

PlayStation[®] 2 presents...
OFFICIAL magazine-UK

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PSP

BIBLE

GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR NEW MACHINE NOW



- Every launch game reviewed
- *Liberty City Stories* blowout
- How to store movies and music
- Every feature explained...

PSP BIBLE

GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR NEW MACHINE NOW



“ THE CHURCH OF PSP HAS A BIBLE, AND YOU'RE HOLDING IT. INSIDE, A WEALTH OF WISDOM AWAITS. EVERY LAUNCH GAME RATED, THE HITS OF THE FUTURE EXPOSED AND AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT THE EXTRAORDINARY *GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES*. BELIEVE BROTHERS AND SISTERS – IT'S INCREDIBLE. THE REST OF THIS VENERABLE TOME? EVERYTHING ELSE YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PSP. MOVIES, MUSIC, ONLINE... EVEN WIFI. IT'S A TRULY RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE. ”

THIS LOT DID THIS BOOK

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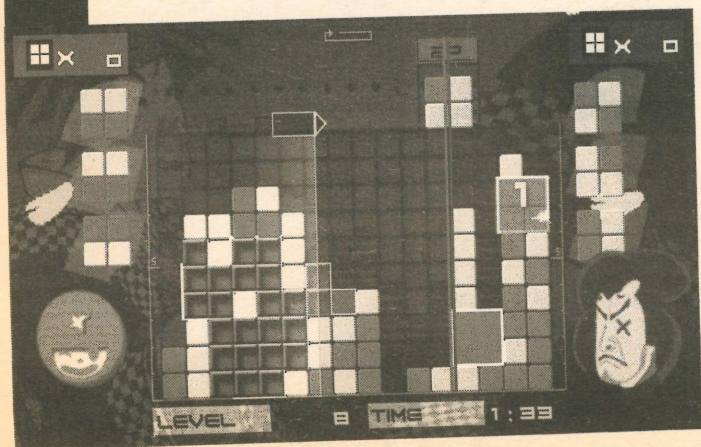
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Complicated words, phrases and acronyms made simple by us, for you

COMPLETE PSP

THE D-PAD

The four digital direction buttons will be familiar to any veteran of the PSone or PS2. Used for in-game control and also to navigate PSP's XMB menu system. Up, down, left and right. Sorted.

ACCESS INDICATORS

The top one lights up when you're accessing or saving data. The bottom one, when you turn on Wireless Networking.

ANALOGUE STICK

It may look like a small speaker but this is in fact the neat little analogue controller, complete with textured, anti-slip surface. You can't push it down to provide an extra button like with PS2, but it works a treat.

HEADSET CONNECTOR

Slot your PSP headset in here, or use your own set of 'phones. Adjust the volume with the buttons on the front, or with the headphone remote control supplied with your machine.

HOME BUTTON

Press this at any point while playing a game, movie or music file and you'll be asked if you want to quit and return 'Home' - in other words, return to the main menu screen.

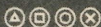
VOLUME BUTTONS

Turn it up or down. The maximum volume is enough for most tastes, especially through the earphones. Bear in mind, the louder you play, the quicker the battery is used up.

GUIDED TOUR

SCREEN

The PSP screen features Sony's X-Black LCD technology, which provides superior brightness and contrast.



The familiar Triangle, Square, Circle and Cross buttons that have graced every Sony games machine since PSone. As well as in-game use, these are employed to select items in the machine's XMB menu system.

SELECT AND START

These work the same way as they do on the PSone and PS2. Game developers can use them as anything from pause buttons to weapon selectors.

SOUND BUTTON

This adjusts the tone of the sound, so that it suits the type of music you're playing. There are four settings - Heavy Metal, Pops, Jazz and Unique. You can select 'Off' for a normal tone.

DISPLAY BUTTON

Press this repeatedly to work through four levels of screen brightness. The brightest can only be accessed when you're using the AC adaptor (for power-sucking reasons).

AC ADAPTOR PORT

Plug your PSP power adaptor in here to charge the batteries. Obviously the PSP runs off the power adaptor when it's plugged in, rather than the batteries, and lets you turn the brightness to full.

INFRARED PORT

The IrDA (Infrared Data Association) port will enable the PSP to connect wirelessly to other devices that don't have WiFi support. Sony has also mentioned the possibility of PSP users going online via an infrared connection to a mobile phone.

USB CONNECTOR

This is where you attach a USB cable to link to your PC or Apple Mac. It'll also let you connect your PSP to a PS2 (and, later, a PS3) or to any USB add-ons that Sony manufactures. It's already shown prototypes of a camera, GPS device and keyboard.

POWER/HOLD

Push the slider switch up to turn on the machine. Slide it up again to pause the current game and activate sleep mode. You can also slide it down to lock the switch.

BATTERY COVER

The battery goes in here. It should last between four to six hours while you're gaming or watching a movie, and over ten hours if you're listening to music. When it starts to run low the power indicator on the front will flash green. The same light will go orange when you're charging.

UMD OPEN LATCH

Opens the UMD slot. And that's all there is to it.

UMD SLOT

Pop the catch, slide a Universal Media Disc in here, shut the door, select UMD from the XMB menu and you're away. The disc makes minimal noise while spinning – it's virtually silent when gaming outdoors.

SHOULDER BUTTONS

There are two shoulder buttons and they're primarily for in-game use – for example, in *Ridge Racer* these buttons are used to change the in-car view and activate nitros.

MEMORY STICK DUO SLOT

Simply open the slot cover and slide in your Memory Stick Duo. When the PSP is accessing data the Memory Stick Duo access indicator on the front of the machine flashes. Don't remove the Memory Stick Duo while this is happening or you could lose or corrupt data.

WLAN SWITCH

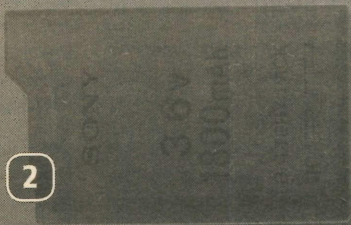
This switches on your Wireless Network connection so you can indulge in WiFi multiplayer gaming, or go online. Switch it off when it's not in use to preserve your battery.

PSP guided tour

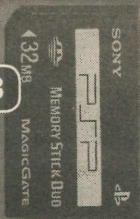
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2



3



IN THE BOX

Along with the PSP itself, the Value Pack comes with a whole bunch of extra goodies. Here's what you'll find when you open the package...

1 CARRY POUCH

This padded case keeps your precious PSP nice and safe while it's in your bag. You also get a useful cleaning cloth so you can wipe those pesky fingerprints off the screen. What's more, the spongy, Neoprene construction keeps it safe from light knocks and bashes.

2 BATTERY PACK

For tech spec fans this is a 3.6v 1800mAh Lithium Ion battery. It'll take approximately two hours and 20 minutes to carry out a full recharge. According to official figures that will provide you with four to six hours of gameplay (with WLAN switched off).

3 MEMORY STICK DUO

The Value Pack contains a 32MB Memory Stick

Duo, which will store several game saves, music tracks, photos and short video clips. If you want a larger capacity, Memory Stick Duos and the faster Memory Stick PRO Duos are sold in iterations of up to 2GB – although one of those will set you back around £150. 512MB models are closer to £50, while a 64MB stick goes for £15.

4 HEADPHONES

The PSP comes with a sleek pair of in-ear headphones, complete with a detachable remote control unit. You can also use any other headphones with the machine and the remote control can still be employed. Remember, there's a sound level limiter to protect your hearing but this can be turned off in the XMB menu if you want to really rock out.

Did you know...?

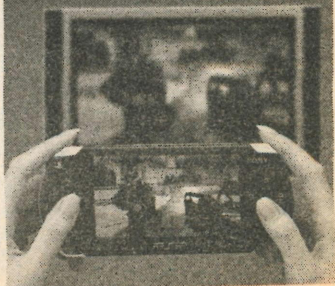
PSP CONNECTS TO PS3!

One of the most head-turning parts of the recent PS3 unveiling – aside from the graphical horsepower – was word that the futuro-console will connect to the PSP.

The handheld will be able to interact with the console both locally (while you're in the same room) or from afar via wireless connection. You'll be able to browse through files stored on the PS3 hard drive, or order downloadable films that will be sent straight to the console ready for you to watch when you get home.

Sony won't leave the PSP as the world's most expensive remote control though, there will be lots of gameplay crossover as well. You'll be able to use the PSP as a controller for the PS3, giving you your own screen in multiplayer games or an extra element to consult while playing an RPG, for example.

There's much chatter about console and handheld games interconnecting. You can already connect PS2 and PSP games, with upcoming *SOCOM US Navy SEALs 3* (PS2) and *SOCOM US Navy SEALs Fireteam Bravo* (PSP) sharing mission data via USB, and *Metal Gear Acid* linking with *Snake Eater*. PSP connectivity is a big part of *Pro Evo 5*, and on PS3 this kind of connectivity will be even more prevalent. Imagine an online RPG game for PS3 that would let you tinker with your character on the move using your PSP. "Hang on ladies, I've got to check in on Thor..."



5 AND THE REST

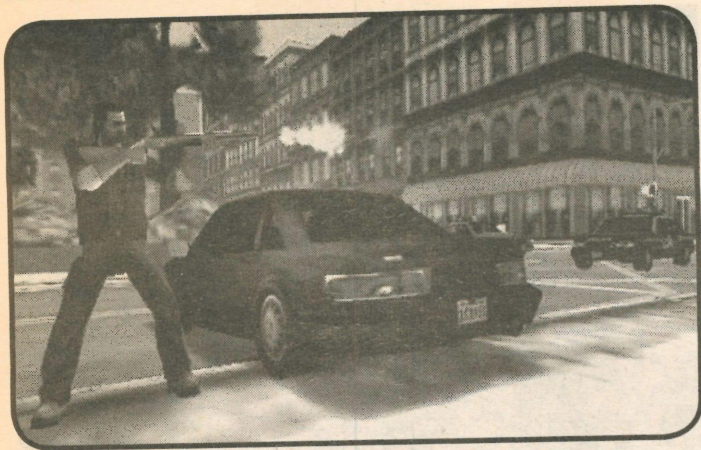
There's a useful wrist strap, an even more useful instruction booklet and a power adaptor so you can play at home while charging the battery. More accessories will be available to buy including the Logic3 PSP Sound Station, a dock for your console that has a sub-woofer speaker system and a 3D surround sound processor.

grand theft auto™

Liberty City Stories

*Petite crime is the new grand
larceny. On the small screen
with huge ambition it's
GTA: Liberty City Stories*





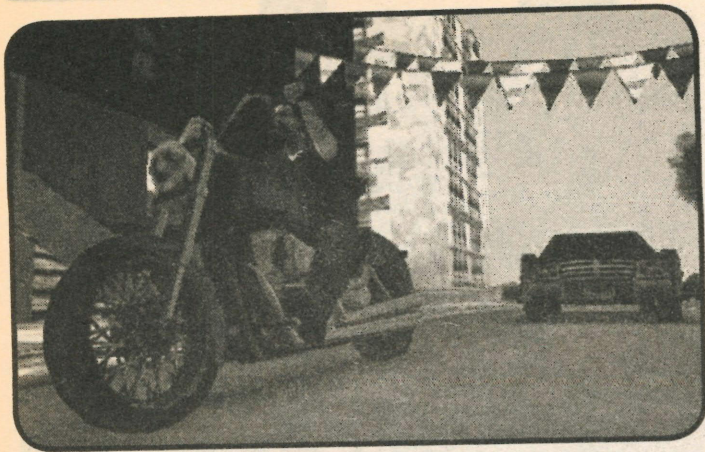
GTA. PSP. Put them together and what do they spell? Gtapsp. And that, believe it or not, is one of the most astonishing sounds in gaming. The whole crazy world of *Grand Theft Auto*, running on a machine that very nearly fits in your mouth. Certainly it fits in your pocket, which is more hygienic. Nevertheless, it's a

IT'S BENEFITED FROM IMPROVEMENTS IN VICE CITY AND SAN ANDREAS

moveable feast; portable punkery; a travelling city of chaos. We're quite excited. But can it really be *GTA* as we know it? It can, and it is. Hear the unequivocal words of Dan Houser, no less than creative vice president of Rockstar North: "It's full *GTA*." No compromise.

"Pretty much everything's in the game," continues Dan, warming to his subject. "I mean, I say that because I was speaking to your US cousins yesterday and afterwards they were like, 'that's cool, but what can you do in it?' And I was like, well, it's *GTA*... you do everything you wanna do. And they couldn't really get their heads around that." Americans, eh? We're not really cousins.

So it's full *GTA*, but it's not *GTA3*. As the more alert among you will have noticed, we're back in Liberty City (the clue's in the title), scene of the first PS2 game. Why? "For two reasons. One, it was a long time since we'd done anything with it. Y'know we'd just finished *San Andreas* – didn't want to do that again – and just finished *Vice City* just before that, so it was just like, okay, let's go back to the →



→ beginning in some ways. And then also I think we just find the Mafia stuff that's the centre of the *Liberty City* world so fun, and we'd made these characters that we really liked in *GTA3*, and then we killed them all. Or large numbers of them." Whoops.

Of course, a prequel outwits even death – *Liberty City Stories* is set three years before *GTA3*. And as has become traditional, your character has changed, only this time he's familiar. Remember Tony Cipriani, the guy from the Bistro in St Marks who has you whacking Triads before you go to work for the Don? This is who you play. Still some years away from the garlic bread and candles, Cipriani is fresh back in the city after a while laying low, having offed a fellow mobster as a favour for Don Salvatore Leone. The grateful Salvatore

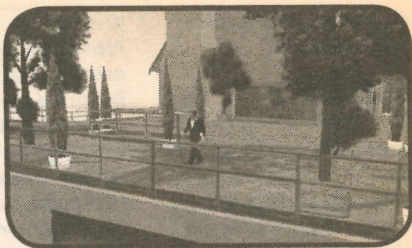
puts you straight back to work beating things to a pulp.

And this is when we first see *Liberty City Stories* running on PSP for ourselves. It's not quite true that it's Liberty City as we know it. In some ways it's more than that. While the series staples such as Insane Stunt jumps, Rampages and Hidden Packages are all here – not necessarily in the same places – it's also benefited from the improvements introduced by *Vice City* and *San Andreas*.

Perhaps the most obvious update is the inclusion of motorcycles. We've never had the chance to explore the rolling hills of St Marks on two wheels before, let alone the vast jumps of Shoreside Vale. "We made Liberty first, and we faced an enormous amount of technical problems doing that. There were a number of design challenges

that nobody had ever faced, and using the same city you can put things in that we hadn't put in that time, for example motorbikes, or having Tony as the main character – a strong character who speaks, which we hadn't done last time because we were still figuring out so many other problems. We just didn't get the opportunity to do these two things at the time of *GTA3*. So story-wise it was very fun to go and play around with, and content-wise small changes could give people a radically different experience from the one that they enjoyed four years ago."

So, four years on and three years back, the city is the same, yet subtly different – in some cases due to gameplay tweaks, such as making the best of the bikes, in others purely for chronology. "If *GTA3* was roughly 2001, this is



roughly '98, though we keep it fairly loose on the actual years. And we thought, y'know, how much can actually change? It's the same with the cars: trying to make the models look a bit earlier. Some are radically different, others just changed a little bit. Most are subtly different and a few are the same... same with the pedestrians. They look different, but it sort of feels like the same place, just a little bit earlier. So all the stuff's quite subtle." Having taken in a few of the sights, it's time to visit the first of →



- two of *Liberty City Stories*' hottest missions.

MISSION 1

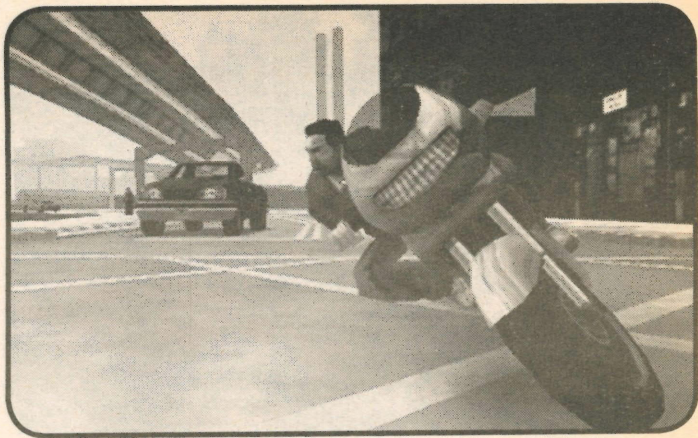
We're rolling through the red district, and true enough, it's familiar but different. We're outside Luigi's strip club, Sex Club 7 – the first place you visit in GTA3 – but Luigi isn't here yet. It's Paulie's Revue Bar and is run by JD O'Toole, a slimy pervert with links to the Triads. He wants to get in with the Leone mob instead, so tips you off about a Triad attack in St Marks. It's nearby, so we head to AmmuNation and load up on Uzis. We rock up in the Sentinel, and Tony's henchman jumps out and stands guard while we decide to head off the attack before it arrives. Two waves of angry Triads and several drive-by shootings later, a bulletproof Patriot arrives... tied up with

it, we can only watch as the Patriot reaches the casino and the Triads plant a bomb. Boom! It wrecks the place, but doesn't demolish it. It's not enough for the gangsters. Relentless, they send another truck packed with explosives, parking it nearby – this one will bring the whole place down if it blows. How can we save the casino?

Naturally we leap in the bomb truck and drive off, paying great attention to the timer and safe-distance meters. Once clear we park up and let it detonate near some innocent bystanders, saving considerable damage to Mafia property. Phew.

It's hectic, fast-paced and hilariously over-the-top; GTA after too much sugar. Also quicker is the combat system, the one thing that truly wasn't up to scratch during our first





visit to the city. The targeting is tweaked even from *San Andreas* – itself a subtle evolution of *Vice City's* – and features a lock-on and target selection system Rockstar believes is 'the most accomplished *GTA* system yet.' They're not shy about where they're aiming with this, either. "I've played a lot of the PSP stuff and to me it's all slightly crappy. Y'know, people are clearly not putting good teams on this. We're using guys with handheld expertise (Rockstar Leeds), but then we're also using all of our premier *GTA* guys, be it people in New York or people in Scotland. So we're not just overseeing it, we've got some of the best scripters in Rockstar North actually scripting missions. As are some of the guys in Leeds, but we've got to make sure that everything's done to the

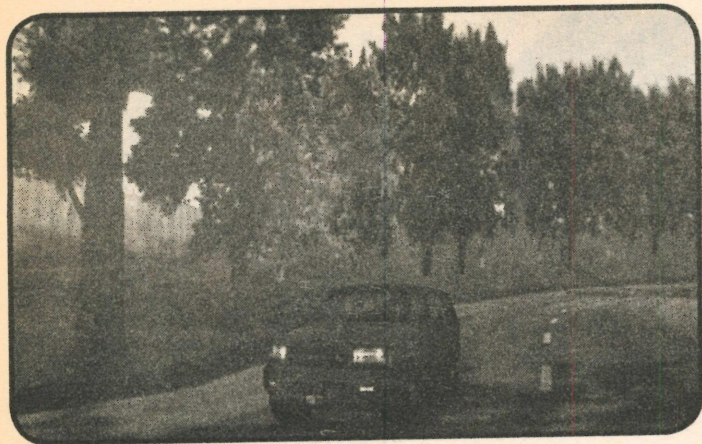
standard it has to be done to.

"I mean we've got a very good bunch of guys in Leeds doing that kind of technical work on the PSP. And they're very hungry, they love working in the handheld environment, and they did stuff we didn't think was possible. So, it's brilliant. The limitations? It's

"WHEN YOU SEE IT ON THE ACTUAL THING, IT LOOKS FKING AMAZING"**

graphically slightly less powerful than the PS2 and the disc is smaller, so you have to compress stuff more or put a bit less on, so music-wise we probably won't have as much as in *San Andreas*. But we'll still have plenty. And the overall effect, when you see it on the actual thing... it looks f**king amazing. One thing we're making sure isn't a





→ difference is production values; you know it will feel like *GTA3* or *Vice City* or *San Andreas*-level production values."

But surely it's not that simple? There are two issues here: how do you physically fit all this content onto the new UMD media, and – more

"BE IT MIDNIGHT CLUB OR GTA OR ANYTHING, WE JUST HAVE TO DO OUR OWN THING"

importantly – how do you tailor it to suit the portable format? "We've just got better at doing stuff. Techniques like how we do the cut-scenes, which we had to invent for *GTA3*... that's what we're trying to go for, that level, a fully immersive experience like the console version. We're obviously making sure it feels

nice. Tactile-wise, that's still the most important thing for a videogame, the tactility of it all. Our goal is that you won't notice any differences, it'll just play better. But the things that we're doing are fairly subtle, like keeping the cut-scenes and the missions a little bit shorter. Our optimum length of mission is roughly five minutes on console, and it's two-and-a-half minutes on PSP. And you shouldn't ever notice that; you should just think 'that's fun'... you know it's the subtle stuff like that where we're trying to keep things moving, because you might be waiting for a bus for 20 minutes." Not in the game, obviously. In real life.

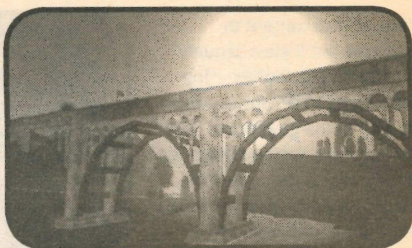
MISSION 2

We're back in the Sentinel, cruising over to Don Salvatore's mansion. He wants us to retrieve some cash from

GTA: Liberty City Stories

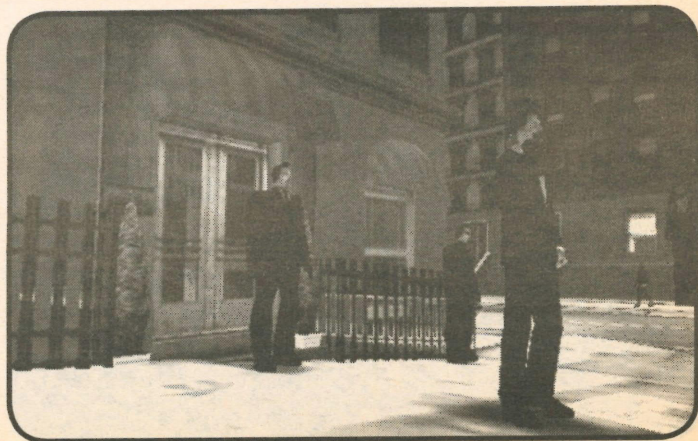
the docks at Atlantic Quays, so we take a dirt bike from his driveway and head down the hill. Across the water we can see Shoreside Vale – the draw – distance is extremely impressive. Unfortunately, those bomb-happy Triads have rigged the warehouse, so collecting the cash packages is a race against time – all while fighting running battles. In the nick of time we dash out and the building goes up, damaging everything nearby. Ignoring the smoking cars, we steal a chopper, gassing it up and weaving madly to avoid the incoming wave of Belly Up fish vans. Eventually, with only minor civilian casualties, we reach the safety of Salvatore's mansion once again.

In some ways, *Liberty City Stories* is just what you'd expect but, well... what did



you expect? It's the free-roaming *GTA* action we've all come to know and love, set in the familiar streets of the city that started it all. But it's not just a simple port – and let's face it, many people would have been perfectly happy even if it was. *Liberty City Stories* brings new missions, new vehicles, new characters and a new storyline to a level design that has arguably never been bettered, even within the *Grand Theft* series itself.

