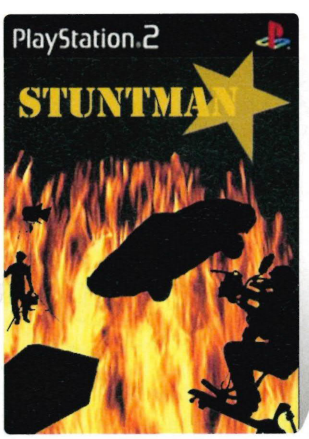
NAME **RONNIE MCCULLAGH**
FROM **SKELMORLIE**
GAME **WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2008**
USED **PHOTOSHOP, PENCILS**
We say: A striking blend of colourful background and surly wrestlers.



NAME **LAURA LAYCOCK**
FROM **KEIGHLEY**
GAME **STAR OCEAN 3: TILL THE END OF TIME**
USED **PENCIL AND BIRO**
We say: A simple concept, yet detailed and very well drawn.

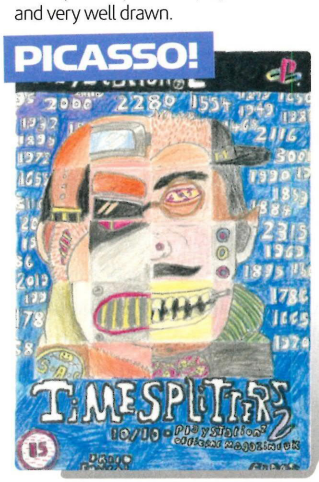


NAME **R WOODHOUSE**
FROM **LIVERPOOL**
GAME **RESIDENT EVIL 4**
USED **FELT TIP**
We say: The dark colors and scary chainsaw man really embody the atmosphere of Resi 4.

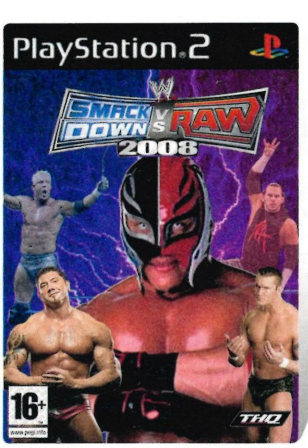


NAME **SCOTT BRADFORD**
FROM **STUNTMAN**
GAME **LONDON**
USED **PHOTOSHOP**
We say: The dramatic flames catch the eye and the simple silhouettes sum up what the game's about.

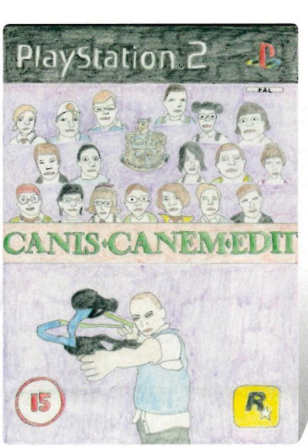
NAME **BEN LESLIE**
FROM **BEDLINGTON**
GAME **KINGDOM HEARTS 2**
USED **PENCIL, PEN, CRAYON**
We say: The clutter of Sora, Donald and Goofy really gets across their friendship and the playful tone of the game.



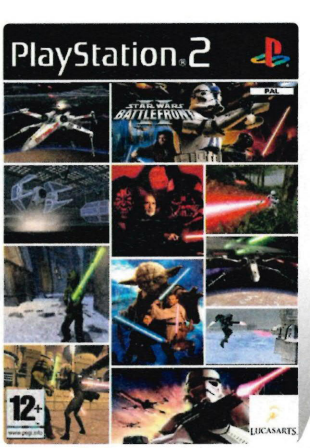
NAME **JAMES YOUNG**
FROM **LONDON**
GAME **TIMESPLITTERS 2**
USED **PENCILS, FELT TIPS**
We say: We really like how James has incorporated the entire cast of TS2 in one place: ingenious concept!



NAME **SAM RICHARDSON**
FROM **PONTYPOOL**
GAME **WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2008**
USED **PHOTOSHOP**
We say: The use of lightning emphasizes the excitement of this game.



NAME **AMANDA PARSONS**
FROM **REDDITCH**
GAME **CANIS CANEM EDIT**
USED **COLOURED PENCIL**
We say: We like the 'class photo' style and the picture of Jimmy with a catapult truly portrays what the game's about.



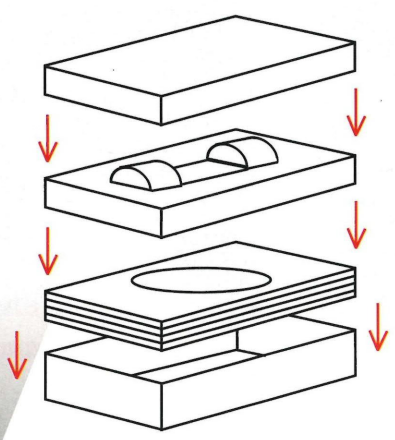
NAME **TYLER GORDON**
FROM **FLITWICK**
GAME **STARWARS BATTLEFRONT 2**
USED **MICROSOFT WORD**
We say: A suitable and well balanced choice of images from film and game.

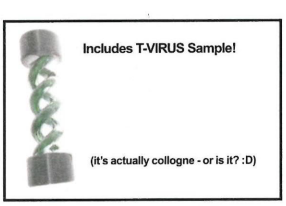
HIGHLY COMMENDED

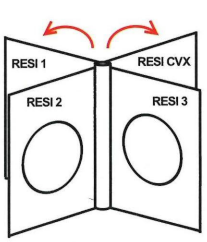
NAME **COLIN SCOTT**
FROM **LANARK**
GAME **KINGDOM HEARTS 2**
USED **PENCIL, PEN, PHOTOSHOP, MS PUBLISHER**

We say: This could be a real pack shot. Not only has Colin used a winning combination of in-game shots, character artwork and hand-drawn imagery, he's branded it perfectly with with logos from front to back. Colin clearly has a talent for marketing.

HIGHLY COMMENDED



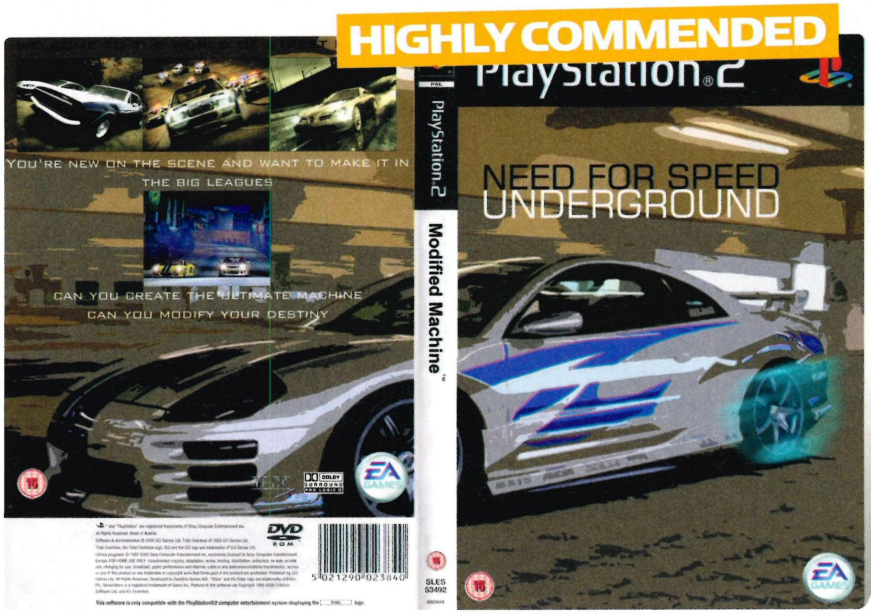




NAME **WILLIAM GOODWILL**
FROM **FAIRFIELD**
GAME **RESIDENT EVIL BOX SET**
USED **PHOTOSHOP, MICROSOFT PAINT**

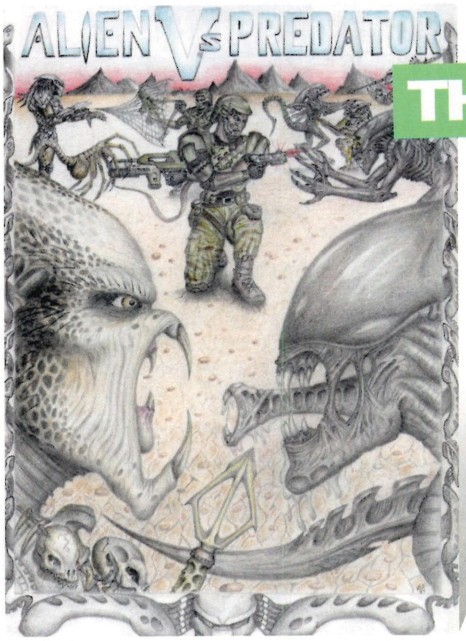
We say: Going beyond the call of duty, William engineered a packaging idea for his Resi box set and illustrated it with diagrams. The beauty of the cover art lies in its simplicity and emotive colours, while including the T-Virus as a cologne in the package 'adds value', as they say in marketing.

HIGHLY COMMENDED



NAME **AHMED BARUT**
FROM **LEWISHAM**
GAME **NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND**
USED **PHOTOSHOP**

We say: Ahmed has bravely used his piece of art across front and back and pulled it off brilliantly. The positioning of the main shot elements are absolutely spot on, the colours are very urban, the polarisation works well. Very professional.



THIRD PLACE

NAME **KARL FAZENFIELD**
FROM **ST HELENS**
GAME **ALIEN VS PREDATOR**
USED **COLOURED PENCILS**

We say: This was without a doubt the best hand-drawn entry that we received. Although it's missing the PlayStation 2 logo and other details of a box cover, the attention to detail and texture technique with the pencils are outstanding. Karl clearly has a talent for illustration.

SECOND PLACE

NAME **JOHN CLINCH**
FROM **KENT**
GAME **JAK3**
USED **PEN, PENCILS**

We say: John has obviously planned the composition of this design beforehand which has without a doubt benefitted the final piece. We particularly liked the way the typography casts long, bleeding shadows towards you. The bright colours would really stand out on a shop shelf and the meticulous details on the characters are the jewels in the crown.

John wins: a Matrix graphic novel, a Star Wars; Tales graphic novel, a game and an OPS2 T-shirt

WINNER!

NAME **DAVE WILKINSON**
FROM **STROUD**
GAME **KILLZONE**
USED **PENCIL, PEN, PHOTOSHOP**

We say: When we received this, we wondered why the Killzone publishers had decided to design a new cover! Super-talented Dave has drawn the image meticulously on paper, before scanning it and then colouring it in Photoshop. The main character has been created with tremendous care with the eye colour linked to the logo, and the eyes really draw your attention and provoke an emotional response. Dave's used a professional level of digital techniques such as blurring, layering and lighting effects, then sealed it perfectly with the real Killzone logo and all the necessary branding. Awesome work.

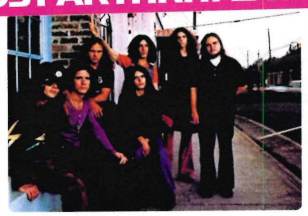
Dave wins: Collins Digital Fantasy Painting (a book by Michael Burns), a Castlevania art print, a Matrix graphic novel, four Star Wars: Clone Wars graphic novels, a PS2 game, a poster and an OPS2 T-shirt

PS2 GREATEST

GREA PS2 B

Dragons, bullies, Nazis, when it comes to bosses,

MOST ARTHRITASTIC!



Free Bird

Guitar Hero II, 2006

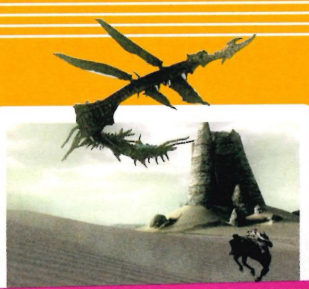
It didn't kill your family and it doesn't have 20 tentacles or plan to rule the world with an army of zombies, but Lynyrd Skynyrd's 'Free Bird' is one of the nastiest, hardest things to beat on PS2. And it's a long fight.

The End

Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater, 2005

A boss you can defeat by saving your game mid-fight, waiting two weeks, and then returning to find he's died of old age? Hilarious, yet at the same time, poignant.

MOST AWE-INSPIRING!



Phalanx

Shadow of the Colossus, 2006

In a game full of some of the most jaw-dropping boss encounters ever, this wyrm-hunt across a windswept desert on horseback is breathtaking.

Sephiroth

Kingdom Hearts II, 2006

Arguably the greatest game villain ever, Final Fantasy VII's Sephiroth has a cameo in Kingdom Hearts II as an optional boss. And he's harder than a titanium rhinoceros.

Darth Vader

Lego Star Wars II, 2006

The best villain of all time, rendered in the best toy bricks of all time on the best console of all time: these are the building blocks (arf!) for an unforgettable battle.

SCARIEST!

Bitores Mendez

Resident Evil 4, 2005

Hope you packed a fresh pair: one of Resi 4's most shocking moments is Mendez's transformation into a hideous centipede-spider, er, thing.

Night Terror

Soul Calibur III, 2005

He might look like something you'd find festering in the back of a dodgy butcher's, but hidden boss Night Terror has a neat trick: if you knock him out of the ring, he'll fly back in on demon wings.

The Hydra

God of War, 2005

Fighting the Hydra in the first 20 minutes of play is an awesome introduction to the scale of this game. A first-level boss that puts most final-level bosses to shame.

They're mad, they're bad, there's a high chance they killed (or are) your father: videogame bosses have come a long way from the barrel-lobbin', girlfriend-kidnappin' escapades of Donkey Kong.

So, what makes a good boss? We reckon it's the reaction that they cause, whether it's your jaw dropping at the sheer size (Shadow of the Colossus), your bowels emptying in terror (Resident Evil 4) or simply you scratching your head, trying to work out how to deal with the situation (Manhunt).

Bossed and found

The very best bosses are those that require you to think outside the box to defeat them.

And it's not always a game's final boss that's the most memorable. In fact, there are only nine final bosses here, while six

Pyramid Head

Silent Hill 2, 2001

Though you face this freak three times, you can actually 'beat' him without lifting a finger. Best not to touch him anyway, actually: the things he does to his fellow monsters are better left unsaid.

Zeus

God of War II, 2007

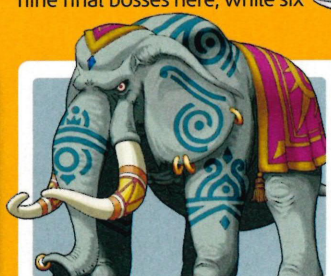
The daddy of Olympus is, as you'd expect, no kitten. First he's a giant, then when he shrinks down to man-size, Kratos has to drop a few pillars on his head and steal his sword to finish him off.

LONGEST!

Yiazmat

Final Fantasy XII, 2007

With his 50,000,000 hit points, only the truly hardcore FFXII player will even come close to slaying the Dragon God Yiazmat. Especially given that finishing the fight in two hours is considered extremely fast.



Linda

Dark Chronicle, 2003

Using a steam-powered mecha to take on an enraged circus elephant? That's just the kind of craziness you can expect from serial sleeper-hit Dark Chronicle.

Gary Smith

Canis Canem Edit, 2006

After betraying our hero Jimmy in the early hours of the game, Gary hides behind the scenes until the game's climax. Well, would you trust a guy who dressed up as a Nazi for Halloween?

Dhoulmagus

Dragon Quest VII: Journey of the Cursed King, 2006

Never trust a jester. The King of Trodian did, and the result was Dhoulmagus transmogrifying him into Yoda's ugly cousin.

Cyber-Errol

Jak 3, 2004

Ah, that great sci-fi cliché: just when you think your arch-nemesis is dead, some wannabe Dr Frankenstein patches him pack together and gives him a cyborg chassis. Typical.

Vergil

Devil May Cry 3, 2005

Though seemingly destroyed in the first DMC, Dante's twin brother Vergil is the chief baddie in prequel DMC3. And we all know how brother vs brother standoffs are always particularly vicious, eh kids?

TEST OSSES

terrorists, gods: the PS2 beats all

– that's 25%, stat fans – are optional. But all 24 exhibited here remain in your gaming memory for days, even weeks, after you've put them in their boss-shaped graves.

Mike Sterry

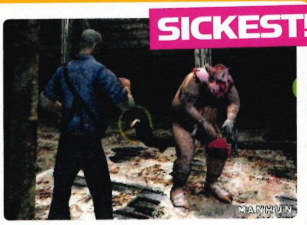
Did we miss out your favourite fight? Mail psnation@futurenet.co.uk and tell us your top bosses!

The Dahaka

Prince of Persia: Warrior Within, 2004

A manifestation of the inevitability of fate, The Dahaka pursues our paradox-producing Prince through the game. Only after finding the Water Sword can you destroy it.

SICKEST!



Piggsy

Manhunt, 2003

Naked, obese men-children sporting masks made from pigs' faces are a rare occurrence on PS2. So when you meet one like Piggsy, here, you remember them. Forever.

SILLIEST!

Kochamara

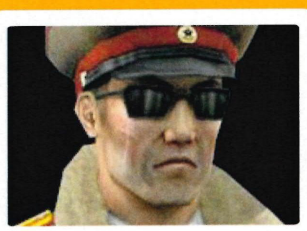
Psychonauts, 2005

Kochmara pokes fun at boss attack patterns by screaming things during the fight such as: "Overly-intricate COMBINATION ATTACK!" and "Hard to avoid AREA ATTACK!"

Orochi

Okami, 2007

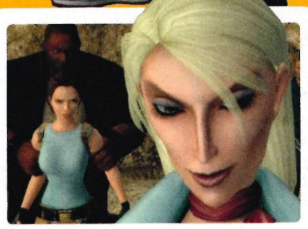
To fell this massive, eight-headed demon-dragon, you'll need plenty of booze and assistance from the wind god. But the story doesn't end once you've slain him…



The Deck of 52

Mercenaries, 2005

Not a boss exactly, but 52 mini bosses. Mercenaries' arsenal of vehicles and air-strikes let you tackle them any way you wish – and whatever way, it's loads of fun.



Natla

Tomb Raider Anniversary, 2007

Variously described as everything from 'really difficult' to 'the most annoying boss in the entire Tomb Raider series', we'd rather face a fleet of tyrannosaurs than this rocket-launching demoness.

Anubis

Zone of the Enders: The 2nd Runner, 2003

Named after the Egyptian god of the dead (he even resembles him somewhat), Anubis is a mecha so badass you have to fight him five times to take him down.

MOST CONTROVERSIAL!

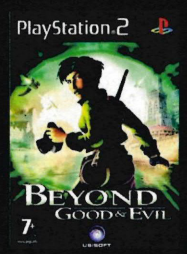
Dr Báthory Mengele

BloodRayne, 2003

BloodRayne? Mediocre. BloodRayne's bosses? Utterly unforgettable. Our 'favourite' is Báthory, aka The Butcheress, a cannibalistic Nazi who fights with stiletto heels and a pair of bone spikes attached to her arms.

UNSUNG HERO

#02 Jade is not your typical photojournalist. Her taste for beating up aliens with a stick is the biggest giveaway...



Beyond Good and Evil is one of the most original games ever made, yet in terms of sales it bombed.

Too obscure? Too sophisticated? Or just too French? Whatever the reason, its main character had star quality in spades.

Indeed, her Gallic creators were so sure of their heroine's appeal they gave her just one name: Jade.

Jade isn't just notable for her green lipstick. She's an exquisitely textured personality from the first opening sequence to the final, triumphant victory celebration.

Having been orphaned at a young age and brought up by her strange, boar-like Uncle Pey'j, she has a backstory that intrigues from the start.

Now a sassy, sharp-witted and adventurous adult, her ability to defeat enemies with martial arts (she is an expert at fighting with a 'dai-jo' staff) yet still exude femininity makes Lara Croft look like something out of a Reader's Wives magazine.

Happy snap

Her job as a photojournalist – her eye for detail and determination to get the job done – is at the heart of the game.

Saving the world is, of course, a powerful hook for any story but your secondary mission to snap all the strange, enchanting animals of Hyllis, such as the majestic Manta Cyanea and the elusive Ignis Ignifera, is Beyond Good & Evil's crowning achievement.

Photography is as integral to Jade as it is to the game, her camera being the only item left to her by her parents.

It also offers the player a unique window on Hyllis, serving to draw you in and look at it at close quarters.

But it's in the towns where you'll notice Beyond Good & Evil's beautiful night and day cycles – the mornings radiating pinks and peaches while the evening skies are suffused with stunning lavenders and plums.

Sass-kicker

And Jade isn't merely a conduit for taking pretty pictures, or even for kicking ass. Her ability to use a number of vehicles and nifty gadgets give her a MacGyver-like appeal as she uncovers the truth about the aliens that are abducting people from her world.

The game's art has the comic-book charm of a Tin Tin novel, but Jade also emerges as very human. She's very fond of her adoptive 'uncle' and the numerous other orphans he's taken in over the years.

It's a title that defies categorisation but it is unquestionably one of the greatest story-led games ever made.

As well as Jade's strength of character, the imaginative missions, gadgets, variety of gameplay and beautifully realised universe make you yearn for more of its ilk.

So yes, Beyond Good & Evil flopped commercially, but there are plenty of reasons to dig out this gem and meet Jade for yourself. **Mark Walbank**

ON THE DISC
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

YOUR HEROES!

Do you have a favourite PS2 character who doesn't get the respect he, she or it deserves? Nominate them to be an OPS2 Unsung Hero! Each month we celebrate one of the console's lesser-known stars, so vote for your choice by emailing **psnation@futurenet.co.uk**

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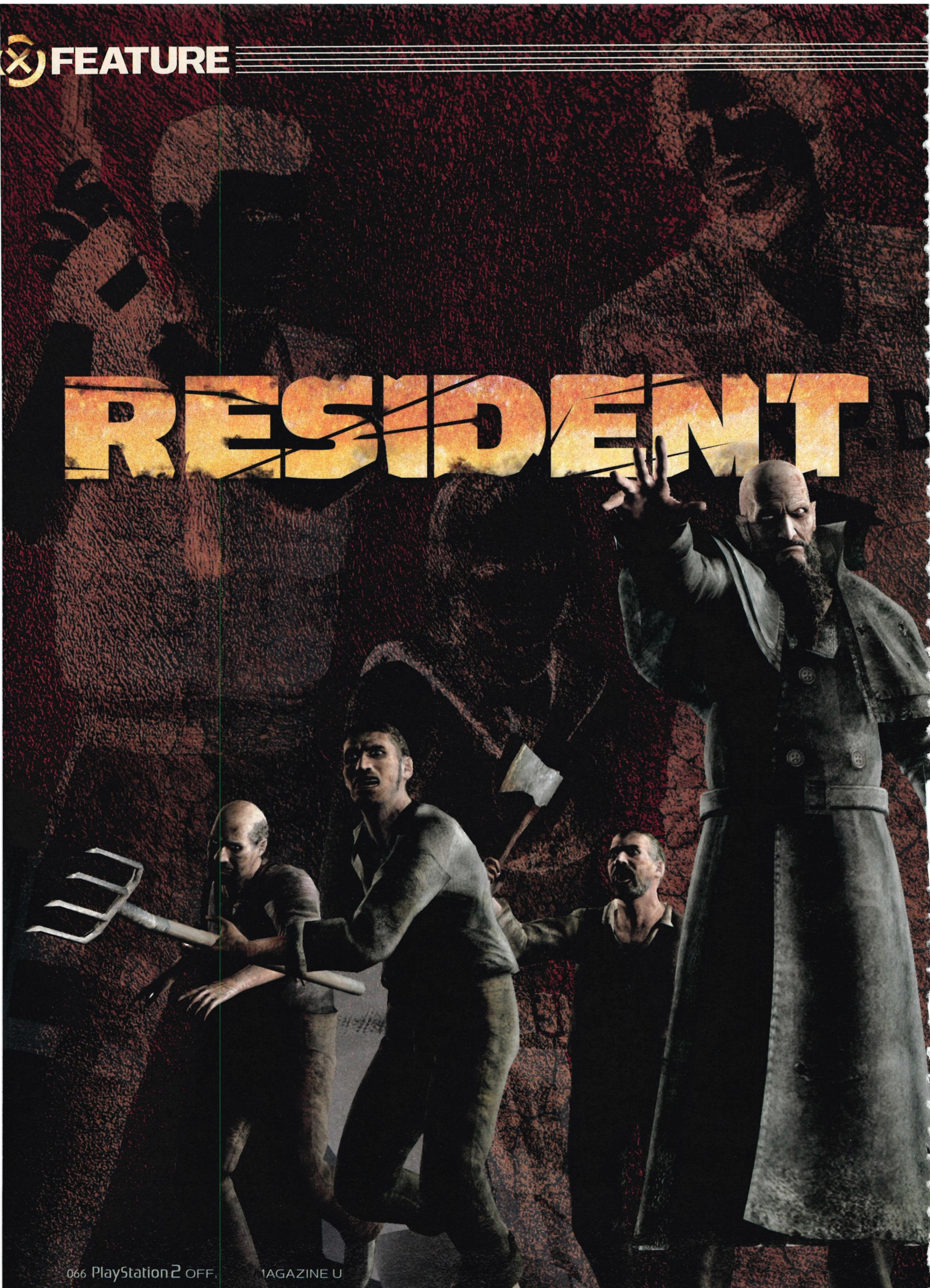
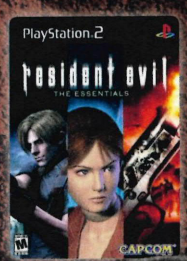

RESIDENT

EVIL'S SCARIEST MOMENTS

Three essential games, numerous scenes of spine-tingling terror...



While perusing the internet this month, we stumbled across a new US release called Resident Evil: The Essentials, a collection of the three best Resi titles to appear on PS2. With the Silent Hill Collection and Hitman: Triple Pack already in UK shops, we naturally assumed that this value pack would be hitting our high streets some time very soon.

Wrong! Outrageously, Essentials is only being released in the States. Although this made us angry, a quick scout around the second hand listings on websites such as amazon.co.uk revealed that you can purchase all three of the games in the collection for less than £20, which is a bargain by anyone's standards.

The fright stuff

While there are plenty of ways to terrify yourself on PS2 – Silent Hill, Project Zero, Little Britain The Video Game and so on – Resi is the undisputed master of the horror genre, and has been since the early days of PS1. Atmosphere, narrative, monsters, characters, spine-chilling moments; Resi comes top of the class in all categories.

So with this in mind, plus the fact that it's Halloween very soon, we revisited Resident Evils Code Veronica X, Outbreak and 4 and here present you a selection of the most petrifying moments from each of the games. Free sofa to hide behind not included. ▶

RESIDENT EVIL CODE VERONICA X

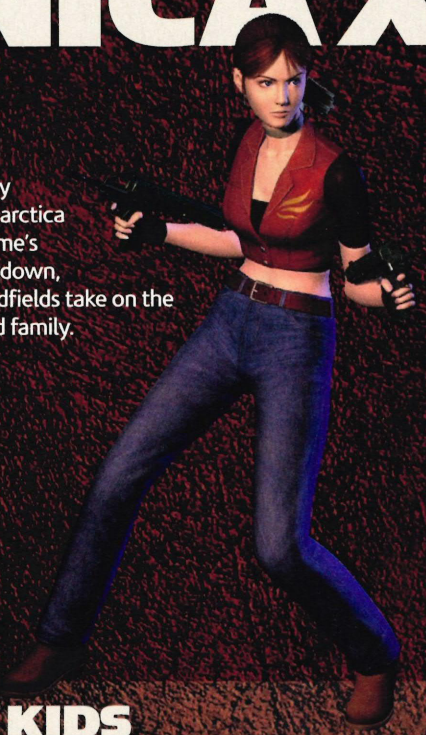
Chilling in more ways than one

This was the first Resident Evil game on PS2, following on from the events of the original trilogy on PS1. It all starts with Claire Redfield waking up in a prison cell on Rockfort Island, after she is captured while searching for her brother, Chris, at Umbrella's Paris labs.

Inevitably, things aren't right at Rockfort and she's soon knee-deep in zombies and genetic freaks. To top it all off, the Ashford family, who are in charge of Rockfort, are a bit bonkers too and they're gunning for Claire and her new companion Steve Burnside. After fleeing Rockfort the pair arrive in Umbrella's Antarctic base, which is – surprise, surprise - also overrun by the shuffling undead.

During the second half of the game, you play as Chris, as he follows his sister's trail of zombie-destruction. He's out to destroy the Umbrella corporation too, and he'll be damned if they're going to hurt his little sister.

The pair finally reunite in Antarctica during the game's thrilling showdown, where the Redfields take on the awful Ashford family.



1 FIRST SCARE

Claire finds herself in a graveyard

Ok, this is a Resi game, so zombies are inevitable. What you might not be expecting are these pasty half-decayed corpses that snatch at your ankles as you try to run away.

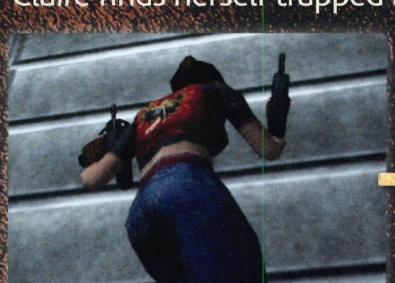
2 CREEPY KIDS

Watching the Ashford family's home movie

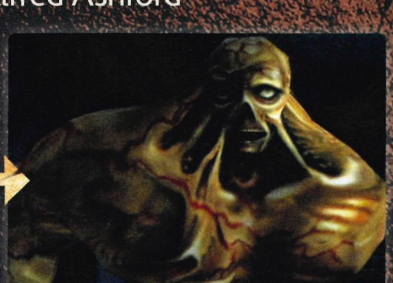
Its all standard Resident Evil fare until you stumble across this film of two Arian siblings (Alfred and Alexa Ashford) pulling the wings of a dragonfly and staring incestuously into each other's eyes. Now you're scared.

3 BANDERBOTHERS

Claire finds herself trapped by Alfred Ashford



Code Veronica delivers a one-two punch here. First, you're unnerved by the psychotic ramblings of Alfred Ashford, who invites you to play his sick cat and mouse game.



Then you discover you're the mouse, because in the next room, Alfred unleashes a fierce Bandersnatch on you. What's with wearing your muscles on the outside, mate?