Happily, Rockstar is not a company governed by the faceless pursuit of the bottom →

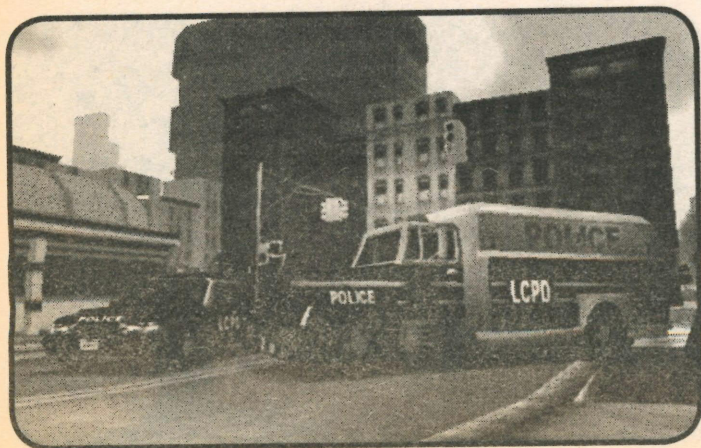


GTA: Liberty City Stories

→ line, or one content to squeeze out lifeless sequels just to fill the shelves. "The key things to *GTA* for us, more than just the graphics or music or anything, would have to be freedom and non-linearity. That's what the game is based around. And if we were to compromise those elements, then it wouldn't be the same game. If the machine couldn't do that in 3D, we'd do it in 2D rather than give up those." But isn't there a point where the effort isn't worth it? Where it just takes too long? "Yes, there's a point where it must come out if you want to maximise profit, but you know we're not interested in that. It's a commercial art form, but to us the art form is just as important as the commercial side. We believe if the game is good it sells better if it comes out a month later, but you know..."



It's not a speech you'd hear coming from every company. In fact, it's pretty much the opposite of current corporate 'thinking,' but it's all part of the individualistic behaviour that makes the company what it is. They're not called Rockstar for nothing. Yet for all its trailblazing swagger, Rockstar's not short of ambition or commercial nous, either. "Even in the States the PSP's still only getting going. It's sort of finding its feet and I think that's fundamentally because what sells machines is games,





and there still isn't a *great* game on the machine. Our goal is to rectify that."

It would sound like arrogance from almost any other developer. "The PSP is one of those things where people will play it lots of different ways, and you've got to try almost more than with the console." Why? "Because some people will use it travelling to work, other people only on odd train journeys, and obviously it's even more static when you're at home because you're bored out of your brain. Other people will be, y'know, playing it on the beach or whatever, and we've gotta try to some extent to cater to all of those: and that's something where the *GTA* model is fundamentally good, because it gives you lots of little things. You know, you can just run around and cause mayhem

for five minutes, you could go on a drive and listen to music, you can get really engrossed in the story... *GTA's* always supported that kind of thing, so I think we're just trying to bring out that side more. To reduce some things to smaller chunks yet keep

"WE ARE VERY, VERY CONCERNED THAT THE GAME IS RIGHT..."

the big, general sprawl in there as well."

Perhaps with the increasing number of wannabes out there, they're looking to be the first to move into fresh territory? "Not really, I mean, we just kind of want to do our own thing really, we're pretty clear about that. In any of our main franchises we do it because we think it's interesting and we're not →

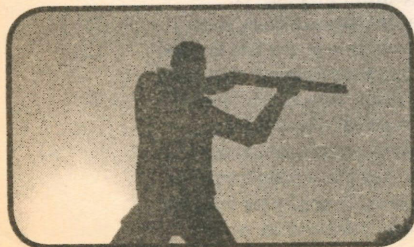


→ ripping other people off. Be it *Midnight Club* or *GTA* or anything like that, we just have to do our own thing – we're quite adamant – and let other people do their 50 copies; steal whatever they want to steal out of it. Of course we'll borrow the odd thing from other people too, because everyone does. But the core idea is, we stick to our own guns." Yeah. Lots of guns.

Even so, we might worry that something so ambitious as stuffing a virtual New York into a machine smaller than Victoria Beckham's sunglasses

would take more hours than have so far elapsed, ever. But Rockstar is historically pretty good: so far it has stuck unusually tightly to release dates. So when is *Liberty City Stories* due? "Sometime at the end of this year," says Dan vaguely. "October, November, September if we work very hard... You know, we're not EA in our approach at all, and we are very, very concerned that the game is right before it comes out."

"It's not just about the narrative drive, it's also about being in this f**king cool fictional world. We're going to keep pushing that shit forward. That's when we're going to overtake movies and Hollywood. Suddenly you're turning the watcher into the player, and it's a more interesting role for the person, engaging with the story. And that's the stuff we're looking



at: how can we move it to a whole new level, how can we advance this world, this sensation of being somewhere fake and of being your own person in that fictional environment or fantasy-distorted America?"

We suggest more guns. Anyway, back to Dan. "People go crazy about graphics, but games sell on gameplay." We were going to say that. (WARNING! UNDERSTATEMENT ALERT!) "So if some of our games have been successful now, what we think that buys us is the freedom to get future games right." Rockstar: some of its games have done okay. Breaking news.

Having seen this running on PSP, it's quite clear it's nowhere near having to go back to two dimensions – this will set the bar on PSP formidably high right from the start. And it's looking pretty solidly on course for its October-ish release. As mentioned before, the only concession seems to be, as Dan admits, the amount of music. Tantalisingly though, there is the possibility of importing your own track lists. The PSP does have its own music file capabilities, and Rockstar previously added an in-car 'CD changer' to the Xbox *GTA*, which played tracks ripped to the hard drive. ➔

PLAYING *GTA* IS GOOD FOR YOU

According to one-man American think tank, Steven Johnson, playing games like *Grand Theft Auto* can make you smarter

Apparently *GTA* helps train your brain to work better because: "you have to map a complex space in your head, work through levels of multiple objectives, and make decisions about what your strategy will be. It's the open-ended nature of the game, the fact that you can explore such a huge environment, with so many variables at play, and build your own narrative out of that space. If it were just about running around and shooting things – as in *Doom* or *Quake* – it wouldn't be nearly as challenging."

Johnson says the same can also be said of TV shows with huge complex narratives, such as *24* and *Alias*, and while he wouldn't say that *GTA* is any better than reading a worthy tome such as *War And Peace* – don't shred that GCSE reading list just yet – he told us, "If the choice is between *GTA* and a silly romance novel – or watching something like *Charlie's Angels* on TV – I'd recommend the game every time."

Worth bearing in mind the next time you get an ear bashing from the missus about how staying up late chasing *San Andreas*' 100% rating is ruining your relationship.

Everything Bad Is Good For You, is available now at www.amazon.co.uk for £7, and from other good places too...



➤ Surely including the same capability on PSP would be a cinch?

Rockstar, as ever, won't confirm or deny anything. It's very secretive about its games until the day they appear on the shelves... but try this little exchange:

OPS2: "What about multiplayer?"

DAN: "We're still obsessed with the single-player at this point."

TANTALISINGLY THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY OF IMPORTING YOUR OWN TRACKLISTS

OPS2: "Can we ask about aerial transport...?"

DAN: "I don't think we have it. Motorbikes are our big thing at this point. That required certain workings of the map, and to do the other

stuff would require more... it would end up..."

We don't know how it would end up. Dan Houser never ended the sentence. Mostly, however, Rockstar won't confirm or deny anything because it's too busy being un-PC, un-corporate and downright passionate. "I know you guys are big believers in this because... games are going to overtake films as the next thing. Not commercially, but who cares? One costs six dollars, one costs sixty dollars, and we can only sell ours once and they can sell theirs 90 times... but from a storytelling perspective, games are catching up with films, in the way society tells stories about itself." And this game, *Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories*, is going to catch up with you wherever you are. Gtapsp! *Liberty City*, in your pocket! It's full GTA. ■



WHAT'S YOUR GTA TOP 20?

Everyone's got their favourite joints. But for our money this is the ultimate top 20 *GTA* track list for the ultimate personal *GTA* soundtrack...

FIND THEM IN...

GTA: San Andreas

GTA: Vice City

GTA3

NWA – *Express Yourself*

Jan Hammer – *Crockett's Theme*

Gary Numan – *Cars*

The Cult – *She Sells Sanctuary*

Dr Dre – *Nuthin' But A 'G' Thang*

Cutting Crew – *(I Just) Died In Your Arms*

Giorgio Moroder & Arthur Barrow – *Scarface (Push It To The Limit)*

Blondie – *Atomic*

A Flock Of Seagulls – *I Ran (So Far Away)*

Public Enemy – *Rebel Without A Pause*

Spandau Ballet – *Gold*

Mr Mister – *Broken Wings*

Michael Jackson – *Billie Jean*

Yes – *Owner Of A Lonely Heart*

Soul II Soul – *Keep On Movin'*

Michael Jackson – *Wanna Be Startin' Something*

Giorgio Moroder & Peter Bellotte – *She's On Fire*

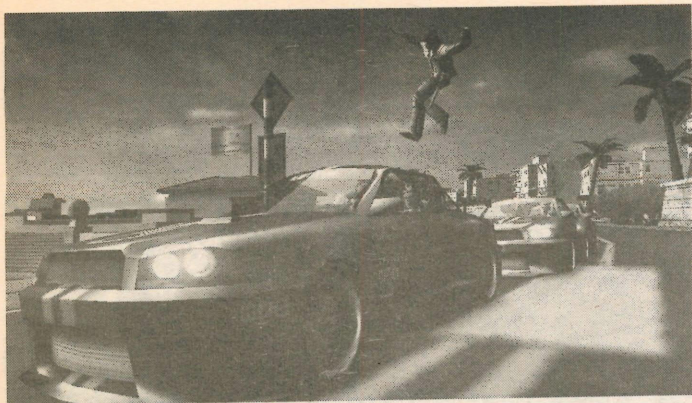
Ron Ayers – *Running Away*

Ice Cube – *It Was A Good Day*

REO Speedwagon – *Keep On Loving You*



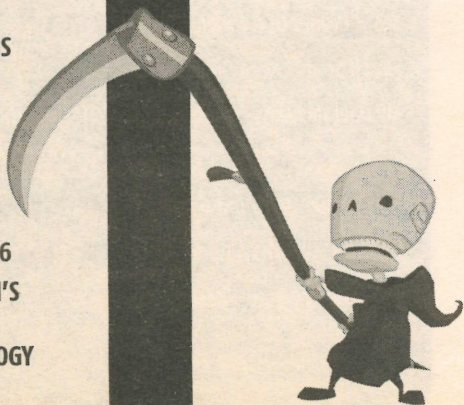
NOTE: Trying to rip from a PS2 game to an iPod is not only probably illegal it's also bastard hard. You're best off buying the albums or paying for downloads.



PSP PREVIEW

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PUBLISHER EA | DEVELOPER EA SPORTS BIG

SSX 4

EA PROVES ONCE AGAIN THAT IT'S DOPE ON THE SLOPES

➤ Back in 2000, the very first *SSX*, an extravagant snowboard sim with fun characters and awesome stunts, was one of EA's initial PS2 games. It really showed the machine's

power, offering an exhilarating thrill. Now, *SSX 4* (a working title) is set to do the same for PSP, promising incredible moves, smooth animation and massive courses as you travel around

the world, moving up the snowboard or ski rankings. Radical stuff. Also included is a skin unlocking mode – ski or snowboard your way to success, unlocking new characters as you play. ■



STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT

THE FORCE IS STRONG WITH THIS ONE



When *Star Wars Battlefront* made its debut on PS2

last year, the playing field for online games and *Star Wars* games changed forever. Not only was it the first time the PS2 played host to the free-for-all epic battlefield action

PC gamers are most accustomed to, but the game very quickly became the best-selling *Star Wars* title of all time.

But even with all that success, the game only scratched the surface of what was possible in the *Star Wars* universe – and it came as no surprise that a sequel had gone into production just



days after the first game was finished.

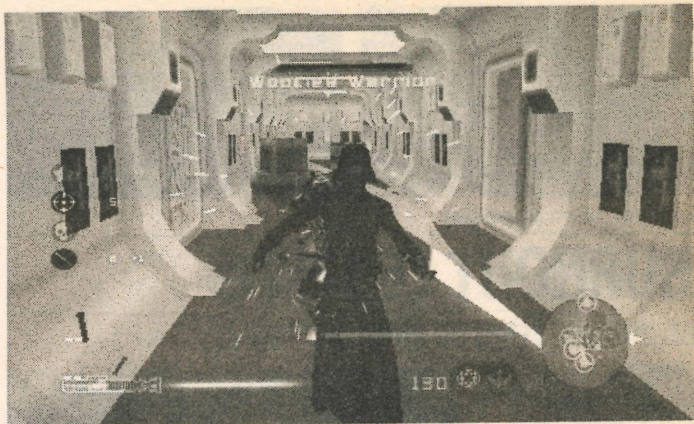
Giving you the chance to play through the military campaigns seen in all six films of the double trilogy, *Battlefront 2* lets you play as all kinds of characters, from footsoldiers to the more important Jedi and even lets you take to the

driving seat of the saga's iconic space craft in epic space battles.

Which brings us to the PSP version. It's clear from the shots here that the emphasis is on classic scenarios we all know from the films.

Here for instance are the opening scenes of *Episode IV: A New Hope*. Most interesting to *Star*





Wars fans, however, will be the chance to play as either Vader or Princess Leia during this sequence – and you can expect to go hands on with other famous characters in other parts of the game. Us? We're most excited about getting the chance to fly an X-Wing in a bid to to aid the Empire's defeat in *Return of the Jedi*.

Key to *Battlefront's* action on PSP will be the WiFi multiplayer. The console games are online, so obviously this element had to make it to portable in tact otherwise there was no point bothering – the real joy in this series is being able to run across the war-torn plains seen in the films, taking out characters controlled by other players all

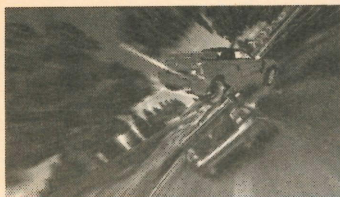
over the globe. With support for up to eight players confirmed so far (LucasArts may add space too support a higher number of players as time goes on) and a set of specially designed arenas to battle in, this will not disappoint. Especially given that you'll have the chance to play as either the evil empire or rebel scum. Want to fly Han Solo's Millennium Falcon? You'll get your chance. ■

"I WANT TO BECOME A GREAT JEDI LIKE MY FATHER"



Key to the action will be the ability to fly the famous ships from the original trilogy of films. Plus, you should also be able to play missions that have you hoping in and out of spacecraft, with you fighting on the battlefield before you take to the sky.





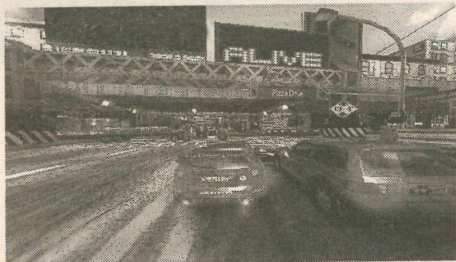
PUBLISHER EA | DEVELOPER CRITERION GAMES

BURNOUT LEGENDS

BECOME A LEGEND, OR BURN OUT TRYING...

➤ The idea of *Burnout* is simple. Drive a car very, very fast. Then, just when you're agog with fear, go even faster as you earn nitrous-style boosts from daring maneuvers between on-road traffic. In itself this would be a recipe for a jaw-dropping experience, but chuck in the most thunderous and compelling crashes you could imagine and you've got a game you simply can't peel your eyes away from.

Let's explain what we have here. Imagine if all



the *Burnout* games so far blasted it toward each other and smashed into a blood-curdling wreck. Then imagine that all the chunks of gloriously mangled levels, vehicles and game modes were welded back together to form a new juggernaut

of a game. That's *Burnout Legends*.

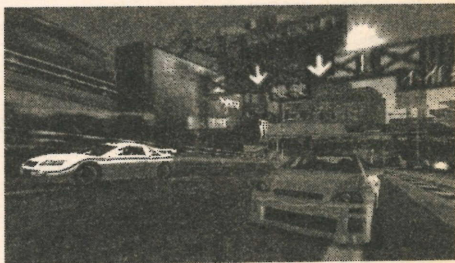
On PSP, *Burnout* is driven to all new extremes of high-octane entertainment. Eight gameplay modes in total make for a potentially unputdownable single player experience. Some modes emphasise your racing skills while others, such as *Crash*, simply require you to twist metal as spectacularly as possible.

The best feature of *Burnout Legends*, however, is the game's connectivity. Rather than simply enabling





the player to compete against rivals using a WiFi connection, playing others is essential if you want to unlock all the cars in the game. Only by beating friends, enemies and everyone else will you be able to win certain cars to drive, not to mention all-important bragging rights. Also, built-in Game Sharing will let you play friends in multiplayer pile ups – even if they don't own a copy of the game. Just beam the level to them



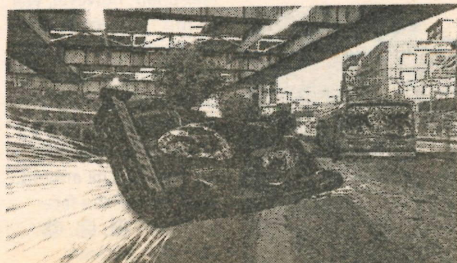
using the PSP's on-board WiFi adaptor.

Burnout Legends is more than a 'best of' collection, it's a thrilling, vehicle-mashing wonder in its own right. ■

NEW WHEELS



As well as a host of twists on classic levels, there's plenty of new stuff under *Burnout Legends'* shiny hood. There are tons of new vehicles, with 25 unique cars for you to mash with glee, and that includes an extra five unlockable police motors. The Legends mode enables players to compete against 11 great drivers from previous *Burnout* titles.





PUBLISHER KONAMI | DEVELOPER KONAMI

CODED ARMS

AMBITIOUS FIRST-PERSON ACTION ON THE SMALL SCREEN...

➤ First-person shooters, like racing games, are an excellent yard-stick with which to measure the grunt under the bonnet of gaming hardware.

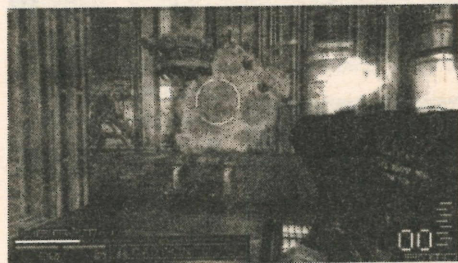
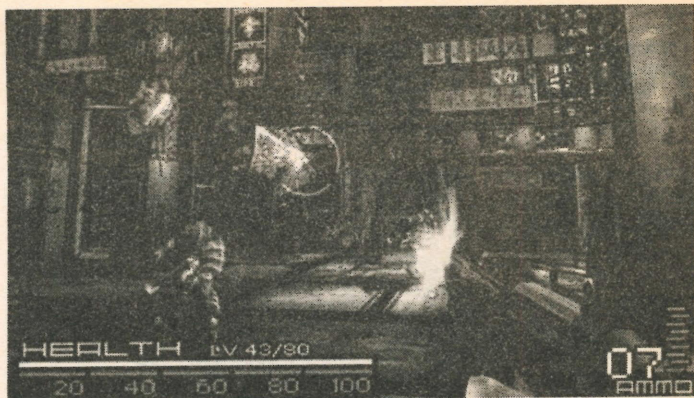
Konami's *Coded Arms* then, like *Ridge Racer*, packs a serious visual punch that amply demonstrates the raw

power of your new PSP. It's a slick, fast-paced and velvety-smooth shooter that takes you on a relentless bug hunt through a gritty, industrial virtual-world – boasting a smart line in visual effects, from dazzling neon to light reflection and refraction. It's pretty much your standard run-and-gun

affair then, but that's no bad thing because the emphasis is less on showy gimmicks and quirky mission objectives and more on delivering jaw-dropping visuals, and a solid, no-frills, first-person shooting experience.

The question on the lips of any '*Splitters*, *Killzone* or *Medal Of Honor* fan, however, will be this: how on earth do you play it with just one analogue stick? Remember, in standard PS2 shooters you have one stick to move and another to look around. Well, on PSP the face buttons – **A**, **X**, **□**, and **○** – are your

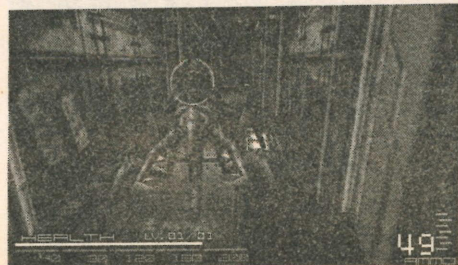




substitute for looking up, down, left and right. Clever.

There's plenty of other innovations, too. 30 weapons are on offer, with four-player WiFi deathmatches

available and, perhaps most interestingly, a random level-generator which, theoretically, will keep you in fresh frag-filled multiplayer arenas until the end of time itself. ■



THE MAINFRAME




Coded Arms isn't just another game about when aliens attack.... Some years ago, a military-grade VR training simulator was created to test soldiers in alien invasion scenarios. However, deadly flaws were found in the system, and the project was abandoned. You, as a top hacker, have sneaked your way into this defunct VR world, only to find that the program has evolved and grown to an incredible degree – and now you must fight your way out. Intriguingly, the weapons and power-ups you find in this VR world can be carried over into WiFi battles...

PUBLISHER SONY | DEVELOPER BIGBIG STUDIOS

PURSUIT FORCE

...IS THE GREATEST CAR CHASE HOLLYWOOD NEVER MADE

 The first thing that strikes you about *Pursuit Force*

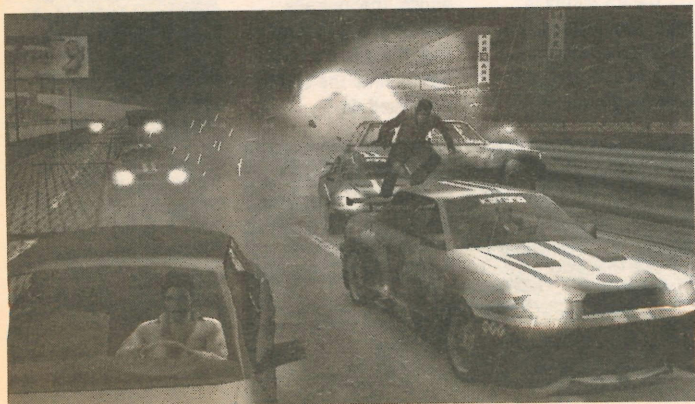
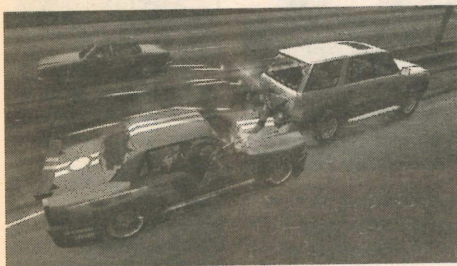
Force is the beautiful simplicity of the idea – why has nobody done a game like this on any console before (never mind the handheld PlayStation)? It's a police car racer that has you jumping from cop to criminal car with a

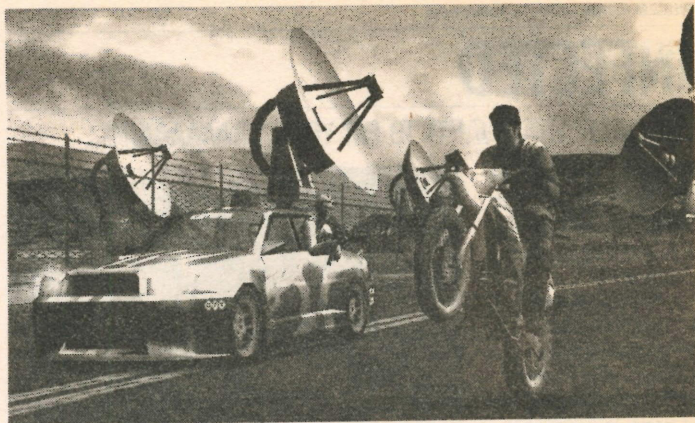


single button press. It's kinetic and frenetic.

The retroheads among you will be impressed by how it echoes classic arcade title *Chase HQ*, but the rest of us can coo at the *GTA*-like freshness of the concept and *Burnout*-esque vibrancy of the visuals.

And after playing through the first five levels of the game, we'd wager that *Pursuit Force*





will become just as essential for PSP as either of those two games are for PS2.

While the bread and butter objectives usually involve playing catch up with law-breakers, you'll often be given different kinds of missions. At one point we had to kidnap and subdue a passenger while outrunning the crims, and later on make sure a truck laden with explosives didn't explode. Enemies include a pack of crazy



lady-criminals you chase in a giant articulated lorry, and we're promised a variety of vehicles to take charge of or hijack, including motorbikes, boats and aircraft (there

are moments where you take the passenger seat in an armed helicopter, firing at the vehicles on a car-packed freeway below).

Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories may well be at the top of your PSP most wanted list, but we'd strongly suggest you put *Pursuit Force* straight in behind it. An excellent concept well executed, we're itching to get our hands around the finished version. ■



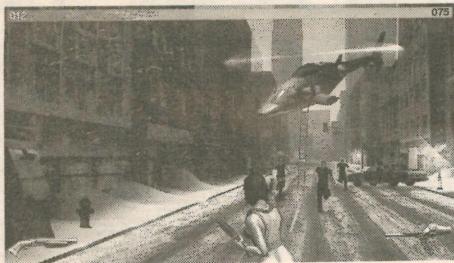
PUBLISHER MAJESCO | DEVELOPER PLANET MOON

INFECTED

THE GAME THAT WANTS TO EAT YOUR BRAAAAAAINS

➤ It's all gone a bit *Day Of The Dead*. The zombies are out, and they want in – to your PSP.

In fact, *Infected* is one of the most innovative gaming concepts we've heard of. It's a shoot-'em-up at heart, in which you blast the living dead with big guns, but WiFi weirdness is *Infected's* sucker punch. If you beat another player, your own



particular virus 'infects' his PSP, making all his zombies like yours. And if he then beats someone else, their

PSP gets tainted with your unique mark, too. Socially communicable gaming – it's definitely the future. ■

PUBLISHER EA | DEVELOPER VICARIOUS VISIONS

BATMAN BEGINS

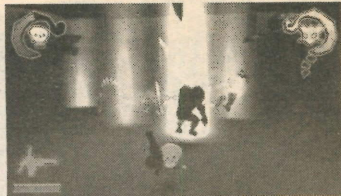
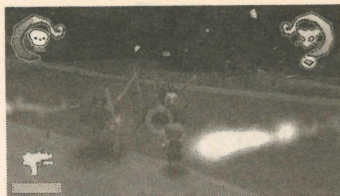
HOLY UTILITY BELT! IT'S A DARK ADVENTURE ON PSP

➤ This is the game of the movie, starring Christian Bale as Batman, which hit cinemas in July.

As with the film, it explores the origins of the Dark Knight and his mission to clean up Gotham City following

the murder of his parents. Gameplay is a mix of fighting, puzzle-solving and exploring as the young Bruce Wayne uses his gadgets and kung fu skills in a vigilante crusade. Expect a game comparable to the version recently released for PS2 – and with no other stealth game on PSP, this is perfect for all the sneaking/skin-tight latex suit fans out there. ■





PUBLISHER **KONAMI** | DEVELOPER **BACKBONE**

DEATH JR

A GAME THAT WE'VE BEEN DYING TO GET OUR HANDS ON...

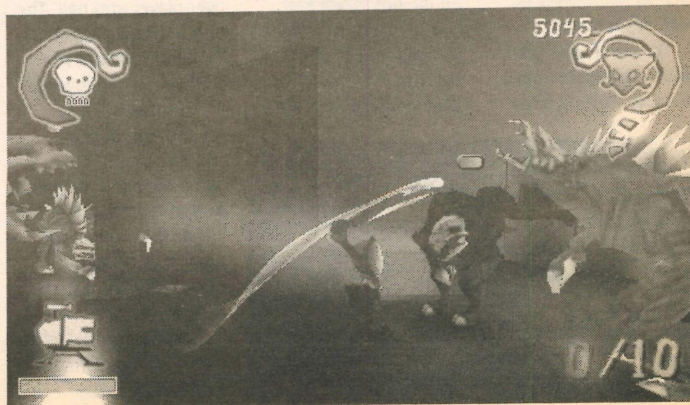
➤ Death, it seems, has a son. How he found the time to sire a grim nipper in between all that grim reaping is rather unclear, but the fact remains.

Death Jr. is the young man's name, and death is certainly something he enjoys dishing out. His first videogame outing is a mixture of platforming and shooting – the latter being the important



part, as he's pretty handy with the old boom-sticks. And when things get up-close and personal, there's just no

substitute for a reapers trademark weapon: a scythe. But despite all that death, this one is set to have a long life. ■





PUBLISHER EA | DEVELOPER EA SPORTS

FIFA 2006

WHERE THE FOOTBALL SEASON REALLY STARTS...



Now you're spoiling us.

Not only is the football season starting up again after another long summer hiatus, but now EA has announced the latest title in its superlative *FIFA* series. Both are welcome.

Of course, you get what you expect from a *FIFA* title. Cutting edge

animation, over 20 leagues, 10,000 players with all the 05/06 stats, and intricately modelled stadia. In terms of actually playing the game, the designers have gone for an all-out attack feel, you're expected to see yourself as a Midfield Maestro – a Gerrard or Kaka perhaps – directing

the play, taking the ball from defence to attack in a series of deft moves. Apparently, new tackling, passing and shielding controls give you incredibly accurate and highly responsive control over player and ball. The aim is attractive football. Glamour football. The stuff we all like to watch.

But that's not to say the experience will lack depth. The game includes 'tactical button configurations' so you can build and enact deep strategic plays while the match progresses.

Another typical *FIFA* feature is interesting game modes. The





2006 edition features Challenge in which you re-live pivotal matches of the 04/05 season to see if you can change the course of history. (Note: you can't *actually* change the path of history, of course, but this is a great mode for letting you live out those fantasies.)

Plus, there's also a ball-juggling minigame where you turn your PSP on its side and get a portrait view of your player as he plays keepy-uppy for as long as possible.

WiFi support is agreeably thorough. Not only can you challenge other gamers to wireless matches, but you'll also be able to go online and download the latest team stats thereby keeping the game up to date with all the



transfer market activity.

We're also promised plenty of the old EA Sports razzmatazz: great presentation, videos, licensed tunes. *FIFA 2006* comes with Pocket Trax, a built-in player that lets you watch your favourite music videos via the game – we're not sure how this works but it sounds intriguing.

WiFi, data downloads, minigames *FIFA* understands PSP. If the gameplay measures up, this will be an essential purchase. ■

KEEP IT UP



The ball juggling minigame – for which you turn the PSP on its side – lets you practise your keepy-uppy skills. Good performance unlocks new goodies.

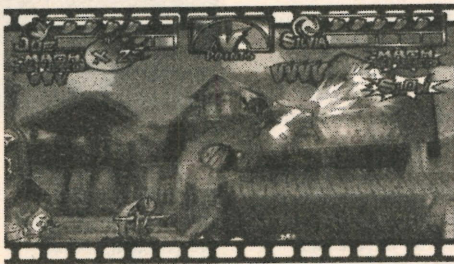


PUBLISHER CAPCOM | DEVELOPER CAPCOM

VIEWTIFUL JOE VFX BATTLE

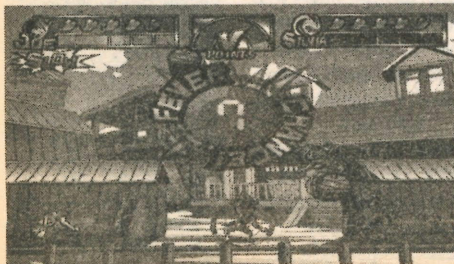
CARTOON CAPERS FROM ONE OF THE MOST ORIGINAL STARS

➤ If you've yet to encounter Capcom's offbeat cel-shaded hero, this is a great place to start. Based in a 'Movie Studio' theme park world, you must fight a sinister group of nutjob villains who are looking to sabotage Joe's latest film. What follows is side-scrolling, fighting



platform action. There are also multiplayer

co-op and vs modes. It's sheer madness visually, brought to life with candy-sweet comic book animations. What isn't mad is the time-warping battle controls. Pressing the shoulder buttons either slows time or speeds it up, letting you land a sucker-punch on the cartoon enemies coming your way. ■



PUBLISHER SEGA | DEVELOPER SPORTS INTERACTIVE

FOOTBALL MANAGER 2006

ABACUS GRAPHICS, COCAINE GAMEPLAY

Due out by Christmas, this is the very first time Sports Interactive, the creators of *Championship Manager*, have produced a footie manager game for a handheld console – which shows how powerful PSP really is. Expect a massive database of players, incredibly in-depth tactics and an authentic transfer market all ripe for the taking. We're also



expecting the customary 'so addictive you'll play it all night' vibe to remain in tact. However, as this is for a portable

machine you won't have to stay up glued to a screen – so you can play it in bed! The girlfriend will be pleased. ■

PUBLISHER UBISOFT | DEVELOPER UBISOFT

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG

ONE MONKEY TO RULE THEM ALL...

It's going to be the cinematic event of the

year – the *Lord of the Rings* director versus one of Hollywood's most

enduring giant apes. Like the console versions, the game will take in tense squad-based shooter and monster bash-'em-up elements with players switching roles between the expedition team and King Kong himself. However, we also understand that it will be a totally different game in terms of looks. Intriguing stuff. ■



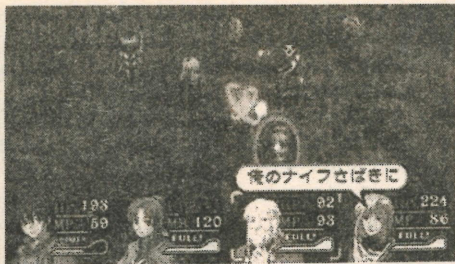
PUBLISHER BANDAI | DEVELOPER FALCOM

GAGHARV TRILOGY

SET SAIL FOR A QUIRKY FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING ROMP

➤ Although the title is so odd it may well be easily caught in the throat, *Gagharv's* gameplay is not at all stange. It is, in fact, a very traditional 2D Japanese RPG: story-driven and packed with text-based character interaction.

A boy named Jurio, together with his flame-haired gal Chris, must leave his small village and track down



a powerful witch. The fairly typical good versus evil tale takes in eight countries in the vast continent of Tirasweel.

One for the hardcore, maybe, but it's still an absorbing fantasy yarn with an excellent battle system. ■

PUBLISHER NAMCO | DEVELOPER NAMCO

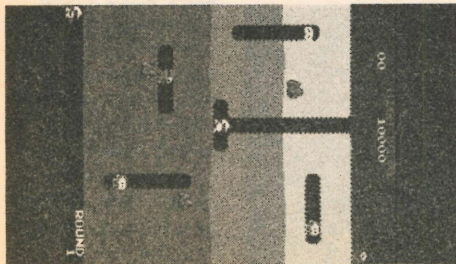
NAMCO MUSEUM BATTLE COLLECTION

RETRO-FLAVOURED RE-RELEASE RAMPAGE

➤ One for the rose-tinted spectacle lot that say 'I

remember when all this was just 8-bit fields of pixels', this features new

versions of classic Namco arcade titles as well as ports of the originals. Over 20 games are included - look out for arcade faves *Pac-Man*, *Ms Pac-Man*, *Dig Dug*, *Rally X*, *Galaga*, *Galaxian* and *Xevious*. And there's a four-player WiFi battle mode and a Game Share function where you can send a quick retro treat to a pal. Inspired. ■



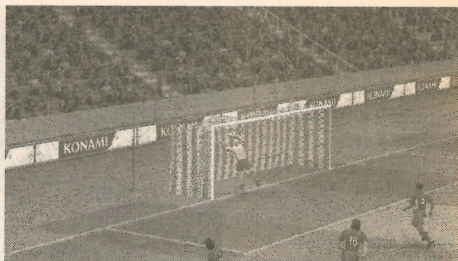
PUBLISHER KONAMI | DEVELOPER KONAMI

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5

PSP GETS *PRO EVO*? OUR LIVES ARE NOW COMPLETE

> We've always known that Konami would bring it's almost perfect footy series to the PSP - but until now we never realised how comprehensive and, well, perfect the transition would be.

First things first: yes, the on-pitch action is faithfully rebuilt for the portable device, with rather impressive results. But while not only being exactly precise and perfectly in tune with the PS2 series of games (this version is most comparable in feel and play to *Pro Evo 3*) this outing comes with a raft of new features.



Wireless multiplayer is the first big draw - it's what we've been dreaming of. Fire up the handheld and you can compete in a match against four other *Pro Evo* players.

Plus, the game features connectivity between the PS2 game *Pro Evo 5* and *Pro Evo* PSP. Simply connect

console and handheld with a USB cable and transfer a Master League save between them. This way you can improve your console game's team using a series of brand new portable training mini-games.

All sounds pretty tantalising, eh? Well it's not called the beautiful game for nothing. ■



PUBLISHER EIDOS | DEVELOPER CORE DESIGN

FREE RUNNING

BUT NOT FREE HEALTH INSURANCE IF YOU BREAK A BONE

➤ It was only a matter of time before the cult urban activity of free running (or 'Parkour') became a game. After all *Prince Of Persia*, PS2 stealth game *Stolen* and even the upcoming *Tomb Raider Legend* have all decided to turn their heroes into super-agile action acrobats.

In this game you'll soon be able to experience the thrills of



leaping from roof to roof gutter to gutter and past city skylines without worrying about broken bones. Over 50 moves

will be at your command as you charge through the city against a human or AI competitor. Just don't look down. ■

PUBLISHER SONY | DEVELOPER INCOGNITO

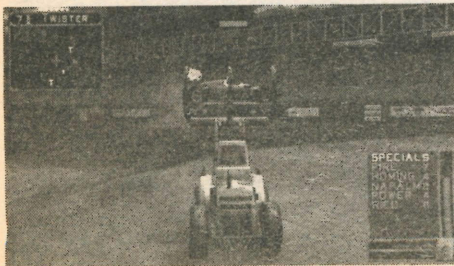
TWISTED METAL

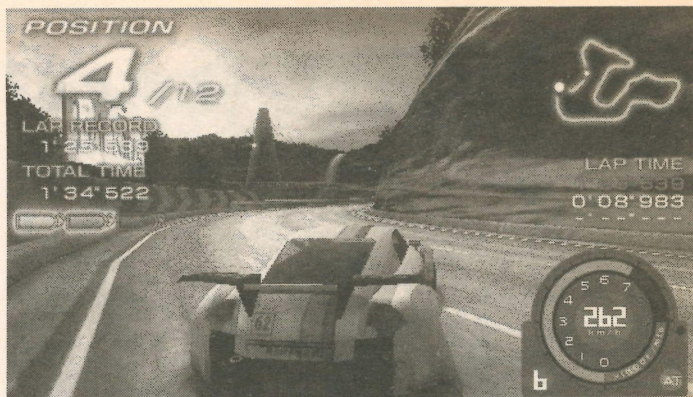
THE PS2'S ONLINE VEHICLE SMASH-UP GOES HANDHELD

➤ *Twisted Metal: Head-On* takes the key elements of this cult vehicle combat series – big cars,

big guns, big arenas – and brilliantly transfers them to the tiny world of PSP. But none of the jaw-dropping scale is

lost in the process. You'll get 14 souped-up and deadly motors to choose from and 12 gigantic arenas to explore (and utterly destroy). Plus, it comes with two very distinct WiFi modes. The first lets you play against mates at the pub while the second allows you to connect to the web using a wireless router and blow up players globally in epic multiplayer road carnage. ■





PSP REVIEWS

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-----|---|
| 048 | RIDGE RACER | 066 | WIPEOUT PURE |
| 052 | EVERYBODY'S GOLF | 070 | APE ACADEMY |
| 054 | METAL GEAR ACID | 071 | MERCURY |
| 055 | TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2 REMIX | 071 | FORMULA 1 |
| 056 | MEDIEVIL: RESURRECTION | 072 | VIRTUA TENNIS: WORLD TOUR |
| 057 | NFL STREET 2 UNLEASHED | 074 | DARKSTALKERS CHRONICLE: THE CHAOS TOWER |
| 058 | WORLD SNOOKER CHALLENGE 2005 | 075 | LUMINES |
| 059 | NBA STREET SHOWDOWN | 076 | WORLD TOUR SOCCER: CHALLENGE EDITION |
| 060 | SPIDER-MAN 2 | 077 | FIRED UP |
| 062 | NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND RIVALS | 078 | TOCA RACE DRIVER 2 |
| 064 | COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005 PLUS | 079 | DYNASTY WARRIORS |
| 065 | SMART BOMB | 080 | MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION |
| | | 081 | ATV OFFROAD FURY: BLAZIN' TRAILS |



RIDGE RACER

Namco crams its classic racer into your pocket

STYLISH RACER



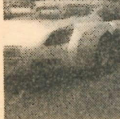
3 namco

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
 DEVELOPER NAMCO
 OUT NOW
 PRICE £34.99
 WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
 DOWNLOADS NO
 CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

POSITION

7/12
 LAP RECORD
 2' 37' 592
 TOTAL TIME
 0' 25' 132



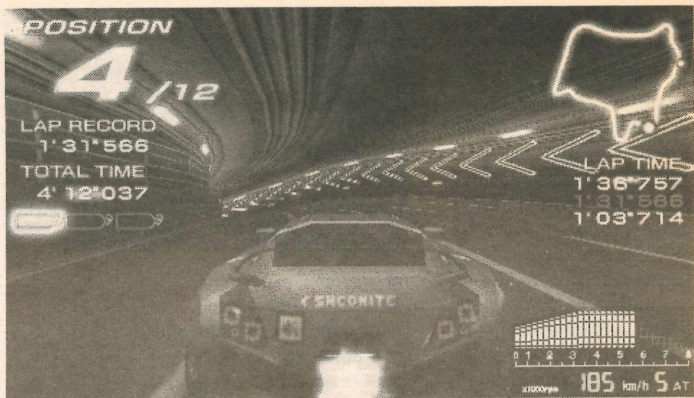
Easy to play but requiring dedication to master, *Ridge Racer* is a game of champions. Although this version's content is a remix of the best tracks and cars from previous *Ridge Racer* games, on PSP it's minty fresh and sharply delicious. And it's in playing this that we've come to realise just how much further all the other PlayStation Portable racers need to go before they're worthy of sustained play. *Need For Speed*, *Midnight Club* and

TOCA are all put to instant shame by *Ridge Racer's* unparalleled sense of speed and uncomplicated kicks.

PIMP MY RIDGE

First though, understand this about *Ridge Racer*: in an age of modding, ride pimpin' and NOS-powered hatchbacks, it's a more simple game that's elegantly accessible – even minimalistic – in comparison to the chav-pleasing racers out there. The basic structure is a series of multi-track competitions, with successful performance unlocking courses with harsher and faster opponents. Before each race you choose a car from the line-up available, with more unlocked as you progress.

So far, so traditional, but *Ridge Racer* helped create this tradition when it first arrived

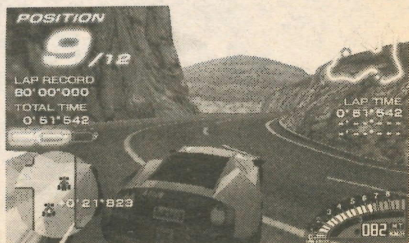


as a PSone launch game ten years ago, so you can't really fault it. And anyway, *Ridge's* racing is spiced up with an emphasis on drifting: long and successful power slides around corners and past other drivers gradually fills up a boost gauge in the top left of the screen, and if you smoothly massage your vehicle through a bend you're rewarded with a G-force twanging burst of acceleration out of the skid.

This 'reckless driving = boost' mechanic exists in almost every other racing game these days, but you can't criticise *Ridge's* polished interpretation. In some of the hottest races, this part of the gameplay merges with the racing tournament structure to deliver a simple formula that anyone can enjoy, but which requires sustained play to be truly mastered. Of course, playing on your Jack Jones is only half the



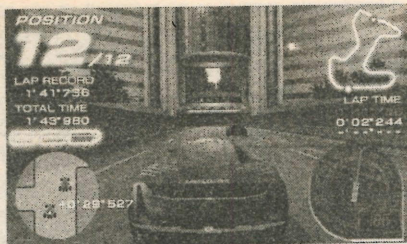
story. The way the game's multiplayer effortlessly uses the machine's WiFi elements only serves to reinforce *Ridge's* position as king of the road. The innumerable wireless battles we've had in the *OPS2* office have been easy to set up (the very definition of idiot-proof) +



PSP review

→ and also thick with the heady scent of manly competition.

A word of warning, though. After you've aced the basic tracks and unlocked the seriously challenging advanced races, the game expects your skills to have progressed significantly. The difficulty ratchets up fast and you need to keep pace. And as you proceed, the game's foibles become deliberate elements for you to exploit. You'll quickly learn that you can always boost at the start



of the race if you rev the speedometer needle to a redline-tickling position, and that bumping into rival cars oddly makes the two of you swap speeds.

SCREECH IF YOU WANNA GO FASTER

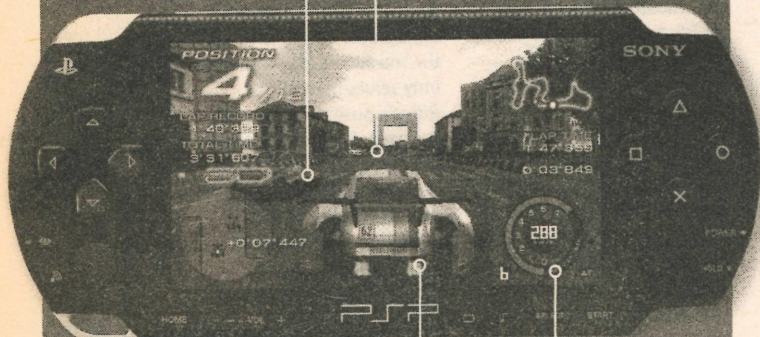
Inside the world of corner drifting and boost tech

RIVAL ARRIVAL

Pulling up to an opponent to drift past tops up your boost meter. Rival cars are spread out, keeping the challenge high.

CAR FOR THE COURSE

The environments you race through are detailed and include countryside, villages, motorways and hi-tech roads.



YOUR SPANGLY MOTOR

You start with a basic set of cars, unlocking more as you progress, including a car driven by Pac-Man. Serious.

SPEED DEMON

This is your speedometer. If you rev up just past the six at the beginning of each race you should get a boost.



However, this doesn't dampen the game's basic verve-packed thrills. The key is drifting. (It's simple, just over-steer into a curve or tap/brake before turning.) Once mastered, there's nothing more exhilarating than pulling off a massive skid, squeezing through a tight-as-you-like-bend and then using the rewarding boost triggered by a successful slide to fire yourself out in front of the pack.