4 HIGH ALTITUDE HORROR

Steve and Claire escape Rockfort

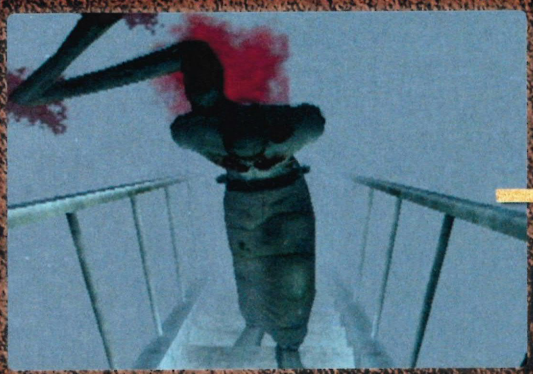
There's a stow-away on board, and he's not going to leave politely. Claire works her way towards the back of the plane...

It's hardly a fair match up. The size difference between Claire and the stowaway makes you miss a hearbeat.

After throwing everything she's got at him, Claire hits the cargo eject button and smashes the Tyrant out of the plane.

5 BRING OUT THE GIMP

Think you've escaped the Antarctic base? Think again...



Nosferatu is a savage gimp discovered by Claire in the deepest recesses of the Antarctic base. When he appears through the fog to fight her, it's chilling on so many levels.

To kill him, you've got to hold your nerve and wait on the helipad until you get a clear shot at his exposed heart.

6 AAAAA-RACHNID!

Deep inside the Antarctic base, Chris gets a spider-shock

Chris claps eyes on a massive eight-legged shape under the ice.

First find the crane key, then raise it to find that Nosferatu's on the winch!

A scream. It's Alexia Ashford and she's looking bonkers.

Now the giant spider decides to burst through the ice!

Shelob's got nothing on this baby, but Chris wastes no time in whipping out his newly acquired Magnum and offs the beast. Time for a lie down!

RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK

The infection is spreading

Just when you thought the streets of Raccoon City were safe... a biological weapon disaster sends lumbering corpses out onto the pavements again.

Set a couple of days after a T-Virus outbreak and moments before undead rioting, eight people enjoying a cold drink after a hard days grind are thrown into a situation that could determine the fate of mankind.

With the ability to command any of the characters, each of which have skills and qualities to fit a certain situation, the plot quickly becomes a race through hordes of infected to escape the government's solution to ending the disaster: a nuclear bomb.

The events span the time frame of Resident Evils 2 and 3. The stories of the eight strangers are interwoven and events take you face-to-face with some hideous Umbrella corporation creations that ultimately need slaying.

Memos and files hint at the experiments that have been going on behind closed doors and it quickly becomes clear that chemicals collected are a cocktail that'll lay the final Tyrant flat on his back...

1 GANG BANG

The first zombie wave in Outbreak

Running from zombies will never do. They'll make you jump out of your socks sooner or later. They're normally in a massive gang, and they're all after your flesh.

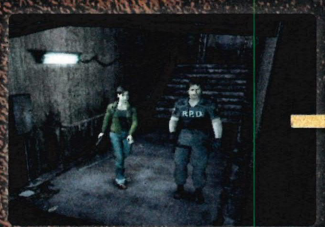
2 MEDI-SIN

Kevin gets plastered

All Kevin wanted was a plaster but as he reaches into the medicine cabinet, this zombie leaps out and tries to bite the rest of his arm off.

3 INCEY WINCEY...

More super-massive eight legged freaks



Not every corner in Outbreak holds a surprise, but you always need to be on your tippy toes.

OMG! What did we just say? Have your grenade launcher ready, this guy's fast!

Is smoking this mutated insect really the end of the story? That scuttling noise suggests not...

AAARGH! Here comes his bigger brother! Shame you can't pull its legs off one by one.

4 THIS SUCKS

We're told that leeches are a fantastic way to halt a fever. Here, they're not so hospitable.

Anyone for a nice boat ride out of this godforsaken hospital? Yes please!

Using the sewer, you and your buddies are almost home and dry...

What's this? An obese leech that feeds on man-flesh. Erk!

With a little help from your friends the leech is pulped.

Take that! You won't be seeing anymore from this beastie, even though he is a toughie.

5 FISH FOOD

There's something stirring in the water

Oh man, if it's not leeches then it's giant zombie sharks.

Someone's going to be fish food, make it your mate!

6 CROAKED

Even the amphibians are deadly in Outbreak

Act too slowly in the university basement and you'll get a tongue lashing from the frog and end up as his next snack.

7 SECOND FIGHT

You've got to nail the last boss a few times before he stays down

We've beaten Thanatos the end boss and left him to burn in a large house.

But guess what, he's not quite dead! We should have seen it coming.

Dead a second time. Surely he can't come back again? Oh...

A little bit of chemical help will nail him once and for all.

And in spectacular fashion! Umbrella's so-called perfect weapon couldn't even get the best of a puny little human.

RESIDENT EVIL 4

Goriest. Scariest. Greatest.

It's no contest: Resident Evil 4 is the scariest game in the series. Whereas the series had been relying on a formula of throwing progressively disgusting mutants at you to ramp up the horror, RE4 went back to the drawing board and decided to get at the heart of fear.

How did the guys at Capcom do it? Why, for one, they decided that they wouldn't be happy unless RE4 was one of the best-looking video games of the year. From the bloated capillaries of the shambling Regenerators to the sallow, waxy skin of the Los Illuminados monks, much of the game's horror is visceral. Oh, and the best monster design in a Resident Evil game? You betcha.

The environments are utterly creepy, from the rotting Ganado village the game opens in to the underground laboratory, you never, ever feel safe.

The fact that it remains so terrifying despite being the fairly ludicrous plot is testament to RE4's deft mastery of survival horror.

1 BUGGED OUT

Half man, half arthropod, 100% unsettling

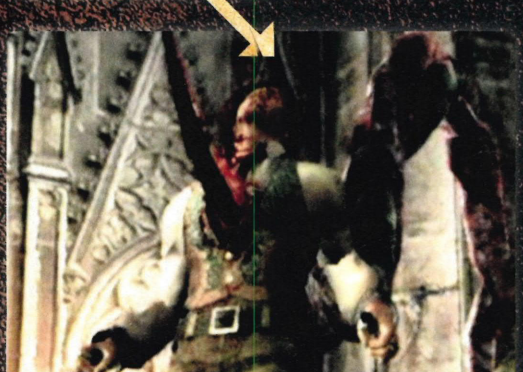
The scariest moment in RE4's first act comes care of Bitores Mendez, who turns into Satan's centipede!

It's a rare moment in gaming, where you're simultaneously scared for yourself *and* for the character.

2 ¡ADIÓS LUIS!

Hunky Spaniards die like the rest of us

Viggo Mortensen look-alike Luis Sera bites it big style when baddie Osmund Saddler spears him through the chest with a monstrous limb...



Thankfully, Luis survives for long enough to impart mission-important info to Leon - a remarkable feet, considering he no longer has any lungs.

3 GANADO GORE

Hope you brought an umbrella

When night falls in RE4, it only gets worse for Leon. Particularly given this is the time when the Ganados reveal that they're host to spine-chewing parasites.

4 PLANT IMPLANT

Roman Salazar reveals his green thumb

So, you've been dying to throttle diminutive sociopath Salazar for a few hours now - but what does he go and do? He merges with a gigantic plant thing!

...and makes it impossible for Leon to kick his tiny ass. So Leon has to make do with a .44 magnum instead.

5 LEON, MEET 'IT'

Terror prefers the impersonal pronoun

Like Stephen King's demon-clown Pennywise and that bipedal fur-ball from The Addams Family, things only referred to as 'It' are never pleasant.

Saddler's pet is no exception - and requires Leon to play a game of cat and mouse in a cargo-hold suspended over a ravine.

6 "AND TODAY'S SPECIALS ARE..."

Leon discovers what's on the menu

Resident Evil 4's most jump-out-of-your-chair-and-change-your-underwear moment also happens to be its funniest: involving a crispy Ganado who pounces at Leon from inside an oven. Fear not though, he can't even damage you!

QUIT OR RETRY?

This month: Is Grand Theft Auto San Andreas a better videogame than Vice City?

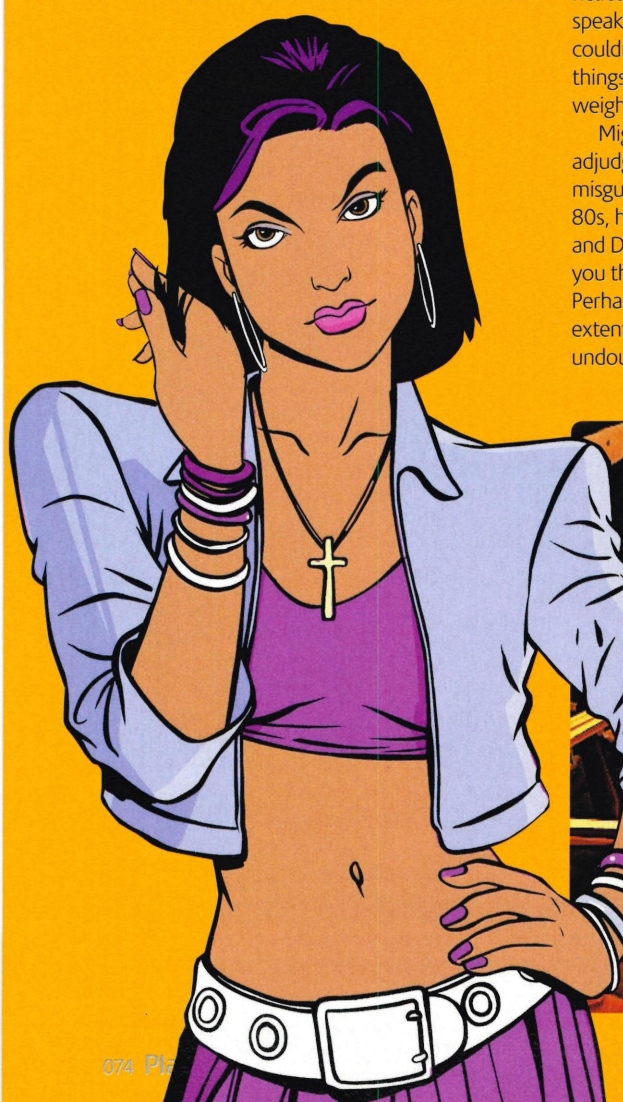
Mike Sterry
staff writer

YES!

Nick Ellis
Editor

NO!

Grand Theft Auto. It's the franchise that sold 10 million consoles and helped PS2 achieve global console domination. But which is the best game in the series? Let the debate commence...



GTA: Vice City sits smugly at the number one spot in our Hall of Fame, while the infinitely superior GTA: San Andreas languishes at number 15. What devilry is this? Why wasn't I consulted? Had I been, I would have fought tooth and nail to see San Andreas claim it's rightful place at the top.

True, Vice City introduced a slew of new features that made it very difficult to return to the original GTA3 - things like motorcycles, helicopters, property management and a speaking protagonist. But Tommy Vercetti still couldn't swim - and in that, among many other things, San Andreas is the better game by sheer weight of improvements alone.

Might I suggest the following: Vice City is adjudged the better game for but one reason - misguided nostalgia. You were a teenager in the 80s, hence memories of Motley Crue, Miami Vice and Diego Maradona resonate much stronger in you than they do me. Perhaps too strongly. Perhaps they've clouded your judgement to the extent that you fail to recognise San Andreas' undoubted superiority.

PIZZA EXCESS

The inference here is that San Andreas is a better game because of technical advances over its predecessor. Sure the game world is larger and there are more sundry activities to partake in - you can ride a bike, get a haircut and eat pizza - but this doesn't make it a superior gaming experience.

Vice City's excellence is, along with the familiar diverse gameplay, down to a tight, compelling narrative and a great set of characters, especially Vercetti. It's a great story regardless of the time period it's set in.

The narrative in San Andreas is found wanting, drifting aimlessly while you run to the tattoo parlour or whatever. Misguided nostalgia? No. I liked the A-Team and The Smiths and anyway I was 10 at the time when the game was set.

Is Rainbow Six a better shooter than Brothers In Arms, just because it's set in our lifetime? I think not.

Yes there's more to do in San Andreas, but that does not make it superior

Being able to ride a BMX is just one of countless improvements over Vice City

The plot was nothing more than *Scarface* with a few porn stars thrown in

Vice City has a more compelling narrative and better characters. SA's plot drifts at times

San Andreas' improvements aren't simply technical, though the lack of loading times between areas was a godsend. No, San Andreas was a huge step towards a more immersive gaming experience.

Admittedly, the constant need to feed CJ was an irritation - but the window-dressing you mention - the tattoo parlours, the clothing stores, the barbershop, the gym - are all optional.

San Andreas is about giving the player a larger range of options than before and letting them construct their own gaming experience out of them.

There's simply so much more to do than in Vice City, the least of which is diverting (the pool mini-game) and the best amazing (skydiving from a jumbo jet).

THE HOOD LIFE

I find it difficult to return to Vice City knowing that despite being a criminal kingpin, I cannot ask my gang to help me out with a little drive-by shooting as in San Andreas; or that I cannot actively take over neighbourhoods from rival gangs by initiating a satisfying gang war.

As for plot and setting, all I'll say is that how you respond to the story and characters in Vice City or San Andreas is a personal call.

That said, the reason I disliked Vice City was that it was simply *Scarface* with some porn stars, property developers and biker games thrown in. San Andreas' plot, like the game itself, was broader and deeper yarn.

There's simply much more to do than there is in Vice City

San Andreas features much that is totally unnecessary

It's interesting that you mention the taking over of territories in gang wars because that was the part of San Andreas that annoyed me the most (well, aside from the missions with the radio controlled planes).

Towards the end of the first 'chapter' the gang wars start in earnest. I spent hours taking over all the neighbourhoods and painting them green, only to find out that it was all totally pointless.

When the focus switches to the next city as the plot moves on, you no longer have those territories under your control. There was no indication to me that this would happen, and I felt cheated.

This to me is indicative of the game as a whole i.e. there's much that's totally unnecessary masquerading as your so-called 'more immersive experience' and none of it makes San Andreas a better game.

In Vice City, every mission you completed gave you a sense of progression, which I think is essential in a game. For too long in SA you're just drifting.

CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS

Quite simply, the Grand Theft Auto series is about being a criminal; starting small before eventually lording it over your own criminal empire. San Andreas, though its plot is patchy in places, emulates this better than Vice City. CJ starts out in jeans and trainers, and ends up in Armani.

Despite my protestations to San Andreas' brilliance, it seems that Rockstar are inclined to agree with you - given how they've approached the development of GTA IV - condensing rather than expanding content.

But then, perhaps in months to come, when GTA IV eclipses all our expectations and takes the title of Greatest GTA Game Ever, you'll still myopically be arguing for your little pastel hero, Vice City.

By saying that Rockstar itself is condensing rather than expanding for the next GTA game, you've provided the best example of why you're argument is flawed. Sure, San Andreas has more game area, more optional side-missions, character customisation and takes longer to play.

But is it a better videogame for all these things? Would Jet Set Willy be better with hi-def 3D graphics? Are the later *Star Wars* films better because they're made with advanced CGI technology instead of models and costumes? The answer is clearly no to all.

Vice City is a superior and more well rounded and atmospheric videogame, and it stays at number one in the Hall Of Fame for that reason. San Andreas is still great, mind!

QUIT OR RETRY

YES!	NO!
Great improvements	A plot that drifts
No loading times	Naff CJ customisation
You actually feel like a criminal mastermind	Not as amusing a take on its era

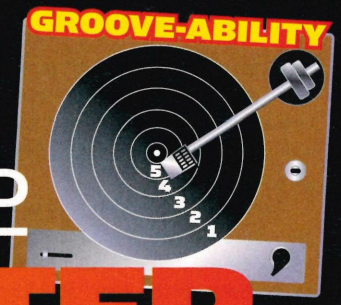
THE VERDICT

San Andreas was bigger, bolder and more crammed full of gaming goodness than any GTA game before it. Bangin' soundtrack, too.

Bigger and bolder, yes, but that was its undoing and the result was a less focused, less compelling game. The soundtrack wasn't all that, either.

@ WHAT DO YOU RECKON?

Who's right? Are they both talking cobblers? Mail in your thoughts to psnation@futurenet.co.uk and we'll feature the best comments in the mag.



OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 GROOVE-O-METER

Your PS2 can take you to boogie wonderland, so here's our guide to the titles to pick up when you want to get down

START HERE

MAD MAESTRO

An excellent rhythm-action title but the focus on classical music won't get anyone grooving (except grannies).

ARMOURED CORE 3

The head-thumping Japanese rock may appeal to you but the number-crunching is hardly rock'n'roll.

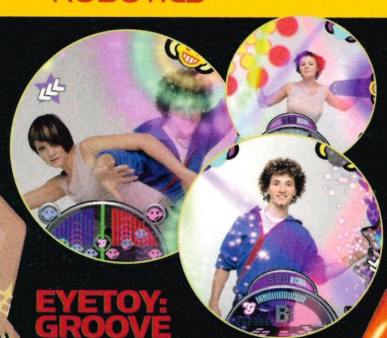
GENTILITY

ROBOTICS

GET THE PARTY STARTED

SINGSTAR

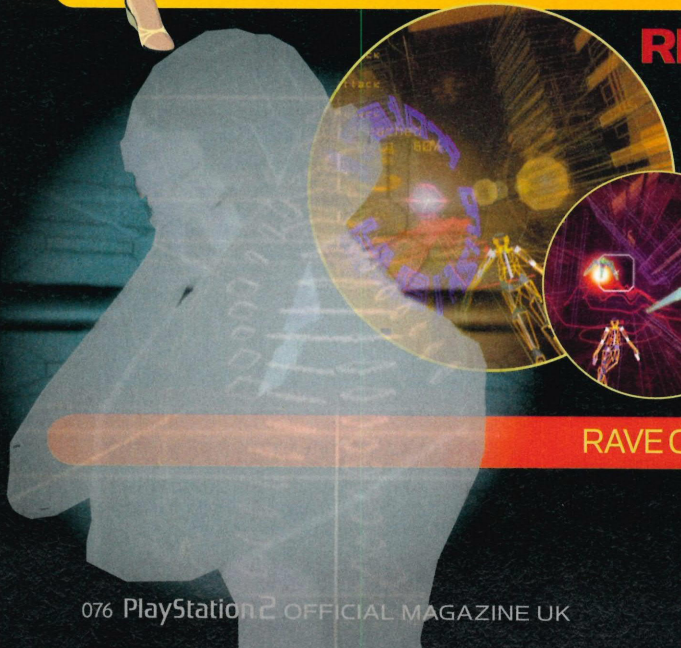
The perfect party game, although the emphasis is on warbling rather than booty-shaking.



EYETOY: GROOVE

A classic party game that forces you to make erratic shapes in front of the TV. You look like a tit, but it's fun.

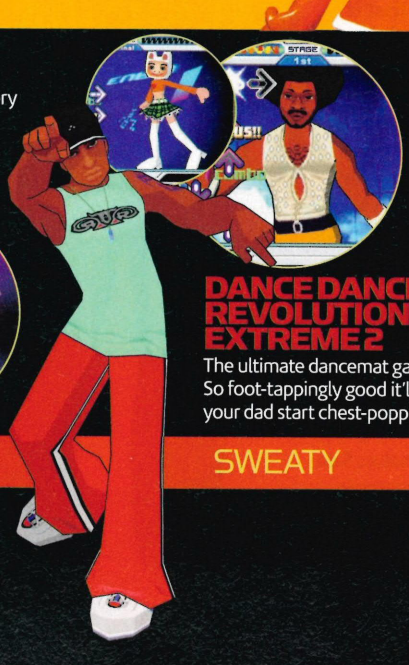
GREAT WITH MATES!



REZ

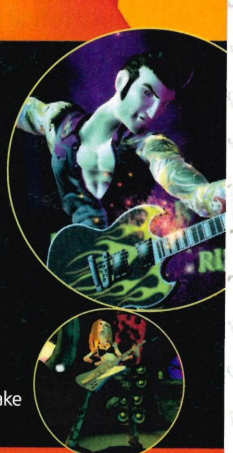
This blissed-out, multisensory shooter will penetrate your every fibre with its trippy visuals and trancey tunes.

RAVE ON!



DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION EXTREME 2

The ultimate dancemat game. So foot-tappingly good it'll make your dad start chest-popping.



SWEATY

CHESSMASTER

Pawn to queen's bishop five… snooze. There's nothing quite like chess to destroy the music in your heart, even with orcs.

BRIAN LARA INTERNATIONAL CRICKET 2007

Thumping bass and dayglo whistles somehow don't mix with cricket whites and barley lemon.

SQUARES

BALLS

FORBIDDEN SIREN

Listening to gurgling cries in the night and hiding in shadows isn't our idea of a party.

EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES

Contains jolly medieval-style tunes, but if you're still playing this, nightclubs are probably a bit alien to you.

UNDEAD

GO QUEST

SPACE CHANNEL 5

Intergalactic grooving in a psychedelic stylee: once you start, you can't stop.

PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2

Very short but oh so sweet with hip-hop beats to make you tap your feet. Word.

GITAROO MAN

From Country & Western to funk, take a draught of this musical ambrosia and you'll be forever Gitaroo-vy!

PINK BARNET

HAPPY RAPPER

GUITAR HERO II

Sucks you in, lets you dream of stardom then leaves you aching, broken and begging for more.

FREQUENCY

David Bowie, Weezer, Garbage and more top artists get you into the groove and keep you there.

AMPLITUDE

It's impossible not to move to the breaks and beats in this rhythmic delight.

ON THE DISC

REAL TUNES

ROCK LEGENDS

Wanted: Galactic Heroes.*

*Space Marines & Plumbers need not apply

THE FIRST REVIEW!

PS3's best game? Read the ONLY *Ratchet & Clank* review – only in **PSM3**. **ON SALE NOW! JUST £3.99!**

REVIEWS

△ LATEST GAMES ○ TESTED ✕ BUYING ADVICE □ KICKINGS

CRASH, BANG WALLOP: WHAT A MONTH!

Crashes, Jackasses and more sport than ESPN: this month's Reviews section is bursting – bursting, I say! – with new PS2 releases.

Why, if we were feeling cruel, we might ask you to compare how many games are out on PS3 this month compared to its older brother.

Orange rush

The big review news this month is the legendary Crash Bandicoot returning, revamped and refreshed in his first PS2 outing for nigh-on three years.

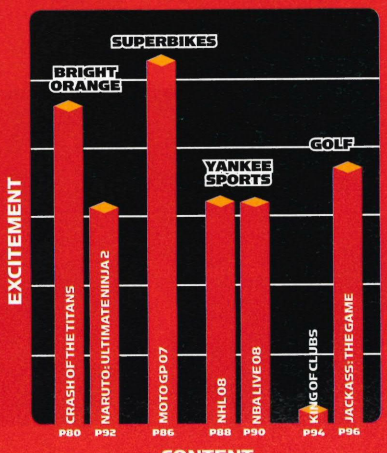
Sure, he's also appearing on a certain motion-sensing console, but believe us when we say that waving a white dongle around to control Crash is the stuff of nightmares.

If you fancy something a bit more mature (while simultaneously infinitely more juvenile), then head over to p96 for our Jackass: The Game review. But not if you're squeamish...

MIKE STERRY
STAFF WRITER
msterry@futurenet.co.uk

'A CHILD-FRIENDLY VERSION OF GOD OF WAR'
CRASH OF THE TITANS

THIS SECTION CONTAINS



UNDERSTAND OUR SCORES!

10 ESSENTIAL
If you have a PS2, you owe it to yourself to own this game

9 OUTSTANDING
Truly innovative with lasting appeal: well made in all respects

8 AWESOME
A sterling effort, very playable and highly recommended

7 VERY GOOD
Falls short of brilliant, but still a great idea, well executed

6 GOOD
Has flaws, but fans of the genre or series will still enjoy it

5 AVERAGE
Not much cop, but maybe worth a go if you find it in a bargain bin

4 BELOW AVERAGE
Disappointing and boring, with few redeeming qualities

3 POOR
Oh dear. We recommend you steer well clear of this one

2 AWFUL
Broken, very badly made or actually unplayable

1 HORRIFIC
Not so much a game as an insult to console owners

STAR GAME

MEMBER OF THE HALL OF FAME

AWARDS

The Star Game medal is for great games that just have to be played, regardless of your usual genre preferences. The Hall Of Fame medal is for titles that rock our world so hard they'll be inducted into our OPS2 Hall Of Fame next issue (find this month's complete listing on p103).

Crash can ride the Titans and use their powerful abilities

Release 12 October **Publisher** Sierra Entertainment **Developer** Radical Entertainment
Price £25.99 **Players** 1-2 **Web** crashofthetitans.com **Also try** Jak 3

CRASH OF THE TITANS

Fresh ideas, new tattoos and not a kart in sight. But is Crash back to his former glory?

It's a simple equation. Take an obscure animal, put him in some skater shorts, give him a dash of attitude and – bingo! Instant franchise and gaming icon. At least, this was rationale that gave birth to Crash Bandicoot back in 1996.

Such was Crash's initial success that Sony adopted him as the unofficial mascot of the PS1. He was meant to be the console's answer to Nintendo's Mario the plumber and Sega's Sonic the Hedgehog and, for a while at least, it seemed like he could compete.

Yes, that is a synthesised fart he's hurling

Success meant cameos on The Simpsons, Family Guy, Friends and, erm, Eastenders, not to mention the kind of sales figures that make a mute, orange marsupial proud of himself.

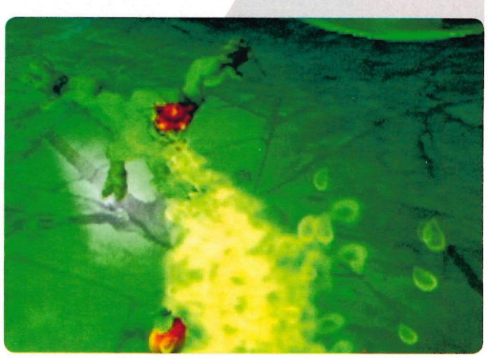
There are 35 million copies of his games sitting in homes worldwide, making Crash the 14th bestselling videogame franchise of all time. He's outsold the Metal Gear Solid series (26th), the Tomb Raider games (15th) and Resident Evil (16th).

Yet Crash's fame has dwindled of late and recent games made in his name have been mediocre at best.

Crash and learn

He has been eclipsed by platformer superstars such as Jak and Daxter and Ratchet and Clank. Thus, much rides on the success of Crash of the Titans.

Developer Radical Entertainment knew this, so it hired a Hollywood



FAQ

Q. WHAT THE JIGGINS IS A BANDICOOT, ANYWAY?

A. A small, critically endangered marsupial native to Australia. The females have eight nipples, but this doesn't seem to be the case for Crash's sister, Coco.

Crunch here does a great impression of Mr T – shame he's in so little of the game

Dr Cortex learns an important lesson about messing with nature

character artist to 'reimagine' the cast. Meanwhile, it aimed to retain the elements that made Crash a success in the first place and draw inspiration from recent gaming successes such as, would you believe it, God of War.

If all this sounds like Radical effectively rebooting the decade-old series, that's because that is exactly what the developer has done.

The first thing you notice when you load up Crash of the Titans is its sparkling presentation. Graphically speaking, this is a stunning game: definitely one of the best-looking platformers on PS2.

The character animation is fantastic. Crash's body bends and stretches like putty as he attacks, while attentive animation means the comedy in the cutscenes is spot-on.

In terms of script, Crash of the Titans aims for Saturday morning cartoon-type chuckles and achieves them with aplomb – markedly better than the lifeless 'humour' of Jak and Daxter or Ratchet and Clank.

Titan Magmadon can walk over lava. Smokin'!

Cortex in the act

The voice acting is excellent, and you'll likely remember the twisted speech of Dr N-Gin long after you've ejected the disc from your PS2.

Unfortunately, beyond a glut at the beginning of the game, cutscenes

Smaller Titans' special attacks can be used in turn for jacking the larger beasts

QUICK GUIDE... CRASH BANDICOOT

THE BEST!

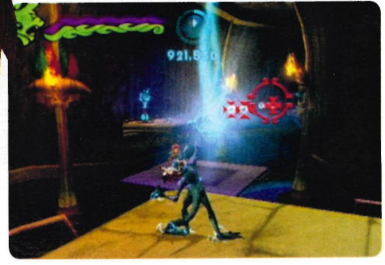
CRASH BANDICOOT: WARPED
PS1, 1998
The peak of his PS1 career.

CRASH TAG TEAM RACING
PS2, 2005
The closest, comparatively decent thing to Mario Kart on PS2.

CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX
PS2, 2001
Crash's first appearance on PS2 was tepid.

THE WORST!

CRASH TWINSANITY
PS2, 2004
Perhaps the funniest game in the series, but the worst in every other respect.



are few and far between. However the game's smaller enemies, the minions, make up for this somewhat by acting as comic relief, just as much as they are hapless Crash-fodder.

The lab rats (who speak like Professor Frink from The Simpsons) and redneck koalas whom Crash meets early on are hilarious, especially the creepy way the koalas quote that line from *Deliverance*: "You've got a purdy mouth, boy."

Merry minions

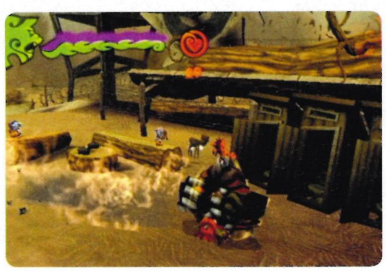
There are more than 7000 lines of dialogue and most of this seems to come from the minions. But bizarrely, they get less and less amusing as the game progresses.

It's almost as if the actors were ad-libbing the lines and some were simply more funny than others.

The plot sees the return of Crash's oldest foe, Dr Cortex, who plans on stealing Wumpa Island's supply of 'mojo' to infuse into his newest batch of genetic abominations. At least, that is his plan, until it's hijacked by his (far more efficient) niece Nina…

Throughout the game, Crash collects the stolen mojo in the form of blue orbs to upgrade his abilities, from new combos to added power for his classic spin attack.

Cortex: camper than Christmas



It's one of Crash of the Titans' many – and rather surprising –nods to the God of War games. In fact, you could almost describe this as a child-friendly version of Kratos' bloody-minded, limb-loosening adventures.