Ridge's star may fade as the PSP's lifespan goes on, especially with hugely promising vehicular adventures such as *Grand*

Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories, *Pursuit Force* and *Burnout* on the way. But the world of racing games is big, and there's room for all sorts (the PSP launch line-up contains no less than six racers). That said, this is currently the only truly essential handheld racer. *Ridge* shines bright because it feels purpose built for the PSP hardware, offering up a driving experience that manages to be snappy and deep. Make it your first purchase on day one. ■

	PlayStation 2 <small>official magazine UK</small>	VERDICT
<i>If you only buy one PSP game, it must be this. Near perfect in its execution, this is one of most expertly judged racers ever made</i>		9/10





EVERYBODY'S GOLF

Giant Head too big for your puny body? Golf is for you



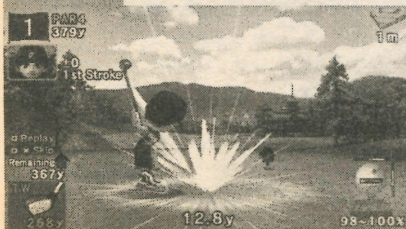
DETAILS

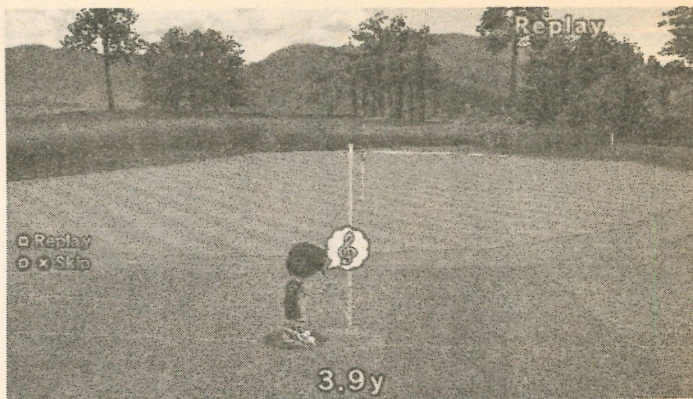
PUBLISHED SONY
 DEVELOPER SONY JAPAN
 OUT NOW
 PRICE £34.99
 WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
 DOWNLOADS NO
 CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

Aside from the cutesy animated characters, *Everybody's Golf* is filled with frivolous graphic touches – a jet-like trail in the wake of your speeding ball, ricochets exaggerated by speech bubbles, backspinning balls highlighted with blue flames – which set a refreshingly light tone. The game's real trick being that, behind this joviality, a solid and surprisingly challenging golf game lurks. The controls are a back-to-basics affair

– select your club, then tap **○** to measure the strength of your swing, and again in time with the return of the gauge to determine your accuracy. The better your button taps, the better swing on the ball you have. The ball physics are realistic and complex, so scoring par or below is much harder than the game's design may initially lead you to believe.

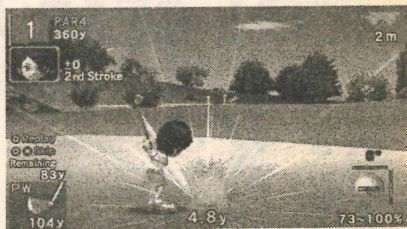
Another pleasant surprise is the scope and detail of the courses. Before taking your shot you can glide over and around the fairway to plan the hole, and the lush greens and open environments are fantastically, unexpectedly gorgeous. The courses are designed with a keen eye for letting you pitch and putt tactically, and the only





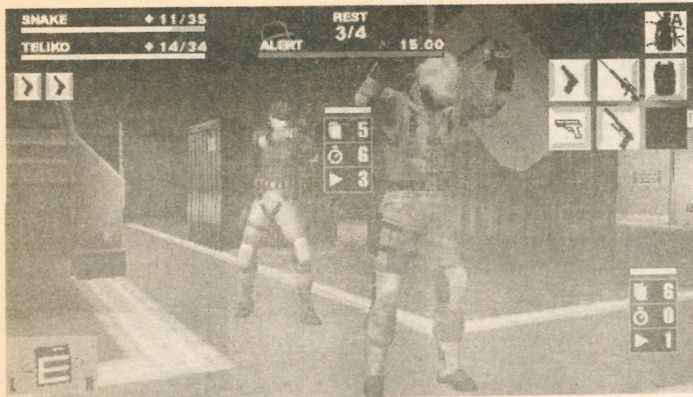
problem we've had is the frustrating difficulty judging the angle of sloping greens.

The sheer enjoyment factor knocks any chance of a boring golf experience out of sight and the PSP is a fittingly first-rate setting for a bright and exceptionally playable game. Fun on your own, the game lives up to its name if you can get some friends around for a WiFi fest. Basically, *Everybody's Golf* is an absolute joy. ■



PlayStation 2 <small>Official magazine UK</small>	VERDICT
<i>Sticks it to the golf 'man' with some, like, far-out attitude, but crucially backs it all up with truly entertaining play</i>	8/10





METAL GEAR ACID

And like real acid, this one can be a little corrosive

METAL GEAR ACID



DETAILS

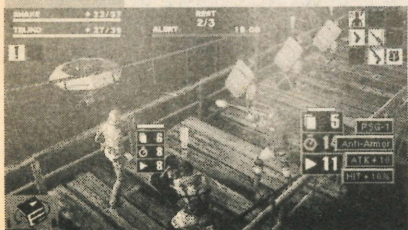
PUBLISHER KOHAMI
DEVELOPER
YOHAMI JAPAN
OUT NOW
PRICE £34.99
SINGLE MULTIPLAYER YES,
BUT MUST BE UNLOCKED
DOWNLOADS NO, BUT
CONNECTS TO MGS3: SNAKE
EXTREME VIA USB LINK
CUSTOM
SOUNDTRACKS NO

Konami has totally played to type. Snake, stealth, silver-walled compounds to explore, super-pretentious dialogue – it's all here and looks very *Metal Gear*. There is one difference though, and it's that *Acid* is a card game.

You have a deck of cards which correspond to weapons, moves and defences that let you move Snake (and, later on, his lady side-kick Teliko) and make him fight. You have a limited amount of steps depending on your hand of

cards (you collect and buy more cards as the game goes on) before your turn runs out, so enemies can make similar moves. Think of it like chess, but with spies and soldiers instead of kings and queens.

Sounds totally wrong, right? Right. But it's not awful. Although far from perfect and quite alienating (the rules are deceptively simplistic and tough to master) it is enjoyable while it lasts. While definitely not for *Metal Gear* virgins (the *MGS3* link-up assumes you own the most recent PS2 game), fans who go in for this expecting a low-key homage to *Metal Gear* rather than a fully-fledged sequel won't be disappointed. ■



PlayStation 2 VERDICT

Only the *Metal Gear faithful* will bother mastering the card system fully, but this is a playable spin-off nevertheless

7/10

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2 REMIX

Is the skateboarding sim sequel worth a second grind?


Pocket *THUG2* works because the smaller mission goals are perfect for a handheld.

What could be a tedious tick list on PS2 – grind here, jump that, etc. – now becomes a collection of bite-sized challenges. It's perfect pick-up-and-play material, and you'll be pulling off combos with ease instantly. It also takes advantage of the USB connectivity, letting you put your face in the game.

Admittedly, the one problem that snagged the original is still there. Once you've completed the easy and engaging challenges, you're left with the crappy hard ones. Your progress stalls, with no option but to slog out



painful objectives to unlock the next level. But there's always the classic mode (the original *Tony Hawk's* game for you to play) and an open free play to break things up – the easily digestible chunks make the whole thing much more manageable. ■

 PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL PRODUCT</small>	VERDICT <p><i>Few games are better at filling up a few spare minutes. You can skate a line, complete a goal, pick it up or put it down as you like</i></p>	8 /10
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TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2 REMIX

16

DETAILS

PUBLISHER ACTIVISION
 DEVELOPER NEVERSOFI
 OUT 1 SEPTEMBER
 PRICE £34.99
 WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
 DOWNLOADS YES (VIA USB)
 CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

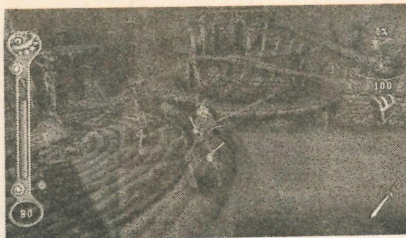


MEDIEVIL: RESURRECTION

PSONE comedy horror comes back from the dead

There are qualities we expect to find in a hero – courage, resourcefulness, and at least a thin covering of skin. Sir Daniel Fortesque, the hero of *Medievil*, lacks all three. He originally died the moment he stepped into battle. But when an evil wizard raises an undead army, Dan gets chance to fight again.

This is solid platforming fun. Explore levels, slash up monsters and tackle bosses. There's also a heap of mini-games and WiFi multiplayer action. And it never fails to entertain, thanks to a great story, fantastic music and voice acting. Whether fighting off mental patients playing 'axe games', or avoiding

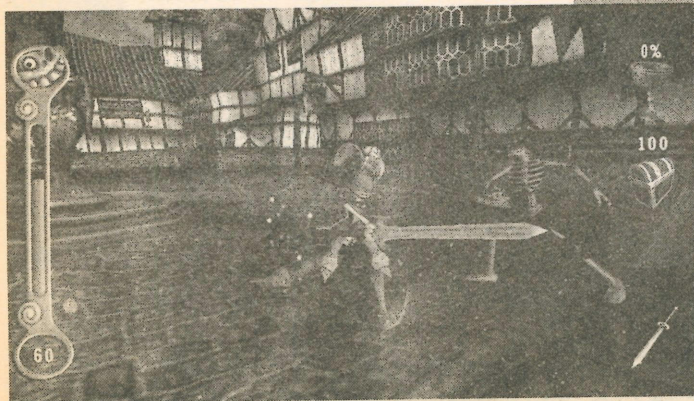


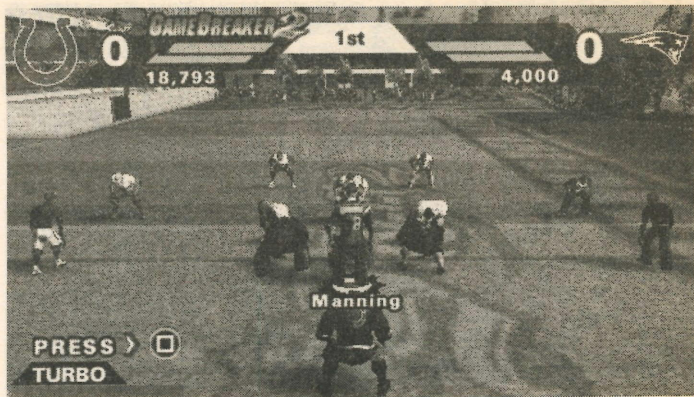
possessed kids, there are loads of laughs here.

The one thing that spoils the Goth pantomime is the unbalanced difficulty. Even armed to the teeth, certain sections require plenty of luck to beat, but look past this and you'll find a lot to like. ■

	VERDICT <i>It might be an old game remixed, but it's still well presented slapstick action – not quite essential, but close</i>	7 / 10
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DETAILS	
PUBLISHER SONY	
DEVELOPER SONY CAMBRIDGE	
OUT 1 SEPTEMBER	
PRICE £34.99	
WIIFi MULTIPLAYER YES	
DOWNLOADS NO	
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO	





NFL STREET 2 UNLEASHED

That's *Unleashed* as in 'same as the original but smaller'



DETAILS

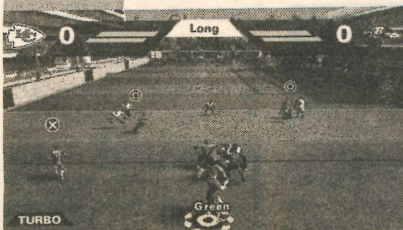
PUBLISHED
ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPED
ELECTRONIC ARTS
OUT 1 SEPTEMBER
PRICE £34.99
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADS NO
CUSTOM
SOUNDTRACKS NO

If you love sport and fancy something a little different from soccer or basketball then look no further.

NFL Street 2 Unleashed is a colourful arcade take on the world of American Football and its strategic action is an enticing change of pace. But be warned: if you're not familiar with the game, then the stop and go mix of tactics and ball play could be a bit of a culture shock.

Stripping the gameplay down to its most basic level makes *Unleashed* extremely accessible. Play alternates between offensive and defensive sections. On attack you pick a formation then play it out; in defence, your job is to stop the other team advancing. Simple.

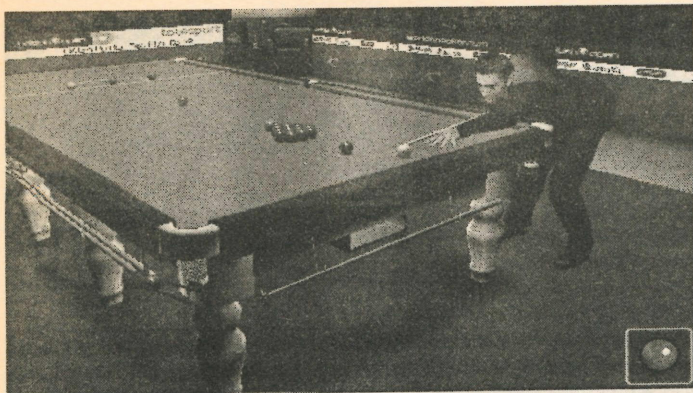
It's not perfect. This is a virtually identical translation of the original console version. And, as such, it suffers from a lack of PSP streamlining. But it's still an addictive adaptation of the sport, only let down by the occasionally stilted action. ■



PlayStation 2 VERDICT

There's no attempt to adapt *Street* for PSP and it suffers as a result. But it's still a satisfying, enjoyable and easy to understand game

7/10



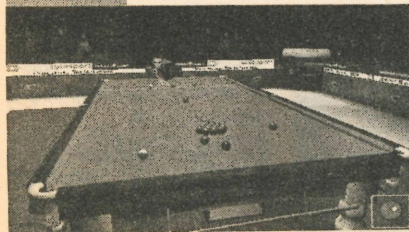
WORLD SNOOKER CHALLENGE 2005

Are you totally addicted to baize?



There's a theory (pioneered by this review, basically) that the best material for portable gaming is puzzle-related or otherwise fixed to a static location. *Virtua Tennis: World* is a good example, as is *Lumines*. *World Snooker Challenge 2005* is basically a fusion of both concepts, making great virtue of its table-tethered location to provide a rewarding and polished tour of the baize.

Built around a condensed, version of *World Snooker Championship* on PS2, this feels anything but 'lite'. There's over a ton of licensed players, full commentary, analogue cue control, lots of tournament and game options, *plus* pool, billiards, bar billiards and 'Snooker Plus', which throws in a couple of extra balls for good measure. The physics are as solid as you'd expect, and thanks to an auto-save function after every shot, dipping in and out of games is a breeze. Hardly snooker reinvented, but it's optimised well for gaming on the go. ■



PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE VERDICT

Whether you fancy a two-player WiFi game or a solo one, this is a comprehensive and well optimized snooker experience for PSP

7/10

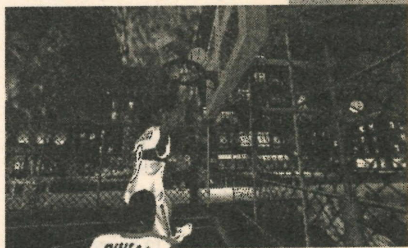
NBA STREET SHOWDOWN

Slam dunkin', but no feelin'

As a sport, basketball is renowned for being fast, flamboyant and physical. *NBA Street* certainly ticks the fast box, and the action can be so quick you'll go cross-eyed trying to keep your eye on the rapidly moving ball. It's also flamboyant, and by using the turbo and trick buttons you can perform a variety of showy moves, from rolling the ball under your legs to slam-dunking it backwards. But it never feels physical. You'll score, then your opponent will score, then you'll score again... it's possible to steal with **Ⓢ**, but it doesn't feel like you're really stealing the

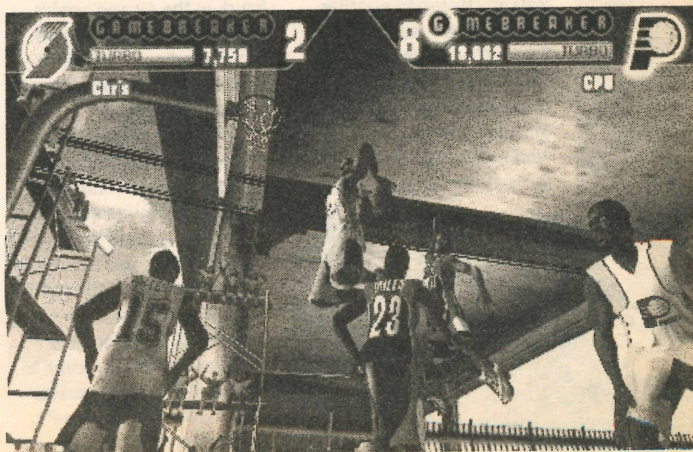
ball, so it seems completely pointless to try. *NBA Street* crams an impressive-looking basketball experience onto PSP, but it doesn't have the playing skills to match. ■

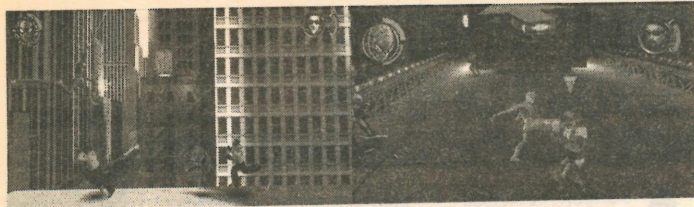
 PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE PICK</small>	VERDICT 7 / 10
<i>The whole thing looks great, but thanks to some pedestrian action, NBA Street Showdown never feels that much fun to play</i>	



DETAILS

PUBLISHER EA
 DEVELOPER EA SPORTS
 OUT 1 SEPTEMBER
 PRICE £24.99
 100% MULTIPLAYER
 YES (E-4)
 DOWNLOADS NO
 CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO





SPIDER-MAN 2

This time he's the smallest swinger in town



DETAILS

PUBLISHER ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER VICARIOUS VISIONS
OUT NOW
PRICE £34.99
WIFI MULTIPLAYER NO
DOWNLOADS NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

The PSP version of *Spider-Man 2* has lost the *Grand Theft Auto*-style freedom of the PS2 version, and now you'll instantly be able to notice that web lines attach to mysterious invisible ceilings rather than buildings (just like the older games). But making up slightly for the enclosed, limited environments are the surprisingly friendly controls. There are plenty of unlockable abilities to collect and they're always easy to access. You'll be instantly throwing punches, zipping to the ceiling and firing off webs like a pro. The only letdown is having to tweak the camera with the direction buttons. The lock-on works well, enabling you to focus attacks on your target,

but manual adjustments can be tricky on the move.

All this web-slinging, baddy-bashing action is fun, but by Christ it's insubstantial. Most missions include big, pointy direction arrows and consist of no more than 'get from A to B'. The more complicated levels might add 'and do C while you're at it', but it's still paper-thin gameplay. Outside, you're nearly always chasing villains across the New York skyline (stuck in the air and unable to touch the ground thanks to unseen floors – another unwelcome hangover from old *Spider-Man* games).

When you *finally* get to play inside a building you'll be hunting down buttons, switches and/or hostages. It feels like the same things keep repeating over and over again. For example, all of the pursuit sequences will, at some point, involve you webbing up a damaged rooftop structure to prevent it hitting the streets below. While inside there's an endless cycle of thugs to






twat and doors to unlock. And yes, the boss battles still bite a sizable amount of arse – expose a weak spot, punch it. Repeat, repeat, cry...

Spider-Man on PSP is far from the classic game we were hoping for. It's fun in small doses, and on the move it's not bad for filling brief spare moments. But play it on a long journey and you could finish it before you reach your destination. ■



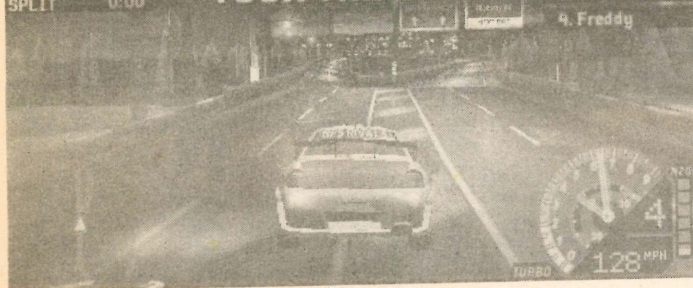
 PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK</small>	VERDICT
<i>Fun like fireworks – nice flash, but nothing that lasts. It's a lightweight adventure that has good bits, just not enough of them</i>	6 / 10



LAP 2/2
 TIME 0:25
 BEST 1:12
 SPLIT 0:00

POS 1/4
 1. PLAYER 1
 2. Big Al
 3. Sandra O.
 4. Freddy

TOOK THE LEAD!



NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND RIVALS

Play it while mum's driving you to a 'tuner meet up'



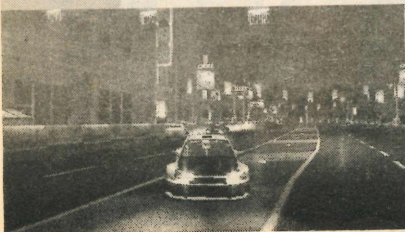
DETAILS
 PUBLISHER ELECTRONIC ARTS
 DEVELOPER ELECTRONIC ARTS
 OUT NOW
 PRICE £34.99
 WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
 DOWNLOADS NO
 CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

This is a strictly-by-the-numbers street racer. Tear through urban tracks after dark, win competitions and spend the resulting points on spoilers, stickers and oversized rims for your motor. And while there are plenty of challenges and cars to keep you occupied, it's unimaginative stuff.

The steering, for example, lacks the accuracy to make this the road-munching blast

it should be. You can reach impressive speeds, but you'll never feel completely relaxed with the handling. Races feel too cartoony and the handling jelly-like, so rather than the intended boy racer thrills, the overriding feeling is of racing shopping trolleys around empty car parks.

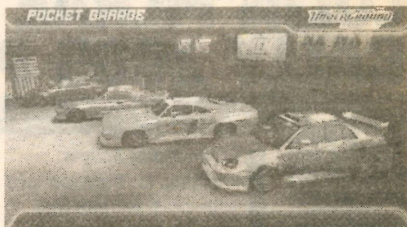
Then there's the stupid amount of work needed to get at the upgrades. Identical to the big console *NFSU* this may be, but the small scale amplifies the flawed over-reliance on constant replaying. In fact, this doesn't suit the portable PlayStation at all. A few hours' driving to access a new colour windscreen or spinner? Whoop-de-do. There's no real satisfaction in




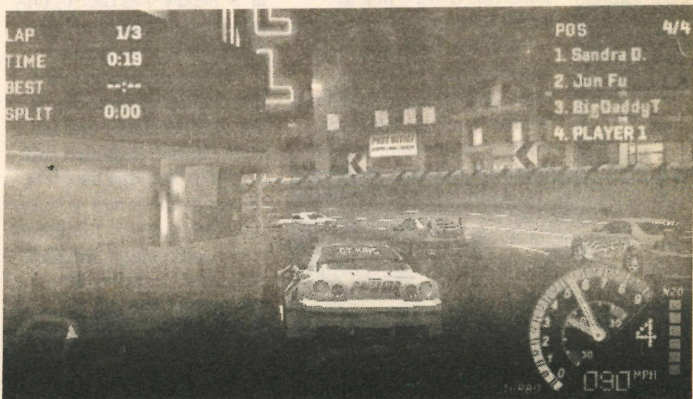


that – particularly if you need someone to explain what a spinner is in the first place.

The track design is good and it looks and sounds the part, but we can't help feeling that this is one-trick pony. This version of *Need For Speed* just doesn't cut it on PSP, left lagging behind to eat the dust of top-grade racers like *WipEout Pure* and *Ridge Racer*. *Rivals* is a functional racer, not an outstanding one. ■



 PlayStation 2 <small>Official Magazine UK</small>	VERDICT 6 / 10
<small>Cookie cutter street racing done exactly as you'd expect. Might keep you occupied, but it certainly won't blow you away</small>	





COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005 PLUS

We can't see the track for the trees



colin mcrae rally 2005 plus

8

DETAILS

PUBLISHER CODEMASTERS
 DEVELOPER CODEMASTERS
 OUT 3 SEPTEMBER
 PRICE £34.99
 WITH MULTIPLAYER YES
 DOWNLOADS YES
 CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

If *Colin McRae Rally* is anything, it's busy, jammed with rocks, hairpins and trees all designed to get in your way. On PS2, this was fine. With the PSP's mini-widescreen view though, playing *Colin McRae Rally 2005 Plus* is like trying to watch TV through a letterbox.

Split into three parts and spanning nine countries, there's plenty to get stuck into. But the handling is twitchy, making the constant steering

adjustments more of a challenge than they should be.

Visually it's impressive, with plenty of trackside detail and environmental hazards. But with so much going on, the job of threading your car through the increasingly eye-of-a-needle-like courses only gets more difficult and less enjoyable as time goes on.

The graphical sheen of *Colin McRae* makes it easy to like, and the better cars are more responsive. But on such a small screen, the busy task of rallying never fails to throw up a turn you didn't notice or a tree you couldn't see. And that's just annoying. ■



PlayStation 2 VERDICT

Nice looking but easy to get lost in, Colin McRae Rally 2005 Plus can be enjoyable, but it's too frustrating to really suit the PSP

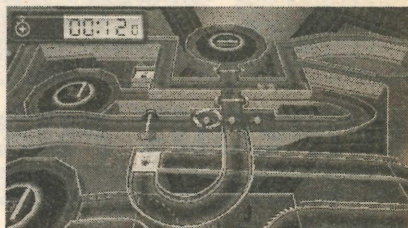
6/10

SMART BOMB

Ooh! It's going to explode! Let it

At first glance this is a really logical match for PSP; dozens of two and three-minute puzzles and challenges that fit neatly into the spare gaming moments you can catch on the move. Plus, they're all based around a needlessly complex plot about saving the world from thinking bombs, making us feel all futuristic and technologically advanced with our sexy new gaming kit. The people of tomorrow, that's us.

Shame, then, that the reality is a bunch of visually underwhelming and often impossibly infuriating mazes and logic problems. This stuff isn't even that 'now', let alone futuristic. Instead, it's very, very yesterday. We could forgive the drab looks and uninspired graphics if all the development time had been



given over to ingenious and clever puzzle design. But it hasn't. The mini-games are repetitive and poorly thought out, leaving you with little clue as to what you're supposed to be doing and mild disappointment (rather than satisfaction) when you finally figure it out.

Give it 20 minutes and it'll be in the bargain bin. ■

	VERDICT
<i>This should have been an addictive time-swallower. Instead you'll be hard-pushed to squeeze out your money's worth</i>	4/10



DETAILS

PUBLISHER EIDOS

DEVELOPER EIDOS

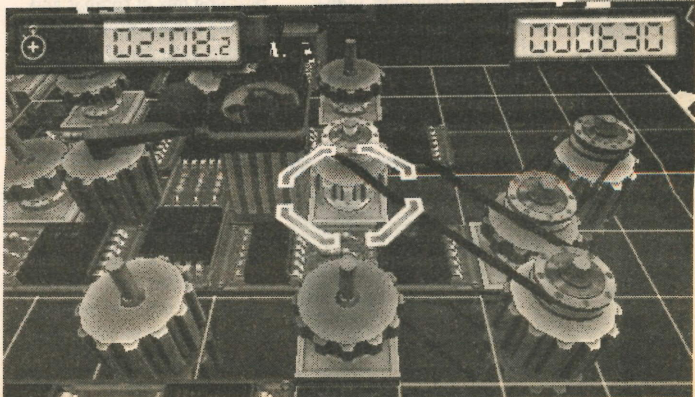
OUT 3 SEPTEMBER

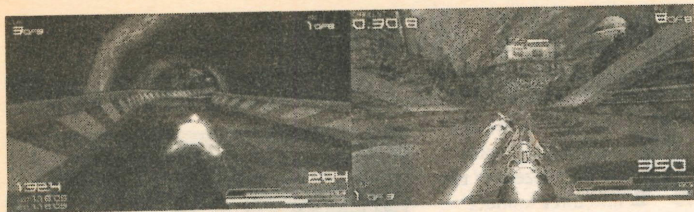
PRICE £34.99

WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES

DOWNLOADS NO

CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO





WIPEOUT PURE

Whoooosh! Hear that? It's the sound of the future

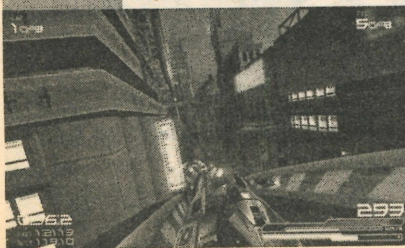


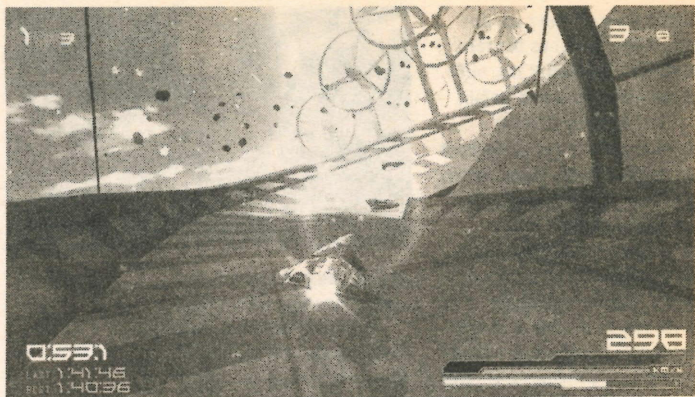
Back 'in the day', the original *WipeOut* fused blissed-out club tuneage with break-neck, tomorrow-tech racing to deliver the cultural package that launched PlayStation numero uno into the stratosphere. Ever since its explosive arrival though, the series has got progressively quieter – notably muted on PS2 and unable to live up to the impressive standards it set itself. Unable, that is, until now. Sony has reconfigured the sleeping *WipeOut* giant as the perfect, symbiotic match for PSP – tuning it to the look, feel and essence of its new machine. And yes, it 'rocks'.

Those who feared that *WipeOut* would inevitably lose

speed on its way to Sony's handheld can breathe easy. On the smaller screen the racers go faster than ever, searing around the 12 new tracks at eye-watering velocity. Steadiness and precision is required when you're trying to cling to the driving line at these speeds, and it delivers admirably, allowing for smooth, arcing gradients and sharp turns.

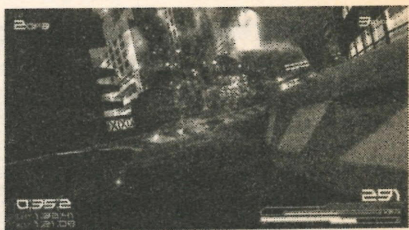
You can pick up weapons to take out opponents as you race, and although this adds a tactical dimension, the resulting mix of combat and driving can be infuriatingly unbalanced. Concentrate too much on the weapons and you'll find yourself lagging behind in time-sapping gun battles, but pay no attention and you'll be open to attack and lacking speed. More than once we've felt aggrieved at our AI rivals' consistent luck at scoring the precise item needed in order to deny us almost certain victory – a boost, a homing rocket – while we always seemed to



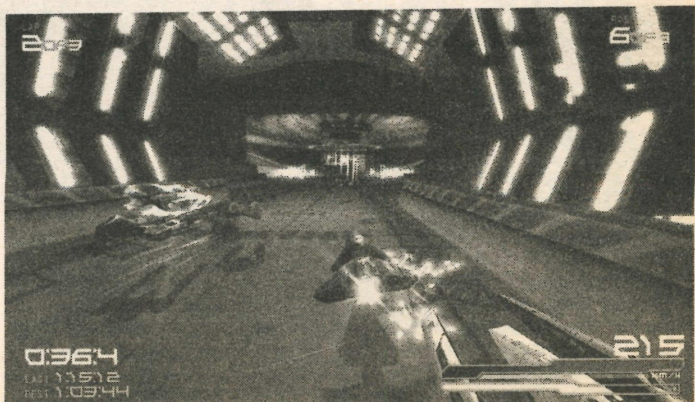


end up with nothing more impressive than an endless supply of shields when chasing for pole position.

Also frustrating is the way in which *WipeOut* steadily edges up the difficulty of the races. As you progress through the game you'll unlock gradually faster vehicle classes, the idea being that the speed increases act as a natural learning curve. Trouble is, as you get further into the game,



a rigid pattern emerges; even with a boost start, supposedly slower vehicles overtake you on the first lap, leaving you to →



→ battle through the pack and attack the leader as the race climaxes. Dramatic? Yes, but it can feel forced and unfair.

But crucially it never compromises the addictiveness of *WipEout Pure*'s highs. When you find yourself missing out on a gold medal in the tournament mode by a mere hundredth of a second, you'll go back again and again until you've aced it. And the weapons, tournament racing and WiFi multiplayer elements come together perfectly



during the combat-infused championships with mates.

WipEout Pure is massively suited to the PSP format, and this is most obvious while playing the 'zone' mode.

"HANG ON, IS THIS THING MANUAL OR AUTOMATIC?"

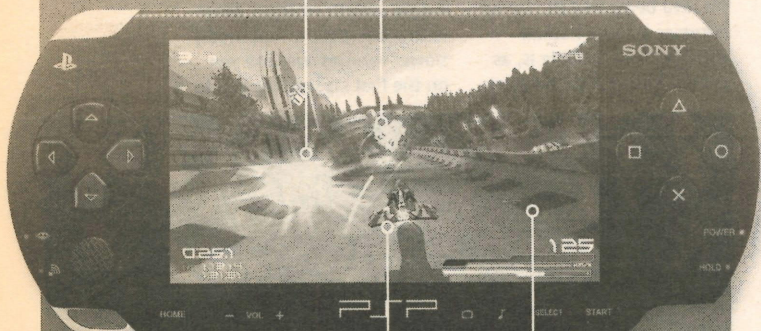
Guiding you through the essentials of future racing

GOING TURBO

This exhaust signifies a turbo boost. Turbos are useful on long straights, and to push ahead at the finish line.

HAVING A BLAST

Rockets like this one are best used to slow opponents down, rather than trying to destroy them completely.



MIND THE PAINTWORK

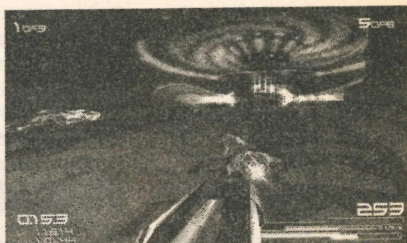
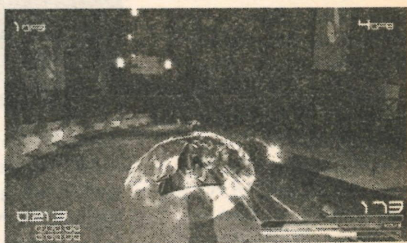
Your racer can take some punishment but will give out eventually, so keep an eye on your damage meter.

THE RACING LINE

Navigating the course properly is pretty important, so these arrows have been laid out to help you find your way.



Here you steer your speeding racer – locked at a constant top speed which increases with each lap – through various courses. As you build up impossibly fast momentum and pull your craft through corner after corner before the inevitable crash, it feels like the concentrated spirit of racing. And that, if you could distil it, is the essence of WipEout Pure: exhilarating, beautiful and ideal for mobile play. Highly recommended. ■



PlayStation 2 **VERDICT**
Official magazine of
This is gaming genius on a tiny, shiny disc and a stunning racing experience you can take with you wherever you want
8/10



APE ACADEMY

Like *Fame Academy*, but with real monkeys

Face it, chimps rock and if they weren't always smearing themselves with crap, you'd have one curled up at the end of your bed instead of a dog. Which is why this should be the best game ever made – especially as it's thankfully lacking any poo-throwing mini-games.

It's not, of course, but that isn't for want of trying. *Ape Academy* is a fresh spin on the familiar *Ape Escape* theme. Here, you play a monkey, 'studying' via 45-plus mini-games with the aim of graduating. As you go, you collect rare monkey figurines that unlock more games and become the highly prized stakes in heated WiFi battles.

The games include a range of quizzes, skill-based challenges and sport. When



they work, they're addictive and funny, but there are a fair few that feel like fillers, and none of them last more than a minute or so. Whether that's an asset or not depends on how involved you like to feel. As it stands, *Ape Academy* provides simple fun. Sadly, it's not the PSP's answer to the excellent *Wario Ware*, but mostly fun nonetheless. ■

PlayStation 2 **VERDICT**

Over 45 mini-games long, this just tips the balance in favour of fun – we'd have preferred fewer, but longer challenges, though

7 / 10

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
 DEVELOPER SONY
 OUT NOW
 PRICE £34.99
 WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
 DOWNLOADS NO
 CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO



MERCURY

Lethal liquid makes for addictive game

Right, listen up: this is an odd one and space is limited. Using the analogue pad, you roll a blob of liquid around a variety of mazes, making sure not to spill it off the edges. The premise, as with all the very best games, sounds baby simple, but it makes for a demanding and addictive puzzler that's very well suited to the snappy gameplay the PSP offers.

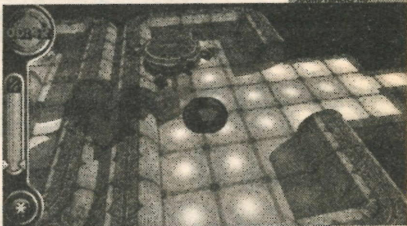
Mazes are filled with coloured doors and howl-encuding pitfalls – which obviously get increasingly

tricky as you go – and there's 72 to battle through. And you'll want to keep battling on, as *Mercury* is totally unmissable. ■

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF VERDICT

It may be a little short-lived, but Mercury is hugely inventive and visually distinctive with yanks of replay value. Roll on Mercury 2...

8 / 10



Mercury

DETAILS

PUBLISHER ATARI
DEVELOPER FORTYSEVEN
OUT NOW
PRICE £34.99
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADS NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

FORMULA 1

Looks like they used the wrong tyres



You might win or you might lose, but what you definitely *won't* do is care, as *Formula 1* has not only reduced the graphical detail on its way over to the PSP, but also the gameplay, too.

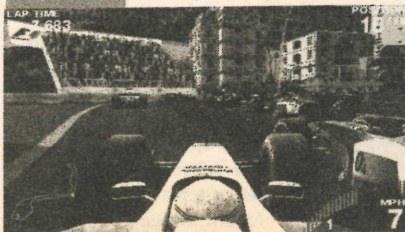
The visuals are obviously small, but they remain mostly

solid throughout and there's a decent sense of speed, but the gameplay lets you get away with murder. For example, swing wide and you won't skid, even when the surface is under water.

Obsessional F1 fans might squeeze out some enjoyment, but when you compare this lazy update to launch games like *Ridge Racer* and *TOCA*, then *Formula 1* just doesn't hold up and is left broken in the pits after one lap. ■

DETAILS

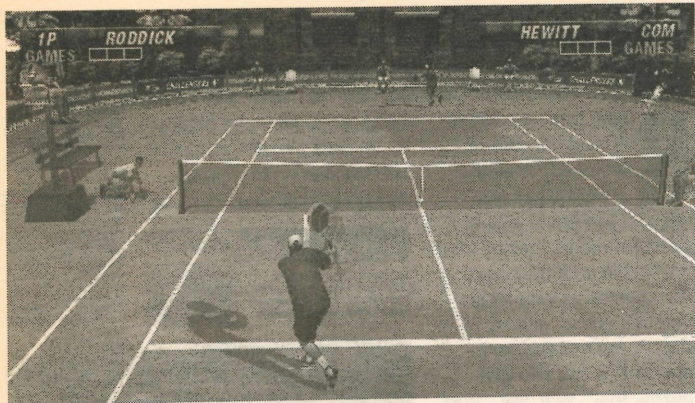
PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER SONY
OUT NOW
PRICE £34.99
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADS NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO



PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF VERDICT

Formula 1 looks good, but the sloppy racing feels overly simplistic and fails to generate any real excitement

7 / 10



VIRTUA TENNIS: WORLD TOUR

Virtua Tennis arrives on PSP and shoots up the seedings



3+ SEVEN

DETAILS

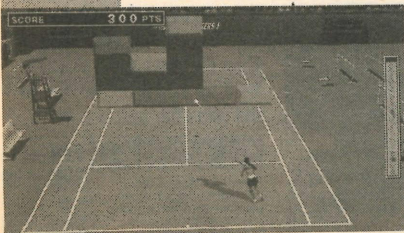
PUBLISHER SEGA
 DEVELOPER SLIMO DIGITAL
 OUT 1 SEPTEMBER
 PRICE £34.99
 WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
 DOWNLOADS NO
 CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

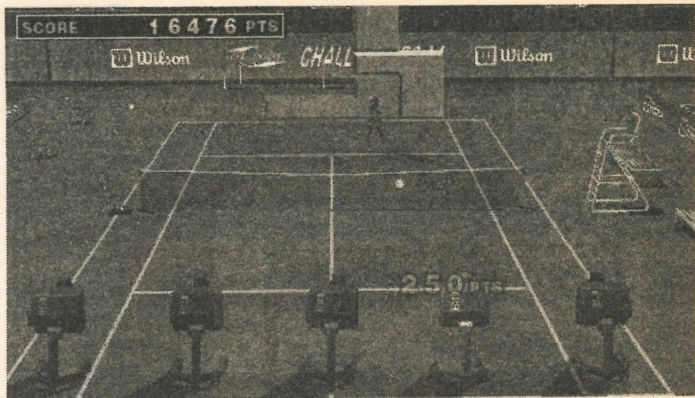
Tennis is cool. Deal with it. Obviously, you'd do well to take *OPS2's* word on this, but should you need a little more persuasion, allow us to point two things out to you. First, there's Snoop Dogg name-checking 'Venus and Serena at the Wimbledon arena'. And, on top of that, there's this superb game.

Here's how *Virtua Tennis: World Tour* breaks down. There's a roster of tennis's

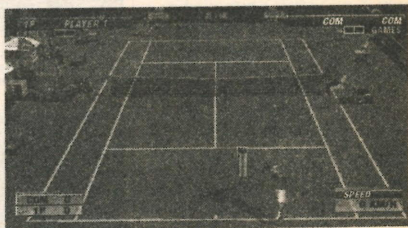
top seeds, tournaments, exhibition matches, WiFi multiplayer and the involving career experience of *World Tour* itself. Along with this you get a slew of highly addictive mini-games (the *Tetris*-style *Block Buster* in particular will get under your skin) and a simple but effective setup that enables solo players to play doubles, issuing orders to their team mate on the fly.


But all of this is just window dressing to *Virtua Tennis's* killer hook: the way it feels to play. Rather than punishing novices until they drag their game up to meet the pros, players in *World Tour* will rarely be unable to return a shot, and this makes for fast, exciting games. What

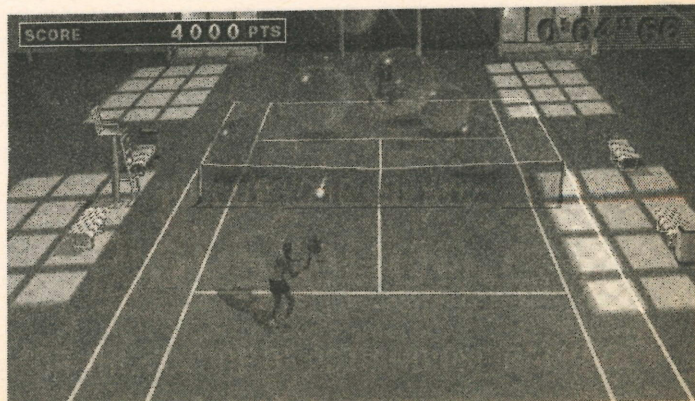




is hard however, is making shots from the ideal position on the court. And it's finding those constantly shifting sweet spots, and attempting to wrong foot either the sharp but fallible game AI, or your mates, that is the real juice here. Add the inherently compact match format to the mix and portable *Virtua Tennis* simply feels right, and another game that's perfectly suited to portable play. Great stuff. ■



 PlayStation 2 <small>official magazine</small>	VERDICT 8/10
<i>Virtua Tennis has always been a great sports franchise, but on PSP it seems to have found its spiritual home. 15-love to Sega</i>	



DARKSTALKERS CHRONICLE: THE CHAOS TOWER



DETAILS

PUBLISHER CAPCOM
DEVELOPER CAPCOM
OUT NOW
PRICE £34.99
WIFI MULTIPLAYER
YES (1-2)
DOWNLOADS NO
CUSTOM
SOUNDTRACKS NO

Longest fantasy cliché title of 2005?

The best way to describe this is as *Street Fighter's* eccentric cousin. And on PSP, if anything, the horror-themed weirdness is even more prominent – which wouldn't normally be a problem, but the fighting consistently fails to drag itself above the average.

The Chaos Tower will be familiar to any fans of 2D fighters, as it's an almost-perfect port of a five-year-old Dreamcast game, but it's not age alone that spoils it. We're more concerned with the fact that the finger-warping special moves needed to pull off all but the simplest of

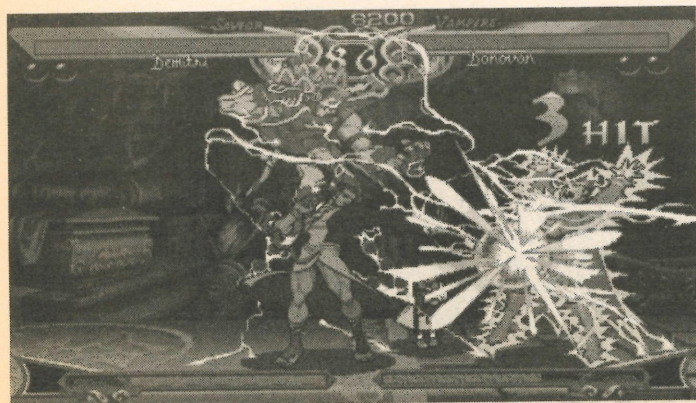
special moves are practically impossible on the PSP's D-pad.

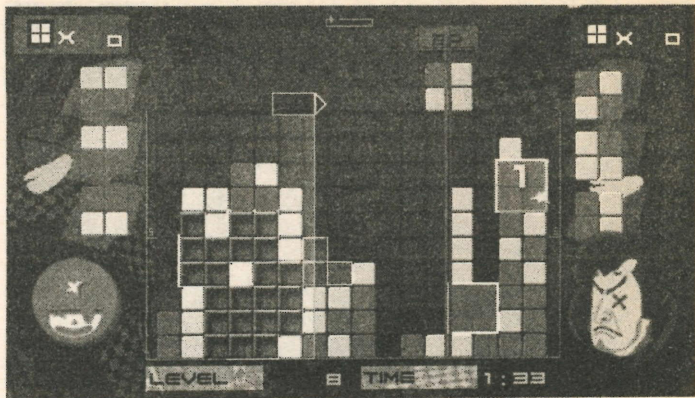
A WiFi mode and a roster of unusual and fun characters helps the game's cause slightly, not sadly just not enough. ■

PlayStation 2 **VERDICT**
official magazine of

A trip down memory lane that proves 3D fighters are just plainly better, and makes us realise how much we want a good one for PSP

6/10





LUMINES

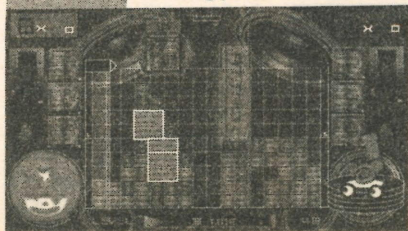
'Puzzle x Music' says the game's slogan. 'brilliant' says us



As in the likes of *Tetris*, *Columns* and *Puzzle Fighter*, the action in *Lumines* revolves around the arrangement of falling blocks, but the twist is that a deliberately chosen set of dance and techno tracks play along as blocks fall. In time with the beat, a metronome bar sweeps across the screen to clear away 2 x 2 stacks of blocks you've assembled – these can also be chained together into snaking patterns. What adds

an extra layer to the game is that, whenever blocks are moved or disappear, they play extra sounds to accompany the music. This can make for a level of puzzling that's both tactical and audibly satisfying, and perfectly paced down to the beat of each track. You can play it obsessive-compulsive style and make sure the screen is clean and empty, or set-up the area to create massive high scoring chains that evaporate with percussive riffs.