YOU FEEL CRASH GET MORE POWERFUL AS THE GAME GOES ON

You can't choose which specific abilities to power up, and you'll have nearly maxed out Crash's stats by the final level, but you certainly feel your hero getting more powerful as the game goes on.

This is mostly because certain Titans are more susceptible to certain combos that Crash acquires.

Oh no! Pupil-less rat-things have captured Crash's friend Aku-Aku!

CRASH AND THE CAST

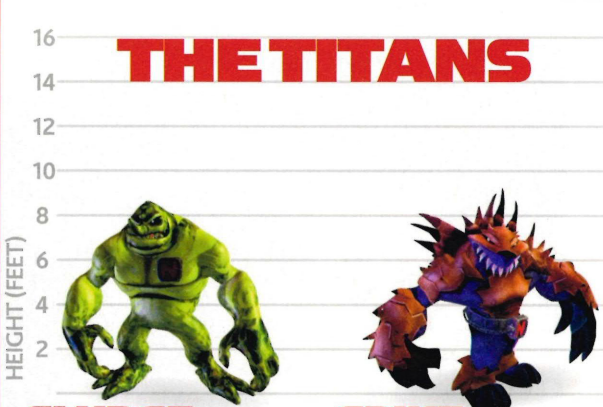
They've had a makeover, but the Crash crew still look – and sound – familiar

TINY TIGER

INFO A thinly-veiled caricature of ear-chewing boxer Mike Tyson, Tiny Tiger doesn't want to be evil, it just pays the bills. He considers Crash 'stupor-tabulous'.

VOICED BY Chris Williams. You may remember him from such games as Open Season (he voiced Boog the bear).

THE TITANS



SLUDGE

INFO Incredibly quick and packing an extendable fist, Sludge can ruin your enemies' day with some targeted vomiting.

DESTRUCT-O-RATING 4/5

SPIKE

INFO Your first Titan, Spike is speedy, but doesn't pack as much punch as the beasts you'll come across later.

DESTRUCT-O-RATING 2/5

COCO

INFO Coco is Crash's genius adoptive sister. She is kidnapped, brainwashed and forced to work on Dr Cortex's doomsday robot.

VOICED BY Debi Derryberry. You may remember her from such games as The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron Boy Genius: Attack of the Twonkies (she played Jimmy Neutron).

CRASH

INFO The hero of our piece, Crash has had some tribal tattoos done since his last game. Aided by his constant companion, a floating mask called Aku-Aku, Crash sets out to save Wumpa Island from the nefarious Dr Cortex.

VOICED BY Jess Harnell. You may remember him from such games as Spyro: A Hero's Tale (he played Spyro).

DR N-GIN

INFO Sociopathic N-Gin is the star of the show, in our opinion. Has an army of Planet of the Apes-inspired chimps and does a good impression of Gollum at one point.

VOICED BY Nolan North. You may remember him from such games as Final Fantasy XII (he played Captain Vossler).

DR CORTEX

INFO Up to his old tricks again, Crash's nemesis Dr Cortex kidnaps Coco and sets about building an army of genetic abominations. He finds flying around in vibrating air-ships 'stimulating'. Ick.

VOICED BY Lex Lang. You may remember him from such games as Star Wars: Battlefront II (he played Han Solo and Imperial Infantry).

NINA CORTEX

INFO Dr Cortex's goth niece. Nina has changed from the puppy-lover of previous games to a more evil, more efficient replacement for her dad. Hates 'popular girl' Coco Crash.

VOICED BY Amy Gross. You may remember her from such games as, er, Crash Tag Team Racing (she played Nina Cortex).

CRUNCH

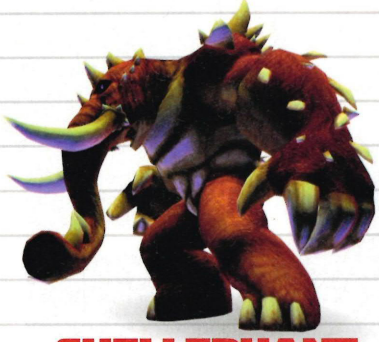
INFO Crash's cyborg pal, Crunch is imprisoned in ice at the start of the game, and has no role for the rest of it. Shame. We really enjoy his Mr T impression.

VOICED BY Chris Williams. You may remember him from such games as Need for Speed: Most Wanted (he played Sergeant Cross).

RATCICLE

INFO Able to freeze foes and then rend them to shreds, Ratcicle is a difficult Titan for Crash to jack, but well worth the effort.

DESTRUCT-O-RATING 3/5



SHELLEPHANT

INFO Slow-moving and susceptible to being surrounded, Shellephant's flame-throwing trunk is more than enough to clear a room.

DESTRUCT-O-RATING 4/5

SCORPORILLA

INFO The Big Daddy of the Titans, Scoropilla is the only Titan that's able to go toe-to-toe with some of the game's bigger bosses.

DESTRUCT-O-RATING 5/5

Ah yes, the titular Titans. The central gimmick around which Crash of the Titans revolves. They are genetic abominations, and Crash is able to 'jack' them. Put simply, this means that after pummelling them enough, he can hoist himself onto the beast's shoulders and ride it around.

→ The characters are wonderfully brought to life

Fightin' Titans

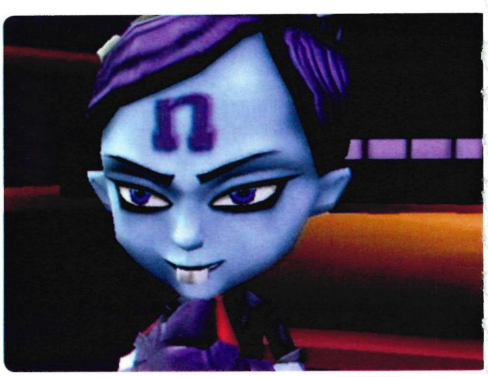
They're roughly organised into three tiers: melee, ranged attackers and big beasties. And each of the 15 Titans, including three bosses, has its own array of special attacks.

Because his furry little fists are unable to make a dent on some of the building-sized Titans, Crash must use their hierarchy.

Thus he can jack an easily-dazed ranged attacker, use its attack to pummel an elephant-sized Titan, jack that Titan and then use the second Titan's special ability to daze a bigger beastie for jacking, and so on.

It may sound confusing, but it isn't. In fact, the first boss battle that requires you to jack your way up the hierarchy is pretty exhilarating. But the joys of jacking diminish over time as what seems at first to be an innovative and addictive concept falls prey to the old bugbear of game design: repetition.

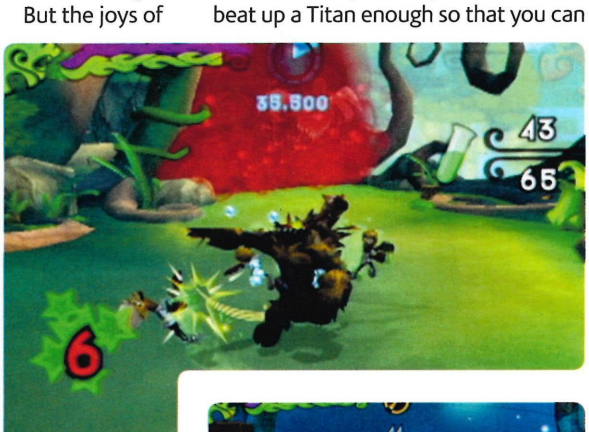
THE JOYS OF JACKING DIMINISH OVER TIME, GETTING REPETITIVE



Even a sterling gameplay idea can lose its appeal if you're required to repeat it 1000 times in the course of an eight-hour game.

Jacked off

In the later stages of the game, Crash has wave after wave of Titans thrown at him. So the process goes like this: beat up a Titan enough so that you can



↑ Bonus levels such as this one are hidden throughout the proceedings

JACKING TITANS
Smashing things from atop a Scorpilla is loads of fun.

THE LAUGHS
The cartoon-style wit is better than any of Crash's rivals can muster.

THE OVERALL DESIGN
From backgrounds to beasts, all are rendered beautifully.

LOVING

HATING

ACCURSED REPETITION
The game just continuously throws enemies at you, especially towards its finale.

LONGWINDED ANIMATIONS
Jacking beasts produces a ponderous, unskippable piece of slow-mo.

IT DOES WHAT?

AKU-AKU
The spirit of a witch doctor and Crash's best friend, Aku-Aku acts as a shield, a skateboard, and the means to control the Titans.

ORGINALITY RATING **85%**

jack it; have that Titan beat up the Titan next to it enough so that you can jack it; jack that Titan and collect the blue orbs dropped by your previous Titan; rinse and repeat. And repeat.

Add in the God of War-style slow motion that occurs with every third beast you jack, and you'll quickly find yourself getting bored.

This is a shame, because had a bit more variety been mixed in (and some of the duller skateboarding sections removed), Crash would have taken the crown as PS2's best platformer.

That said, there is a large degree of replay value at hand. After completing a level, you can always return to it to unlock more costumes for Crash.

This is what you get if you cross an octopus and an ox. Apparently

And if that doesn't sound like much of an incentive to go through the game again, there's a brilliantly executed multiplayer mode.

With two controllers plugged in, you and a chum can play as Crash and Carbon Crash respectively and cooperatively.

Pairs and graces

The neat thing is that at any point, one player can decide to hop into the other player's backpack.

This changes the multiplayer dynamic radically. Instead of always having two Crashes playing together, you'll swap turns every time Crash lands a jump, making for a frantic, hilarious time.

Friendly fire is always on, so you can always take a break from the beast-jacking to whale on each other, or pit two beasts against each other and see who fares better.

Once you've tasted this kind of tandem gameplay, you'll wonder how you ever managed to play through the game without it.

So, has Crash of the Titans returned the once-loved Crash Bandicoot to his former glory? Well, yes and no.

Yes, because it's breathed new life into a brand that had become stagnant. And no, because the game has one too many flaws for it be considered essential.

But on the face of it, we're hopeful. Things are starting to improve for this PlayStation icon. **Mike Sterry**

Hot tea in the face. Classic

The frequent skateboarding sections become a bit tiresome

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

STAR GAME

- Tandem multiplayer is a hoot
- Great presentation and humour
- Gameplay marred by repetition
- Some lame skateboarding bits

A delightful, brilliantly realised platformer, Titans would have scored higher were it not for its reliance on repetition

7

The realism extends to the authentic roar of bikes on the starting grid

Handlebar view gets you close up to the action

Release November **Publisher** Capcom **Developer** Milestone **Price** £29.99
Players 1-2 **Web** capcom-europe.com **Also try** SBK-07 Superbike World Championship

MOTOGP 07

Finally, the thrilling ride the series has always promised

As a sport, MotoGP is riding a spike in popularity. Qualifying results and standings have pride of place on the BBC between one-day test cricket round-ups and athletics reports. So now, more than ever, the sport deserves its PS2 namesake, the MotoGP game series, to do it justice.

And here it is. Having previously pulled on the leathers of SBK-07, the other bike racer developed by Milestone, we can report that we noticed very few differences between that fine game and MotoGP 07 when we played the latter.

THE CHALLENGES ARE THRILLING AND WORK EXCELLENTLY

The superb handling and portrayal of speed are identical and, happily, a million track miles away from the icy giro movements of the series' last PS2 title, MotoGP 4.

The organic roll of the shoulders, the swing of the bike, the kiss of bone on asphalt have all been transferred from SBK-07, plus riders' reactions to bumps, scrapes and victories.

Similarities aside, MotoGP 07 looks more complete with its greyed tones, smoother edges and deliciously drenching water effects. But despite the near-simulation realism, there's an accessibility that should bring the franchise its long-awaited success.

For, despite the growing crowds at race weekends, they remain dwarfed by those at other motorsport events.

Get setting

Milestone has risen cleverly to the challenge of bringing the sport to the masses by including three difficulty

Rainy weather makes tracks darker, more dangerous and so much fun

levels. Arcade setting (effectively the novice difficulty) all but equips the rider with a set of stabilisers and a bubble-wrap overcoat, so you'll rarely fall off and face amputation during your tumble in the gravel.

Next up the scale, Advanced, applies more realistic physics (the odd rear wheel slide and easier crash). But the Simulation setting should only be approached by those looking to paint the crash barrier red.

You also have the ability to adjust opponent AI, which gives the game a further layer for newbies and enthusiasts alike to master.

You really feel the thrill of going limb-to-limb with other riders

Learning curves

The thrilling biking challenges are the perfect climbing tool for the learning curves. There are 100 of them, ranging from acceleration and braking tests to slaloms and checkpoint dashes. They work excellently as tutorials, teaching every skill needed to progress through the toughest championship races.

We particularly liked the random nature of each level's difficulty, taking you outside your comfort zone.

The absence of other riders helps the trial objectives but by the end of your 10th run, a championship race with 20 other guys – with the potential to cause some spectacular smashes – is welcome.

It's this depth that that makes Moto GP a game worthy of the sport. The realism, style and visuals unseen on previous games in the series kick hot rubber at the notion that this year's MotoGP will achieve anything but a podium finish. **Dean Samways**

Championship races are tough so learn your skills in the challenges

VEHICLE CHECK

Yamaha YZR-M1

PRO Ridden by one of the most successful MotoGP stars of all time, Valentino Rossi. Can't be bad!

CON Slower paced bikes have a braking advantage on fast ones like this

BEST FOR Churning up straights

SATISFACTION RATING 1 2 3 4 5 6 **7** 8 9

WORST CASE SCENARIO

21ST OF 21 WITH TWO LAPS TO GO

Go for a spectacular crash! When you're reset as a ghost, you'll have more chance to outrun the pack.

CHANCES OF WINNING **50/1**

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

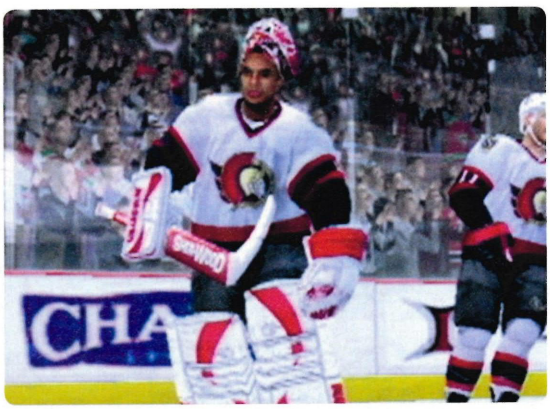
HALL OF FAME

- Every bike, rider and track
- Unsurpassed racing realism
- Challenges a fun way to learn
- Tough physics in sim mode

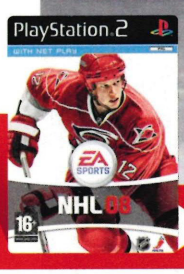
A jewel in the biking helmet. Accessible, enjoyable and thrilling MotoGP 07 brings a sport, and gaming genre, to life

8

Whether you want in-depth sim or quick play, NHL is king of the rink



Salary caps prevent you from making a team of uber-men in character creation



Release Out now **Publisher** EA Sports **Developer** HB Studios **Price** £29.99
Players 1-4 **Web** easports.com/nhl08 **Also try** NHL 2K8

NHL 08

Once-plucky pucker now seems frozen in time

An ice hockey game is a bitch to set up. Apart from several hundred pounds' worth of kit per player, you'll need to run pipes pumping antifreeze under a 10 ton concrete slab to create a rink. Nope, this is not a jumpers-for-goalposts kind of sport.

So if anything screams for a £30 videogame simulation, it's ice hockey. And that's where EA Sports' NHL series steps in, having wrestled the title of premiere stick-'em-up away from the 2K titles last year.

Sadly, apart from jersey and roster changes, the game has developed little in the intervening time.

Shooting the freeze

Hockeyheads can still get stuck into micro-management in Dynasty mode. For casual players, setting up a quick game (online or otherwise) is a breeze, and there are a handful of mini-games where you can practise the intricacies of 'dekeing' and shooting too.

That's handy, given that the revamped control system isn't entirely intuitive.

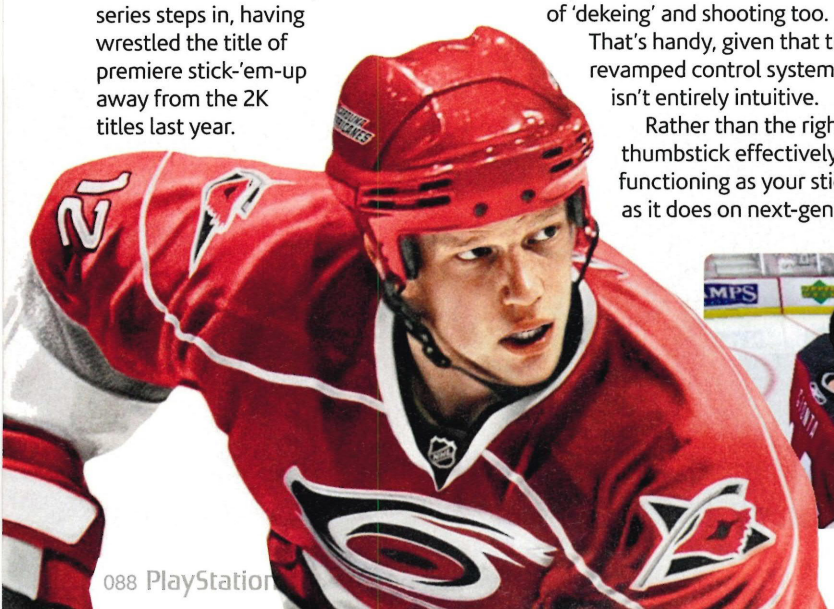
Rather than the right thumbstick effectively functioning as your stick, as it does on next-gen, you pull back on it to begin a shot, and push forward quickly to fire it off.

Still, given a bit of practice, you'll soon be giving goalies shellshock.

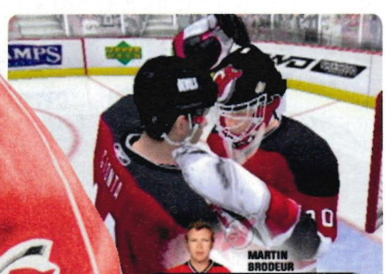
NHL is still reigning champ of the ice hockey sim. But, alas, it isn't too much of a stretch to imagine all of NHL 08's changes fitting onto a single PS2 memory card and serving as an update to its older brother. **Mike Sterry**

BONUS INFO

There's plenty of crazy jargon thrown about in ice hockey. Complementing the sport's own offside rule, 'icing' is when a player shoots the puck past both red lines. To 'deke' means to feint the puck away from a defender or goalie (from Canadian slang meaning 'to confuse').



Chewing gum, throwing punches: player animation is excellent



PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- Plenty to do for nerd or novice
- Lifelike animation
- Control system is tough to learn
- Few new features

It still rules the PS2 rink, but if you're already familiar with the series, NHL 08 doesn't do enough to prevent NHL 07 déjà vu

7

FIGHTING STYLE

"NATURALLY GIFTED & TECHNICALLY SOUND."

TECHNICAL

SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2008

FEATURING ECW

HOW WILL YOU PLAY?

DIRTY · HIGH FLYER · SHOWMAN · BRAWLER

SUBMISSION ARTIST · POWERHOUSE · TECHNICAL

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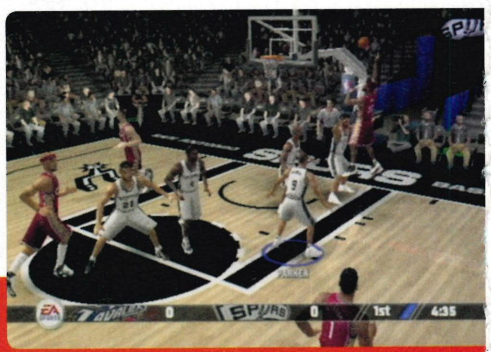
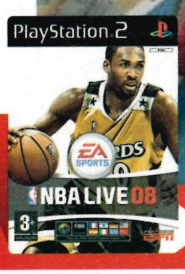
It's another solid showing for EA's slam-dunker but problems remain





Release Out now **Publisher** EA Sports **Developer** EA **Price** £39.99
Players 1-2 **Web** easports.com/nbalive08 **Also try** NBA 2K7

NBA LIVE 08

Inconsistency is king of this court

NBA Live 08 is as wretched as a basketball game can get. Or at least, that's what we thought, because this truly is a game with a split personality.

After a few hours playing the game in the default camera view, which sits awkwardly behind the attacking team, we were ready to scream.

In this mode, players slide along the floor and fly awkwardly through the air to catch rebounds, and the ball bounces like it's flatter than roadkill.

But, bizarrely, if you change the camera settings to a more traditional, side-on view, it's as if you're playing an entirely different game.

Instead of slow and jerky, your players are lithe and quick. Shooting and rebounding feels natural and the game is generally great to play.

It's certainly a big improvement over NBA Live 07, but there are still problems beyond that camera thing.

Slam junk

EA is *still* using separate buttons for jump shots and dunks, which is frustrating. Our guess is that it covers up the AI's shortcomings, because players still seem unable to make decent shot choices on their own.

Tactically the game is a little weak, too, and your team will sometimes not follow instructions when setting up screens and double-teaming your opposition's danger men.

Even EA's usually glitzy presentation is below par. Replays are low key and the choice of highlights is dubious.

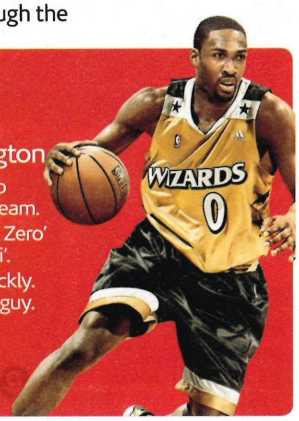
Commentary flows well, and the way the home fans 'boo' the away team is a neat touch, but it's not enough to give NBA Live the edge over the 2K series, which is still king of the 'ballers on PS2. **Andy Hartup**

PLAYER PROFILE

Gilbert Arenas, Washington

PRO Edged out Vince Carter to appear in the Eastern All Stars team.
CON His cool nickname 'Agent Zero' has been swapped for 'Hibatchi'.
BEST FOR Scoring points quickly. He's a 'shoot first, pass second' guy.

SATISFACTION RATING 7



PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- All the licences are there
- Slick in side-on view
- Doesn't handle detail well
- Controls are strange

Still trails behind the NBA 2K series, but this is certainly an improvement on last year if you can get to grips with the camera

6

FIGHTING STYLE

"WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GET THE JOB DONE."

SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2008

FEATURING EXTREME CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING ECW

HOW WILL YOU PLAY?

DIRTY · HIGH FLYER · SHOWMAN · BRAWLER

SUBMISSION ARTIST · POWERHOUSE · TECHNICAL

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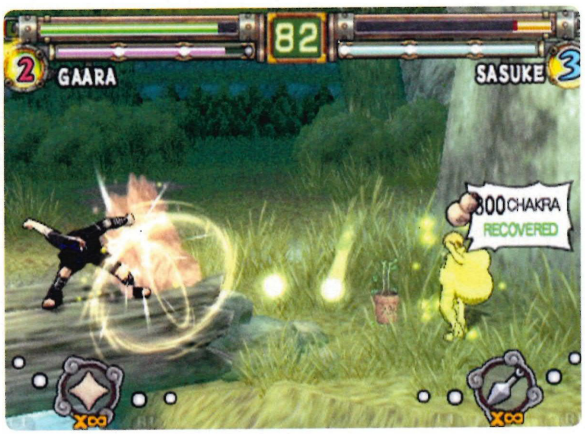
Bemani posing games break up the crazy technicolour fighting action



The fights are based on combos, special attacks and blocking moves

Release 19 October **Publisher** Atari **Developer** Namco-Bandai **Price** £29.99 **Players** 1-2
Web cartoonnetwork.com/tv_shows/naruto **Also try** Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi

NARUTO ULTIMATE NINJA 2

The ancient Japanese art of button-bashing

For a game packed with super-complex combos, epic special attacks and careful block-and-parry tricks, there's a hell of a lot of mashing of buttons in Naruto: Ultimate Ninja 2.

The game is equal parts technically challenging and straightforward slugfest, which is great because there's a very sharp learning curve to actually become an Ultimate Ninja.

Don't worry if you're not savvy with the TV series on which it's based.

Compared to many fighting games, the landscape is sumptuous

All you need to know is that there are over 30 characters in this cel-shaded caper that are there to kick the colour out of each other.

There are also Bemani posing games, a shop to buy new items such as throwing stars and bricks, and a pseudo free-roaming story mode.

Combo diddly

But at its core, it's all about the violence. You can bluff your way through your first couple of fights by whacking ◎, but for the perfectionist there are enough intricacies to keep you practising hard.

And they're worth learning, because some of the moves are amazing. Like Ultimate Ninja 1, you raise your Chakra bar by holding ↓, hit △, and then punch (◎) your opponent to reveal an interactive cutscene where following on-screen prompts will ignite all kinds of unique and spectacular moves.

In fact, most things are the same as in the first game: the characters have been polished and a few new modes added but the crux hasn't changed.

Still, the toe-to-toe scrapping is compelling, even though it'll turn your ham-fists to mince. **Nathan Irvine**

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- Easy to play, tough to master
- Looks great
- New features are scarce
- Our hands still hurt

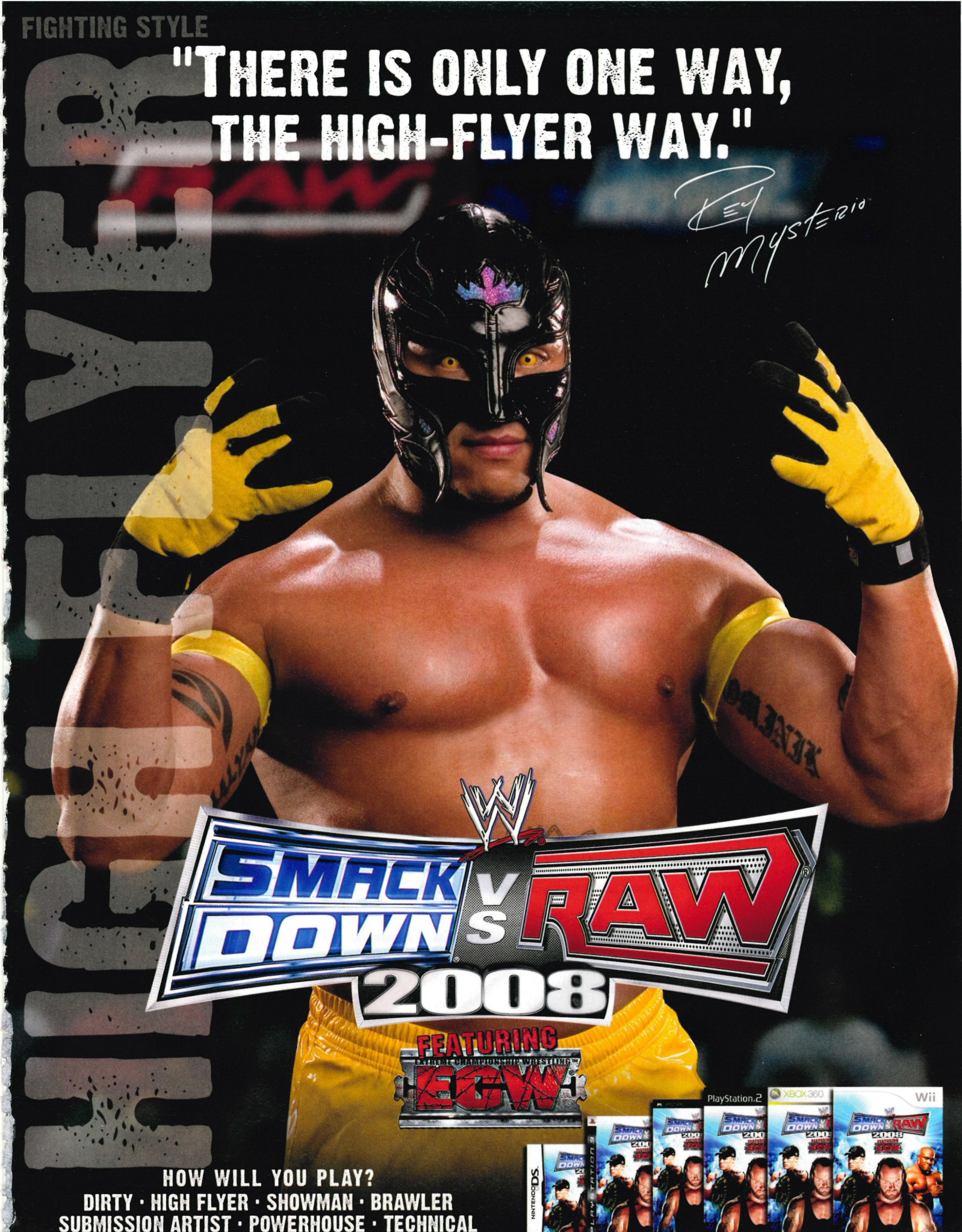
It's difficult not to find this fighter charming – even if the hero is a squeaky-voiced brat

7

FIGHTING STYLE

"THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY, THE HIGH-FLYER WAY."