In all, the puzzling and music really work together. The electro sounds and falling blocks set up round after round of action that is both entrancing and addictive. ■



PlayStation 2 **VERDICT**

Totally unique and, at the same time, rather mesmerising, Lumines is unforgettable puzzle fun that demands a closer look

9 / 10



WORLD TOUR SOCCER: CHALLENGE EDITION

It's not FIFA or Pro Evo, but it's not rubbish, either



DETAILS

PUBLISHER: SONY
 DEVELOPER: LONDON STUDIO
 OUT: 2 SEPTEMBER
 PRICE: £34.99
 WII/MULTIPLAYER: YES
 DOWNLOADS: NO
 CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS: NO

Comparisons with *World Tour Soccer* and *Pro Evolution* are inevitable, as visually the two are very similar, with *WTS* looking like a lesser version of the PS2 gem in everything from player design to pitch perspective.

PES has also inspired the gameplay, although *WTS* is more forgiving and fluid. There's less realism in player movement and ball physics, resulting in a loss of depth perhaps, but also giving you

the ability to stage some spectacular goals. This may be less taxing, especially for Master League veterans, but it's clearly designed with PSP use in mind.

Unfortunately, the lack of any kind of management-style in-depth mode akin to the Master League is a big disappointment, especially with all those shiny player licences to play with. It's the one thing that has us watching out for the arrival of *Pro Evo* on PSP, and reinforces that fact that, although it is enjoyable for the most part, *World Tour Soccer* won't have you hooked for long. ■



PlayStation 2 VERDICT

Fun at first, but without a League option, *World Tour Soccer* remains a very competent stop-gap rather than a genuine title contender

7/10

FIRED UP

Have you got road rage? Then try this

Fired Up is pretty much the PS2 game *Hardware: Online Arena* under a different name.

Everything from the console game is on hand to be blown up, with you motoring around open environments and blowing rivals to kingdom come. But *Fired Up* isn't quite a sequel or a remake – rather, it takes a bunch of modes (including the deathmatches that work perfectly with the PSP's WiFi functions) and throws a solo story mode into the mix as well.

Where *Fired Up* is a bit of a let down though, is in the details. The handling often feels light and cartoony, like driving a milk float in zero gravity, and the one-weapon-at-a-time pick-up system is shallow. Plus, there isn't really enough to do in the



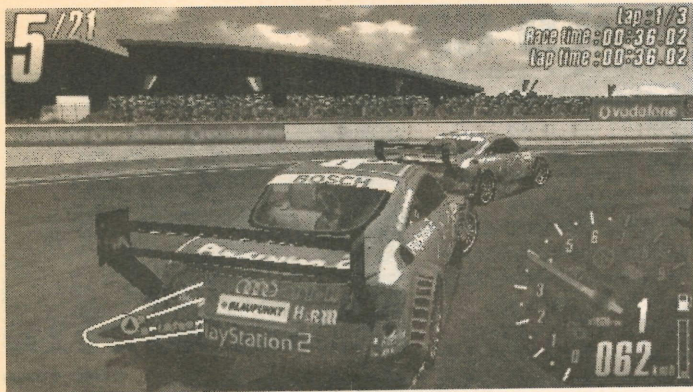
multiplayer maps when there are just two players – matches can consist of lonely driving around instead of the fun fraggery we were hoping for. And as so much of the game is identical to *Hardware*, it's hard to justify classing this as a must-have launch game. *Fired Up* is a title that, while fairly solid, is unlikely to be remembered for long. ■

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

Machine guns and motorcars mixed well. There's a decent single-player game to enjoy and fun from the multiplayer carnage

7/10





TOCA RACE DRIVER 2

It's a smaller engine, but it's just as powerful



12

DETAILS

PUBLISHER CODEMASTERS
 DEVELOPER SUMO
 OUT 1 SEPTEMBER
 PRICE £36.99
 WIFI MULTIPLAYER
 YES (1-12)
 DOWNLOADS NO
 CUSTOM
 SOUNDTRACKS YES

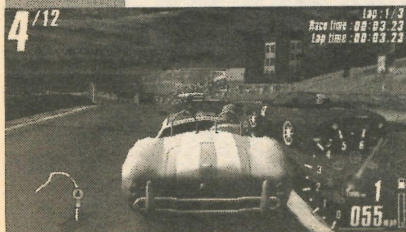
Anyone who hates the PSP will tell you all the games are worse versions of PS2 titles.

TOCA Race Driver 2 will wipe the smile off their faces though, as it's almost identical to the PS2 version and it's easily as good, if not better on PSP. And this is why...

Steering with the stick can feel twitchy, but the D-pad is easily up to the task of controlling your car – the stick actually turns out to be useful for driving vehicles like trucks, where the handling

is heavier. It's as far from the arcade appeal of *Ridge Racer* as you can get, and you'll need practice before you can sling it around corners confidently, but the handling is fantastic, and feels even more responsive and balanced than the PS2 game.

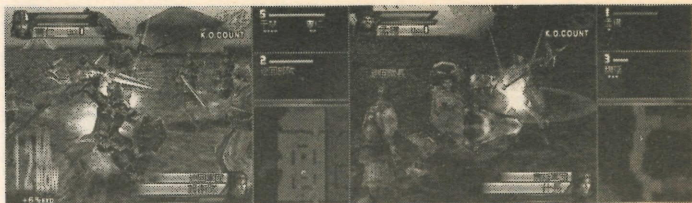
TOCA's goal-based storyline (you're a rookie driver out for sponsorship, and must win prize money and attention to progress) perfectly suits the PSP, serving up bite-sized sessions of racing. And while it's not as visually impressive as *Ridge Racer*, 21 cars are regularly crammed bumper to bumper for exhilarating races. It's tough, but *TOCA* is also hugely playable. ■



PlayStation 2 VERDICT

TOCA might not be as instantly accessible as Ridge, but it's easily as brilliant. Solid, responsive and with tons of replay value

8/10



DYNASTY WARRIORS

Time to get medieval on your, er, PSP

You may well think, what with having to review a *Dynasty Warriors* game, ooh, every ten minutes or so, that we'd be bored of them by now. Or, at the very least, we'd have run out of things to say about them. And you'd be wrong. Something we don't quite understand – a rare and fearsome alignment of the planets, perhaps, or an ancient Eastern curse – keeps the franchise remarkably playable, and never more so than in this latest PSP iteration.

The game's greatest pleasure remains the ability to roam about centuries-old Chinese battlefields on a horse, pretending to be a bearded warlord and hacking dozens of thinly-armoured men into tiny, tiny bits. In fact, it's pretty much the game's only pleasure; actually, it's pretty much the game's only feature. Luckily it's also a pretty good one.

There are some changes in other areas, though. Battles are broken into smaller



encounters to suit PSP patterns of play and to avoid time-sapping jaunts across massive levels. This is basically a good thing – even with a horse, such aimless wandering would only deplete battery power – although some encounters are now so brief that we barely get our bloodlust up and running before the fun's over. And the new ability to swap officers and lieutenants with your mates' armies using the PSP memory stick is a clever use of the new tech. Otherwise, it's pretty much 'as you were' for the ancient war series. Good thing, too. ■

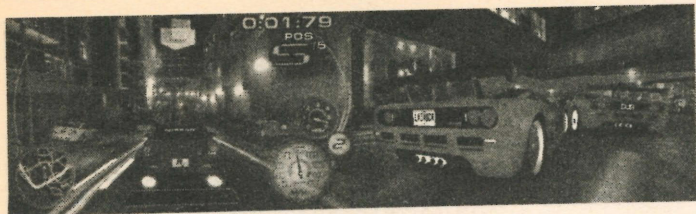
PlayStation 2 VERDICT
official magazine UK

Nothing new here but plenty to enjoy. Dynasty Warriors seems at home on PSP, providing short, sharp bursts of battle satisfaction

7 / 10



DETAILS	
PUBLISHER	KOEI
DEVELOPER	KOEI
OUT	1 SEPTEMBER
PRICE	£34.99
WIFI MULTIPLAYER	YES
DOWNLOADS	NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS	NO



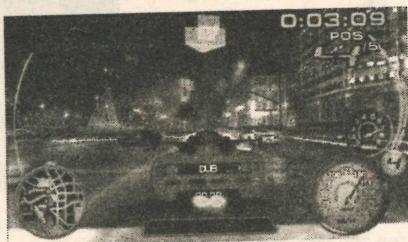
MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION

Proof that bigger isn't always better

The hook with *MC3* is that it's exactly the same as the PS2 version. All the speed, slick visuals and three huge living cities on one tiny disc. You take part in crosstown showdowns, dodging traffic, taking the fastest route to checkpoints whether it's over rooftops or through underground car parks.

But despite its jumped-up technical wizardry, *MC3* isn't properly suited to PSP, as there's just too much going on at once. Floating arrows, maps, speedometers, nitrous bars and, somewhere in the middle, the road ahead. Given that the key to winning races is to make split-second decisions, darting down a side alleys or over a ramps, the restricted vision is a serious issue. It's hard to see the traffic, let alone a gap in the scenery.

The cars' handling isn't as well honed as *Ridge Racer*. Cars tend to feel quite stiff and heavy, and behave irrationally when you hit scenery. An



overzealous interpretation of gravity means cars flip easily, often for just clipping a curb. Interestingly, the bikes handle better, their more responsive turning making it easier to negotiate tight bends.

What concerns us most is that no attention has been paid to the short-burst game-playing the PSP demands. In order to get really involved you need to win races and spend time customising. Great on PS2 but do you really have time for that if you're simply after a five-minute racing fix? ■

PlayStation 2 VERDICT
critical acclaim

Doesn't feel like a 'made for PSP game', hence it's a bit squashed in and uncomfortable. Racing games need more room to breathe

7 / 10

Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition

DETAILS

PUBLISHER ROCKSTAR GAMES
 DEVELOPER ROCKSTAR SAN ANTONIO/LEDES
 OUT NOW
 PRICE £34.99
 WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
 DOWNLOADS NO
 CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO



ATV OFFROAD FURY: BLAZIN' TRAILS

Well, it certainly made us feel furious



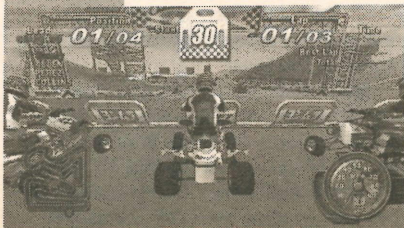
DETAILS

PUBLISHER SOUTH PEAK
DEVELOPER CLIMAX
OUT NOW
PRICE £34.99
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADS NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

This has got everything you'd expect from an extreme-themed racer (right down to the pop-metal soundtrack), with one crucial oversight: fun. Each race demands a phenomenal level of skill just to stay on the track. The main problem is the concept of 'preloading'. This is the skill of shifting the rider's weight to jump higher. And thanks to the cramped, twisting tracks, if you don't

get it exactly right you'll fly totally off the course. Even if you do perfect your technique, the handling is so boingy, and the tracks so riddled with potential disaster, that frustration is never far off.

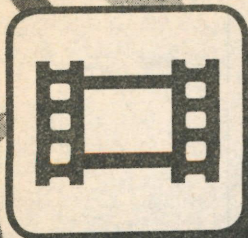
It doesn't help that although you might escape a head-on collision unscathed, a light shunt can hurl you from the saddle. And lastly, restarting a race after a crash puts you back at exactly the same place and speed that made you crash in the first place. If we didn't know better, we'd think the game wanted us to hate it. If so, job done. ■



PlayStation 2 **VERDICT**
official.magsize.co.uk

Not a patch on the PS2's own ATV games. The handling's terrible and the game design is knackered by several other serious flaws

5 /10



MOVIES


It's not all about the games, you can also watch films on that perfectly formed, 16:9 TFT screen

With so many great games coming soon to PSP it's easy to forget that this is only a small part of what the handheld has to offer. Another major feature is the ability to watch movies while you're on the move.

While other, lesser, portable players restrict you to just audio, your PSP has the ability to play back movies in near DVD quality, for perusal on the bus, on the train, anywhere. And it does this via not one but two new amazing pieces of technology:

WHY MOVIES ARE GREAT ON PSP

Making the outdoor movie-watching experience possible is the PSP's super-bright TFT screen. With the same 16:9 ratio as your widescreen TV movies look great on it. And the PSP has the power to kick out images that are visible in bright sunlight or fluorescent glow. Backing this up are the built in stereo speakers, loud enough to let two or more share the action, or you can go for a pair of headphones and enjoy sound quality to rival the best DVD-plus-power-amp combos.



firstly, the UMD disc, created especially for the PSP but set to feature at the core of Sony's upcoming portable products, and the Memory Stick Duo, its smallest storage device yet and one that keeps getting larger in capacity but smaller in price...

Over the next few pages we delve into the workings of the UMD disc and the Memory Stick Duo. We'll also take your hand and gently walk you through exactly how you put DVDs onto your PSP – trust us, it's not as hard as you might think.

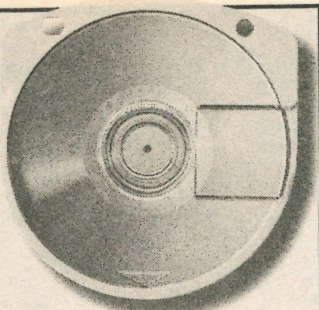
AT A GLANCE

MPEG-4 is the file format the PSP can read. You can also view these on a computer using QuickTime.

AT A GLANCE

The UMD has an open slot on its rear. This is where the laser reads the disc, so don't touch it!

THE UMD DISC



Making its debut on PSP is Sony's UMD disc. This new disc format, created to be a portable means of cheaply carrying large quantities of data, combines the jumbo storage of laser-based DVD technology with the portable size and robustness of the MiniDisc. The UMD discs are the same size as MiniDiscs, but come in a curvier, sexier protective casing.

There will be at least 25 films available at launch, and with cheaper prices promised

you may find yourself impulse buying a movie for that long train ride home.

Each disc has a 1.8GB capacity which, compared with the 9GB storage on today's dual layer movie DVDs doesn't sound much but it's more than enough to hold games, a CD's worth of music or a full movie compressed to MPEG-4 format. The result is sound and vision that's indistinguishable from their full-size, far less portable originals.

PORN ON PSP

Unsurprisingly, adult films have found a natural home on the discreet portability of the PSP. In its native Japan, there's a growing collection of pornography in the UMD format, and we suspect that this is a trend that's only likely to grow – especially

with Playboy also offering PSP video downloads on their site.



HOW MUCH WILL FIT?

As a rough guide, MP3 files (the world's favourite way of compressing and carrying audio) works out at about 1MB per minute of sound. Similarly, video, when compressed to MPEG-4 (the standard used on PSP) can get as small as 2MB per minute. These are theoretical maximums however. You may want to increase the quality of your stuff, so be prepared for your data to take up even more space than you first thought. Then again, with 2GB Memory Sticks now available, that isn't really a problem.

32MB

7 MP3s
21 4-megapixel photos
16 minutes of compressed video

64MB

14 MP3s
42 4-megapixel photos
32 minutes of compressed video

128MB

27 MP3s
84 4-megapixel photos
64 minutes of compressed video

2356MB

54 MP3s
168 4-megapixel photos
128 minutes of compressed video

512MB

107 MP3s
336 4-megapixel photos
256 minutes of compressed video

1GB

214 MP3s
672 4-megapixel photos
512 minutes of compressed video

MEMORY STICK DUO

You can store your photos, game saves, films and music, all on Sony's tiny Memory Stick Duo

Get used to seeing these little beauties everywhere – you'll be using them a hell of a lot. The Memory Stick Duo is Sony's latest (and smallest) addition to its Memory Stick range. It has all the capacity and security of Sony's older memory sticks but it's less than half the size – just the thing for including with a mini, portable PlayStation.

Sticks come in all kinds of sizes, ranging from 32MB right up to 2GB currently, with 4GB sticks in the pipeline. Imagine all that storage (enough to hold four movies or 1,000 songs) on a sliver of plastic that's smaller than half a stick of



chewing gum?

Storing digital photos and music on memory sticks is old news. Today's digital cameras and solid state 'flash' MP3 players are commonplace. And storing your saved games on memory sticks has been around since the days of PSone. However, it's still early days for storing movies on the Memory Stick Duo but it's entirely possible and, if you know where to get the software, it's completely free.



SOFTWARE YOU'LL NEED

There are three steps: The first is ripping the DVD onto a computer. The next stage is compressing the video to a quality that's both acceptable to watch and small enough to fit on your memory stick.

And the final stage is transferring the movie onto your PSP in the required format.

We've assumed you'll be using a PC (with a DVD drive) for your movie-squishing, but there's info for Mac owners, too. Before we can begin though, we need to get your PC loaded up with the necessary software.

There are many programs you can use and lots of them are free, but we recommend two shareware tools. The first is *DVD Shrink* (www.dvdshrink.org). The second is *3GP Converter* (www.videohelp.com/tools/tool=3GP_converter). Download them and install as you would normally.

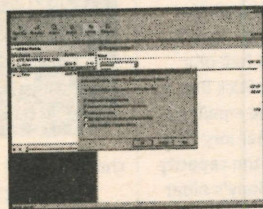


HOW TO GET A



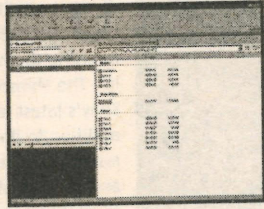
Getting films onto your PSP is a piece of cake with *DVD Shrink*

PART 1 – RIP YOUR DVD



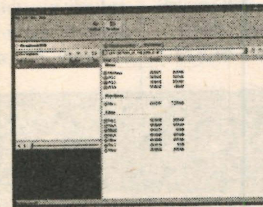
1 START HERE

Start by going to 'Edit' then 'Preferences'. Find the 'Output Files' option and uncheck the box marked 'Split VOB files into 1GB size chunks'. Press the Open Disc button and, once it's found the disc, hit 'OK' then press 'Analysis'.



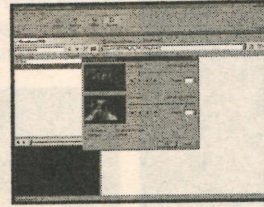
2 SELECTING

Now click the 'Re-Author' button. You'll now see two windows. Look for something in the right-hand one called 'Main Movie' or 'Title 1' and drag and drop this to the left window. You've just trimmed away all the surplus stuff.



3 PREVIEWING

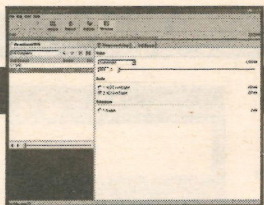
You can preview the movie with the play button. If it's not the right one, then drag across another segment until you've found what you want – it may be that you just want one of the extras or just the title sequence.



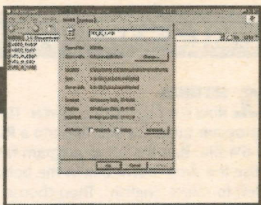
4 STRIMMING

If you're not blessed with a huge memory stick then you'll have to trim away bits to save space. Press the 'Set Start/End Frames' button on the left window's menu bar and adjust the sliders to select the chunk you want.

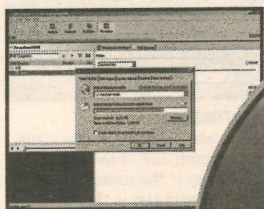
DVD ONTO YOUR PSP



5 COMPRESSING
Press the 'Compression Settings' tab. Go to the drop-down box with 'Automatic' in it. Now select from 'No Compression' for a rip of DVD quality, through 'Automatic' which gives the video a squeeze, down to 'Still Pictures'. Go for 'Custom Ratio'. Uncheck the 'Subpicture' box, too, to remove any subtitle track.



6 GO!
When you're done, you're ready to let the computer do the hard work. Press the 'Backup' button and browse your desktop (or another folder) for a place where the compressed file will be put. Press 'OK' and *DVD Shrink* will begin encoding your clip which could take anything up to an hour to complete.



7 THE RESULT
Now your DVD has been squished, and you've now got a single file with everything you need in it. *DVD Shrink* lets you trim away what you don't need and compress what you do. You're now ready for Part 2.



GOT A MAC? THEN DO THIS...

Just as there is shedloads of DVD ripping and MP4 creating shareware on the PC, so there are loads for the Mac, too. If you're on OS X, we recommend that you check out the following software...

1: DVD BACKUP

Get *DVD BackupUp* from www.opusc.com/download/other.shtml. This simple utility rips a DVD to a folder on your desktop. In that folder you'll find all those lovely VOB files you need. Now jump to our second stage: MP4 conversion using *AltShiivo*.

2: ALTSHIIVO

AltShiivo (<http://betima.com/psp/altshiivo0.9.1.dmg>) is the Mac version of the OpenShiivo MP4 converter. It even has a tab for optimising your video for PSP.

Two tips: In 'Crop and Scale' click the 'Scale' checkbox and enter width 320 and height 240. And in 'Video' set the 'fps' to 29.97 for the most stable playback.

3: COPY ONTO PSP

Just as with PCs, you're going to have to create an 'MP_ROOT' folder in your Memory Stick's root directory and then make a '100MNV01' folder inside this. Make sure your clips are *always* called M1A0000X.MP4, where XXXXX is a five digit number. Always use capital letters.

YOU WILL NEED

A USB or Mini USB lead to connect your PSP to your computer. And – at the time of going to press – Sony doesn't include one in the box. Fortunately they're readily available at your local PC superstore.

QUICKTIME

You may find that your computer asks for a QuickTime update because 3GP Converter uses QuickTime technology to do its business. If this happens just click 'yes' to get the latest QuickTime and then restart 3GP Converter. Easy.

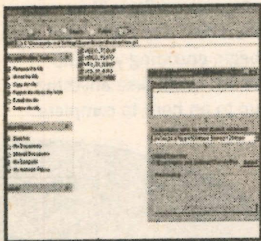
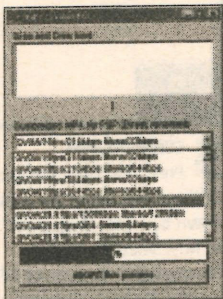


HOW TO... GET A


PART 2 – GET YOUR FILE PSP FRIENDLY

1 SETTINGS

Now start up *3GP Converter*. This program turns the VOB file into a PSP MP4 file. Run the Setup program first. Use the drop-down box in the bottom left to select 'English'. Then choose 'Model: MP4, for PSP (Direct, renamed)' in the top box to set the format. The 3GP program will then start. Use the drop-down box to select the quality of the final PSP movie. The numbers on each row represent framerate in frames per second (go for 29.97). Next is the video quality (higher number = better quality). Finally, choose mono or stereo.



2 CONVERTING

Press the  button to choose a place to put your file, then drag and drop your VOB file produced by *DVD Shrink* into the big box at the top. The program will instantly begin converting it and producing an MP4 file. This process can take hours, so you might want to do this bit overnight – drop a few VOBs on there and they'll be ready in the morning. If you already have VOB files or any other type of movie file on your computer then, in theory, you can skip to this stage and just drag and drop the files to *3GP Converter*. (Although in our experiments, the files did not always run correctly.)

3 FINISHED!

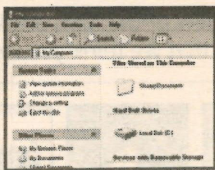
Double click the resultant MP4 file – which *3GP Converter* has named up in the correct format – and it should play in *QuickTime*. You've gone from a DVD to a single portable PSP-able file. Right click on it to 'Get Info' to see how big it is. Note the name *3GP Converter* has given it. Don't change it or it won't work. Also note the THM file that's been created, as this is a thumbnail file for the clip. Copy this alongside the MP4 file and you'll see a little image of your clip on your PSP's menu screen. You can ditch this if you like. As long as you've got enough memory space, you're now ready for Part 3...