Rey Mysterio



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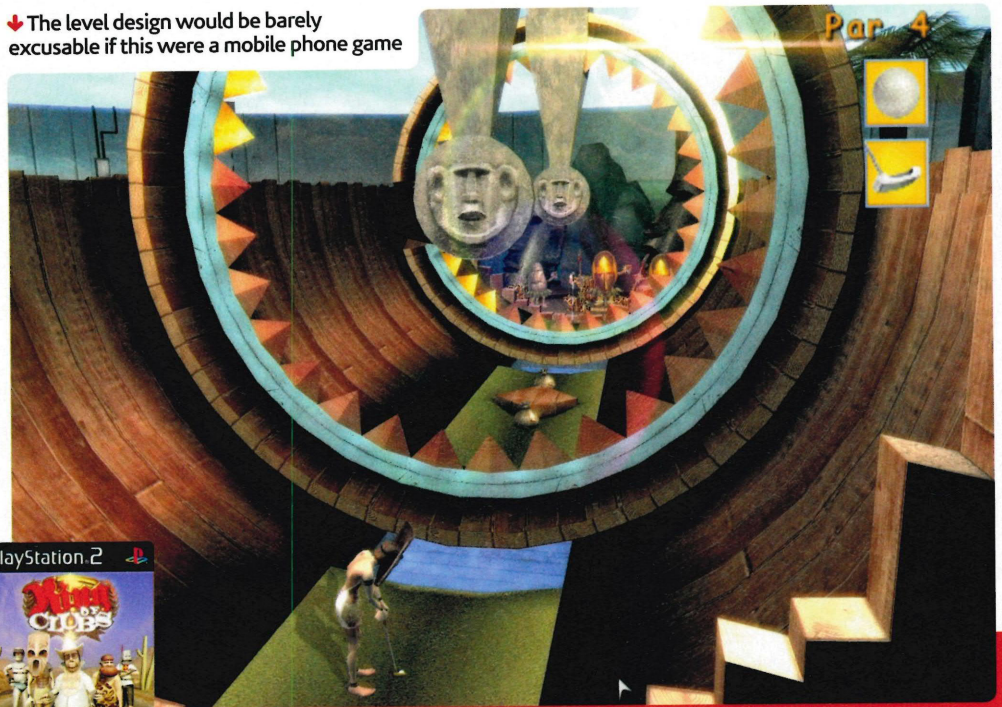
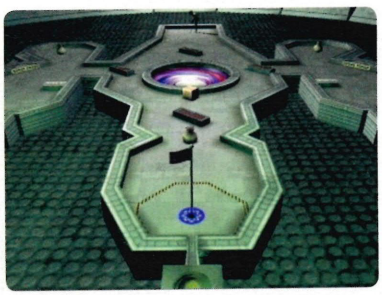
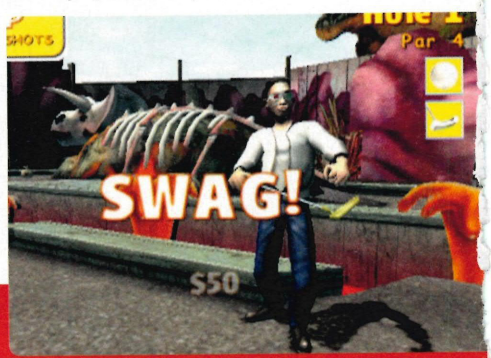
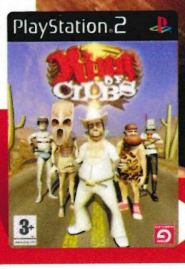
The level design would be barely excusable if this were a mobile phone game





We think we're supposed to feel happy at this point, but we just can't





Release 20th October **Publisher** Oxygen **Developer** Oxygen **Price** £24.99
Players 1-4 **Web** talktobubba.com **Also try** Everybody's Golf

KING OF CLUBS

You don't have to be mad to buy this guff, but it helps

Are you tired of playing good PS2 games that provide you with hours of entertainment? Then King of Clubs will be right up your street.

This incredibly lacklustre take on the world of crazy golf is exactly the sort of game PS2 can do without.

Set in a sort of theme park owned by Elvis-a-like, Bubba, you simply pick up some putters and head out onto the course. And that's where the problems start.

The drab putting courses (from prehistoric to Aztec zones, all equally unimaginative) look like they were designed in a day. By chimps.

Monotonous music claws mercilessly at your eardrums over the menus and however much you pray it will stop, your gods aren't listening: it continues during play, too.

The king is dead

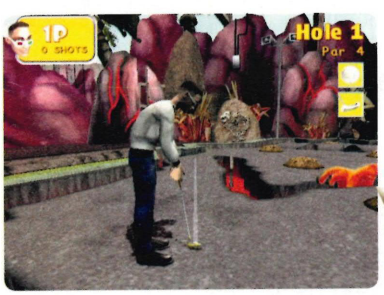
The actual 'golfing' is a broken affair that features misjudged angles and some utterly useless ball physics.

Add to the mix a set of garbled cheers and boos at your performance, plus money sacks that, when you collect them, flash that early 1990s phrase 'wonga!' across the screen and you get the feeling that you're one crappy feature away from a mobile phone game.

Except that this one costs 25 quid, for which price you could buy a pair of secondhand classics instead.

In short, you can count King of Clubs' redeeming features on a sardine's fingers.

It's all terribly below-par and we don't mean in the 'good' golfing sense of the phrase. **Nathan Irvine**



Ball physics are useless and angles are misjudged

TO DO LIST

Dear developer, please fix the following problems

PRIORITY	PROBLEM	HOW BAD?
1	The targeting is all over the place	Utterly disappointing
2	Absolutely disgraceful graphics	Our eyes hurt
3	Sound effects and music	Hit the 'mute' button
4	Slapdash course design	A complete turn-off

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK VERDICT

- Buying this dross is optional
- Looks like a mobile phone game
- Golf mechanics are dreadful
- The noises hurt our soul

We're almost lost for words as to how bad this is. You'd have more fun playing real golf in the driving rain. Blindfolded and naked.

2

FIGHTING STYLE

POWERFUL

"I AM AN UNSTOPPABLE FORCE."

RAW

SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2008

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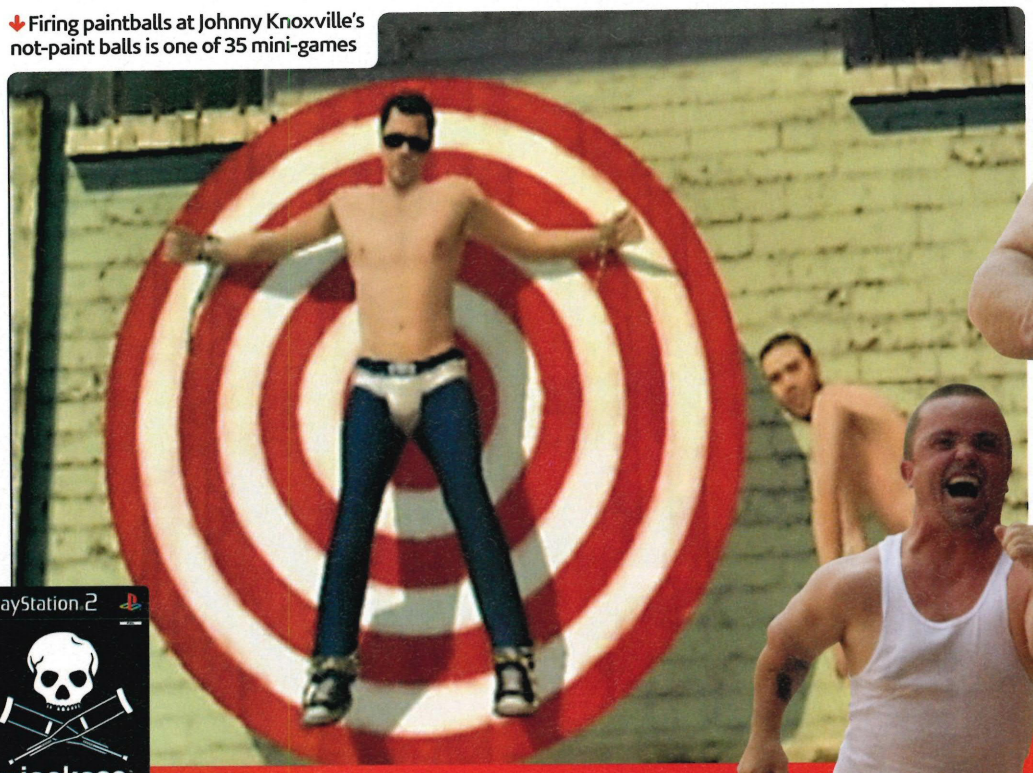
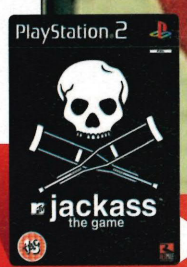
Firing paintballs at Johnny Knoxville's not-paint balls is one of 35 mini-games





Release 26 October **Publisher** Red Mile Entertainment **Developer** Sidhe Interactive **Price** £24.99
Players 1-4 **Web** jackassthegame.com **Also try** Rayman Raving Rabbids

JACKASS THE GAME

Crass, disgusting, painful – and that's just the intro

So, you've just been awarded the licence to make a game of popular TV series *Jackass*. How are you going to go about doing that? What genre will be the best vehicle? Turn-based roleplayer? First-person shooter? Real-time strategy?

No, there's really only one genre that can come close to replicating the scattershot collection of barmy pranks and bone-crunching stunts that makes up a typical episode of *Jackass*, and that is the mini-game collection.

But don't worry. We can proudly declare that Jackass: The Game is not another mini-game fiasco in the vein of the horrible Little Britain: The Videogame.

Yes, we're as shocked as you are, but Jackass: The Game is actually rather good.

Johnny Knoxville, Steve-O, Chris 'Party Boy' Pontius, Dave England: the crew are all here, apart from the notable absence of Bam Margera. They're brought to life through the motion-capture wizadry of Weta Digital (the geniuses behind the CGI in The Lord of the Rings films).

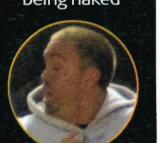
WE'RE SHOCKED, BUT JACKASS: THE GAME IS ACTUALLY GOOD

The detailed character models are well animated, but the faces are a little eerie

CAST LIST

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE
'Serious' acting credits include the Dukes of Hazzard and The Ringer

PARTY BOY
Vegetarian Chris Pontius is married and likes being naked



WEE-MAN
4 ft 7in Jason Acuña is also a pro skateboarder

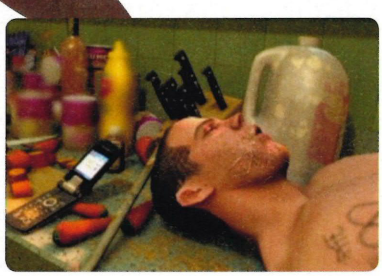
Needless to say, don't try this at home kids

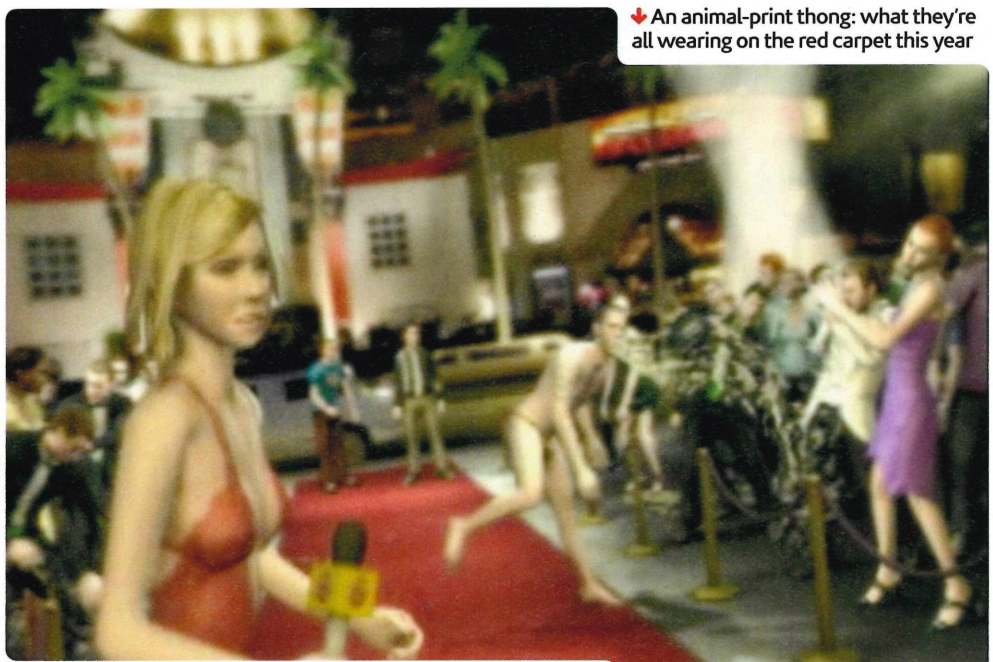
The pain game

The main part of the game, MTV Story Mode, sees you 'filming' the newest series of Jackass for MTV, with seven episodes made up of five stunts each.

Each episode is rated and generates revenue according to the footage you get from each stunt, and after raising

Mini-games can last from 10 seconds to five minutes





An animal-print thong: what they're all wearing on the red carpet this year

enough cash, you move onto the next episode. It's all window-dressing, really, although completing all the objectives in a given stunt will unlock further characters and footage from the actual show.

But this is where something odd happens: after completing a stunt to satisfaction, it's unlocked in Challenge Mode, which presents the stunt again with slightly more difficult objectives.

You'll then start raising cash again for an entirely new fund, which can be used to purchase goofy (and useless) props, slideshows and classic clips from the TV series.

It's basically a ploy to get you to play the game again, but you could just buy a DVD (we recommend the second film).

The stunt is on

Around 80% of the stunts give you the option to 'bail' at any time, which typically means relinquishing control of your chosen Jackass and letting their limp body break against a wall.

These bails are bone-crunchingly brilliant and will produce a slideshow of X-rays explicitly detailing their injuries (bruised testicles being our favourite). It's one of the funniest bits of the game and there's method to the madness, because racking up a huge medical bill is a secondary objective in most stunts.

Mind you, funny as it is, these otherwise-fatal injuries kind of miss the point of the show. When Johnny Knoxville famously almost broke his neck after a golf cart fell on him, the episode took a quite serious turn. But as you're guiding a limp Jackass down a cactus-strewn slope and racking up the wounds in 'Pachinko Precipice', it's not exactly realistic.

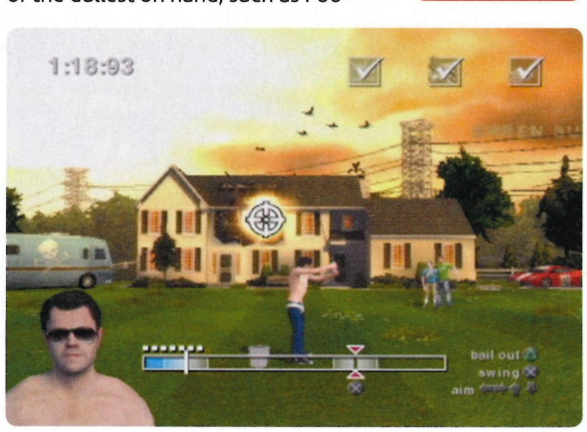
We also thought it was a shame that Jackass's token dwarf Wee Man was given his own set of particularly demeaning mini-games. We weren't expecting political correctness but still, being short isn't inherently funny.

There's a multiplayer mode, but it feels like something of a missed trick. Only five of the mini-games can be played simultaneously (in Ass-to-Ass mode), and these happen to be some of the dullest on hand, such as Poo Tug and Rock Paper Nuts. Yes, that last one is literally rock-paper-scissors. It's hardly worth firing up the PS2 for, to be honest.

Dung is often involved in stunts. So is vomit

GAME CLOCK

Time taken to play through all the mini-games to satisfaction



Jack to the future

The rest of the mini-games have to be played round-robin style, which feels particularly hollow during the game's numerous racing games.

Is it too much to ask for a bit of split-screen? It seems a bit negligent to develop a game that's best enjoyed with friends, dare we say it after a few shandies, and then not allow them to play together.

Also, one of the best things about Jackass on TV is the camaraderie that's obviously enjoyed among the cast and crew. You get the sense that this is just a group (albeit a well-paid group) of stoners, skaters and general losers playing painful pranks on each other and carrying out near-fatal dares, usually involving shopping trolleys and fireworks.

The poor, expletive-strewn script of the game and its often-disturbing cutscenes (such as the one that suggests Steve-O has just choked to death on his own vomit) hardly bring this across.

True fans of the show (and, given that the last new episode aired in 2002, there are probably few genuine fans left) will doubtless want to pick this up, but most others won't bother.

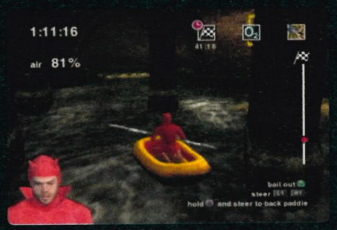
It's as well made as can be, given the subject matter, but the definite Jackass experience remains in their TV and movie antics. **Mike Sterry**

MINI GAMES, MAJOR INJURIES

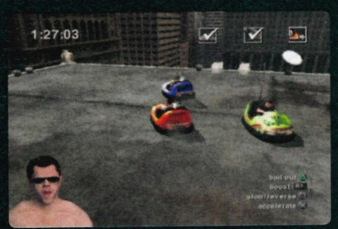
Some are trickier than others, some are more fun than others. Here's the complete lowdown...

BACKYARD RACE
Mindlessly racing golf carts along a very short circuit. Meh.
DIFFICULTY 8/10
MINI-RATING 5/10

BIG BALLS
It's zorb vs zorb vs zorb vs zorb on a skyscraper rooftop. And it's fun.
DIFFICULTY 8/10
MINI-RATING 8/10



BROWN WATER RAFTING
Sewer rafting. Avoiding gators. Collecting turds. Nuff said.
DIFFICULTY 9/10
MINI-RATING 3/10

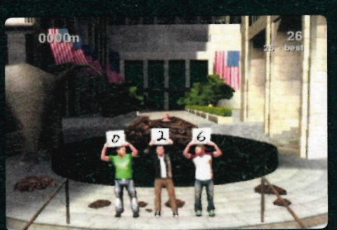


BUMPER KINGS
Another rooftop battle, this time with dodgems. We liked it.
DIFFICULTY 8/10
MINI-RATING 8/10

CART JAM
Hump an out-of-control shopping trolley down a hill. Weeeee!
DIFFICULTY 6/10
MINI-RATING 6/10

DEMOLITION GOLF
Demolish a house with carefully hit grenades. A bit entertaining.
DIFFICULTY 7/10
MINI-RATING 6/10

EGG GULP
Feed Wee-man rotten eggs till he vomits. Final Fantasy it ain't.
DIFFICULTY 0/10
MINI-RATING 1/10



ELEPHANT POO DIVE
Press button combinations while Steve-O dives into dung. Depressing.
DIFFICULTY 4/10
MINI-RATING 1/10

EXTREME JUGGLING
'Extreme' because it involves TNT. No death though, which is a shame.
DIFFICULTY 8/10
MINI-RATING 2/10

FRIDGE RACER
Because there's this game called *Ridge* Racer, which is much better.
DIFFICULTY 7/10
MINI-RATING 4/10

GOLF RALLY
Race around a course in a golf cart, collecting flags. Mildly diverting.
DIFFICULTY 4/10
MINI-RATING 5/10

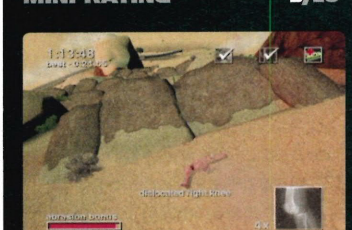
GOLF WAR
A game of keep-away with four Jackasses in golf carts. It's alright.
DIFFICULTY 8/10
MINI-RATING 6/10

GRENADE GOLF
Hit grenades on a driving range or sit on one to launch yourself. Odd.
DIFFICULTY 5/10
MINI-RATING 5/10

MEAT MAN
Run around feeding dogs meat and taking their bones. Yawn.
DIFFICULTY 0/10
MINI-RATING 2/10

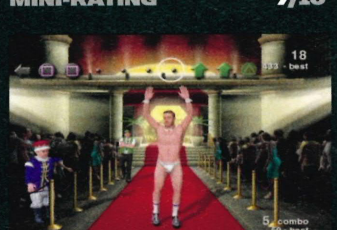
NEW YORK POGO
A rooftop pogo race. Actually a lot more fun than we expected.
DIFFICULTY 6/10
MINI-RATING 7/10

ODDLY SHAPED SHOOTING
A fat man, a dwarf, a trampoline, us with a paintball gun. Tee hee!
DIFFICULTY 6/10
MINI-RATING 8/10



PACHINKO PRECIPICE
The best thing in the game: a truly hilarious ragdoll roll down a hill.
DIFFICULTY 7/10
MINI-RATING 10/10

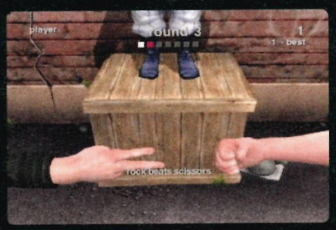
PARTY BOY
Rhythm action involving a man in a thong. Surprisingly funny.
DIFFICULTY 8/10
MINI-RATING 8/10



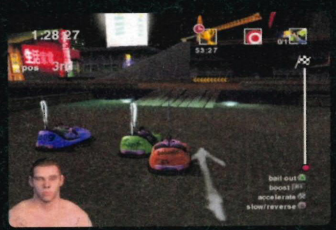
PARTY BOY 2
More of the same, but on a red carpet. Still funny, but very tricky!
DIFFICULTY 10/10
MINI-RATING 7/10

POO SHOWER
Move a brolly around to protect Wee-Man from flying poo. Silly.
DIFFICULTY: 7/10
MINI-RATING: 7/10

POO TUG
Tug of war over a pit of butt-butter. Unpleasant.
DIFFICULTY 2/10
MINI-RATING 4/10



ROCK, PAPER, NUTS
Rock, Paper, Scissors. Winner, Hits, Loser's, Nads. Oh dear.
DIFFICULTY 0/10
MINI-RATING 3/10



ROOF RACE
A rooftop dodgem race. No, we don't know how they're powered.
DIFFICULTY 6/10
MINI-RATING 7/10

ROOF TOP CART STOP
A game of Chicken with shopping trolleys and a steep drop. Okayish.
DIFFICULTY 3/10
MINI-RATING 5/10

SAN FRAN TRASH CAN
Roll down a hill in a rubbish bin (old-style metal type). A tad dull.
DIFFICULTY 9/10
MINI-RATING 5/10

SHOOT JOHNNY
Whale on Knoxville's nuts with a paintball gun. Very pleasing.
DIFFICULTY 4/10
MINI-RATING 8/10

SHORT FIGHTER
Wee-Man smashes up a car. Not big. Not clever. Not very funny.
DIFFICULTY 2/10
MINI-RATING 2/10

SNOW JOB
There's a level just like this in We ♥ Katamari. This is not quite as good.
DIFFICULTY: 6/10
MINI-RATING: 7/10

SUBURBAN CATAPULT
Strap a guy into the Deathsling and… you get it, eh. We chuckled.
DIFFICULTY: 7/10
MINI-RATING: 9/10

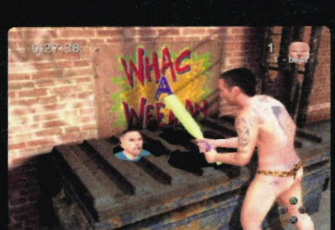
SUBURBAN WAKEBOARD
A kid did this on our street once. He went to hospital. This is better.
DIFFICULTY: 5/10
MINI-RATING: 6/10

SUPER BOWLED
Zorbing downhill, hitting people dressed as bowling pins. Mediocre.
DIFFICULTY: 6/10
MINI-RATING: 4/10

URBAN WAKEBOARD
Wakeboarding through the streets of New York. A bit unrealistic.
DIFFICULTY: 6/10
MINI-RATING: 5/10

WEE HAND
Five-Finger Fillet with Wee Man's hand. We winced, but we laughed.
DIFFICULTY: 7/10
MINI-RATING: 8/10

WEE TATTOO
Tattoo Wee Man's back while he sits on a kiddie ride. It's fun.
DIFFICULTY 2/10
MINI-RATING 9/10



WHAC-A-WEE-MAN
Exactly how it sounds. A little bit too demeaning to be really funny.
DIFFICULTY: 3/10
MINI-RATING: 5/10

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- A real fan-pleaser
- Soundtrack like warthogs mating
- Some of the mini-games are dire
- Humour doesn't translate well

A few stinkers aside, Jackass is a great bunch of mini-games that capture the essence of the show

7

Kaka screams one past Kahn at the San Siro as FIFA returns in fine form

Release Out now **Publisher** EA **Developer** EA Canada **Price** £39.99
Players 1-8 **Web** fifa08.ea.com **Also try** Pro Evolution Soccer 2008

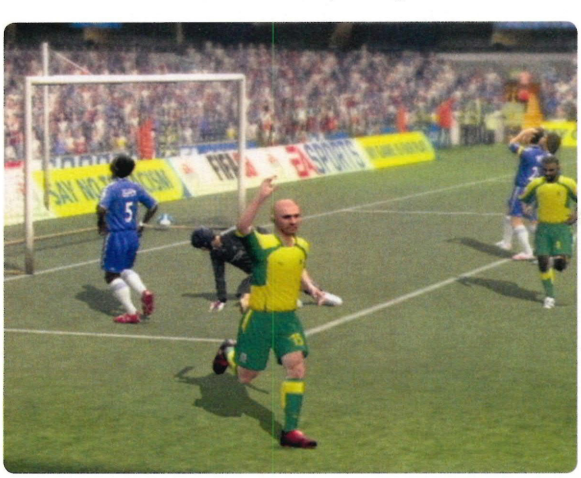
FIFA 08

Match of the day? It's certainly game of the month

After more indifferent seasons than Spurs, FIFA finally came good last year. The now-expected slew of official licences was finally backed up by a more than respectable showing on the pitch.

Okay, so this upward turn was largely down to the gameplay aping that of the hugely respected Pro Evo series, especially in the area of through balls and shooting, but we weren't complaining.

Hammering Chelsea at the Bridge is fantasy footie at its finest



It'll be no surprise to you, then, that there's very little in the way of tangible gameplay changes in FIFA 08.

Well, to be frank there are actually no obvious changes at all. Is the AI a little tighter? Have the ball physics and player animations been tweaked? Possibly, but not so that you would notice. No matter.

Be A Pro evolution

With this in mind, you might assume that all you're shelling out for are the authentic kits and squads. But you'd assume wrongly, because there's a new game mode called Be A Pro, and this is worth the entrance fee alone.

Be A Pro mode puts you in the shoes of a single player for an entire season. You can choose an existing member of a side, or create a bespoke player (who may even look uncannily like yourself…) and assign him to the team of your choice in the position of your choice.

Your player develops over the course of a season by earning experience points, which are then spent on improving various sporting attributes in a roleplaying game style.

The number of points you earn for your player depends primarily on your

THE MOMENT WHEN...

The Nike T90 football makes the keeper 'do a Lehman'

The keeper attempts to gather an innocuous 20-yard strike but it dribbles straight through his legs. Arf!

↑ Don't call LA Galaxy a one-man team. Donovan's pretty handy, too

↑ Replays are for special moments such as scoring against Bristol City

stat-tracked performance rating (shots on target and so on) and on whether or not you complete individual and team objectives.

Be A Pro is intended for co-op play, and up to four players can sign up for the same team for the season. It's quite superb to play with your mates (although it's dull like a Steve McLaren press conference playing alone).

The on-pitch action works really well. You can use the face buttons to call for passes, lobs and through balls from AI teammates, but linking up with fellow humans and constructing killer moves is far more fun.

BE A PRO MAKES IT WORTH SIGNING ON FOR ANOTHER YEAR

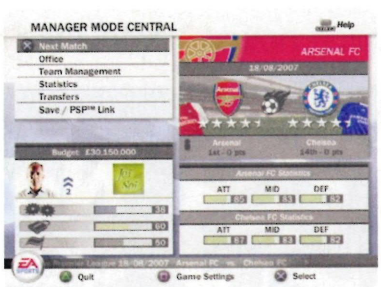
The mode has even more added spice when there's two or more of you, thanks to the fantastic stat tracking and post-game analysis. You won't want to be outdone by your teammates in the ratings… but don't feel tempted to put a cigar out in anyone's eye if they tease you.

'They always score!'

As for the rest of the game, it's basically a case of 'see FIFA 07'. The excellent Manager mode returns, but with few additions, and there's the usual plump selection of licensed competitions, from the Turkish first division to Coca Cola League Two and the FA Cup. You can create your own compos too, which enables you to mimic the absent Champions League.

Presentation is top drawer, with 30 authentic stadiums, the correct 07/08 kits and team-specific chants. And, as much as we dislike Clive "that balmy night in Barcelona" Tyldesley and Andy Gray, their commentary here is generally well-scripted and insightful.

So a season of consolidation for FIFA, but Be A Pro makes it worth signing on for another year. PES 2008, it's over to you. **Nick Ellis**

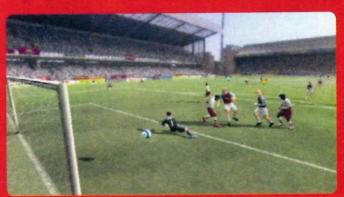


→ Manager mode is great, although little has changed

LIVE THE DREAM

In Be A Pro mode you can…

CREATE YOURSELF
The create-a-player function is comprehensive to the point of nostril size, even eyebrow shape and colour.



SIGN ON FOR YOUR CLUB
With EA buying just about every football licence going, you can play for the club you support.

OUTSHINE YOUR MATES
At the end of every match you are given a rating and a performance breakdown. Bragging rights ahoy!

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

HALL OF FAME

- Be A Pro is great with mates
- Stuffed with all the licences
- It's barely changed since last year
- Losing to Swindon Town sucks

Don't expect a revolution, or even an evolution, come to think of it, but this is solid stuff and truly excels in multiplayer

9

gamesradar presents

top 7 sexiest cheats

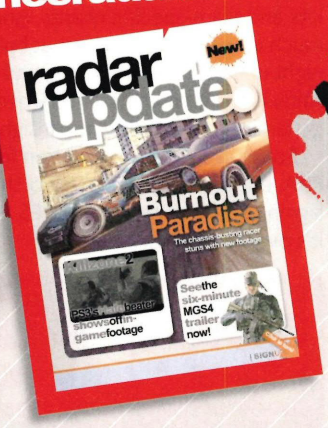
the most dangerous people in the games industry

and one of them is your girlfriend

The 10 worst game characters ever!

Plus

New FREE weekly online magazine http://ezine.gamesradar.co.uk/



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HALL OF FAME

PS2'S 100 GREATEST ◎ BEST GAMES EVER ⊗ CLASSICS ▣ HISTORY

WELCOME TO THE OPS2 HALL OF FAME

I suck at first-person shooters. Really suck. My sado-masochistic, destroy-everything-in-the-way-even-if-it's-myself tendencies don't hold up too well.

But then I found TimeSplitters 2 and realised my true calling. You see, TS2 encourages mass destruction.

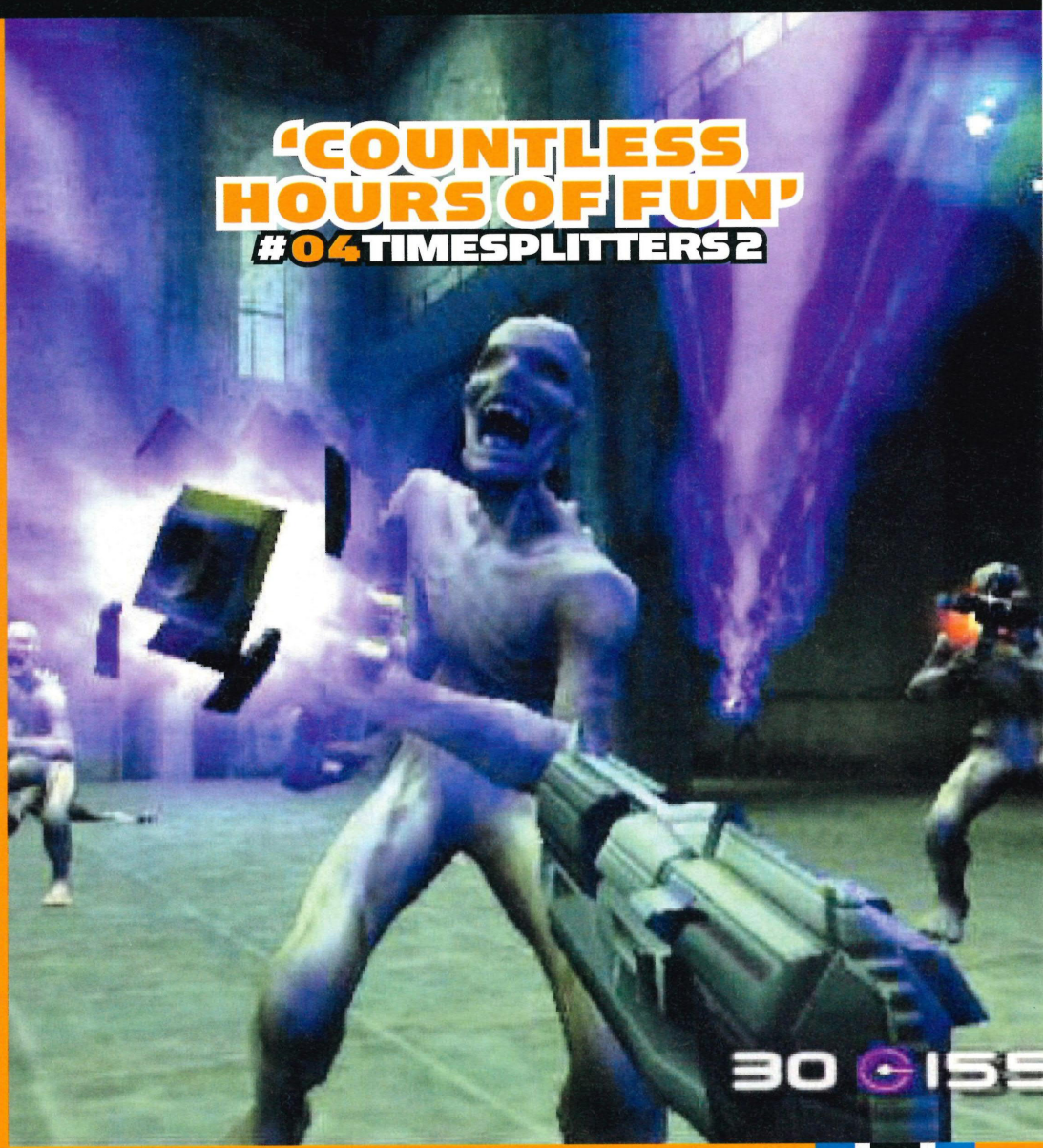
Shot the lot

It's got everything. Robots, zombies, angry Chinese chefs, aliens, marines, double machine guns, squid, grenade launchers, moustaches, cowboys….

The history-spanning levels are beautifully designed and set in places begging for shootouts: the Wild West, the gangster streets of New York, Amazonian jungles and even that Siberian Dam level from classic gunner Goldeneye.

The multiplayer options are without a shadow of a doubt the best ever. Play co-op, head to head, deathmatches, flag captures, king of the hill – play everything until your fingers fall off and your friends have long since gone home. And, if you're me, play it all as a flamethrowing monkey… mwahahahaha!

KIM RICHARDS
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
krichards@futurenet.co.uk



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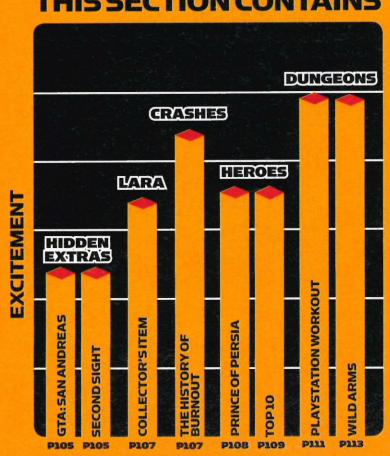


HALL OF FAME ESSENTIAL INFO

HOW A GAME GETS IN THE TOP 100

We don't award membership to the Hall Of Fame lightly. To prove itself worthy of induction, a game must demonstrate many of these qualities: outstanding gameplay, glorious graphics, pioneering innovation, superior use of sound and great replay value.

WE USE OLD REVIEW SCORES

Scores for games listed in the Hall Of Fame are those that were awarded when the game was first reviewed in OPS2. Times change and technology evolves, so some of the games released early in the PS2's life, while still great, may not have the same polish as more recent titles.

AWARDS

If you see this medal on the verdict box in a game review, it means the title is worthy of a place in the Hall Of Fame and will be inducted in the following issue.

ON THE DISC

100

KILLZONE
Sony, 2004 Shooter

Didn't turn out to be the Halo-killer that it was billed as, but worth a blast anyway, if only to see what all the fuss was about.

Buy it if... you need a lesson in vaulting ambition and you like blasting aliens.

OPS2 #51 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

99

SLY 3: HONOUR AMONG THIEVES
Sony, 2005 Platformer

Cartoon japes starring a light-fingered raccoon and his gang, Sly is slick, stylish and bursting with ideas.

Buy it if... diamonds are your best friend.

OPS2 #52 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

TOP FACT

It costs up to $3.5m to lease a top-level bike for a real-life MotoGP rider. The game is much cheaper

98

MOTO GP4
Sony, 2005 Racing

This technically impressive superbike sim is a must for fans of two-wheeled speed machines and serious racing.

Buy it if... you fancy yourself as the next Valentino Rossi.

OPS2 #60 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

97

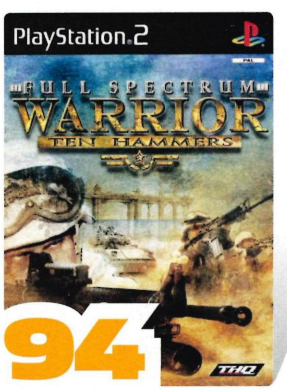
DISGAEA: HOUR OF DARKNESS
KOEI, 2004 RPG

Strategic RPG with more depth than the Marianas Trench and it's full of giggles.

Buy it if... the idea of deploying exploding penguins in a tactical RPG appeals.

OPS2 #47 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



94

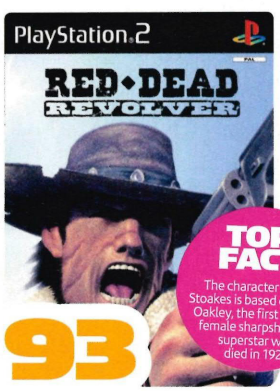
FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR: TEN HAMMERS
THQ, 2006 Tactical shooter

Hardcore, squad-based tactical sim used by the US Army to help train new recruits.

Buy it if... you failed your Territorial Army recruitment physical.

OPS2 #72 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



TOP FACT

The character Annie Stoakes is based on Annie Oakley, the first real-life female sharpshooting superstar who died in 1926

93

RED DEAD REVOLVER
Rockstar, 2004 Adventure

Not quite as good as Gun (see #76), but if you love John Wayne and shooting greasy robber-barons in the face, this is for you.

Buy it if... in your house, 'spaghetti' goes with Westerns, not bolognese.

OPS2 #47 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

92

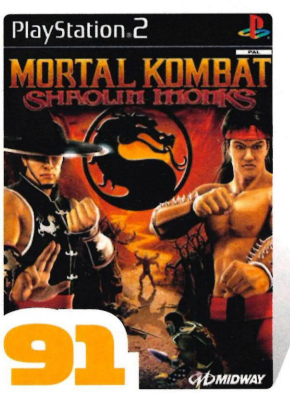
MUSIC 3000
Jester Interactive, 2003 Music

A powerful music editor. There's little else like this on PS2; it lets you sample MP3s, CDs or even your old GameBoy.

Buy it if... you tout yourself around as the new Fatboy Slim.

OPS2 #33 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



91

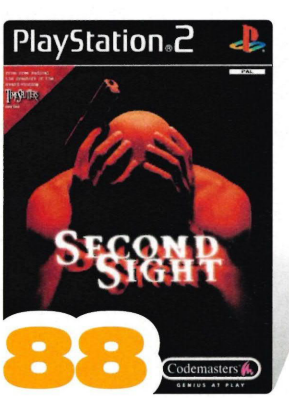
MORTAL KOMBAT: SHAOLIN MONKS
Midway, 2005 Fighting

A fast-paced beat-'em-up with loads of colour, class and claret.

Buy it if... your first words as an infant were: "Finish him!"

OPS2 #65 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



88

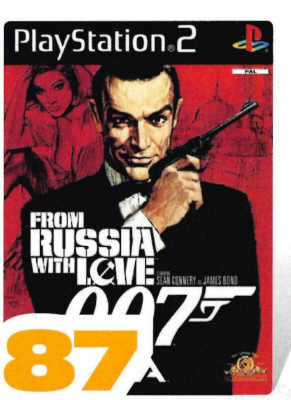
SECOND SIGHT
Codemasters, 2004 Adventure

There aren't enough games that let you telekinetically throw people off buildings.

Buy it if... you ever wondered what Professor X from *The X-Men* would be like with no wheelchair and an SMG.

OPS2 #50 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



87

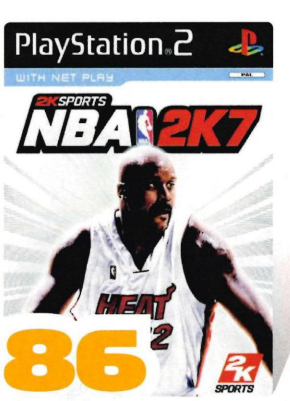
JAMES BOND 007: FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE
EA, 2005 Action

Superb adaptation: as close as you'll get to being 007 without actually killing a man.

Buy it if... you've been ex-schpecting it, Mr Bond.

OPS2 #66 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



86

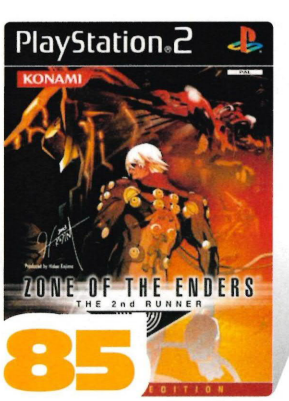
NBA 2K7
2K Sports, 2006 Sport

You don't have to be a b-ball fan to enjoy the subtleties of this top-tier basketball game. If you are, well, 2K7 will have you believing in true love.

Buy it if... the local court is rained out.

OPS2 #79 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



85

ZONE OF THE ENDERS: 2ND RUNNER
Konami, 2003 Action

Metal Gear Solid creator Hideo Kojima's other series, it couples scraps in flying mechs with a bonkers plot to great effect.

Buy it if... you're a Transformers fan.

OPS2 #38 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

WALLACE AND GROMIT: THE CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT

Konami, 2005 Platformer

Well-crafted, with pleasing graphics that do justice to the original characters.

Buy it if... you wear the wrong trousers.

OPS2 #65 **8/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT

SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS

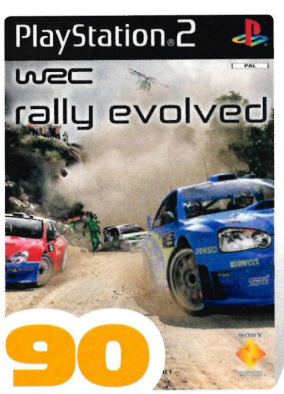
Sony, 2004 Shooter

The daddy of squad-based tactical war simulations, SOCOM still boasts a thriving online community.

Buy it if... you've yet to experience the joys of squad-based online play.

OPS2 #43 **8/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



WRC RALLY EVOLVED

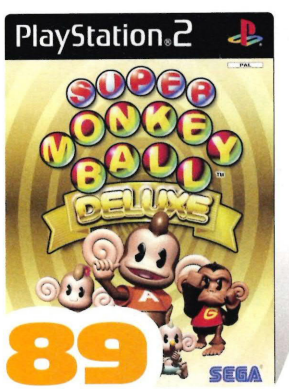
Sony, 2005 Racing

Sits neatly between punishing sim and fluffy arcade racing and remains accessible while gradually ramping up the challenge.

Buy it if... you've already nailed Colin McRae Rally 2005.

OPS2 #65 **9/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



SUPER MONKEY BALL DELUXE

Sega, 2005 Puzzle

Crazy action-puzzler-racer with chimps locked in giant plastic balls. A bit like that dream we have after eating cheese.

Buy it if... hamster balls fascinate you.

OPS2 #59 **8/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION REMIX

Rockstar, 2006 Racing

Nitro-tastic, open-world street racer with a generous selection of authentic vehicles, modding options, race types and tunes.

Buy it if... you're a fast-driving insomniac.

OPS2 #72 **8/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT

HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX

EA, 2007 Adventure

Roam freely around Hogwarts in a surprisingly fantastic game that Potter obsessives and lay folk alike will enjoy

Buy it if... you're not a Muggle.

OPS2 #87 **8/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT

SECRETS ARCHIVE

Digging up the hidden extras and bonus items from PS2's greatest games...

SINGING CJ

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

Leave the game to its own devices for long enough and CJ will start to sing songs from the radio. The tunes you will most likely hear CJ sing are the ones played on your favourite radio station.

UNLOCK ARCADE GOLD

SECOND SIGHT

Boot up the Reliance level. Enter the building through the vents and you'll find a room with guards and arcade machines inside. Kill the guards, and you'll be able to play arcade game Earth Impact! You can access it through the Pause menu.

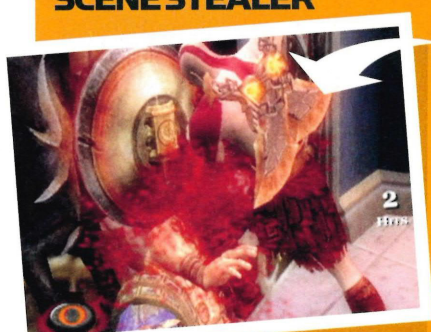
RUDE RATING

GUITAR HERO II

Next time you've noodled your way through Free Bird, take a look down the bottom of the statistics screen and you'll find you have a score for your prowess in, ahem, 'end wankery'!

SHOW US YOUR EASTER EGGS!
Email your game tips to opsm2@futurenet.co.uk

SCENE STEALER



Poor Theseus

God of War 2
Sony, 2007

Silly Theseus thought he could beat Kratos. But after an intense battle full of ice bolts, minotaurs and general butt-whopping, he is unceremoniously yanked from the roof and shoved into a doorway before having his brains mashed out of him by the door. Rather icky, but very funny, it's a rare upstaging for Kratos.

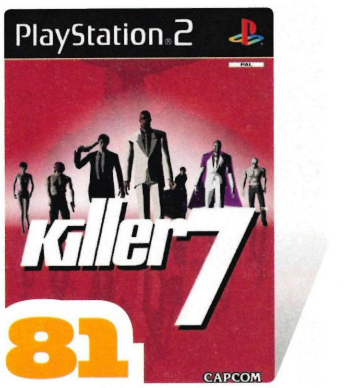
RATCHET & CLANK
Sony, 2002 Platformer

One of the finest games of the PS2's early years, the original R&C is still one of the most entertaining, inventive romps you can buy, even after three sequels.

Buy it if... you haven't played it already!

OPS2 #26 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



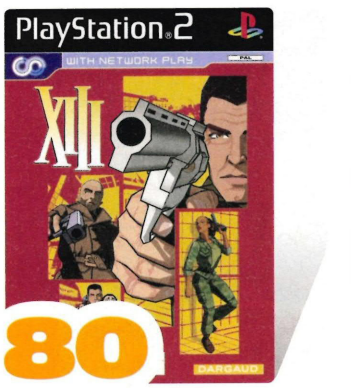
KILLER7
Capcom, 2005 Action

Unorthodox, on-rails shooter where you play as a wheelchair-bound assassin who can call on seven personalities with special powers to work for him.

Buy it if... the voices tell you to.

OPS2 #61 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



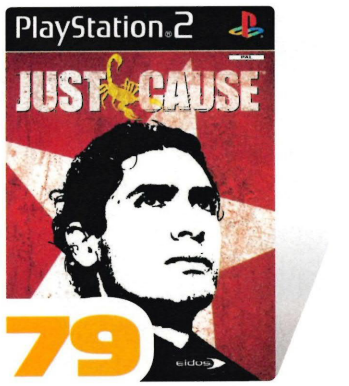
XIII
Ubisoft, 2004 Shooter

Highly original shooter starring a special-forces agent with amnesia who must crack a global conspiracy. Presented just like the cult comic book it's based on.

Buy it if... you love graphic novels.

OPS2 #40 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



JUST CAUSE
Eidos, 2006 Action

Parachute into the shoes of a CIA agent and bring down a corrupt government. Huge, beautiful and free-roaming.

Buy it if... the idea of Grand Theft Auto with politics gets you excited.

OPS2 #77 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

GUN
Activision, 2005 Shooter

Gun-totin', horse-ridin', baccy-chewin', poker-playin', free-roamin' Wild West action with a classic cowboys'n'injuns storyline and great voice acting.

Buy it if... you're an outlaw.

OPS2 #67 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

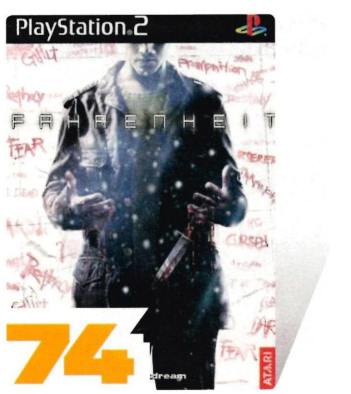
ACE COMBAT: SQUADRON LEADER
Sony, 2005 Shooter

An unashamedly arcadey flight sim with tons to do and all kinds of aerial combat.

Buy it if... you failed your eye test for the RAF.

OPS2 #56 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



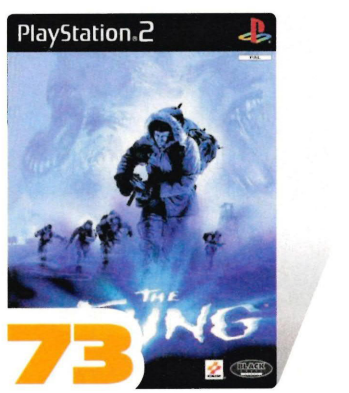
FAHRENHEIT
Atari, 2005 Adventure

Ambitious and engrossing, this plays like an interactive movie. You must find out how you were made to commit a murder before the police catch up with you.

Buy it if... you like messing up your mind.

OPS2 #64 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



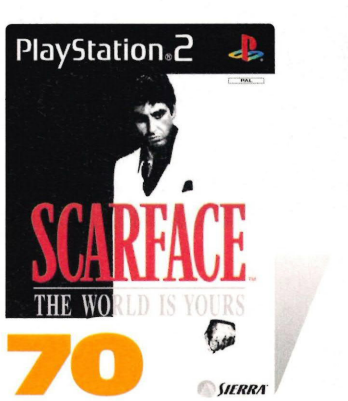
THE THING
Konami, 2002 Horror

Takes up where the 1982 sci-fi/horror movie left off: you and your troops must survive a nightmarish Arctic in a tense, atmospheric thriller. Chilling stuff (arf!).

Buy it if... you don't feel the cold.

OPS2 #25 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



SCARFACE: THE WORLD IS YOURS
Vivendi, 2006 Action

A GTA-inspired swear-a-thon that has you guiding Tony Montana from death's door to top of the Miami underworld.

Buy it if... you wanna play rough.

OPS2 #78 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND
Eidos, 2006 Adventure

Helping us forget the horror that was Angel Of Darkness, Lara's *real* PS2 debut is a trifle easy and a little short but a return to past form nonetheless.

Buy it if... you had a happy Anniversary.

OPS2 #71 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

ROGUE GALAXY
Sony, 2007 RPG

An excellent intergalactic roleplayer that borrows heavily from *Star Wars*, but in the most affectionate way. And with pirates.

Buy it if... you want great characters, settings and story. With pirates.

OPS2 #86 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

VIEWTIFUL JOE
Capcom, 2004 Fighting

A sexy marriage of snazzy, comic-book visuals and a retrotastic difficulty level, this loves to be hard but is hard not to love.

Buy it if... the words 'challenging' and 'retro' quicken your pulse.

OPS2 #52 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

78

CRICKET 07

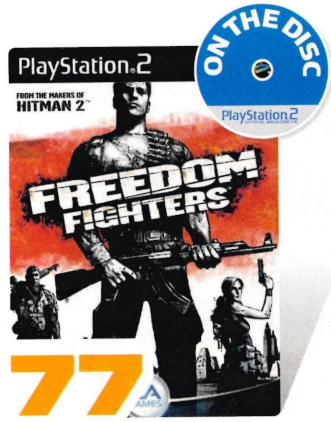
EA, 2006 Sport

The definitive sim of the ultimate real-time strategy game, it's more demanding than the Brian Lara games but also far superior.

Buy it if... you know your square cut from your Square-Enix.

OPS2 #80 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



77

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

EA, 2003 Shooter

Insanely addictive strategic and tactical shoot-'em-up set in a bleak New York overrun by Communist Russians.

Buy it if... you wonder what it would've been like if Russia had invaded the USA.

OPS2 #37 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

72

AMPLITUDE

Sony, 2003 Music

Vastly under-rated rhythm action: peform, mix and remix your way through classic tunes from the likes of David Bowie, Slipknot, BT, Pink and Run DMC.

Buy it if... you're a bedroom DJ.

OPS2 #38 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

71

SHADOW OF ROME

Capcom, 2005 Action

Gruesome toga'n'slash action mixed with stealthy detective work and a story that has more twists than Homer's *Odyssey*.

Buy it if... *Gladiator* and *The 300* are your favourite films.

OPS2 #56 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

66

BUZZ! THE MEGA QUIZ

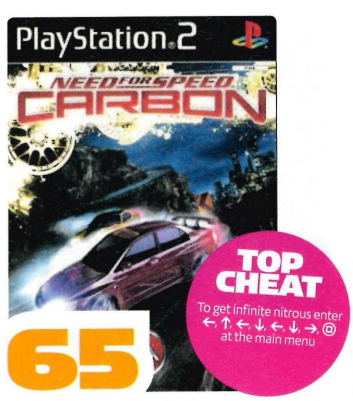
Sony, 2007 Party

Quiz show-style fun for all the family that comes with special buzzer controllers. Kids should try the Buzz! Junior series.

Buy it if... you like quizzes but can't stand that Noel Edmonds.

OPS2 #84 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



65

NEED FOR SPEED CARBON

EA, 2006 Racing

A blur of spoilers, nitros and elaborate paint jobs that speeds past you in the outside lane doing 175mph, this is the best in the Need For Speed series so far.

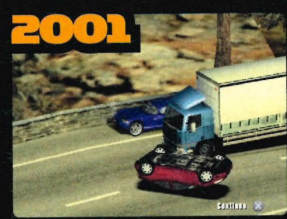
Buy it if... you feel the need.

OPS2 #79 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

A BRIEF HISTORY OF... BURNOUT

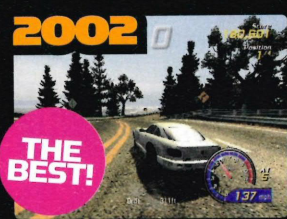
From twitchy street racer to supersonic crash-a-thon: we take a ride with the best driving series ever to park on PS2



2001

BURNOUT

The first PS2 Burnout was a solid enough racer, but it lacked that certain 'va va voom' we know and love from the other games in the series. And the crash mechanic was teeth-grindingly unforgiving.

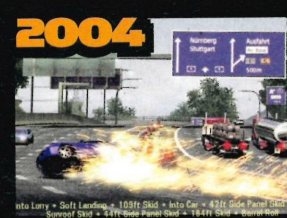


2002

THE BEST!

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT

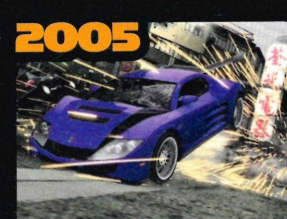
Arguably the greatest game in the series, Point Of Impact is all about avoiding other cars while driving as quickly and dangerously as possible. It also introduced the series' trademark Crash Junctions.



2004

BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN

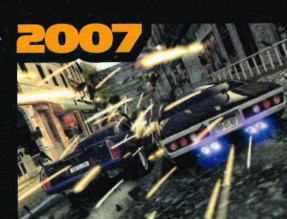
Before Takedown, Burnout was all about winning races and beating the clock. As the name suggests, this game introduced Takedowns – the ability to smash your opponents into walls and other vehicles.



2005

BURNOUT REVENGE

Here the focus shifted further towards causing damage rather than getting quick times and winning races. It allowed you to smash regular traffic off the road and into opponents, expanding the Takedown mechanics.



2007

BURNOUT DOMINATOR

The most recent Burnout on PS2 saw a return to roots, with racing against the clock and staying ahead of your opponents being the main emphasis. Sadly, the Crash Junction mode was completely removed, too.

COLLECTOR'S ITEM

Lifesize Lara

DODGY JPEG ALERT!

Everyone loves a little bit of Lara. And a big bit of Lara is even more to love, right? So how better to celebrate your love than by buying a lifesize statue of Lara Croft in her Angel of Darkness gear. Standing tall at 6 feet, 9 inches (including the podium) it's made of fibreglass, will cost you upwards of £500 and is a must-have for any serious Croft Collection.

RARITY VALUE

BROKEN XBOX 360S — SUNNY DAYS

QUAKE III REVOLUTION

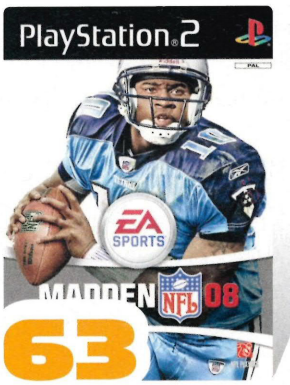
EA, 2001 Shooter

Old as the hills it may be, but Quake's only appearance on PS2 remains a solidly enjoyable, stress-relieving blastathon.

Buy it if... you need a breather from TimeSplitters 2 (see number 4).

OPS2 #6 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



MADDEN NFL 08

EA, 2007 Sport

Another improvement on EA's superlative gridiron sim. With an in-depth Franchise mode and accessible on-pitch gameplay this really is American Football for all.

Buy it if... rugby looks too dangerous.

OPS2 #90 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

REZ

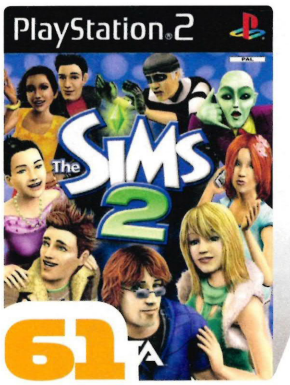
Sega, 2002 Shooter

A brain-frying, psychedelic, on-rails shooter-cum-music game where you hear colours and see sound. No, really.

Buy it if... taking your brain to another dimension sounds like a good idea.

OPS2 #16 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



THE SIMS 2

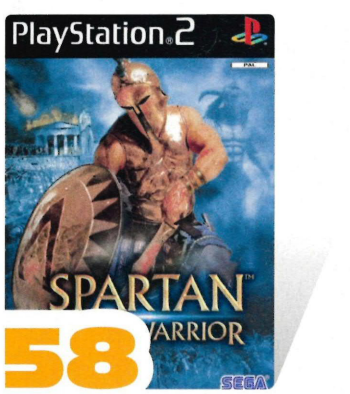
EA, 2005 God sim

What happens when The Most Successful PC Game of All Time™ comes to PS2? A surprisingly enjoyable interactive soap opera, that's what.

Buy it if... you enjoy meddling.

OPS2 #66 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



SPARTAN: TOTAL WARRIOR

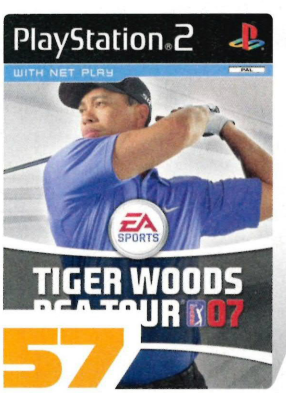
Sega, 2005 Action

A battle-heavy romp through the ancient world that blends the historical and mythological with swords and sorcery to great effect.

Buy it if... you want to be one of the 300.

OPS2 #64 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07

EA, 2007 Sport

With excellent analogue stick controls for your swing and a dazzling array of official licences and customisation options, this is the definitive pro tour title.

Buy it if... you're a serious golf fan.

OPS2 #78 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

SINGSTAR ROCKS!

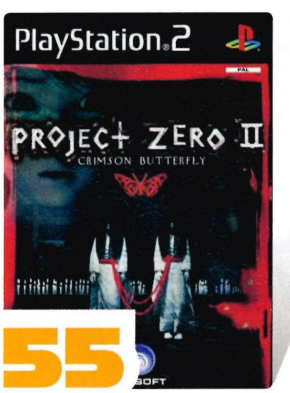
Sony, 2006 Karaoke

Our favourite of the SingStar series, with Bloc Party, The Killers, Coldplay, The Rolling Stones and Keane on the tracklist.

Buy it if... you wanna rock! Also try SingStars Pop Hits, '90s and Legends.

OPS2 #72 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



PROJECT ZERO 2: CRIMSON BUTTERFLY

Ubisoft, 2004 Horror

A gore-free yet terrifying ghost story; your only weapon is a camera that can exorcise the spirits trying to steal your soul.

Buy it if... you dare.