DVD ONTO YOUR PSP

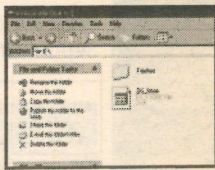
PART 3 – GET IT ON YOUR PSP



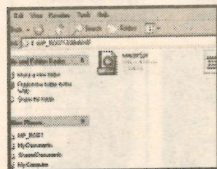
1 GET CONNECTED So your PSP can see and understand your new video files, you have to put them in a special folder on the Memory Stick that you have to create yourself. But first, connect your PSP to your computer. This is done with a standard USB device cable of the type used by digital cameras and available from any PC superstore. The fat end goes in your PC, the tiny end goes in your PSP.



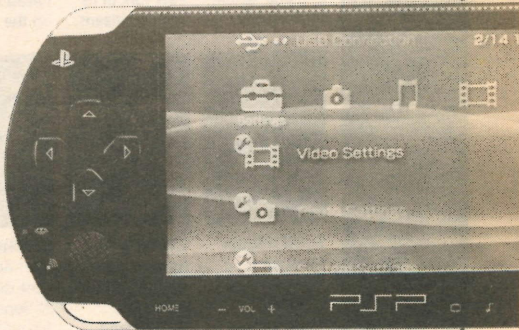
2 ENGAGE USB MODE Fire up your PSP and scroll left to the 'Settings' option. From there scroll up to 'USB Connection'. Selecting this option puts your PSP in USB Mode and your computer should pick up the PSP as an external hard drive. Your PC may be set so that new drives appear on the desktop. If not double-click 'My Computer' and then open the new drive you'll see there.



3 MAKE YOUR ROOT FOLDER With your PSP's Stick open you'll see a folder called PSP and perhaps a few other tech files. If you don't see this, disengage USB Mode on your PSP (press **X**) and choose the option to format the Stick. Now, on your PC, create a folder alongside the PSP folder in the usual way. Call this folder MP_ROOT. The capitals and underscore are very important.



4 MAKE YOUR VIDEO FOLDER Double-click the MP_ROOT folder and make a folder inside called 100MNV01. This is the home for your video files. Now copy your MP4 and THM files into this folder. When it's done, eject your PSP properly – don't just pull the USB lead out! This is essential if your files are to be transferred intact.



5 SIT BACK AND WATCH Now choose 'Video' from your PSP's memory, scroll to the new clip and simply select it to play it. Depending on your source material, you may have to press **A** and cycle through to the PSP's screen mode menu in order to select the correct screen-filling ratio.

THE FULL LIST

It's worth noting that Sony owns Columbia TriStar movies, forming Sony Pictures. As a result, most of the first batch of movies you'll be seeing on UMD will hail from Columbia TriStar's recent back catalogue, with some older classics sure to follow. However, lots of other studios have stepped up to release their films on UMD as well. This is great news because it means you can expect to find shelves heaving under the weight of portable cinema discs once the PSP arrives in the UK.

Below you'll find a list of the official launch titles available from day one, other UK releases on the way, and movies headed for the US which we expect to arrive here.

COLUMBIA TRISTAR

13 Going on 30
 Anacondas: The Hunt for the Blood Orchid
 Bad Boys
 Charlie's Angels
 Daddy Day Care
 Ghostbusters
 Hellboy
 Hitch
 Hollow Man
 A Knight's Tale
 Once Upon a Time in Mexico
 In Mexico
 The One
 The Punisher
 Resident Evil: Apocalypse
 Spider-Man Animated
 SWAT
 xxx
 xxx2: The Next Level
 You Got Served

20TH CENTURY FOX

Alien Vs Predator
 I, Robot
 Alien
 Resident Evil
 House Of Flying Daggers
 Dodgeball
 Robots

BUENA VISTA

Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy
 Sin City
 Donnie Darko

MOMENTUM

Equilibrium
 Football Factory
 Reservoir Dogs

COMING SOON: MOVIES ON UMD

Here are a few of the films available for the PSP in September that we think you should watch out for



BAD BOYS
 Will Smith and Martin Lawrence star as cop buddies chasing after a huge haul of heroin. It's directed by Hollywood's king of pulpy explodo-action, Michael Bay.



GHOSTBUSTERS
 Classic comedy with the always brilliant Bill Murray and Dan Aykroyd as three New York parapsychology professors who set out to rid New York of its spooky citizens.



RESERVOIR DOGS
 The film that kick-started Tarantino's career, and hits PSP to prove that you can watch modern classics as well as recent releases while on the move.



HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
 This lands on PSP at the same time as the DVD. Several other DVD/UMD joint releases are in the works as well, so there's loads of choice.



EQUILIBRIUM
 Christian 'Batman' Bale stars as a futuristic law-enforcer trained in the deadly art of 'gunkata'. (It stands for 'firing a gun and looking really cool'.)



SIN CITY
 Awesome and gritty comic book film. Stylised and looking good on the PSP screen. At one point the very hot Jessica Alba is wearing just a very flimsy nightie.



DONNIE DARKO
 Intentionally confusing tale of Donnie and his odd visions. Students and goths love it for being 'clever', but don't let that spoil your fun. It really is genuinely good.



ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
 The sequel to *Desperado* has an amazing cast of actors - Depp and Hayek to name but two. *Desperado* will also hit PSP in the future, too.

COLUMBIA
TRISTAR CONT...

TARTAN

Battle Royale
Old Boy
Hard Boiled

US RELEASES

DISNEY/BUWE

Coyote Ugly:
Unrated Extended Cut
Sin City
Shaolin Soccer
The Rock

IMAGE

ENTERTAINMENT

The Hitlz
Short Circuit
IMAX: The Magic of Flight
Jamie Foxx's I Might
Need Security
Tupac Shakur:
Thug Angel
Endless Summer
Godsmack Live

MGM

Beauty Shop
Be Cool
Stargate: Atlantis
Bulletproof Monk

PARAMOUNT

Team America:
World Police
Coach Carter
Without a Paddle
Sahara
MTV's Viva La Bam: Vol. 1
The SpongeBob
SquarePants Movie
Ren and Stimpy:
Volume 1 1/2 ish
SpongeBob SquarePants:
Volume 1
Chappelle's Show:
Volume 1 Uncensored
South Park: Volume 1

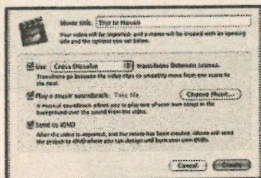
UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

Dawn of the Dead:
Unrated Director's Cut
The Chronicles of
Riddick: Unrated
Director's Cut
The Rundown
Van Helsing
The Fast and the Furious
Assault on Precinct 13

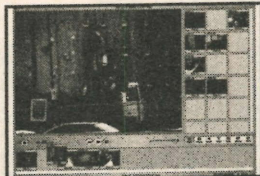
HOME MOVIES

If you fancy expanding your PSP's movie collection still further, you might want to think about transferring your home video footage, too. The

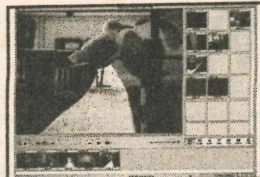
process is remarkably simple, with a lot of the steps being shared with importing other movies. But if you're stuck, here are some pointers to help you.

**1 SHOOT YOUR MOVIE**

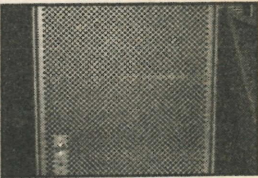
Make sure your camera links to your computer. This is easy with digital – analogue tapes will have to go in via a USB video adaptor.

**3 EDIT YOUR MOVIE**

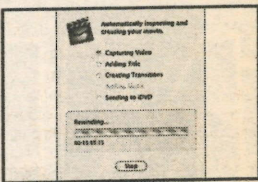
We tried iMovie for Macs, which is a breeze to use, but you can use any other editing program. You can now edit your movie if you wish.

**5 PSP CONVERSION**

Now you've got your movie file it's just the matter of dropping it on your MP4 converter to give you a PSP-friendly film.

**2 CONNECT YOUR CAMERA**

Plug your camera in with a firewire cable. Play the tape and let your video software record the footage to the hard drive.

**4 OUTPUTTING**

Now you're ready to output it. Choose a good quality AVI format or you can reduce the detail (and size) of your clip here.





MUSIC

PSP is more than a games and movies player, you can also use it as a portable music system. Find out why dedicated music machines should be quaking in their pods

Walkman, Discman, MiniDisc, PSP? Yes, it may be predominantly a games machine, but PSP also has the capacity to be the latest in Sony's long line of hugely successful portable music players. In an era where music on the move has never been more popular – largely thanks to Apple's über-sexy MP3 player, iPod – PSP will be the next big thing. Just imagine: you're still only halfway through that long train journey, you fancy a break from the powersliding madness of *Ridge Racer*, so you stick your headphones in the PSP,

CONTENTS

P94

Find out how PSP playback compares to CD and MiniDisc as we delve into the machine's sound quality. Plus, we investigate the pros and cons of the two methods of listening to music through your PSP: UMDs and music files stored on a Memory Stick.

P96

A step-by-step guide to transferring music from your computer to your PSP. Follow this walkthrough and your Memory Stick will soon be stuffed to the gills with a fine selection of top tunes.

P98

Three reasons why the future's bright for PSP music. 1) Sony's plans for an online service dedicated to the PSP that's set to offer music downloads. 2) The UMD format opening up to other hardware manufacturers. 3) Bigger and cheaper Memory Sticks on the horizon.

"Fancy a break from the powersliding madness of *Ridge Racer*? Stick your headphones in the PSP and happily foot-tap away to the Kaiser Chiefs"

select the Music folder and spend the next hour happily foot-tapping away to the Kaiser Chiefs. One machine. Different mediums. Zero hassle.

Over the following pages we will tell you everything you need to know about listening to music on your PSP. The sound quality, the different storage options (Universal Media Disc, Memory Sticks), a handy guide to transferring music onto your machine – using either a Mac or a PC – and what the future may hold for downloading MP3s. So kick back, relax and for those about to rock, we salute you!

AVLS

As with Sony's MiniDisc players, PSP features the Automatic Volume Limiter System (AVLS) to prevent you bursting your eardrums when you're listening to music through headphones. But if you like your music REALLY LOUD, just turn AVLS off in the PSP's sound settings and you can whack the volume up to the max!

MP3

The standard format for compressing a sound sequence into a very small file (about one-twelfth the size of the source file) while preserving the original level of sound quality. Typically, 1MB is equal to one minute of music through MP3s. Oh, and for any Luddites out there who don't know, you get MP3s by downloading music from a CD or website onto a computer.

A-B

PSP has a cool playback feature called A-B Repeat, where you can cut out a chunk of a song. Just select a point for the passage to start (A) and stop (B) then you can repeat it to your heart's content. Ideal for replaying those epic guitar solos!



THE SOUND OF MUSIC

Music on PSP is coming through loud and clear...

Sony's long-standing expertise in music playback shines through with the PSP, which boasts sound quality that's up there with MiniDisc output. As you'd expect, PSP's speakers aren't really cut out for serious sonics and although you can connect the console to your stereo via an RCA cable, you only get basic

stereo sound. But connect a good pair of headphones and you'll struggle to tell the difference between the PSP and dedicated music players, such is the sound standard. What's more, you can switch between audio settings for pop, jazz, heavy and unique to tailor the output to the kind of music you're listening to.

UMD

The new MiniDisc? UMD could be so much more

There are two ways of playing music through the PSP: via Memory Stick or the Universal Media Disc format. It's early days, but Sony has already signed deals to ensure the release of music UMDs. In the UK, Sanctuary Entertainment, the world's largest independent music group, has prepared a range of UMD music videos for the PSP launch. These will be from classic (ahem) artists like Bob Marley and Iron Maiden, although new releases will follow.

As for sound quality, our Japanese PSP came with a UMD containing some music and video clips and we're happy to report that the UMD audio performance is top-notch. But the advantage over regular compact discs is that UMD can also hold video footage. Rather than merely delivering audio, UMD will be an MTV version of the CD – you don't just listen to the music, you watch it too. Videos, interviews and live performance should all crop up on them.

MEMORY STICKS

Get the lowdown on the sticks that are compatible with PSP and how much music you can store on them

Memory Stick Duo

32MB
Approx 27 mins
7 tracks

Memory Stick Duo

64MB
Approx 54 mins
14 tracks

Memory Stick Duo

128MB
Approx 107 mins
27 tracks

Memory Stick PRO

Duo 256MB
Approx 214 mins
54 tracks
5 albums

Memory Stick PRO

Duo 512MB
Approx 427 mins
107 tracks
10 albums

Memory Stick PRO

Duo 1GB
Approx 853 mins
214 tracks
20 albums

Memory Stick PRO

Duo 2GB
Approx 1,706 mins
428 tracks
40 albums

MEMORY STICKS

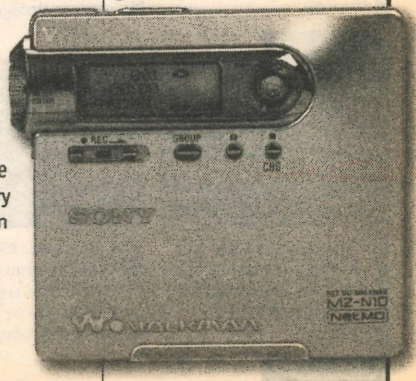
Sony's sticks will help turn your PSP into an iPod

Whether you want to save game data, photos or music on your PSP you'll need a Sony Memory Stick. Versatile and extremely user-friendly, the Memory Stick is the portable memory device of choice for anyone storing digital content. Although sticks come in all shapes and sizes, the PSP is compatible with just two types: the Memory Stick Duo (available in 32MB, 64MB and 128MB versions) and its higher-capacity brother the Memory Stick PRO Duo (available in 256MB, 512MB, 1GB and 2GB versions).

With a Memory Stick Duo or PRO Duo inserted, you can connect a USB cable to the top of the PSP, hook it up to your computer and then save music files on your PSP in a similar way to storing music on MP3 players. You simply open up the 'Music' subdirectory of the PSP folder on the Memory Stick and drag MP3s into it. You can save music files individually or in

named folders ('Classic Rock', for example). Each folder appears with its name and the number of tracks included. Then go into the folder and you'll see that each track is listed with title and artist information. Select a track and it begins playing immediately.

Of course, the amount of music you can store depends on the capacity of your Memory Stick. PSP isn't a dedicated music player, so you can't expect the massive 20–60GB storage of an iPod, but with the current biggest Memory Stick PRO Duo standing at 2GB, you can easily save over 400 music tracks – which is extremely impressive for a portable games machine.





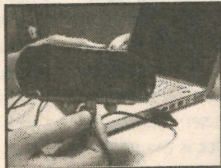
HOW TO... TRANS



A step-by-step guide to getting MP3s from your Mac to your PSP



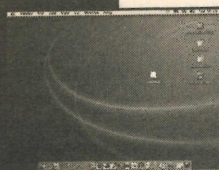
1 Insert a Memory Stick Duo or Memory Stick PRO Duo into the slot on the left of your PSP.



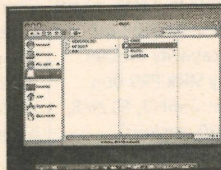
2 Connect one end of a USB cable to the USB port at the top of the PSP and the other end to one of your Mac's USB ports.



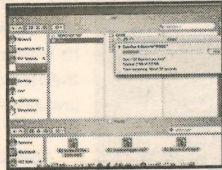
3 Go into your PSP's 'Settings' and select 'USB connection' to activate the USB link to your computer.



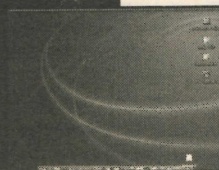
4 An 'Untitled' icon will appear on your Mac's desktop representing your Memory Stick. Click on the icon.



5 A number of folders will appear. Click on the PSP folder, then click on the Music folder to access your PSP's music storage.



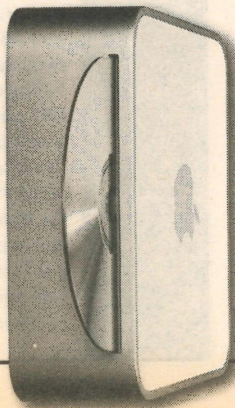
6 Now simply drag MP3s from your computer into the Music folder to store them there.



7 Close the folders and drag the Memory Stick icon into your computer's wastebasket to safely eject it.



8 Choose your PSP's Music operation and you'll be able to play any of the music files you've just transferred. Groovy!



FER MUSIC TO YOUR PSP



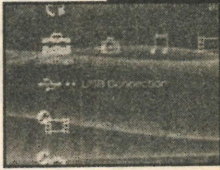
A step-by-step guide to getting MP3s from your PC to your PSP



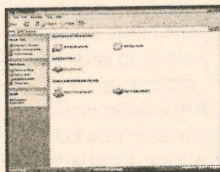
1 Insert a Memory Stick Duo or Memory Stick PRO Duo into the slot on the left of your PSP.



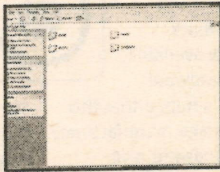
2 Connect one end of a USB cable to the USB port at the top of the PSP and the other end to one of your PC's USB ports.



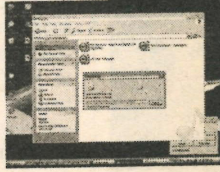
3 Go to your PSP's 'Settings' and select 'USB connection' and select 'USB connection' to activate the USB link to your computer.



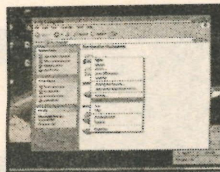
4 A Removable Disk icon will appear in your PC's 'My Computer' folder representing the Memory Stick. Click on it.



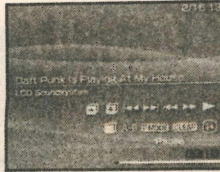
5 A number of folders appear. Click on the PSP folder then click on the Music folder to access your PSP's music storage.



6 Now simply drag MP3s from your computer into the Music folder to store them there.



7 Close the folders, right click on the Memory Stick icon and select 'Eject' to safely disconnect it.



8 Choose your PSP's Music operation and you'll be able to play any of the music files you've just transferred. Funky!

DOWN LOADS

In 2004, over 200 million songs were downloaded from legal online music stores around the world – an incredible 900% increase over 2003's total. The MP3 format and Apple's iTunes service accounted for more than 90% of the market. These figures offer further proof that downloading is the future of music – and PSP has the capabilities to be right at the heart of it.

ATRAC

As well as MP3s, PSP can also play ATRAC music files – Sony's own music format that has a higher compression than MP3, therefore enabling you to store more files. However, besides being less well-known than the MP3 format, ATRAC is also slightly less user-friendly, requiring the use of Sony's Sonic Stage software to transfer files to your PSP.

THREE REASONS WHY THE FUTURE'S BRIGHT FOR PSP MUSIC...



1 SONY TO OPEN UP UMD FORMAT

Sony Computer Entertainment President Ken Kutaragi has revealed that SCE plans to make the UMD's music and movie playback technology available to other hardware makers. It's hoped that this will encourage manufacturers such as Panasonic and Toshiba to make UMD-compatible media players, enabling UMD owners to play their discs away from the PSP.

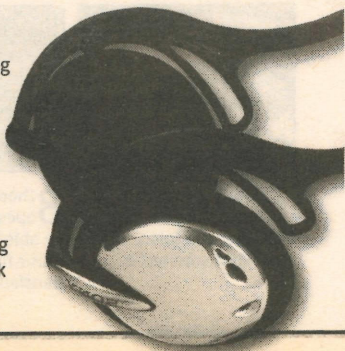


This would clear a massive hurdle in making UMD a major force outside of the gaming world. And of course,

the more machines that can play UMDs, the more eager music and movie studios will be to get their content onto the discs. UMD enables music companies to release full-length albums along with video content. And if the format can reach DVD or CD levels of ubiquity, that's only got to be a good thing for us.

2 THANKS FOR THE MEMORY STICKS

The only drawback to storing MP3s on PSP is that you'll need a hefty Memory Stick to save a decent number of tracks. Luckily, Memory Sticks are getting bigger all the time, while their cost is coming down. We're hoping to see a sub-£100 2GB stick in the very near future.



CONNECT - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address http://www.connect-europe.com/G2/en/website/static/node125.html

CONNECT

The New Album

Recently Added Electronica & Dance

Mia & M...
Black Day
£4.99

Major Cal...
Various Artists

Binary The...
Maximum Attack
£6.99

The Under...
The Underworld

Identity...
Mia & M...
£7.99

News

BEASTIE BOYS have issued PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF...

BRITNEY SPEARS is getting excited with a hairy movie...

Featured Artist

The subversive madmen LONDON JULY have released their third album '94-95', with many being a no doubt best work yet.

Featured Electronica & Dance Albums

Rian V...
Capeers T...
£7.99

Seal...
Seal...
£7.99

Penguin Rock...
Lanz...
£7.99

Crane Co...
Crane Co...
£7.99

New Music

1. It's Now Or...
Eric Prydz
£1.99
2. Goodies - L...
Cura Futura
£1.99
3. Galaxies - L...
The Chemical Bro...
£1.99
4. Wires (duo)...
release
£0.99
5. Hey Ho (Mo...
Yoon
£1.99
6. Fifty Gorg...
Gordon Jones
£1.99
7. Out Of Trach...
Shoring House
£0.99
8. What You Wh...
Gwen Stefani
£1.99
9. Drop B L...
Phoned Int...
£1.99
10. What You Wh...
Gwen Stefani
£1.99

3 SONY ONLINE MUSIC STORE

Sony Computer Entertainment Europe plans to launch a new online music service specifically for the PSP. This is expected to launch alongside the machine itself and will also include movie downloads and possibly all the game content such as levels, weapons and vehicles.

No details are available yet, although Sony has set up a website - <http://psp.connect.com> - where it's already possible to download some short video clips and see an excellent video tutorial on how to do it. Closer to September, the company will announce the music download element and it is sure to be compatible with Sony's Connect - a digital music download site for computer users. When Sony called PSP the Walkman of the 21st century, they weren't kidding...



A grayscale background image showing a person sitting at a table, playing a PSP. On the table is a white mug of coffee and a plate of food. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an indoor setting like a cafe or a living room.

WiFi

Get yourself connected! But you can say goodbye to multitaps and link-up cables. PSP multiplayer gaming comes entirely without wires...

On the left side of the PSP is a very important little switch. It's the one that enables or disables the integrated WiFi adaptor – PSP's gateway to multiplayer gaming heaven and a lot more besides.

WiFi is short for Wireless Fidelity and it enables devices like computers, mobile phones and now the PSP, to connect to the Internet – and each other – without any need for extraneous gubbins like link-up cables, external modems or phone points. Providing there is a WiFi network point in the area (also known as 'hotspots') – whether it be your

WIFI GAMES

The majority of PSP's launch titles offer some kind of WiFi multiplayer support. Here are our faves...

TWISTED METAL

Subtitled *Head-On*, this latest title in the crazed vehicle combat series will be one of the first titles in the UK to support PSP's Infrastructure mode, allowing you to go bumper-to-bumper against gamers all over Europe via a WiFi hotspot or your own broadband router.

TOCA RACE DRIVER 2

Not satisfied with cramming in all 15 different motorsports from the PS2 version, along with 52 circuits and up to 21 cars on screen at once, Codemasters' PSP edition of its ace driving sim also features eight-player WiFi racing across a load of modes.

APE ACADEMY

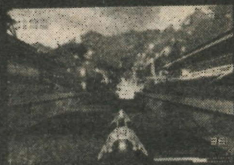
Monkey mini-game mayhem for up to four players. These primate pastimes including table tennis (obviously), snowboarding, boxing and remote-control car racing. More fun than a chimp's tea party with boiling hot water and sloppy cream cakes and far less messy.

WIPEOUT PURE

Eight players can jump into their hoverships for some exhilarating future-cool racing. Ultra-fast, toolied-up with a range of lethal weaponry and looking the absolute business, *Wipeout Pure* threatens to propel PSP into the zeitgeist just as the original did for PSone.

home, an airport, a hotel or a fast food joint – your PSP will detect it and be able to go online thanks to its in-built 802.11b wireless LAN networking capabilities.