OPS2 #46 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

EVERYBODY'S GOLF

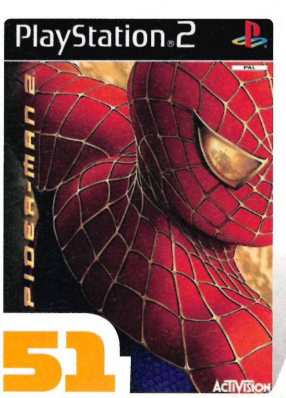
Sony, 2005 Sport

If you're not bothered about official PGA licences and don't mind the cute, cartoony looks, you'll find this to be the finest and friendliest golf game of all time.

Buy it if... you can live without Tiger.

OPS2 #65 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



SPIDER-MAN 2

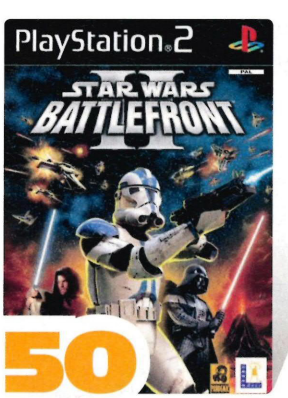
Activision, 2004 Action

Free-roaming and beautifully animated web-slinging adventure based on, but also expanding on, the movie of the same name. The best Spidey game, bar none.

Buy it if... your spider senses are tingling.

OPS2 #49 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT II

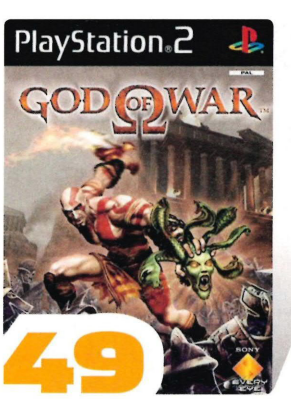
Activision, 2005 Shooter

Offers both tactical and arcade gameplay options plus all your favourite characters, vehicles and locales.

Buy it if... you can feel a disturbance in the Force.

OPS2 #66 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



GOD OF WAR

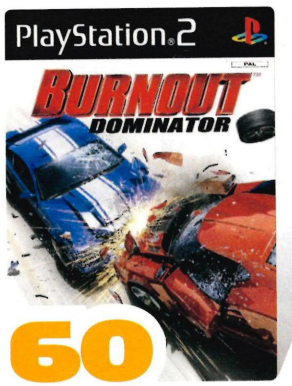
Sony, 2005 Action

Blessed with divine inspiration, this gore-spattered hack-fest begins the tale of Kratos, the angriest man in ancient Greece. Bettered only by its sequel.

Buy it if... you want to stick the knife in.

OPS2 #60 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



60

BURNOUT DOMINATOR

EA, 2007 Racing

Reckless driving? We don't recommend it. Burnout Dominator? Yup, totally recommend it. Great soundtrack, too.

Buy it if... you don't want to lose your no claims bonus.

OPS2 #83 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

59

EYETOY PLAY 2

Sony, 2004 Party

Twelve entertaining, movement-based mini-games, plus the ability to turn your EyeToy camera into an inexpensive home security system, will make you smile.

Buy it if... you dream of being on the telly.

OPS2 #53 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

54

BROTHERS IN ARMS: ROAD TO HILL 30

Ubisoft, 2005 Shooter

The story of a squad from the 101st Airborne in Normandy after D-Day. Realistic, atmospheric and respectful.

Buy it if... all's quiet on the Western front.

OPS2 #58 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

TOP CHEAT

To unlock everything, press ↑,→,↓,←,↑,←,↓,→,↑,↓ at the main menu

53

MASHED

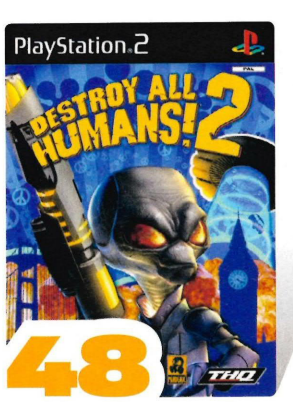
Empire, 2004 Racing

Birds-eye view driving with weapons that just screams to be played with three mates via multitap. The definitive party racer.

Buy it if... the local garage won't fit homing missiles to your motor.

OPS2 #48 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



48

DESTROY ALL HUMANS! 2

THQ, 2006 Action

B-movie-inspired shooter that puts you in an alien's spacesuit, hands you an anal probe and lets you take revenge on humankind for all the ET-blasting games.

Buy it if... you hate the human race.

OPS2 #78 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

TOP FACT

A movie based on the Prince of Persia games is planned for release in 2009

47

PRINCE OF PERSIA: SANDS OF TIME

Ubisoft, 2003 Adventure

This slick remake of the classic platformer introduced us to both the wall run and the ability to rewind time. And neat beards.

Buy it if... you've a good sense of balance.

OPS2 #40 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

GREAT GAME INGREDIENTS

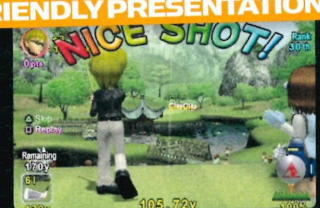
EVERYBODY'S GOLF

What gives this game its universal appeal?

AUTHENTIC ACTION

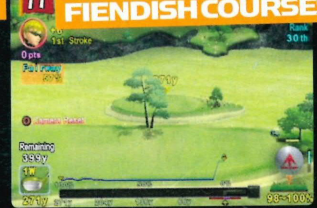
There's not a Pringle sweater or Nike logo in sight and you won't see Tiger Woods but nonetheless this is as realistic a round of golf as you could wish for. There's also bags of choice in gameplay options and golfers.

FRIENDLY PRESENTATION



It looks as cute as kittens, never fails to congratulate you when you play a decent shot and there's helpful advice at every turn.

FIENDISH COURSES



The lavish variety of courses range from the relatively simple, with wide fairways and flat greens, to the devil's own back garden.

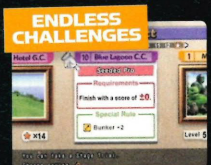
GREAT UNLOCKABLES

Earn crazy golfing kit and other rewards including new golfers such as Jak and new caddies such as Clank.

TAUNTS

The multiplayer mode highlight is using the directional pad to taunt your opponent as they take a shot. Arf!

ENDLESS CHALLENGES



From climbing the rankings to beating scores and unlocking everything, you'll never run out of stuff to do.

WHAT DID YOU LOVE ABOUT THE HILL?
Send us your memories: psnation@futurenet.co.uk

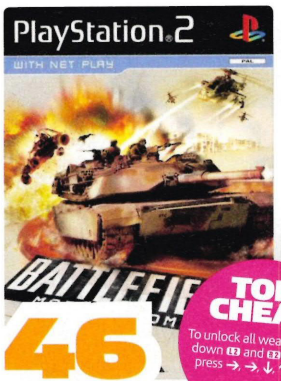
TOP 10 PlayStation heroes

10	Lars Umlaut (Guitar Hero)
9	Yangus (Dragon Quest)
8	The King of All Cosmos (We ♥ Katamari)
7	The Prince of Persia (Prince Of Persia)
6	Sora (Kingdom Hearts)
5	Amaterasu (Okami)
4	Dante (Devil May Cry)
3	Lara Croft (Tomb Raider)
2	Solid Snake (Metal Gear Solid)

#01

Ratchet

So heroic, they named a game after him and his mate Clank!



TOP CHEAT
To unlock all weapons, hold down L1 and R1 and then press →, →, ↓, ↑, ←, ←

46 BATTLEFIELD 2: MODERN COMBAT

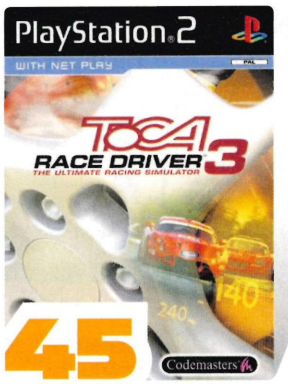
EA, 2005 Shooter

A superb modern warfare shooter that lets you switch between soldiers at the touch of a button. Great in multiplayer, too.

Buy it if... you're an armchair general.

OPS2 #65 **9/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



45 TOCA RACE DRIVER 3

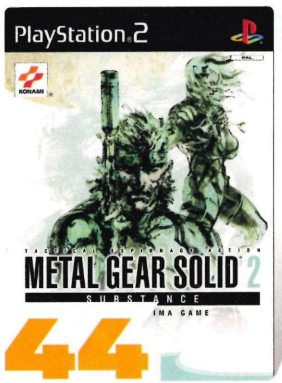
Codemasters, 2006 Racing

Variety is the spice of life and with all sorts of wheels on offer this multi-disciplined racer is a potent feast for petrol-heads.

Buy it if... you love motorsports but can't choose a favourite.

OPS2 #69 **9/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



TOP FACT
Reeves Gabrels, one of the composers of Deus Ex's music, was in the band Tin Machine with David Bowie

44 METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE

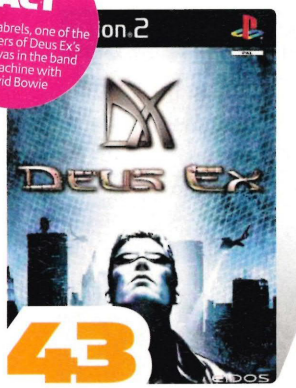
Konami, 2003 Stealth shooter

The plot may be complex but MGS2 is still one of the most thrilling, cerebral games on PS2. Substance includes extras galore.

Buy it if... you can follow the storyline.

OPS2 #32 **10/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



43 DEUS EX

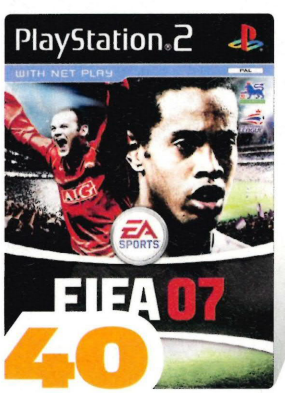
Eidos, 2002 RPG

PC gamers: they think they're all that. Well, they ain't. PS2 owners have one of their greatest games in the shape of Deus Ex.

Buy it if... you suspect you may actually be a nanotech-enhanced superhuman.

OPS2 #20 **9/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



40 FIFA 07

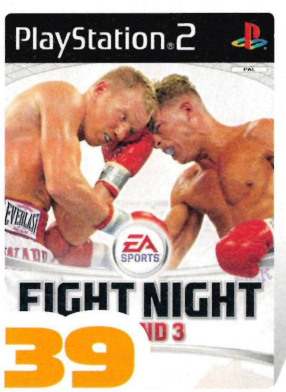
EA, 2006 Sport

The pieces finally fall into place for the veteran footie sim, the plethora of licences combining with striking gameplay and a wealth of game modes for a great result.

Buy it if... you want to keep it official.

OPS2 #77 **9/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



39 FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3

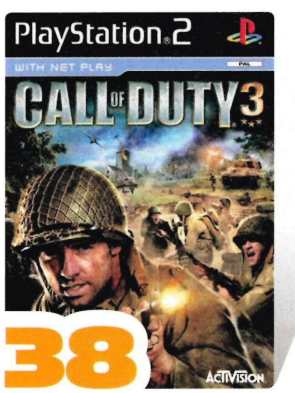
EA, 2006 Sport

There's nothing quite like punching a man in the chin and watching as sweat and blood flies off in slow-mo.

Buy it if... you need a legal outlet for your anger-management issues.

OPS2 #71 **9/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



38 CALL OF DUTY 3

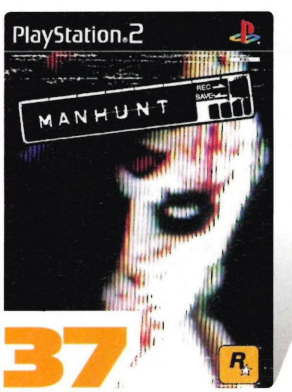
Activision, 2006 Shooter

There are roughly one million WWII games out there, but this is by far the best of them thanks to some intense action and great multiplayer.

Buy it if... you hate Nazis.

OPS2 #80 **8/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



37 MANHUNT

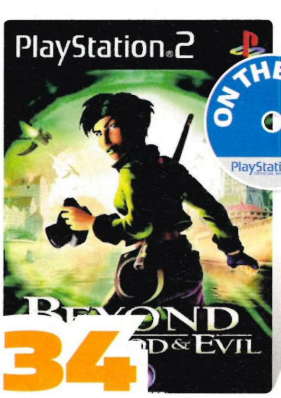
Rockstar, 2004 Stealth

The grisliest game ever to find its way onto PS2, this sinister stealther drips with atmosphere and twisted tension.

Buy it if... you have a lust for gore and are looking for a sicko storyline.

OPS2 #42 **9/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



34 BEYOND GOOD & EVIL

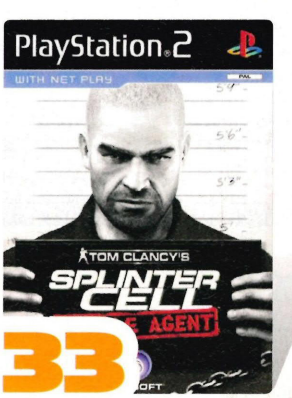
Ubisoft, 2003 Adventure

Under-appreciated weirdness starring a female photo journalist and her piggy uncle fighting off an alien menace.

Buy it if... you've got an eye for a photo and a penchant for green eyeshadow.

OPS2 #40 **8/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



33 SPLINTER CELL: DOUBLE AGENT

Ubisoft, 2006 Stealth

Pinnacle of the futuristic stealth series on PS2, this has moral dilemmas to get to grips with as well as nailbiting action.

Buy it if... you can think as well as sneak.

OPS2 #79 **8/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT

TOP CHEAT
To play a female version of Mokujin or Kuma, press ⊗ when selecting the character

32 TEKKEN 5

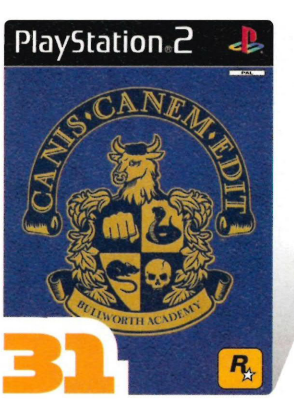
Sony, 2005 Fighting

The King Of Iron Fist Tournament returns with more fighters and fancier settings than ever. The quintessential 'easy to play, hard to master' scrapper.

Buy it if... you heed the call.

OPS2 #61 **8/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



31 CANIS CANEM EDIT

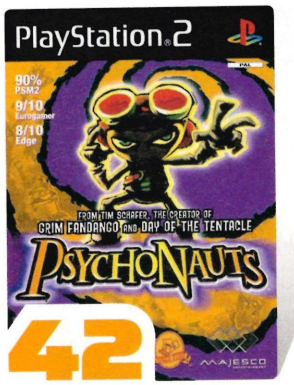
Rockstar, 2006 Action

Grand Theft Auto meets Grange Hill for free-roaming adventure fun set in an American private school.

Buy it if... you like melting Jelly Babies in test tubes.

OPS2 #79 **9/10**

☐ PLAYED IT ☐ OWN IT



42

PSYCHONAUTS

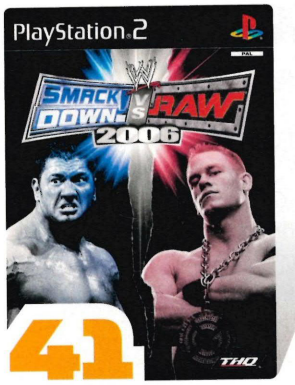
THQ, 2006 Platformer

Quirky, funny and genuinely entertaining, this is one of the greatest yet sadly most overlooked platformers on PS2.

Buy it if... you like a side order of laughs with your gaming.

OPS2 #65 **9/10**

PLAYED IT OWN IT



41

WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW 2006

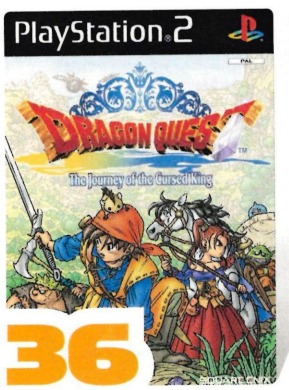
THQ, 2005 Fighting

It's not the most recent in the franchise but pound for pound, SmackDown! vs Raw 2006 is the best wrestler out there.

Buy it if... you're a wrestling fan.

OPS2 #66 **9/10**

PLAYED IT OWN IT



36

DRAGON QUEST VIII: JOURNEY OF THE CURSED KING

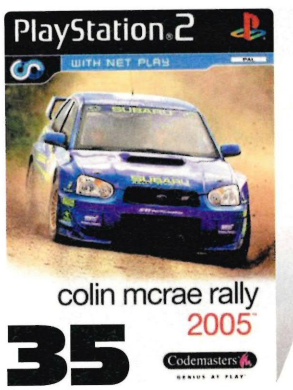
Square Enix, 2006 RPG

A truly epic, old-school roleplayer with alluring visuals and a strong narrative.

Buy it if... you've 100 or so hours to spare.

OPS2 #71 **9/10**

PLAYED IT OWN IT



35

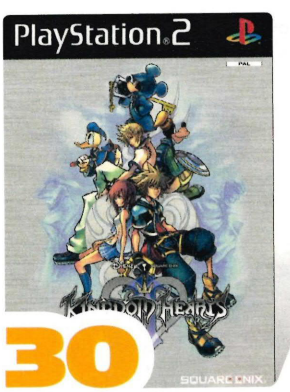
COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005

Codemasters, 2004 Racing

Rally legend Colin McRae died in a tragic accident last month. We'll remember him not only for his racing prowess, but also for the brilliant series of games to which he put his name, of which this is the best.

OPS2 #51 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



30

KINGDOM HEARTS II

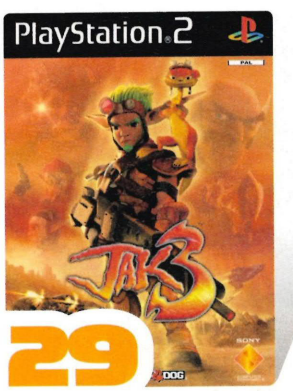
Square Enix, 2006 RPG

The stars of Final Fantasy make friends with the Disney crew for a super-cute adventure that's as deep as it is handsome.

Buy it if... Donald Duck and Cloud Strife in the same game is your idea of heaven.

OPS2 #78 **8/10**

PLAYED IT OWN IT



29

JAK 3

Sony, 2004 Platformer

Second only to Ratchet & Clank in the PS2's platformer-cum-shooter stakes, Jak and Daxter's third outing has variety and charm in brightly coloured spades.

Buy it if... you're a Jak of all trades.

OPS2 #53 **8/10**

PLAYED IT OWN IT

PLAYSTATION WORKOUT

Kim Richards guides you through the roleplaying genre in four gaming steps

WEEK 01

EASY

DRAGON QUEST VIII: JOTCK

Cute, pretty and with a reasonably simple battle/development system, Dragon Quest VIII: Journey of the Cursed King is just the right mix of tactical battles and exploration to start you off.

- COMPLETE IT IN 60 HOURS
- MUST SEE THE CUTE LITTLE SLIMES THAT ARE SO HARD TO KILL

WEEK 02

MEDIUM

SHADOWHEARTS: FROM THE NEW WORLD

More brainwork is needed here in the menu-driven battles and the separate development system for the character Shania, but the crazy cast will show you just what RPG fans love about, well, RPGs.

- COMPLETE IT IN 50 HOURS
- MUST SEE AL CAPONE BUSTING OUT OF ALCATRAZ WITH YOUR HELP

WEEK 03

HARD

FINAL FANTASY X

A classic with an epic story and amazing style in which a tag-team battle system allows for advanced tactics and the Sphere Grid gives the freedom to set up your party whatever way suits you.

- COMPLETE IT IN 40 HOURS
- MUST SEE THE BIT WHEN SIN DESTROYS ZANARKAND

WEEK 04

KILLER

VALKYRIE PROFILE 2: SILMERIA

Hardcore AI and an advanced battle system make this old-school RPG a challenge. But the rewards – a magical story with gorgeous cutscenes, plus a huge sense of achievement – are well worth it.

- COMPLETE IT IN 35 HOURS
- MUST SEE THE OCTOPUS BOSS, FOUR DUNGEONS IN

TOP CHUMPS

Joshua Hartwell

His pic's in the dictionary under 'useless'

If you ever find yourself stuck in a collapsed hotel that's rapidly filling with water, you'd hope someone would save the day. Superman, for example. Or Jack Sparrow. Even Kratos would do, because at least he'd do something. But not Joshua. Joshua's only response to a tidal wave crashing his way is to go 'huh?'. Or 'hmm'. Or 'errr'. Not very helpful when wet death is ahoy.

See him in Raw Danger (2007)

28

ONIMUSHA 3

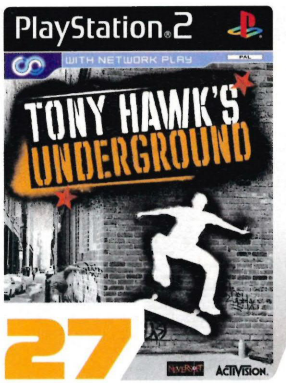
Capcom, 2004 Action

Jean Reno stars in this demon-slaying Samurai spectacular that flips between modern day Paris and feudal Japan.

Buy it if... you think the film *Leon* would have been better with a spear whip.

OPS2 #48 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



27

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND

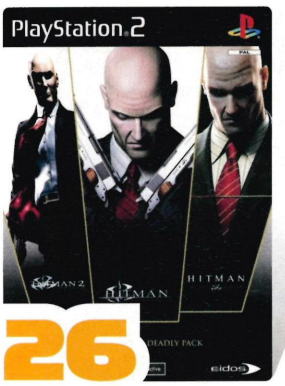
Activision, 2003 Sport

With its story-driven trickplay, this is the best of the many titles in the skate series.

Buy it if... you ever dreamed of pulling a backside 360° heelflip to fakie.

OPS2 #40 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



26

HITMAN TRIPLE PACK

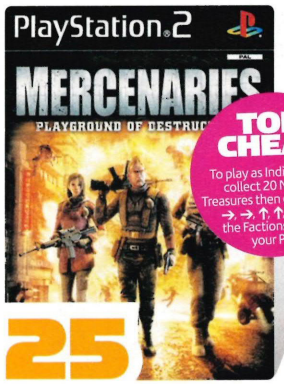
Eidos, 2007 Stealth

All three PS2 games – worth getting for Blood Money alone. Sneak around using disguises and cunning to carry out hits.

Buy it if... you fancy yourself as a genetically engineered assassin.

OPS2 #88 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



25

MERCENARIES

Activision, 2005 Action

Hijack tanks, demolish buildings and topple a dictatorial regime in North Korea – all while making a pretty penny.

Buy it if... you think the explosions in Grand Theft Auto are kind of puny.

OPS2 #55 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

22

LEGO STAR WARS II: THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY

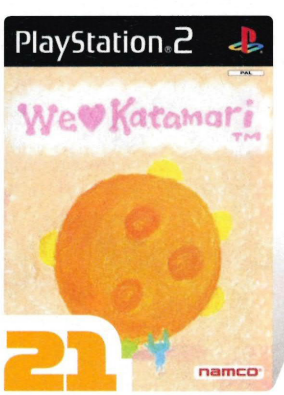
Activision, 2006 Adventure

The best *Star Wars* game money can buy. It's fresh, funny and cute without being sickly sweet or disrespectful to the films.

Buy it if... you liked the Ewoks best.

OPS2 #77 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



21

WE ♥ KATAMARI

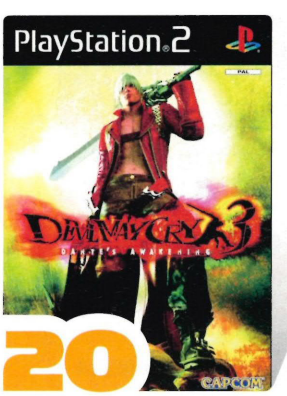
EA, 2006 Puzzle

Completely mental, utterly unique and dangerously addictive, Katamari's genius is in its simplicity. Just roll a sticky ball around a city and collect stuff!

Buy it if... your life isn't weird enough yet.

OPS2 #69 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



20

DEVIL MAY CRY 3: DANTE'S AWAKENING

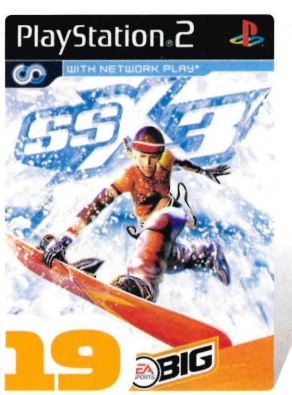
Capcom, 2006 Action

Super-hard prequel to the first-rate demon-slaying action series. Buy the Special Edition if you're inexperienced.

Buy it if... modern games are too easy.

OPS2 #77 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



19

SSX 3

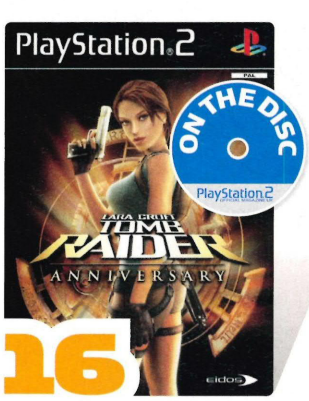
EA, 2003 Sport

Sublime snowboard sim with one giant mountain to play on, dozens of disciplines to learn and hundreds of tricks to pull off.

Buy it if... bailing on concrete is too painful a prospect.

OPS2 #40 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



16

TOMB RAIDER: ANNIVERSARY

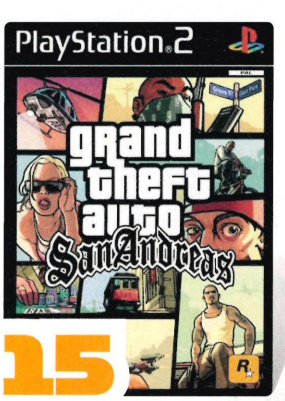
Eidos, 2007 Adventure

This stunning revamp of a classic title expands upon the original by extending fiendish tombs and adding extra puzzles.

Buy it if... you want globe-trotting action.

OPS2 #85 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



15

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

Rockstar, 2003 Action

A massively ambitious, crime-filled romp with planes, trains and automobiles by the score and 1001 things to see and do.

Buy it if... you're the original gangster.

OPS2 #54 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

14

RATCHET & CLANK 3

Sony, 2004 Platformer

This third helping of pan-galactic, combat-centric platforming is a riot of barmy weapons, barmier enemies and glorious environments.

Buy it if... you want *Star Wars* with smiles.

OPS2 #53 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

13

GRAN TURISMO 4

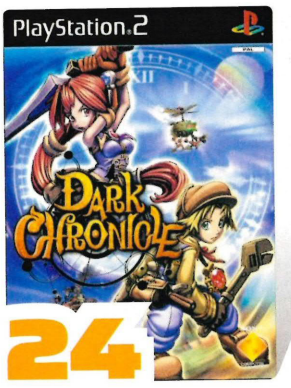
Sony, 2005 Racing

PS2's most comprehensive and authentic racer offers some 700 of the world's finest cars and 50 tracks to drive them around.

Buy it if... you never miss an episode of *Top Gear*.

OPS2 #57 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



24

DARK CHRONICLE

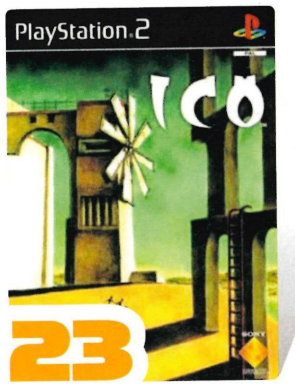
Sony, 2002 RPG

An engrossing, attractive Japanese RPG with a great storyline, real-time combat, time travel and town planning among its many delights. Nick's favourite game!

Buy it if... you enjoyed Rogue Galaxy.

OPS2 #35 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



23

ICO

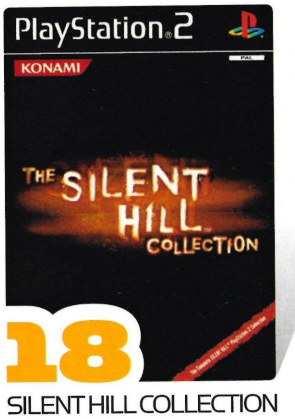
Sony, 2002 Adventure

Visually stunning, intensely atmospheric puzzler with simple combat. Reminds you how emotionally powerful games can be.

Buy it if... the puzzles in Tomb Raider were a bit easy for you.

OPS2 #69 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



18

SILENT HILL COLLECTION

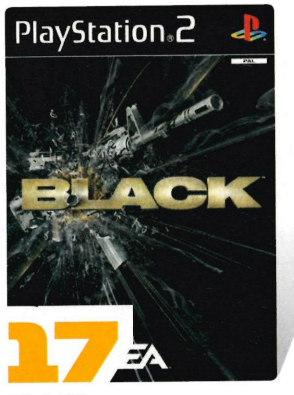
Konami, 2006 Horror

A bumper pack of Silent Hill scares: each chapter has you guiding doomed visitors through a twisted, terrifying ghost town.

Buy it if... you want to own a meaty chunk of horror history.

Not reviewed

PLAYED IT OWN IT



17

BLACK

EA, 2006 Shooter

The makers of Burnout set their sights on the shooter genre with delightfully destructive results. As fine a guns'n'ammo game as you could wish for

Buy it if... you love to blow shit up!

OPS2 #69 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

12

SOUL CALIBUR III

Sony, 2005 Fighting

Some purists cry foul at a fighting game involving weapons, but Soul Calibur III is as deep and engaging as they come.

Buy it if... you've a hankering for some stunning-looking swordplay.

OPS2 #66 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

11

TOP FACT

Issun is based on a Japanese fairytale character called Issun-boshi ('One-Inch Boy') who uses a sewing needle for a sword

OKAMI

Capcom, 2007 Adventure

Restore life to a cursed world with a magic 'paintbrush'. An epic, emotionally charged journey with stunning, picture-book art.

Buy it if... you'd like to make the world a nicer place.

OPS2 #81 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

THE YEAR IN PLAYSTATION 1996

The PS1 is one year old, and already it's hosting plenty of games to remember...

THE BEST

TOMB RAIDER

Eidos, Adventure

The legend of Lara Croft begins as she sets the world aflame with her gutsy attitude, gymnastic agility and pointy, pixellated chesticles.

THE WORST

BUBSY 3D

Accolade, Puzzler

Before this, Bubsy was a healthy gaming franchise. After this unwieldy 3D outing, Bubsy sank without a trace.

UNDER-RATED

EARTHWORM JIM 2

Virgin Interactive, Platformer

Lovely but punchy Earthworm Jim's one-liners and pithy comebacks made him and his partner Snott into cult celebrities.

OVER-HYPED

PRIMAL RAGE

Atari, Fighter

Billed as the next great hope for 2D fighters, this was a clunky mess that looked tired next to 1996's fighting highlights: Tekken 2 and Soul Blade.

FORGOTTEN

WILD ARMS

Media Vision, RPG

Overshadowed by Final Fantasy VII, this was the first decent Japanese RPG to arrive on our shores, with a kooky cast and gorgeous graphics.

NEVER AGAIN!

AREA 51

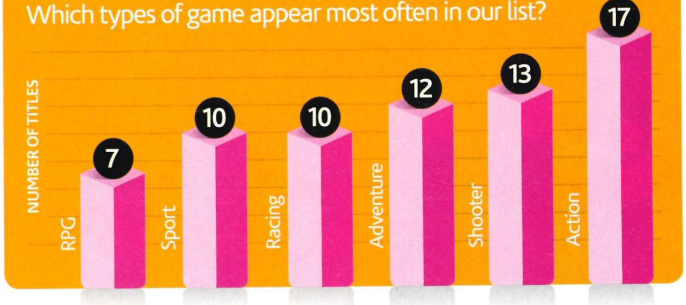
Midway, Shooter

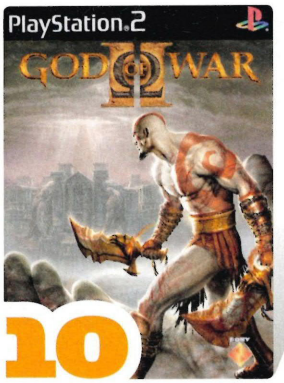
After this sub-Doom shooter, the world assumed it had seen the last of Area 51. But in 2005 along came the remake... much better!

TOP 100 STATS

Genres

Which types of game appear most often in our list?





10

GOD OF WAR II

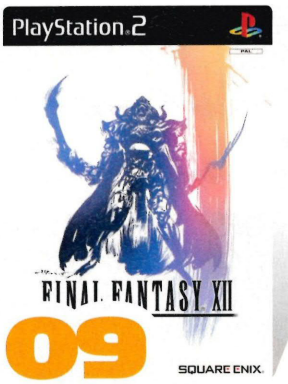
Sony, 2007 Action

Accessible, exhilarating and macho as all hell, the second thunderous outing for PS2's angriest anti-hero is an essential buy.

Buy it if... you're feeling a little tense – and have a strong stomach.

OPS2 #83 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



09

FINAL FANTASY XII

Square Enix, 2007 RPG

The latest in the fabled roleplaying series is as engaging of plot, epic of scale and achingly beautiful as any of its ilk.

Buy it if... you're on a quest to find the apex of sword and sorcery adventuring.

OPS2 #81 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

TOP FACT

In PES 6, Chelsea player Claudio Pizarro's name is wrongly spelled as Pizzaro. Oops!

08

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6

Konami, 2006 Sport

The ultimate PS2 kickabout. The gaming equivalent of the 1970 Brazilian World Cup squad and it'll last you as long as the footie season proper.

Buy it if... the world is at your feet.

OPS2 #79 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

07

GUITAR HERO II

Activision, 2006 Music

Simple to play but very rewarding, this axe-wielding rhythm-action title brings out the rock god in anyone and everyone.

Buy it if... you're a legend in your own living room.

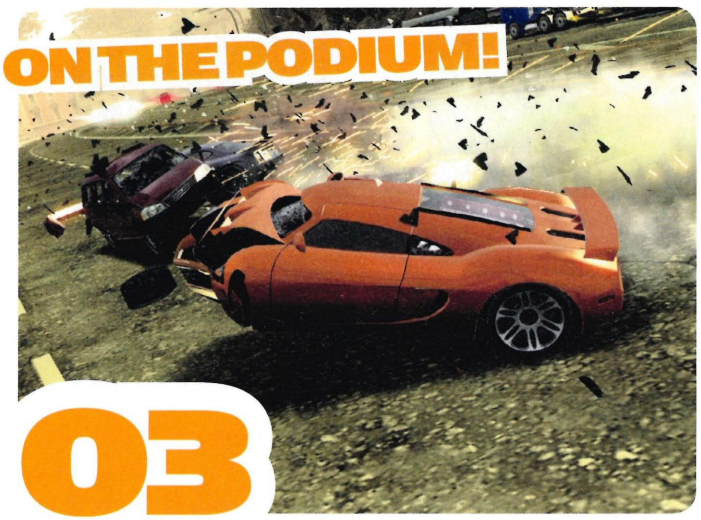
OPS2 #80 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

RUNNER-UP!

04

ON THE PODIUM!



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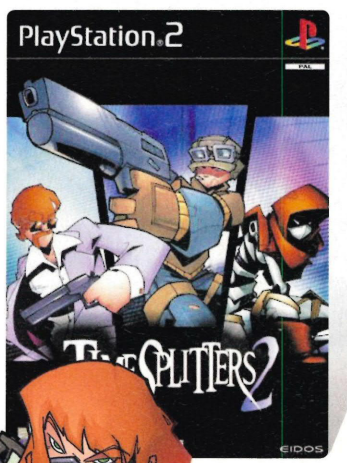
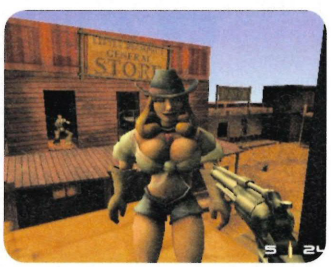




TIMESPLITTERS 2

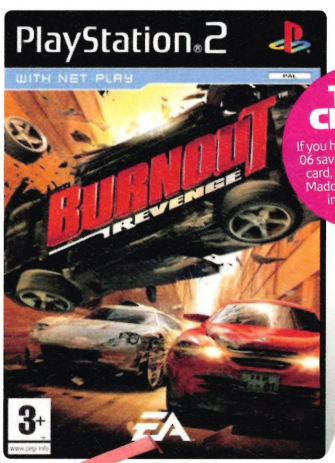
Eidos, 2002 Shooter

Killzone, Medal Of Honor, Call Of Duty – they all pale in comparison to this, simply the best first-person shooter on PS2. The singleplayer affair stands up by itself but it's in the expansive multiplayer modes that the game really shines. A copy of 'Splitters 2 plus a multitap equals countless hours of fun.

Buy it if... you have friends.

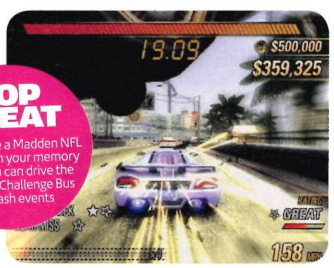
OPS2 #25 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



TOP CHEAT

If you have a Madden NFL 06 save on your memory card, you can drive the Madden Challenge Bus in Crash events



BURNOUT: REVENGE

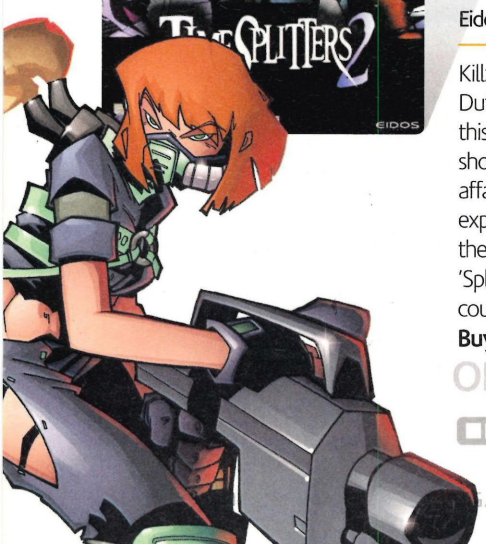
EA, 2005 Racing

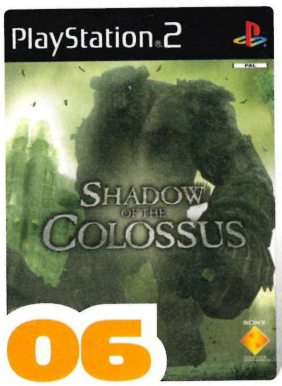
Insanely chaotic race'n'crash action – speed through rush-hour traffic, shoving ultra-aggressive opponents off the road, then watch slow-mo replays of the massive explosions that result. Great online multiplayer, too. All the Burnouts are classics, but Revenge is the definitive version.

Buy it if... VROOM! SMASH! and BOOM! are your favourite words.

OPS2 #64 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT





06

SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS

Sony, 2006 Adventure

Battle a series of gigantic monsters in a world touched by artistic genius and have your heart warmed by PS2's most original and unique game.

Buy it if... you've got the wanderlust.

OPS2 #68 9/10

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

TOP CHEAT

During the music video 'Snake Eater', use the left thumbstick to make the snakes move about

05

METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SUBSISTENCE

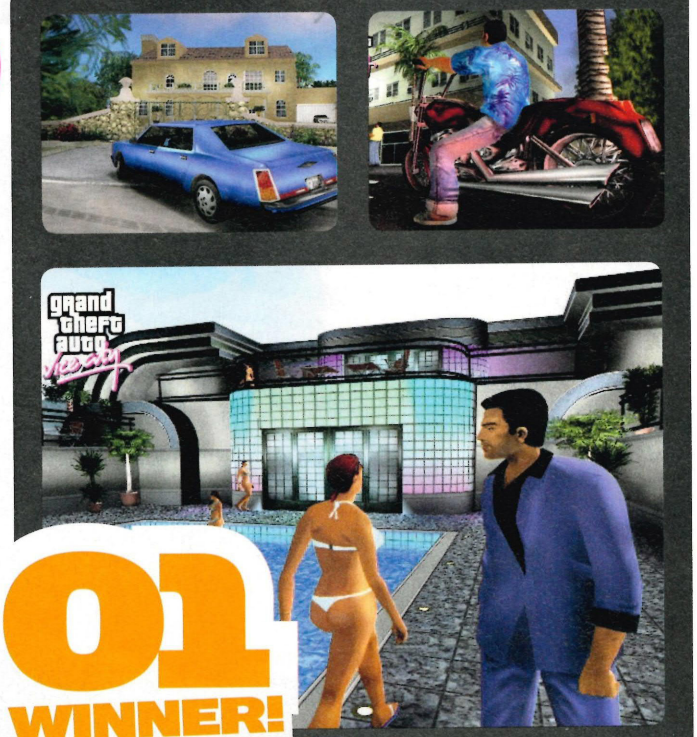
Konami, 2005 Stealth shooter

The finest blend of sneakery and shooting that money can buy includes two extra discs containing a mass of extras.

Buy it if... you like to stay hidden.

OPS2 #78 9/10

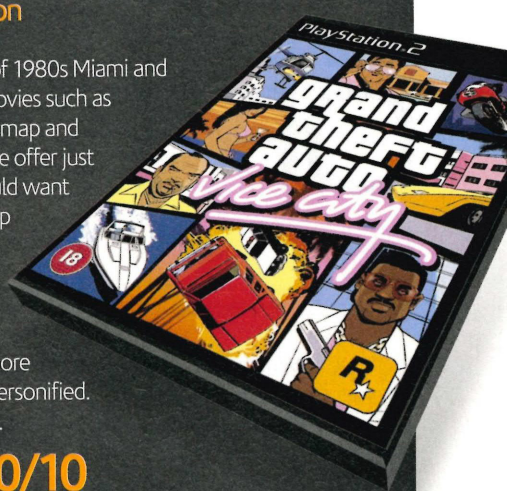
■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



01 WINNER!

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

Rockstar, 2004 Action



Set in Rockstar's version of 1980s Miami and taking inspiration from movies such as *Scarface*, the open-world map and freeform mission-structure offer just about everything you could want from a game: a razor-sharp script, superb voice work, awesome music, fast driving, helicopter gunships, shooting up the 'hood and oh, so much more besides. Gaming genius personified.

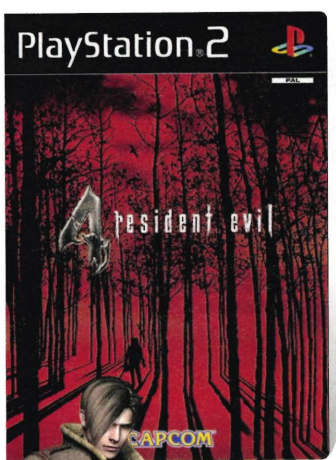
Buy it if... you own a PS2.

OPS2 #27 10/10

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

SO CLOSE...

02



RESIDENT EVIL 4

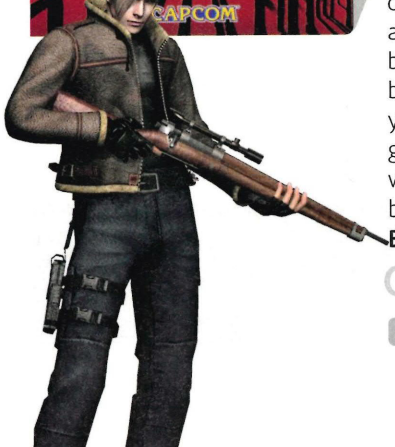
Capcom, 2005 Survival horror

An immaculate adventure that outshines every other horror title and most other games full stop. A blend of beguiling plot, puzzles, boss battles and barmy villagers out for your blood, you can play the main game through numerous times without getting bored and there are bonus missions galore too. Essential.

Buy it if... your veins contain blood.

OPS2 #65 10/10

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



HALL OF FAME FEEDBACK FORM

OI! YOU'RE WRONG!

Dear OPS2, your Top 100 is wrong. Please fix the following errors:

GAME NAME	OPS2 NO.	MY NO.

Kindly remedy this appalling situation at your earliest possible convenience.

Name .....

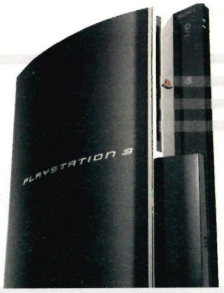
Email .....

Alternatively email feedback to psnation@futurenet.co.uk

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

PS3 IN OPS2

All you need to know about what's happening in next-gen



COME OUT OF THE DARK

Midnight Club: Los Angeles makes it fun to drive at rush hour

PUB Rockstar DEV Rockstar ETA 2008 WEB rockstargames.com/midnightclubLA

What requires bigger cojones than bombing down an LA backstreet at 200mph at midnight? Easy: doing the same thing at midday.

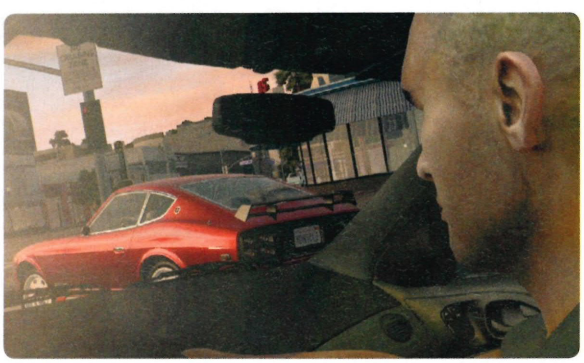
This Midnight Club is the first to have a full 24-hour day and night cycle and, racing at rush hour, you need the reactions of a hummingbird to get your motor through the traffic.

It's also the first Club to restrict itself to one city, but that doesn't mean there's less to explore. This version of LA is three times the size of any of the cities in previous games.

Control bars

There's a nice new control touch, too: dabbing left or right on the analogue stick prompts a quick turn of the head; just like the glance you'd really chance if you were speeding down a freeway.

Other enhancements include the slipstream turbo: driving right behind a car builds up a boost that can be stored for a few seconds.



↑ Free-roam around a huge city with a full day/night cycle

The seamless transition between off and online play, and that brilliant free-roaming structure, means that early next year you'll see Midnight Club: LA and Burnout Paradise eyeballing one another and revving their engines.

↑ You can put your treasured motor on the line in pink slip races

HOW COMPLETE?

MIDNIGHT CLUB: LOS ANGELES

CONCEPT ALPHA RELEASE

PRE-ALPHA BETA 2008

ASGARD AS NAILS

Start growing that hair, because **Viking: Battle for Asgard** will make you a god of war, Scandinavian style

PUB Sega DEV Creative Assembly ETA 2008 WEB sega-europe.com/en/Game/711.htm

We're standing on a lush green hill, surrounded by hundreds of angry men waving swords around. They are almost certainly drunk.

At the front of their ranks stands Skarin, a hero chosen by the gods to prevent an apocalyptic battle that will annihilate heaven and Earth.

Beautiful peaks stretch far into the distance where an equal number of enemy soldiers have gathered. A horn sounds, followed by a deafening roar as everyone surges forward...

↑ You play as hero Skarin, fighting armies of the undead

To Hel and back

While his men tackle the forces of Hel, the god of the underworld, Skarin's taking out shamans who reanimate dead soldiers, or killing champions armed with surfboard-sized blades.

There's also magic to boost nearby troops' abilities and Dragon Strikes, which call in the flying beasts to unleash flaming destruction.

Underpinning the mythological slicing is a free-roaming-mission structure that sees you wandering the landscape, building your army, freeing prisoners and gathering resources.

And you'll need them, because we're willing to bet that despite the gods' best efforts, you'll be facing that apocalyptic battle before the game is through.

HOW COMPLETE?
VIKING: BATTLE FOR ASGARD
CONCEPT ALPHA RELEASE
PRE-ALPHA BETA 2008

GO NUCLEAR

Radiate your way into 2008 with **Fallout 3**

PUB TBC DEV Bethesda Softworks ETA 2008 WEB bethsoft.com

Welcome to Megaton, a town built around an unexploded nuclear bomb. Throwing conventional wisdom to the radioactive wind, the townsfolk have decided that failure to detonate meant this was a very lucky place to live.

It's nice, if you like twisted metal shanty towns built out of scorched girders and corrugated iron.

Leave Megaton and things aren't much better. Giant ants roam the blasted earth, while dull-witted, tribal mutants battle the purebred, heavily armoured Brotherhood Of Steel.

↑ In grim Megaton town it's always nuclear winter, never Christmas

Megaton in a million

Just avoiding radiation poisoning is a struggle, especially when nuclear cars explode with house-sized mushroom clouds at the slightest impact from a stray bullet. Rads (units of radioactive contamination) are absorbed if you spend too long in badly irradiated areas or drink the water there.

That's a problem, because drinking replenishes your health, so a clean source is vital to avoid a glow-in-the-dark death.

PS3 TOP 5 CHARTS

The UK's best-selling titles – and that's official!

01 RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN
Publisher Sony
OPS2 Score 7/10

02 GHOST RECON AW2
Publisher Ubisoft
OPS2 Score Not reviewed

03 MOTORSTORM
Publisher Sony
OPS2 Score 8/10

04 FORMULA 1 CHAMP EDITION
Publisher Sony
OPS2 Score 7/10

05 NINJA GAIDEN: SIGMA
Publisher Eidos
OPS2 Score Not reviewed

↑ The combat has RPG-style elements but is no less brutal for it

The Vault-Tec Assisted Targeting System, or VATS to its friends, gives the combat a distinctly roleplaying game flavour.

For example, you can freeze time, get information about a target's weak spots and queue up multiple attacks before restarting the action.

Of course, the trickier a shot is, the greater the risk of missing, and that's when the 'run away' option starts looking attractive.

HOW COMPLETE?
FALLOUT 3
CONCEPT ALPHA RELEASE
PRE-ALPHA BETA 2008

Release Out now **Publisher** EA Games **Developer** EA Black Box **Price** £49.99
Players 1-2 **Web** ea.com/skate **Also try** Tony Hawk's Project 8

SKATE

Get real with the most uncompromising skate game yet

Skating is hard. You knew that, right? But you wouldn't think so from most skate games.

Hitting the grind button as soon as you jump because there's always something to grind? Doing three tricks and a 'special' every time you get some air? Finding a bowl and whizzing around the lip, knocking out manuals and getting three million points a combo? Skate isn't like that.

This is one-trick-at-a-time stuff where even doing a nosegrind feels like a victory.

Trucking hell

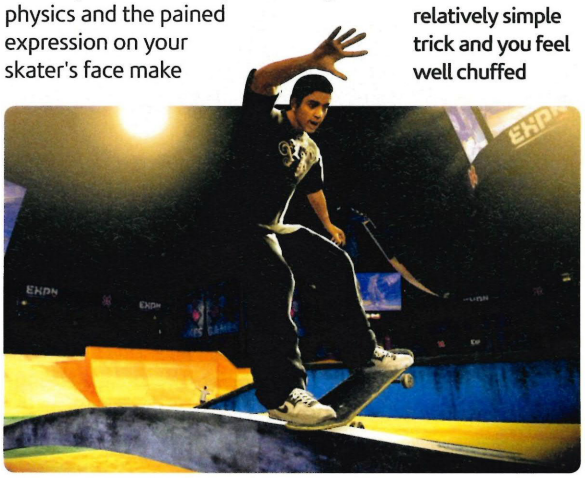
Pulling down on the right stick primes your skater for a jump; quickly flicking it up launches you into the air.

Flick slightly to the left or right and you'll heelflip or kickflip. Spin the stick in a quarter circle and you'll pull out a 'pop shove-it'. Push the left analogue at the same time and you'll spin left or right or flip. Starting with the stick held in different directions sets you up for nollies and varials.

It sounds fiddly, but it's an excellent system and actually a shade more instinctive than using the buttons. The best way to learn what each direction does exactly is in games of 'SKATE' in which one skater performs a trick and the next attempts to copy it, spelling out the word in the process.

It's also super-easy to fall off. At anything like top speed, every bit of scenery is a serious hazard.

Forget to ollie over a kerb? That's a sprained ankle. Hit a post box? Broken ribs. Injuries don't affect performance but they're all tallied up, while ragdoll physics and the pained expression on your skater's face make you feel every impact. And it makes you appreciate every move you do manage to land.



↓ **Pull off even a relatively simple trick and you feel well chuffed**

Falling down

In Tony Hawk's, you'd think nothing of leaping a gap between skyscrapers. In Skate, the first time you're challenged to 'Make it to the ground' down 20ft of steps and rail, you'll have to take a deep breath and dry your palms first.

But that's what makes it fun – and ultimately, so very satisfying.

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- Incredibly close to the real thing
- Instinctive control system
- So satisfying when you succeed
- Some kinks in the difficulty curve

Makes skating feel like it should: often dangerous and always really, really hard

9

Folklore's a feast for the eyes but the gameplay isn't so hot

Release Out Now **Publisher** Sony
Developer Game Republic **Price** £39.99 **Players** 1
Web tinyurl.ytgaou **Also try** Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion

FOLKLORE

There's none so queer as folk, they say, and it's sure as hell true in this game

Imagine Dante from Devil May Cry bursting into an Irish theme pub and butchering the Pokémon drinking inside. Well, that's how you'll feel for the first hour of Folklore.

Set mostly in the afterlife, it involves running around meeting strange beasts and chatting to the dead. Playing as either Ellen – indie chick with mother issues – or a paranormal journalist named Keats, you must solve the mystery of a string of deaths.

You do this by chatting to the knitwear-clad locals before entering the Netherworld, which is split into themed realms. Defeat the evil lurking in one, and you unlock the next.

The game's twist on the usual hack'n'slash of most roleplaying games is the Folk. These are aggressive mini-monsters, and each time you defeat a new one you add its main method of attack to your repertoire.

They are mapped to your symbol buttons, and when summoned the Folk rush out ahead of your character.

The combat is boisterously intuitive but, sadly, Folklore doesn't encourage the kind of speculative exploration that gives the best RPGs their depth.

Hocus folkus

The over-linear plot means your current location is rarely populated with any items or people that aren't pertinent to the task in hand.

Still, if this does grate, you can retire to the pub, day or night, to get side-quests that are a good excuse for more combat and reap rewards including items.

Plus, intriguingly, you'll soon be able to buy quest packs from the PlayStation Store that will include new tasks, costumes, creatures, and a dungeon creator.

And the blend of innovative combat and ethereal design in which every beast looks as if it sprang from the pages of a twisted book of fairy tales, make it worth being patient.

Ellen is one of two playable characters you can choose from

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK
VERDICT

Too linear, but one of PS3's most charming and satisfying adventures so far

7

SEGA RALLY

White-knuckle rides take you back to bare bones

Release Out Now **Publisher** Sega
Developer Sega Driving **Price** £49.99 **Players** 1-6
Web rally.sega-europe.com **Also try** Ridge Racer 7

Everything you need to know about Sega Rally's approach to off-road racing can be summed up by the car set-up menu. You choose from 'off-road' or 'on-road'. And that's it.

"C'mon, hurry up," the game seems be saying impatiently, "and let's drive stupidly fast." This is coin-op-style rally racing and if it were any more accessible, it would play itself.

It's straightforward race/reward fare, and the driving model is closer to the likes of Sega's Outrun 2006 than Colin McRae Dirt. It's all about minimal braking, maximal speed through corners and endless four-wheel powerslides.

It's not very deep, but it's very fast, looks gorgeous and handles ever so sweetly.

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK
VERDICT

Arcade-style racing with next-gen looks that's best enjoyed in multiplayer

7

PlayStation®
Official Magazine - UK

PREVIEWS
Mafia II
Haze
Borderlands
Smackdown vs Raw

REVIEWS
PES 2008
Tiger Woods 08
Syphon Filter
Everybody's Golf 5
SingStar Rock Ballads

FEATURES
Orange Box
PlayStation Network
Silent Hill V

PLAYABLE DEMOS
Heavenly Sword
Lemmings
Virtua Tennis 3

ON SALE NOW!

PSP IN OPS2

Your quick guide to the best new games for your handheld friend

↑ Your favourite characters are back

MULTIPLAYER METAL MADNESS

Expand your operations with **Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops Plus**

PUB Konami **DEV** Konami **ETA** TBC **WEB** konami.com

Metal Gear. You're aware of it, right? Of Solid Snake and his sneaking suit and Big Boss and the clones and the eyepatch and nuclear robots and bisexual vampires and a colonel who doesn't exist… right?

Of course you are. Even babes just seconds from the womb are up to speed with the interweaving, often baffling, always gripping storylines of the Metal Gear Solid series.

Snake it away

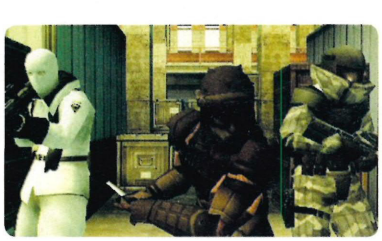
Just in case you're not, though, and the only thing you've really understood since the menu screen of the series' last PSP outing, Portable Ops, was that it was fun, don't worry.

You don't need to understand it all to enjoy the forthcoming Portable Ops Plus. All you need to know is that it's a multiplayer-focused update to the Portable Ops of last year, and as such features new modes, new characters and new stages.

↑ Raiden's back, but this time he might actually be quite a good character

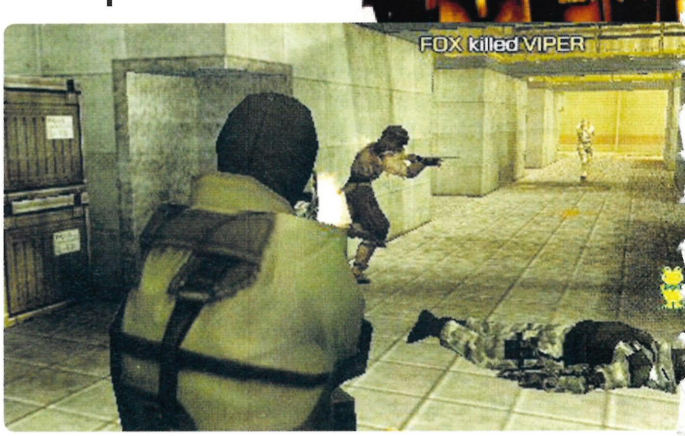
Metal Gear Solid 2's Raiden makes an appearance, as does Guns of the Patriots' Old Snake.

Further new characters are drawn from the series' 20-year history, right back to PS2 and PS1.



Multi gear solid

The new modes come in single and multiplayer flavours. There's an intriguing 'endless' solo mode called Infinity Mission, which means, our spies tell us, that the scenarios are randomly generated.



↑ Multiplayer is what the expansion is all about: ad hoc or infrastructure

There's a new Comrade Recruit system, too, which should ease the process of assembling a team to take online in Plus's ad-hoc and Infrastructure modes.

We're promised this will take the series in an 'exciting new direction'. And, considering that 'Portable Ops Plus' is an anagram of 'Prolapse Subplot', we're genuinely excited about what that direction will be.

HOW COMPLETE?

MGS: PORTABLE OPS PLUS

CONCEPT — PRE-ALPHA — ALPHA — BETA — RELEASE — TBC

TO SEA YOU NICE

We have high hopes for seafaring sci-fi **Steel Horizons**

PUB Konami **DEV** Konami **ETA** October **WEB** konami.com

Oh look, it's World War 2, possibly the most simulated conflict in history. But this time, it's no slave to well-known realities.

Steel Horizons' story centres on a shady, slightly supernatural group of nutballs who are controlling the war from behind the scenes.

You are the apple pie-faced captain of an ultra-secret experimental ship, and it's up to you to win the war and expose the real villains behind it.

↑ The setting is World War 2, but that's where the realism ends

Pocket battleships

This is a curious mix of turn-based strategy and real-time combat. You have a flotilla of ships, which require careful turn-based planning.

But sometimes you control your own guns, too. Each ship has a special attack and you can even sail off to a new position while conflict rages.

There are 20 singleplayer missions, and each mission can take 45 minutes to an hour to complete. And if Steel Horizons can deliver on its many promises, they'll be hours well spent.

The PSP hasn't been home to many decent strategy games to date, and the ocean-going twist is intriguing.

← Turn-based strategy is mixed with real-time combat sections

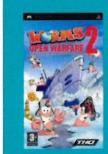
HOW COMPLETE?
STEEL HORIZONS
CONCEPT | PRE-ALPHA | ALPHA | BETA | RELEASE | OCT

PSP TOP 5 CHARTS

What are you buying? Here's the place to find out

01 MONSTER HUNTER FREEDOM 2
Publisher Capcom
Score 8/10

02 BRIAN LARA 2007 PRESSURE PLAY
Publisher Codemasters
Score 8/10



03 WORMS OPEN WARFARE 2
Publisher THQ
Score 8/10

04 TRANSFORMERS THE GAME
Publisher Ubisoft
Score Not reviewed

05 GRAW 2
Publisher Ubisoft
Score 6/10

EPIC OF THE BUNCH

The empire strikes hack – and slash – in **Warriors of the Lost Empire**, a fantasy fighter with a dash of RPG

PUB Mercury Games **DEV** Ertain **ETA** October **WEB** ertain.com/en

It may look a bit brown, but Warriors of the Lost Empire is colourful stuff. It's all about the hack and slashery, but here that means more than just hammering the ⊗ button.