At the moment, PSP can't be used for web browsing or email (although rumours suggest Sony is planning this for the future). Instead, PSP WiFi is all about multiplayer gaming. With the WiFi switch turned on, you simply select a multiplayer mode and the game automatically detects other players in the area. It's quick, it's easy and, quite simply, we think it's the future of multiplayer gaming.



WIRELESS GLOSSARY

An A-Z of useful terms from the wireless world

802.11b: A standard for wireless Internet access that offers connection speeds up to 11 megabits per second (Mbps) between the access point and WiFi-enabled devices. This is integrated into the PSP and enables wireless connection to the Internet, and between PSPs for multiplayer gaming. 802.11b is equivalent to the Apple Airport card which provides wireless networking in Macs.



WiFi PLAYTEST

We test the wonder of WiFi with some two-player *Ridge* racing

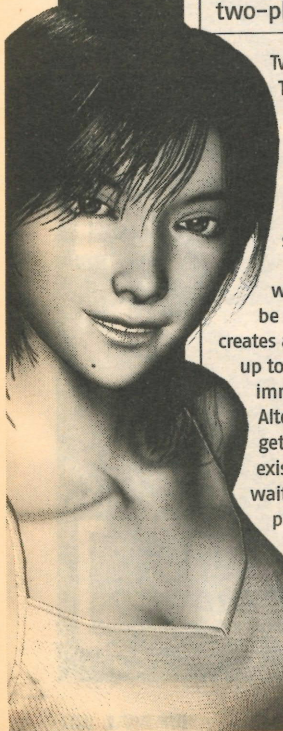
Two players. Two PSPs. Two copies of *Ridge Racer*. Two WiFi switches flicked to 'on'. One aim: to take that chequered flag. Gentlemen, start your engines...

Setting up a wireless race couldn't be simpler. One player creates a game and then up to seven friends can immediately join it. Alternatively, you can get involved in an existing game that's waiting for additional players. With a multiplayer mode selected, your PSP will detect any races in the area and

display them according to their host. Then, after selecting your car and transmission type, you're ready to roll.

For our two-player WiFi contest, one player created a race and picked a car and the second player joined the race that was flagged under his friend's name and chose a motor. The setup took a matter of seconds.

Racing is very responsive, with the movements of one player immediately reflected on the opponent's PSP screen. There's no let up in the game's blistering running speed and we didn't encounter any lag – even with several cars on screen at once. Our verdict: *Ridge Racer* WiFi contests are the absolute bomb.



GLOSSARY
CONT'D

802.11g: A new wireless technology that provides faster connection speeds than 802.11b – up to 54 Mbps. Equal to the Apple Extreme Airport card.

Bandwidth: The amount of information that can be transmitted in a given period of time over a wired or wireless network. Bandwidth is expressed as bits of data per second, or bps.

Hotspot: Another name for a WiFi access point in public locations such as airports or cafes, where a wireless signal for an Internet connection originates.

Network Interface Card (NIC): A card installed in a device that enables it to connect to a wireless network. NIC cards must be compliant with the 802.11b or 802.11g standards. Many new wireless devices – including the PSP – are sold with WiFi cards already installed.

Roaming: Agreements between WiFi providers enable customers to obtain service from another provider's hotspot, usually for a nominal charge.

T1 Connection: A high-speed Internet connection carrying data at a speed of 1.54 Mbps for uploads and downloads. These lines are often used to connect a hotspot to the network.

WiFi: Short for Wireless Fidelity, WiFi is the popular term for the technology that lets you connect to the Internet at broadband speeds without using wires. It also lets you connect wirelessly with other WiFi-enabled devices, as with the PSP.

WLAN: Wireless Local Area Networks enable users to connect to a local area network (LAN) through a connection using wireless access.

WHAT IS WIFI?

Confused? We can answer all your WiFi questions

Q How does WiFi work?

A WiFi signals operate in the 2.4 and 5Ghz radio bands, which are also used by many mobile phones – and the radio signal connects WiFi-enabled devices to the wireless network at broadband speeds. The network operates through base stations called access points (or hotspots), which connect to high-speed lines back into the Internet.

Many newer electronic devices, such as the PSP, come equipped with WiFi antennas and software. As a result, selecting the WiFi setting on the PSP enables you to connect to the network immediately, and it displays all the available WiFi signals in your location.

Q What are the benefits of WiFi?

A Wireless access to a high-speed Internet service provides users with freedom and flexibility. Specifically to the PSP, it enables multiplayer gaming without the need for peripherals such as link cables and multitaps, or indeed opponents in the same room.

Q How fast is WiFi?

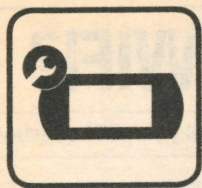
A WiFi connectivity speeds depend on the quality of the signal, your distance from the hotspot and how many people are using that hotspot at a particular time. PSP uses the standard 802.11b connection, which transmits information at a maximum speed of 11 megabits per second, which is more than fast enough for any multiplayer gaming you want to do.

Q What is the range of access with WiFi?

A The WiFi signal typically extends to about 150 feet from a hotspot. But signals do not transmit well through metal, concrete or buildings.

Q Can I surf the Net with PSP WiFi?

A Hopefully soon. PSP's WiFi capabilities currently extend to downloading game data and detecting other users for multiplayer gaming. However, Sony is thought to be working on a downloadable update that will allow full web browsing.



Route planner, email client, chat terminal, PDA? Soon, PSP could be all things to all men

You might think of it as a games machine, but your PSP is basically a pocket computer, as it has the capability to play media files and the capacity to carry and use complex information – such as full computer programs.

And while no firm release announcements have been made, it's known that certain parties, including Sony themselves, are working on a number of applications for the PSP. Together with certain peripherals that can be plugged into the PSP's USB socket, some of which have already been displayed by Sony, a comprehensive suite of applications is set to transform the PSP from a pocket entertainment hub into a fully-fledged and surprisingly functional mobile office and communications tool.

APPL

GPS/SAT-NAV

Satellite navigation units are becoming increasingly popular, especially in the car industry where they're sometimes supplied as an option with a new vehicle. The PSP has the screen, the wireless ability and the processing power to make this work; all it needs is a transmitter/receiver unit which, theoretically, could be connected via USB to turn the PSP into a global positioning system. Very useful when you're travelling, and frankly, GPS units don't come cheap, so it may work out cheaper to buy a PSP and GPS peripheral.

PERSONAL ORGANISER

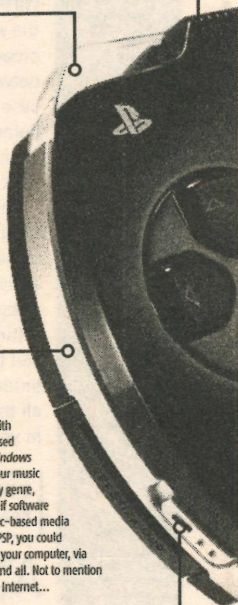
Personal organisers fulfil a host of different functions – including address books, notepads, calendars, date-and-time alarm calls. The really clever bit is, they're capable of talking to other pieces of software, on other machines. So every morning, for example, you could set your PC to automatically update your PSP wirelessly with any changes to your schedule, or any emails from your inbox.

MEDIA SUITES

The PSP may be a high-quality MP3 player, but its music management options leave a little to be desired. With the simple introduction of a UMD-based media suite – rather like *iTunes* or *Windows Media Player* – you could manage your music more effectively, categorising tracks by genre, and creating your own playlists. And if software developers concentrate on a PC or Mac-based media suite to correspond with the one on PSP, you could theoretically pipe music directly from your computer, via WiFi, straight to your PSP – playlists and all. Not to mention downloading music directly from the Internet...

INTERNET CHAT

Internet connectivity? Check. Plug-in keyboard? Check. Mates? Check. All you need now is an Internet chat client – something like MSN or Yahoo Messenger. Chat clients aren't particularly complex pieces of software, so in theory, this could be one of the earliest applications to see a release on the PSP. But there's more: with 802.11b wireless, VoIP communications are possible. That means, with the simple addition of a USB (or even wireless) headset, the PSP could become a completely functional Internet chat tool. All you need now is a plug-in USB camera for full-on, audio-visual webchats with friends, loved ones and colleagues.



ICATIONS

OFFICE SUITE

In computing terms, the PSP is basically a tiny handheld PC, and as such, is able to handle the kinds of files created by other office programs – industry standard documents such as PDFs, spreadsheets and *Powerpoint* presentations. While the PSP's ability to create all of these documents might be limited, the screen is certainly large enough to view them.

DICTIONARY

A single UMD can hold 1.8 gigabytes of data. That's potentially a lot of words – more than you'd find in any single dictionary. But, like the English language itself, dictionaries are not static. As language changes, so does meaning, and dictionary entries eventually become obsolete. Likewise, new terms are coming into common usage all the time. Given the PSP's Internet-connectivity potential, there's no reason why enterprising developers couldn't create an evolving dictionary – one that updates itself as new words come into usage.

WORD PROCESSOR

At last year's E3, the annual videogames trade fair based in Los Angeles, Sony unveiled the PSP. However, it wasn't just the machine itself that drew the crowds. The range of prototype accessories on show spoke volumes for the capability and versatility of the miniature marvel. One of the most instantly recognisable accessories was a portable keyboard – clearly this suggests some kind of word processor is on the cards. Given the PSP's large screen size, we reckon it'll be the perfect platform for writing on the move. Especially as word processor documents (such as *Microsoft Word* files) are pretty small in size. You could fit a whole library of documents on a single Memory Stick Duo – and email them as attachments via *WiFi*.

INTERNET AND EMAIL

The PSP's *WiFi* capability potentially makes it a portable Internet browser. In fact, if you have a wireless network at home, you can see (through the XMB menu) that your PSP recognises the carrier signal. At present, however, there's no software protocol in place to let you access wireless Internet, and no web-browser to let you do it.

That'll all soon change, however. *Wipeout Pure*, for example, comes with its own mini-browser which lets you access Sony's servers in order to download content for the game, such as new tracks, vehicles and music. This alone proves that the PSP is bursting with web-friendly functionality. It's only a matter of time before Sony, or another third-party developer, comes up with a browser capable of accessing the web via *WiFi* hotspots such as *Sip 'n' Surf*, which is found in coffee shops across the country. And it follows that, if you can browse the web, you can check your email wherever there's a *WiFi* hotspot, too.

ONLINE



Playing your PSP offline? Then it's hardly breaking a sweat. Get online and unleash the beast...

The way that PSP embraces the Internet is a glimpse of the future. Sure, you can buy software for it, but PSP also comes online ready right out of the box. Get it in a wireless network environment and it begins to hint at its true potential, with online gaming and downloadable content very much at the forefront of Sony's agenda. Obviously it's early days and the services available for the system are currently few, but expect features and facilities to rapidly grow as the PSP's popularity rises.

GAMING

WiFi gaming isn't all the PSP offers, as you'll soon you'll be able to challenge others over the Internet, too

As anyone who's experienced it will tell you, online gaming is a revelation. It's far more than simply playing against a highly sophisticated computer, because however smart Artificial Intelligence is getting, the way computer-controlled enemies behave in games is still no match for a character's actions under human control.

While it's unclear how many UK titles will feature online play (although *Twisted Metal: Head-On* is confirmed), a quick glance across the Atlantic gives a pretty good indication of what can be expected. For the American launch, the PSP benefited from five titles offering Infrastructure gaming. Three came from sports specialist studio 989, offering US gamers online two-player head-to-head options on its *MLB* (baseball), *NBA* (basketball) and *Gretzky NHL* (ice hockey) titles. UK developer Climax has worked four-player online action into its *ATV Offroad Fury: Blazin' Trails* quad bike racing game while Sony's *Twisted Metal: Head-On* goes two better, delivering six-player automotive destruction across the Internet.

What's next? Massively multiplayer online adventures? Worldwide online tournaments timed to coincide with real sports events? Sony has no doubt thought of everything...

DOWNLOAD

The Internet is a vast repository of content, just waiting for PSP...

If you can browse the Internet, it obviously means that you can download from it, too. And downloading will inevitably become an integral part of PSP ownership. Already Sony has tailored its Connect service to the PSP (<http://psp.connect.com>). The system is similar to Apple's iTunes store – In addition to providing users with singles or albums, iTunes also features music videos and is expected to expand to incorporate film downloads.

Sony is likely to adopt a similar strategy, but as the creator of the PSP its options are far more diverse. So in addition to music, videos and films you can expect game content – gameplay-enhancing features such as

those *Wipeout Pure* already promises or, eventually, full-blown games. One interesting area is that of episodic gaming, whereby you download a new segment of a game every month or so for a set fee.

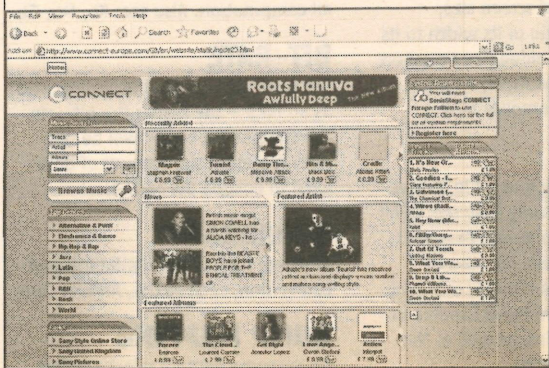
While you're waiting for that to happen, there's plenty to keep you occupied. For instance, you could always check out *Playboy's* recent PSP-specific download service. But if all that sounds too 'hands on', there's still passive entertainment, of course. Sony has already announced its intention to allow TV content streaming over high-speed wireless Internet access for the PSP, and is developing the technology which is expected later this year. Time to get your current TV set on eBay...

ONLINE? HOW?

The PSP essentially offers two types of online connectivity and it's important to distinguish between them both. Its WiFi capabilities mean it can establish a connection to the Internet at any WiFi hotspot and will remain connected as long as you don't stray outside the hotspot zone. Hotspot locations are designated areas where wireless Internet access is available and currently include cafes, airports and libraries (the list is rapidly growing) around the world. In the near future, you're likely to find them universally established, which essentially guarantees constant Internet connection for WiFi devices such as the PSP.

If you don't fancy going out, then you can apply the same principle indoors, provided you have a wireless Internet setup, meaning you get all the benefit of online gaming, but in the comfort of your own home.

An added benefit of WiFi is its ability to establish a local area network (LAN). This means that several PSPs (currently anything from two to eight, depending on the game), can then communicate with each other wirelessly, as long as each player remains within the (generous) designated range. Already the majority of PSP games offer multiplayer options that take advantage of this feature, and the resulting experience can be as magical as it is practical – imagine getting to work knowing you're that day's undisputed *Ridge Racer* commuter king.



GLOSSARY

A

ACTION-ADVENTURE

A style of game with strong character and narrative elements, which is deftly combined with third-person or first-person action.

ADSL

Asymmetrical Digital Subscriber Line, which is a variety of Internet connection that's capable of much faster bandwidth speeds than DSL.

AI

Artificial Intelligence. Typically refers to the ability of computer-controlled characters, vehicles, etc. to mimic human behaviour, and perform independent decision-making.

ASPECT RATIO

A measurement of screen size, described as a ratio of its width to its height. Standard video has an aspect ratio of 4:3, for example, whereas widescreen is commonly 16:9.

ATRAC3

Sony's proprietary music file format. It offers better security (also see: DRM) and heavier compression than MP3, meaning that music files can be smaller while maintaining excellent sound quality. The PSP is capable of playing ATRAC3 files, as well as the more common MP3s.

AVATAR

Your visual representation in an online environment. Commonly represented by a character, vehicle, etc.

B

BANDWIDTH

The amount of data that your Internet connection is capable of transferring per second. This is measured in kilobits or megabits – for example, a 56k modem is capable of transferring 56 kilobits per second, while a 1Mb broadband connection can handle one megabit per second, and so forth. Larger bandwidths will mean more secure and faster online gaming.

BIT

A single unit of data that's either 1 or 0 (on or off) and is the foundation of all computation. Also see: Kb, Mb, Gb.

BIT-RATE

The quality of a digital recording, such as an MP3 – the higher the bit-rate, the sharper the sound will be. Bit-rates represent the amount of data used to encode the sound.

BROADBAND

Any high bandwidth digital Internet connection, such as DSL, ADSL or ISDN.

BUMP MAPPING

An in-game lighting effect applied

to a texture to make it look three-dimensional when light hits it at any angle.

BURNING

Colloquial term for recording media (music, movies, games, etc.) to a CD or DVD. Also see: Ripping.

BYTE

An amount of memory or data – usually eight bits – and the smallest addressable unit of storage.

C

CODE

Software and, in particular for this PSP-related glossary, a game. It's a commonly used games-industry term, but increasingly adopted by gamers.

COMPRESSION

The reduction in a file's size to make it more portable. Compressed files (music, movies and video) tend to be lower quality than the source file.

CPU

The PSP's brain. It performs the mathematical calculations that tell the other parts of the console what to do, and how to use any software the machine is running.

D

DATA RATE

The amount of data that can be sent through a communications circuit in a second. This figure effectively governs the performance of any component.

DEVELOPER

The individual or team of individuals who create, design and program a game. The days of individual developers are pretty much over now though, and games are created by large teams.

D-PAD

The cross-shaped control pad on the front of your PSP.

DRM

Digital Rights Management. This is used by a wide range of technologies to prevent file-copying and sharing. DRM-protected music tracks refuse to play on computers other than their owner's, or you're given a 'licence' to transfer it to a certain number of other machines.

DSL

Digital Subscriber Line. A variety of Internet connection that works across a standard telephone line. DSL connections come in a variety of bandwidths.

E

E3

The Electronic Entertainment Exposition. An annual event held in Los Angeles, at which games-industry software and hardware developers present their latest projects to retailers, distributors, publishers, press and the public. It's the largest event in the gaming calendar and it's common for new software and hardware to be announced at the show itself.

F

FILE FORMAT

Files come in different formats for different purposes. Bitmaps and JPEGs, for example, are two image file formats. The former is designed for high-res imagery, while the latter uses compresses to make the image files smaller, but with a resulting loss in image quality.

FILE SHARING

Transferring media files between computers using a peer-to-peer network such as Gnutella or eDonkey. Programs such as Kazaa and Limewire allow you to do this by searching other people's computers for the files you want. However, taking copyrighted material is an illegal practice.

FLASH MEMORY

Solid-state memory to which files and data can be written – such as the Memory Stick Duo.

FPS

First-Person Shooter. An action game played from a first-person perspective – *Killzone* and *TimeSplitters* are perfect examples of the genre.

G

GB/GIGABYTE

An amount of memory or data amounting to 1,000 MB.

GPU

The Graphics Processing Unit is the silicon brain behind the stunning graphics that PSP pumps out.

GPS

Global Positioning System. A device that uses military satellite data to pinpoint the user's exact location.

H

HOTSPOT

An area within which a Wi-Fi-enabled device, such as a PSP or laptop, can connect to a WLAN. Hotspots are commonly found in certain coffee shops, airports, larger railway stations and so forth.

I

IRC

Internet Relay Chat.

ISDN

Integrated Services Digital Network. A variety of Internet connection which used to be the fastest available kind, but is now superseded by the faster and cheaper DSL and ADSL lines.

ISP

An Internet Service Provider is a company that provides Internet access, such as British Telecom. You need an ISP to host your Internet connection.

J

JPEG

An image file in which data is compressed to make the file smaller. Your PSP can display JPEG images.

K**KB/KILOBYTE**

An amount of memory or data amounting to 1,000 bytes. To give you a rough idea of size, an average sentence in a word processor file is about 1KB in size.

L**LATENCY**

The time taken to deliver a packet of data from the source to the receiver – the server to your PC or PSP, for example – and commonly measured in milliseconds. Latency and bandwidth are the most influential factors governing the speed and stability of Internet connections.

M**MB/MEGABYTE**

An amount of memory or data amounting to 1,000 KB.

MIDDLEWARE

Developers' software tool that connects two otherwise separate applications, or a product that serves as the glue between two applications.

MIPMAPPING

A graphical routine that decreases texture detail the further the object is from the player. By rendering less detail on some objects, the CPU is able to draw more objects on screen simultaneously.

MODEL

A model is a 3D wireframe of triangles that, when enveloped in a texture, looks like an object.

MP3

The world's favourite music file format, because it's capable of reproducing excellent sound quality for a relatively small file size.

MPEG

The movie file equivalent of MP3, the MPEG is popular because it offers reasonable visual and audio quality in a compact file size. The PSP plays MPEG-4 files, the fourth and most advanced generation of MPEGs.

N**NPC**

Non-Player Character. A named rather than generic character in a game that is computer-controlled (also see: AI).

O**OPTICAL DRIVE**

Any drive (CD, DVD, UMD) that uses laser technology to read the disc.

P**PARTICLE EFFECTS**

Graphical effects that utilise tiny dots of colour to create explosions, muzzle flare, smoke and other gaseous effects.

PHYSICS

The laws of physics, when applied realistically to objects in a game world. This means friction, gravity and other forces that influence in-game movement, creating more believable game environments.

POLYGONS

The triangular building blocks of 3D objects. Polygons consist of flat triangular shapes that are stitched together to create the illusion of 3D.

PROCESSOR

See CPU.

Q

QA

Quality Assurance.

R

RAM

Random Access Memory. RAM is the PSP's short-term memory and governs the amount of data the machine can access at any one time.

RENDERING

The process of creating a realistic-looking 3D model out of polygons and textures.

RIPPING

Colloquial term to describe the copying of media files (movies, music etc) from a CD or DVD to your PC or PSP. See also: Burning.

ROUTER

A device, connected to a network, which forwards packets of data to other sources, such as a series of computers in an office.

S

SDK

Software Development Kit. The SDK is a set of tools and applications used to create a game or game element.

SERVER

A remote computer that stores, controls and passes data between other computers via a network like the Internet.

SPECS

The technical specifications of a device, such as the PSP.

SPRITE

A two-dimensional graphical object.

T

T1

A variety of Internet connection, commonly used by businesses as it can handle data and voice transmissions (also see: VoIP). The bandwidth of a T1 line is rated at 1.544 Mbps.

TCP

Transmission Control Protocol. A network protocol responsible for verifying the correct delivery of data from client to server.

TEXTURE

A heavily detailed but flat image that is applied to a three-dimensional model to give it surface detail.

TFT

Thin Film Transistor. Ultra-thin screens with superior colour and resolution – such as the screen of the PSP. Also see X-Black.

U

USB

Universal Serial Bus. A type of connection that enables it to be plugged into another USB device – such as PC and PSP.

UMD

Universal Media Disc. Sony's proprietary new media format.

V

VOB

Video Object. A core file-type found on DVD discs, containing the actual audio-visual data. Check out our guide to movies that starts on page 82.

VOIP

Voice over Internet Protocol.

W

WI-FI

Wireless Fidelity. Device networking without the need for physical wiring.

This comes in two standards: 802.11b and 802.11g – the latter is newer and faster than the former. Your PSP utilises 802.11b to communicate with other devices.

WLAN

Wireless Local Area Network. A group of devices connected via Wi-Fi (see above). If you're lucky enough to play *Ridge Racer* over Wi-Fi, you're essentially creating a WLAN.

WPA

Wi-Fi Protected Access. A new wireless encryption system that stops unauthorised devices connecting to a WLAN or WAN.

X

X-BLACK

Sony's proprietary TFT technology, that offers improved colour, clarity and wider viewing angles than standard TFT technology. The PSP has an X-Black screen, which is of the same standard as the ones found in the latest Sony VAIO laptops.

XMB

Cross Media Bar. The PSP's menu for the PSP's front-end menu system.

Z

ZIP FILE

A file that has been compressed by a computer to make it smaller, and thus quicker to download and store on CDs or any other storage device.

just so you know...

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