You'll be dramatically comboing all comers right from the start. There's lots of talking, bartering and exploring to be done, too, and the impressive artwork makes everything look suitably heroic.

↓ New weapons can be built by a blacksmith if you ask very nicely

Rome around

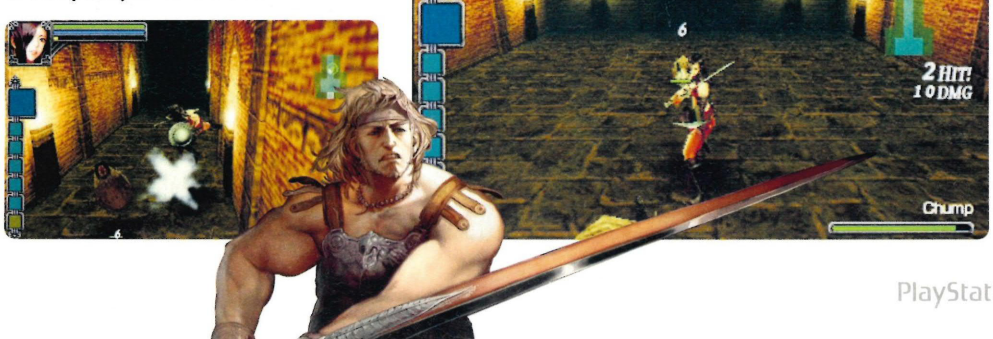
The story is set in a Rome-like city named Antinopolis, where everything was peachy until Emperor Hadrianus 'mysteriously locked himself in the temple' one day and wouldn't come out. This despite him having recently fallen in love.

In his absence, the city is overrun with monsters. You are one of a select few sent in to clear the city, find the Emperor and solve the mystery.

You have 150 upgradable weapons and there's two-player co-op, which certainly helps in the harder dungeons.

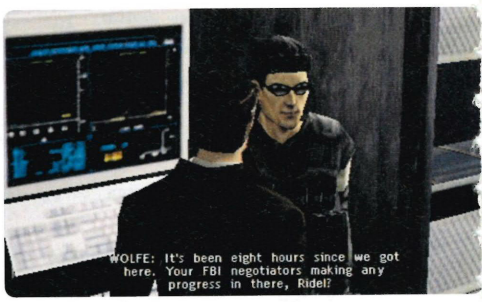
The game is already out in Japan, so delays are unlikely: look for it soon.

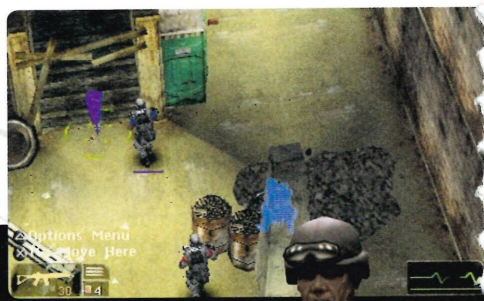
↓ The fighting is combo-based and there's plenty of it to be done



HOW COMPLETE?
WARRIORS OF THE LOST EMPIRE
CONCEPT | PRE-ALPHA | ALPHA | BETA | RELEASE | OCT

Your mission is to restore order, so it's more tactical than just killing everyone





Release Out Now **Publisher** Sierra **Developer** 3G Studios **Price** £29.99
Wi-fi Yes **Web** sierra.com/uk **Also try** Killzone:Liberation

SWAT: TARGET LIBERTY

At last, a war on terror that actually has a winner

In today's world of multiplatform releases it's rare to find a title that's been made specifically for PSP, but this tactical police shooter is just such a game. And it shows.

It's based on Sierra Entertainment's long-running PC series of first-person shooters. But developer 3G Studios has played to the portable's strengths and junked the stuff that just wouldn't work on PSP, making a more tactical game than a straightforward FPS.

Playing as the leader of a small team of SWAT (Special Weapons And Tactics) officers, you must 'contain' terrorists, secure civilians, save hostages, recover intel and so on.

The storyline – written by Scott Rosenbaum, whose work includes notoriously hardnosed cop show The Shield – has an underlying theme of 'restoring order from chaos'. And obviously you're not going to do this if you just ventilate everyone you see.

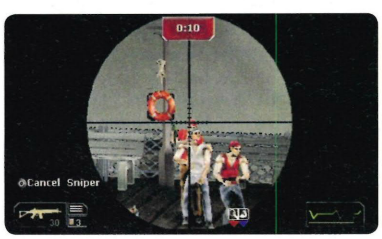
That's where your non-lethal weapons come in (you can even fight hand-to-hand). The beanbag-firing shotgun is our fave: get close enough, and it'll knock a guy right off his feet.

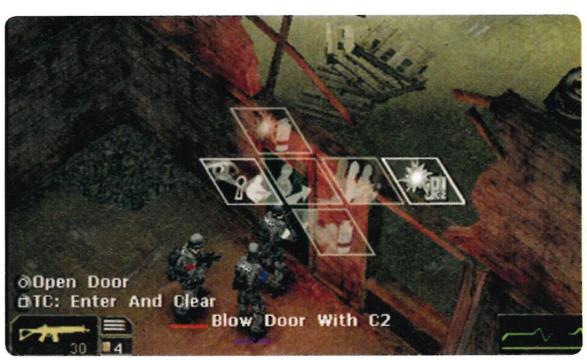
The AI is pretty good: if you switch from beanbags to bullets, your team will, too, and they'll copy your stance.

Slow down and dirty

This is not a fast-paced game but it's frequently very tense, and shot through with pockets of high action, so it doesn't feel slow.

It's eventful enough to be gripping, but not so frantic that your thumbs feel like they've snapped.





Your AI squad are reasonably self-sufficient

Our only real gripe is that there are too many open areas. Once they get wider than the screen, the only way to find what's ahead is to abandon the otherwise plentiful cover and go out into danger.

We found ourselves exposed and under fire from baddies just off-screen rather too often, simply because there was no tactical way to move forward.

But with 45 hours of missions to do and its PSP-specific design, this is one of the best games on the handheld.

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- Clever and individual
- Chunky singleplayer plus wi-fi
- Suspenseful and satisfying
- Pulls its punches occasionally

Not perfect, but still one of the best-quality, most fun games on the market

8

The game may be on the small screen but it looks ace

Release Out Now **Publisher** Square Enix
Developer Square Enix **Price** £29.99 **Wi-fi** Yes
Web thelionwar.net **Also try** Monster Hunter Freedom 2

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS: WOTL

War of the Lions is a port worth roaring about

Final Fantasy Tactics: War of the Lions manages the impossible. While polishing up the original 1997 game enough to satisfy old fans, it's also got fresh elements that'll draw in new fans like the smell of free leather boots.

You play as Ramza, the son of Lord Beoulve, who's caught in the middle of a war he doesn't believe in as feudal kings fight over various kingdoms. The plot is wonderfully presented with emotional, cel-shaded cutscenes and great voice acting.

The world is a map dotted with red, blue and green markers. Blue represents a town where you can buy armour, weapons and items; red marks story progressing battlegrounds; and green are areas you've fought in but not cleared of beasties.

Trigger a fight and you'll be launched into an isometric battlefield for a turn-based scrap.

Each character has three battle stats: Health points, Magic points and Charge Time.

When charge time is full, that unit will be able to carry out an action (move, attack, use an item, cast a spell or whatever).

Mane attraction

There are a stonking 22 job classes to choose from, including two new classes: Onion Knight and Dark Knight.

A character's job will affect the way Job Points (earned everytime you successfully attack) are assigned to different categories of abilities in the very flexible character development.

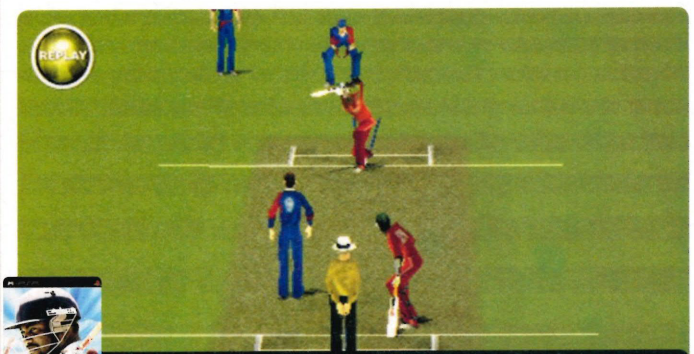
Throughout the game, there's so much detail that experienced players will find a pit of nearly bottomless depth. Newbies will still find it accessible although may have some initial problems defeating the superior AI.

With this many ways to organise your team and develop abilities, everyone will find something to suit their style.

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK
VERDICT
Hours of battling with beautiful drama to draw you into it
7

BRIAN LARA 07

Pressure Play offers robust batting action



Release Out now **Publisher** Codemasters
Developer I R Gurus **Price** £24.99 **Wi-fi** Yes
Web codemasters.co.uk/pressureplay

The bulk of Pressure Play lies in the ICC Cricket World Cup mode, where you can play as one of the 16 major international teams.

There's an impressive array of options for tailoring things from bitesized, 10-over matches to full-blown tests.

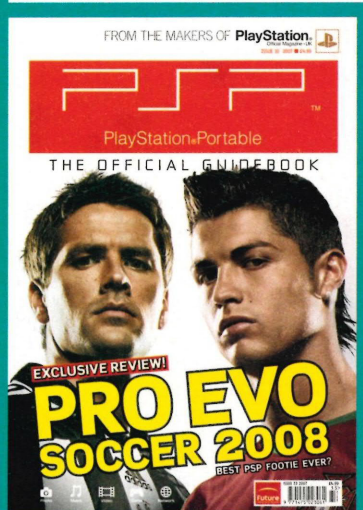
Most of the world's major venues are here, along with 240 licensed players.

The mini missions of Pressure Play mode have you completing objectives, from hitting a certain number of boundaries within a couple of overs to winning a game on the last ball.

Gameplay is smooth and there's wi-fi, too. So, although Brian Lara 2007 was a bit of a bloated let-down on PS2, on PSP it's a hungry young star.

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK
VERDICT
A great sports game that will satisfy fans without excluding newcomers
8

PlayStation Portable
THE OFFICIAL GUIDEBOOK



PREVIEWS
Thrillville: Off The Rails
Sims 2 Castaway
Star Wars Battlefront
Ben 10
Spinout
Castlevania

REVIEWS
Pro Evolution Soccer 2008
WipeEout Pulse
Monster Hunter Freedom 2
Dead Head Fred
Tales of the World
Jackass: The Game
Madden NFL 2008
Stateshift
World of Pool

FEATURES
New-look PSP
The future of games

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PLAYSTATION EDUCATION

#10 GUITARS

It's lifestyles of the riff and famous on Planet PlayStation! But where should you go to get your licks?

NEVAN

As seen in Devil May Cry 3 (2005)

Guitar role Not so much an axe, this one, as a thunder-fuelled scythe. Capable of shooting electrified bats at distant enemies. Meat Loaf wanted one, but his blood wasn't cursed enough.

GIBSON SG AND EXPLORER

As seen in Guitar Hero and Guitar Hero II (2006)

Guitar role While your on-screen rocker noodles on a variety of Gibsons, you play a plastic SG like a real guitar (kind of)! And pretend you're awesome at it! And twitch like a crazy person! Remember to close the curtains...

PATTIMO

As seen in Ephemeral Fantasia (2001)

Guitar role To be plucked via mini-games in this awkward time-warping RPG. One of the first role-players to hit the PS2, with all the impact of a spitball.

DESPERADO GUITAR CASES

As seen in Total Overdose (2005)

Guitar role These bullet-spitting guitar cases manifest for a very limited time during the 'El Mariachi' Loco special attack.

GITAROO GUITAR

As seen in Gitaroo Man (2002)

Guitar role By strumming his guitar, lead character U-1 seduces a lady, defeats demons, repels aliens and fends off a trumpeter in a bee costume. That, friends, is the power of rock.

SEDUCTION GUITAR

As seen in Fahrenheit (2005)

Guitar role When Lucas' ex comes to visit, you can pluck her heart strings in a seduction mini-game. Want to see the result? Flick to p128 for this month's Split Screen…

COSMIC GUITAR

As seen in Katamari Damacy (2004, US/Japan only)

Guitar role Played by the King of All Cosmos during the psychotropic intro sequence. Can also be worn by you as a groovy, if pointless, accessory.

PINK BUNNY GUITAR

As seen in Um Jammer Lammy (1999)

Guitar role Played by Lammy, guitarist for the band Milkcan, in this freakish follow-up to rhythm-action classic PaRappa the Rapper on PS1.

FASHIONABLE GUITAR

As seen in Samurai Western (2005)

Guitar role Boosts your combat stats a little, but mostly there to look funky. Team it with giant cat paws for the ultimate look.

NEXT MONTH **TATTOOS**

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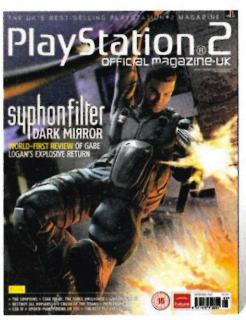
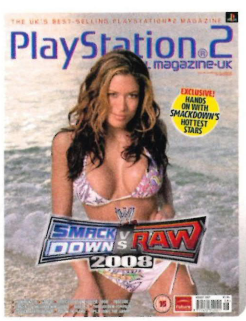
OPS2 #90

- The Simpsons
- Mercenaries 2
- 20 years of Metal Gear
- Crash Of The Titans demo



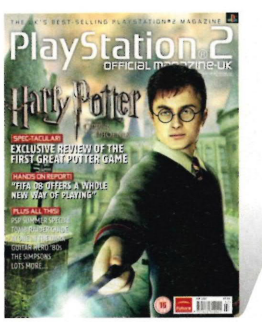
OPS2 #89

- Syphon Filter: Dark Mirror
- SingStar
- Star Wars: Force Unleased
- Rogue Galaxy demo



OPS2 #88

- SmackDown vs Raw 2008
- Guitar Hero: Rocks the 80s
- Harry Potter Walkthrough
- 10 playable demos

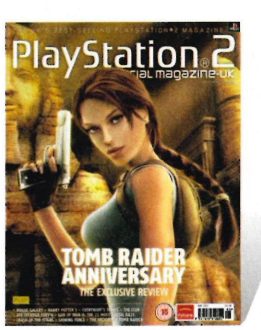


OPS2 #87

- Order of the Phoenix
- Tomb Raider walkthrough
- Top 100 PSP games
- ObsCure II demo

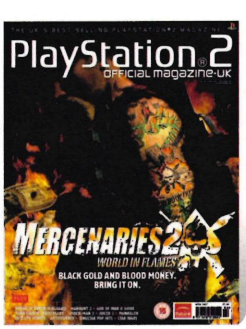
OPS2 #86

- Transformers: The Game
- Rogue Galaxy review
- The Golden Compass
- Everybody's Tennis demo



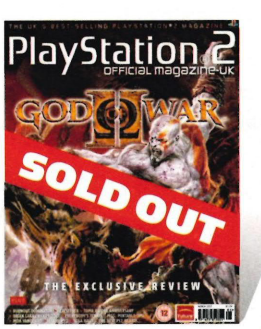
OPS2 #85

- Tomb Raider: Anniversary
- Lara Croft Special
- Vice City Stories cheats
- God of War II demo



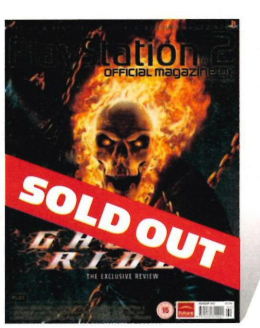
OPS2 #84

- Mercenaries 2
- Medal of Honor Vanguard
- God of War II walkthrough
- Brian Lara 2007 demo



OPS2 #83

- God of War II
- Games and films
- Speed gaming
- Heatseeker demo



OPS2 #82

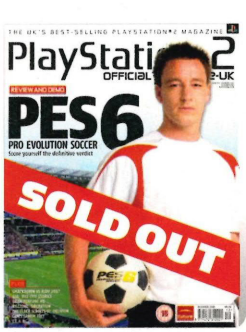
- Ghost Rider
- FFXII walkthrough
- PS2 game A-Z
- Okami demo

OPS2 #81

- Final Fantasy XII
- Square Enix special
- Cheats special
- Arthur & Invisibles demo

OPS2 #80

- Superman Returns
- Rogue Warrior
- Resistance: Fall of Man
- Eragon demo

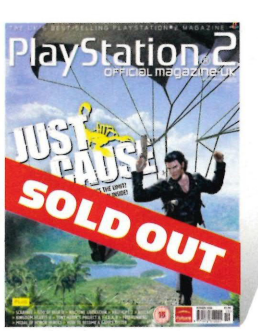


OPS2 #79

- PES 6
- Smackdown vs Raw 2007
- Fighting special
- PES 6 and FIFA 07 demos

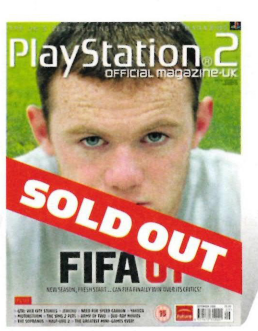
OPS2 #78

- Scarface
- Devil May Cry 4
- Racing special
- Destroy All Humans! demo



OPS2 #77

- Just Cause
- The Sims 2 Pets
- Star Wars
- NFS Carbon demo



OPS2 #76

- FIFA 07
- Yakuza
- Blu-Ray movies
- Yakuza demo

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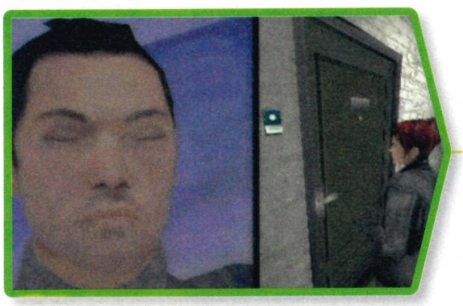
SPLIT SCREEN

One classic level, two ways to complete it. This month: moody thriller **Fahrenheit**

METHOD 1 LOVER MAN

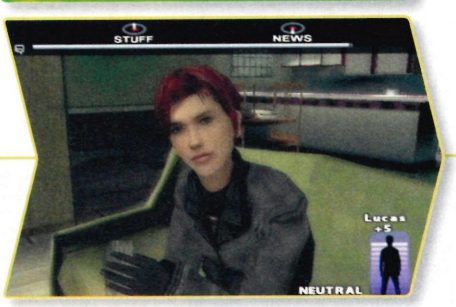
MISSION START

You are Lucas Kane, a lonely chap accused of murder after he was manipulated into killing a man in a restaurant toilet. And as if that's not bad enough, just as you're trying to get some sleep, your ex-girlfriend Tiffany turns up at your flat to pick up the last of her stuff…



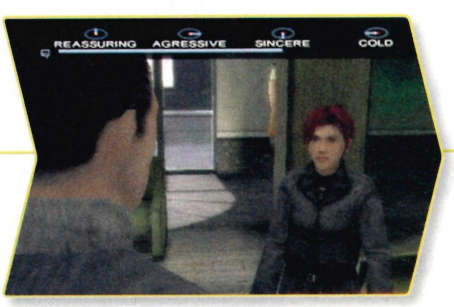
Lucas is awoken by the sound of his doorbell ringing. It's Tiffany! So get yourself out of bed, be a gentleman and let the lady in.

Now the small talk can begin. Ask her how she's been doing and, more importantly, if she's met anyone else. Go on, offer her a drink too.

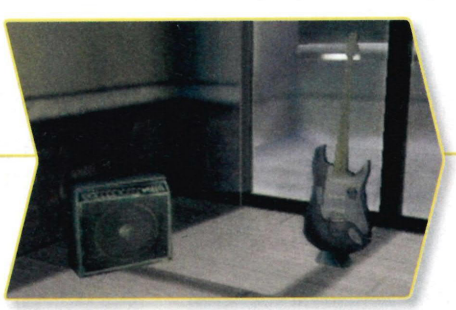


After you've given her a stiff gin, she'll ask if you'll fetch her stuff while she sits on your sofa. She looks vulnerable, so maybe you should help.

You'll find one of her boxes next to the breakfast bar in your sitting room, the other in your bedroom. No rifling through her stuff, now!

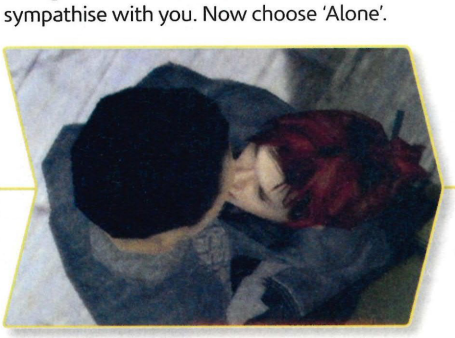


Now the lass seems wistful and sad. Chat to her again and choose the 'Sincere' option. She'll sympathise with you. Now choose 'Alone'.

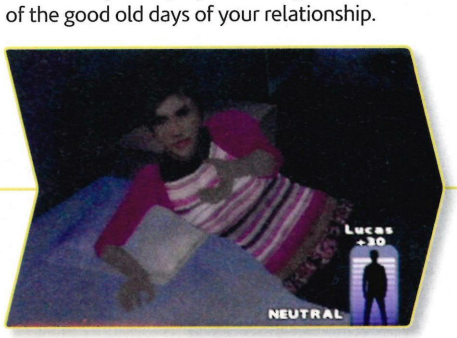


Tiffany is staring over at your guitar and amp. She wants you to play her a song to remind her of the good old days of your relationship.

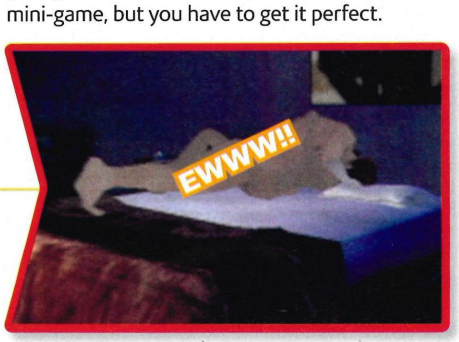
Walk over and turn on the amp. Now pick up your guitar and strum away. It's not the trickiest mini-game, but you have to get it perfect.



She's impressed. She's staring longingly into your eyes. Now's the time to choose the 'Kiss' option from the Conversation menu.



Wahey! Tiffany's on the bed, she's taken her coat off and she's beckoning seductively. Looks like Lucas is in for some action.



MISSION COMPLETE

My eyes! Lucas and Tiff writhe around on the bed, naked. And then the sex mini-game (which, yes, you actually control) kicks in and you're forced to play out Lucas' movements with the thumbsticks. My hands! It feels dirty, and not in a good way, but it sure perks up our hero's mood.

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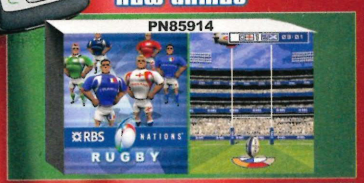

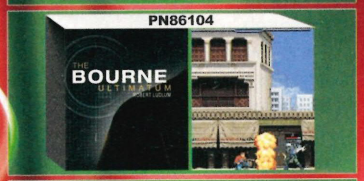

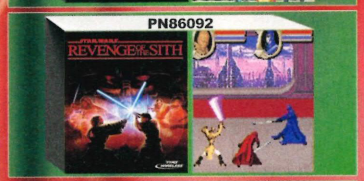

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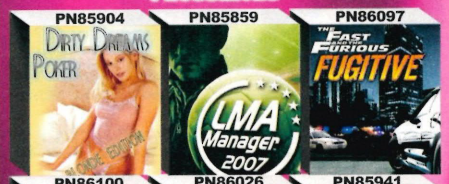

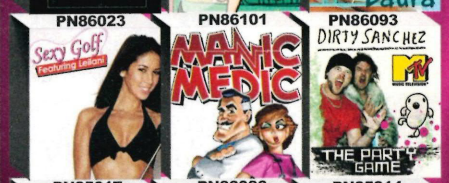

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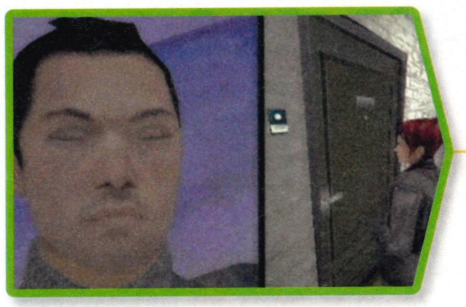
SPLIT SCREEN

One classic level, two ways to complete it. This month: moody thriller **Fahrenheit**

METHOD 2 BITTER MAN

MISSION START

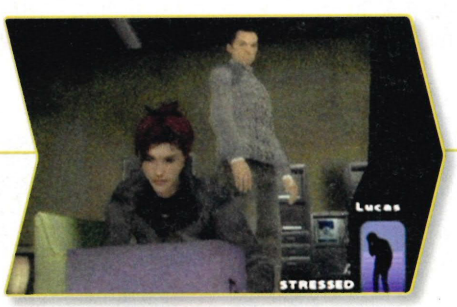
So, you've seen how it should be done. You jumped through hoops for the girl and got your reward. But what if you're not the type to forgive and forget, and you're burning with rage, not desire? What if you want to show your ex how much she hurt you? Let's take a look...



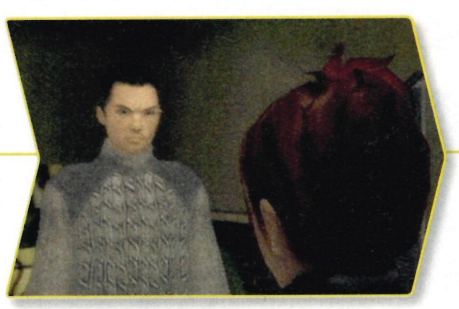
Who's that ringing the bell while you're trying to catch some well-earned Zs? Oh, it's that bitch Tiffany. Well, she can wait outside for a while.

Go into the kitchen and pull out the bottle of gin from under the breakfast bar. Have a few slugs to get yourself in the mood to see your ex.

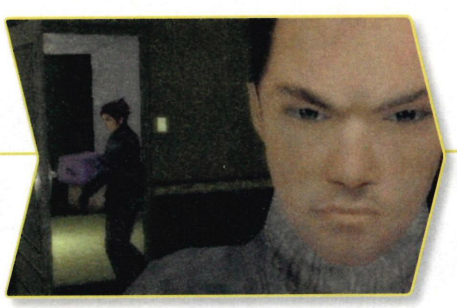
Stagger over to the door and let the cow in. When she tries to make conversation, just ignore her. That'll teach her to mess with you.



You don't want this girl in your apartment any longer than necessary, so you grab both her boxes of stuff, and throw them down at her feet.

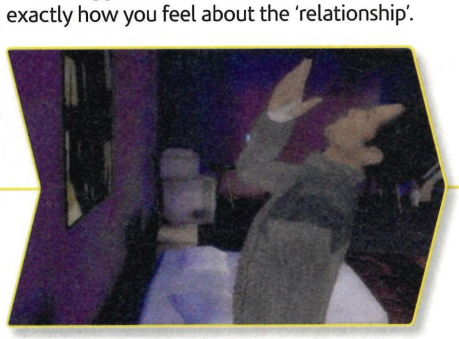


Jeez, doesn't she ever shut up? Choose the Cold or Aggressive option and let her know exactly how you feel about the 'relationship'.

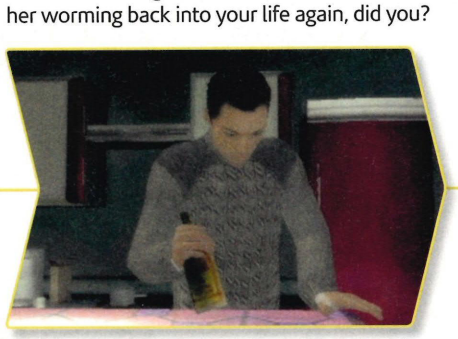


Turn your back until she leaves. Wear that frown like a badge of honour. You didn't want her worming back into your life again, did you?

Once you've slammed the door, how about some TV? The news has a story about the man you killed, and you find it even more depressing.



To top it all off, all that gin has given you a headache: so go into the bedroom and pop a handful of painkillers. They'll make it all better.



The pain isn't quite gone, so saunter back into the kitchen and finish off that bottle of booze. Maybe that'll help you cope with the rejection.

MISSION COMPLETE

Lucas is now totally isolated. He's wanted for murder, he's driven away the people who care for him and to make things worse, he's just chased a load of pills with copious amount of hard alcohol. Lucas falls to the floor and dies alone. So, actually mission *incomplete*, then. Doh!

MISSION SELECT

Have you got a favourite mission you'd like us to feature here? Tell us about it! Email **psnation@futurenet.co.uk** or write to **Split Screen, OPS2, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.**

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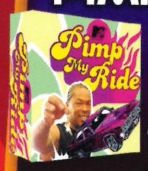

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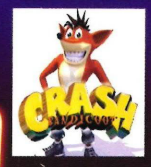

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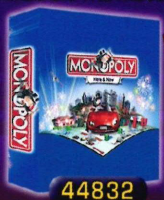

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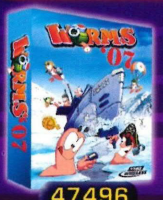

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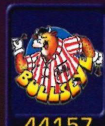

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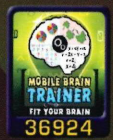

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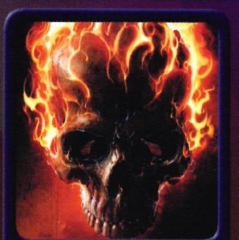

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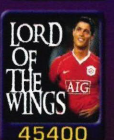

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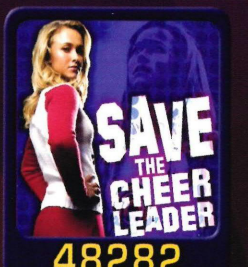

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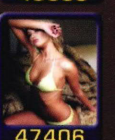

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